

Sewing Lessons.

We opened for the second term on Wednesday, 8 April 2026. Usually, when the term starts in the middle of the week, we wait until the second week before starting lessons. This is because many women are busy during the first week taking their children back to school, so they do not have time to attend class.

In the second week, we started with three ladies: Liyema Jampo, Nosimele, and Nosive. The new ladies who joined during the first term did not come back. I tried to find out what the problem was, and the other ladies told me that it was too far for them to travel to Mankosi Skill Centre every day. One of the ladies also had to bring her baby with her because there was no one at home to help with the baby.

The ladies came from the same household. I suggested that they should share responsibilities and give each other a chance to attend lessons, but it did not work. They did not come back to class again.

Lessons During May

In May, I was busy with computer lessons at Lujizweni Village. I left the sewing ladies with the hope that I would be available to them again in June. They did not stop the lessons while I was away. They helped one another with different sewing techniques. Whoever knew something would teach the others.

The ladies already know and understand how to sew shweshwe items. This skill is now helpful to all of them, and they are interested in learning more.

Sewing Training in Libode

In the first week of June, I was called to attend sewing training in Libode by One to One NPO. I accepted the opportunity because it was good for me and also good for the sewing project I am running. The training lasted for two weeks. I attended the training with one of the sewing ladies, Khunjulwa Tyalinkomo.

We left home on Monday, 1 June. There were 12 people from Mankosi Village and three people from Ntshilini Village, making 15 people in total. We arrived in Libode at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Our classes started the next morning, Tuesday, at 8 o'clock.

I was very happy about the training because I had wanted sewing training for a long time. I wanted to improve my skills so that I could teach sewing properly and gain more

experience. At first, when we arrived and saw the big factory machines, I was afraid. I thought the training would be difficult because I was used to small sewing machines.

The training took place at Masithembe Sewing Factory in Libode. Every day, we woke up at 5 o'clock in the morning to prepare for class. The first lesson was about how to handle the machines safely before sewing anything.

There were three facilitators: two women and one man. They were very kind and patient. Because we were 15 students, we were divided into two groups. The male facilitator taught one group, and the two female facilitators taught the other group.

The First Week of Training

The first three days were difficult. Some people wanted to go back home because they felt the machines were hard to use. The teachers encouraged us and told us that sewing becomes easy when your mind is focused and when you really want to learn. They told us not to be afraid.

As the days went by, everyone became excited because we started to understand what we were doing. We learned about patterns and measurements. Some students practised sewing straight lines on the machines.

We were told that we would learn how to sew a school uniform skirt with pleats and an apron. We started by cutting fabric for the skirt. Cutting the fabric was not easy because the measurements had to be correct. If the pieces were not equal, the skirt would not come out properly.

After cutting the fabric, we went to the machines to learn how to sew straight lines. We also made handbags to keep our work inside while the other group was cutting fabric.

On Thursday, we started sewing our skirts. Our plan was to finish them on the same day, but because of the challenges, we finished them on Friday.

Each student received her own materials to use during class. These included a tape measure, scissors, straight pins, a pen, a pocket file, a book, and a seam ripper. This helped because no one had to move around borrowing from others. The first week ended on Saturday. We went home and came back the following Monday.

The Second Week of Training

During the second week, we already knew some sewing basics, and each person had her own machine. Since we had finished the skirt before going home for the weekend, we were told that we would sew two items during the week: an apron and a traditional skirt.

We had already cut the apron pieces, so on Tuesday we started sewing the apron. It took us two days to finish because it was not an easy apron. It had seven pieces: the front part, three belts, two side pockets, and one front pocket. We had to join all the pieces together to make the apron.

Making the apron was exciting. Some students made mistakes, and the teachers told them to unpick the stitches and start again. The teachers were patient with us because we came from different backgrounds, and some students would cry if they were shouted at.

One day during tea break, I joked with one of the students, Sanelisiwe Mlungwana, who is 25 years old and has two children. She cried, and I was surprised because we had been joking together since we arrived. The others told me not to worry. They said it was not my joke that upset her, but the pressure from working with the machines. Everyone laughed, and the mood became lighter.

We finished the apron on the second day. Some students needed help because they were working slowly. We were then told that we would write a test on Friday, the day before going home.

Skills Learned

Before the test, we were taught how to sew a collar for a shirt or T-shirt, and also how to sew a zip. The teacher said that the students who finished first would start the test. The test was to sew a traditional skirt without being helped or guided. We started the skirt on Friday and were expected to finish it by Saturday before going home.

One of my sewing ladies, Khunjulwa Tyalinkomo, struggled a lot with the machines because they were big and different from the ones we use at the Skill Centre. She told me that the machines were very difficult for her. I encouraged her and told her not to stress.

I asked her what she had learned and what she felt she could do well. She said she had learned how to sew a straight line and how to cut fabric using a pattern. I told her that this was a good achievement. I also reminded her that the classes at the Skill Centre would continue, and she should keep practising so that she does not forget.

The training was for beginners and was open to different ages. The women in our group were between 25 and 55 years old. I learned a lot in a short time. I learned how to sew a skirt and an apron, how to cut material, how to use patterns, and how to identify parts of the sewing machine.

Conclusion

The sewing training was a very good opportunity for me and for the sewing project. It helped me gain confidence and improve my sewing knowledge. When we left the training centre, we were each given five metres of fabric so that we could sew something for ourselves. We were also allowed to take home the materials we had used during the training.

Computer Lessons Report for the Second Term 2026

We closed for Good Friday on 31 March 2026. Good Friday was on 3 April 2026. We opened again on Tuesday, 7 April 2026. When we returned, we decided to use that week for revision because the students were going to write exams the following week.

We started the exams on 15 April. I grouped the students according to the number of laptops available. At that time, we only had seven laptops because three were being repaired. The Acer laptops are old, and they often give us problems.

There were 19 students who were supposed to write the exams. I grouped them so that seven students could write each day. The first group wrote on 15 April, the second group wrote on 16 April, and the last group of five students wrote on 17 April.

One student, Aphelele Ngcenge, did not come to write the exams. I asked the other students if they knew where she was, but no one knew. I tried calling her because I always like to give students a second chance. I could not get hold of her, so I sent another student to ask her to call me. She did not call, and in the end she did not write the exams.

Before the exams, we had a challenge with the hall. The hall was very busy because politicians were holding meetings there. Elections were coming in November 2026, and government politicians were holding BGM meetings. Sometimes we only found out late that the hall would be used the next day.

We spoke to Mrs Mzantsi about the problem. She said her project could accommodate us while the students wrote their exams. The only challenge was that there were not enough tables for the laptops. However, we made a plan and placed some laptops on chairs so that the exams could continue.

The first group of students who wrote the exams included Noluvo Siwengu, Nomvelo Mnqweni, Ntombozuko Mbombo, Ntshongwana Tembela, Zonele Sinawo, and Zimi Vanda.

During the exams, I asked the students to bring copies of their IDs so that we could prepare their certificates. Basic computer skills are not difficult to learn. Students need to understand how computers work and how to use Microsoft Word.

The most important skill is knowing how to open a blank document, type, and use the keyboard tools. Before I start my classes, I always explain to the students that Typing Land is a very good app for beginners. It helps them understand the keyboard and prepares them for working in Microsoft Word.

Supporting Students During Exams

During the exams, one student was struggling but was too shy to ask for help. I noticed that she was not typing while the others were working. When I spoke to her, she told me that she was struggling to open Microsoft Word. This surprised me because she had seemed fine during lessons.

I always tell my students that if they do not understand something, they can speak to me, even privately, if they are afraid to ask in front of others. Zonele Sinawo did not show me during class that she was struggling. She explained that she understood better when she was working with another student.

I asked her what she thought the solution should be. She said she would write the exam, and if she failed, she wanted a second chance to join the next group. I agreed because I want all the students I teach to receive their certificates.

The last day of the exams was Friday, 17 April 2026. The students started writing at 9:00 in the morning and finished at 12:00. I also had to catch a bus home, so I needed to be at the bus stop before 14:30.

New Computer Class in Mgojweni

After the exams in Lujizweni No. 4, I planned to start my first class in Mgojweni. We had held a meeting there in January, and 60 students had written their names for computer classes. I planned to start there in May 2026.

I knew that the number might become smaller when classes started because many people show interest during meetings, but not everyone attends later. At first, I was worried because 60 students were too many for 10 computers. I told myself that I would group them properly so that the class would not be overcrowded.

On 4 May, I went to Mgojweni Village to start the first class. When I arrived, 20 students were waiting outside the hall. We went inside and discussed how we would manage the class because of the number of computers available. I only wanted 14 students in the first group.

The students wrote down their names. I told them that the first 14 people would start the class, and the others would wait for the second group. I grouped the students according to their education level and age.

The first group had 14 students between the ages of 20 and 45. There were 11 women and three men. Two students had passed Grade 10, five had passed Grade 11, and seven had passed Grade 12. Most of them attended Gxaba Senior Secondary School, which is the nearest high school in the area.

On the first day, we introduced ourselves and spoke about what the students usually do at home in their spare time. It was mostly a day for talking and explaining how basic computers work. The students were very excited because they were all beginners.

Starting Lessons in Mgojweni

The next day, I taught the students about the parts of the computer and the names of the keyboard keys. I explained how the keys work and when to use them. On the third day, we started using Typing Land, which is an exciting app for beginners. I showed each student how it works, and then they started practising.

My class starts at 9:00 and ends at 13:00. My transport arrives at 8:30 in the morning and takes me home at 13:30 in the afternoon.

Challenges During May

During the week of 11 May, I only started classes on Wednesday, 13 May, because the whole village had no electricity. Strong winds and rain started on Sunday, 10 May, and many villages and towns were left without electricity. The winds were very strong from Sunday until Tuesday afternoon. The electricity only came back on Wednesday morning in our area, and later in other villages.

On that Wednesday, while I was teaching, I noticed that one student was typing very slowly. I did not speak to her in front of the class. After class, she came to me and said she could not cope with the class. She asked for one hour of individual lessons because she needed time alone without other students.

This was difficult for me because I only have four hours for class, and after that I must catch my transport. I told her I would think about it and get back to her. Her mother also called me and explained that the student was slow and struggled to cope with many students around her. This was one of the reasons she had left school in Grade 11.

The student was Zimi Nkcinkca, who is 22 years old and has special needs. Her mother explained that she takes jokes seriously and struggles in crowded or noisy places. Because of this, I decided to give her one hour of extra support before I finish for the day.

I also had to add another student so that the class would remain balanced. I called a young woman from the waiting list, and she came immediately.

Another challenge in the hall was that there were no tables. Two students brought tables from home. One community member also said he would ask a nearby school if they had unused desks that we could borrow. For now, we started with the two long tables.

I decided to hold short sessions every Monday before starting class. These sessions helped many students because Mondays can be difficult. Some students attend funerals during the weekend, while others go out, so some arrive tired or sleepy in class.

Personal Story of Anathi Candulwandle

My name is Anathi Candulwandle. I was born in George in the Western Cape. I am 23 years old, and I will turn 24 in October. I come from a family of eleven people: my father, my mother, four sisters, my younger brother, three nephews, and me.

I grew up in the Eastern Cape, in a small town called Ngqeleni, at Mgonondi A/A. My father works in Johannesburg as a miner, and my mother is a housewife.

I went to Ngonyama Senior Primary School from Grade R to Grade 7. After passing Grade 7, I went to Gxaba Senior Secondary School for Grade 8. At Gxaba, I had close friends: Ponyela Inam, Xhoxhwana Vuyiseka, Yonela Dlisimanga, and Zenande Ngonyama. My high school life was good, and sometimes I wish I could go back to those days. I passed Grade 12, and my friends also passed. Life later separated us, but our bond is still strong.

After matric, my life became difficult. I looked for a school, but I did not get a chance. I then got a job in Cofimvaba at Nxelesa Mini BJ Shop. The owner treated me like his daughter. He was kind and calm. Even when I made mistakes, he did not shout at me. He encouraged me to apply to university and go back to school.

I worked there for one year and four months. Later, I applied for another job. The people at the shop were happy for me because they believed I deserved a better opportunity. I got a job with the Department of Education as a teacher assistant. I left Cofimvaba, but I still visit during holidays. I promised them that I would always be there if they needed me because they showed me kindness and humanity.

I worked at Ngonyama Senior Primary School as a teacher assistant for almost six months. I enjoyed the work and had good colleagues, but the contract ended. After the contract

ended, I went to Cofimvaba for a holiday, as I had promised. It was November, and I also spent Christmas there. After the new year, I went back home and again felt stuck because I was still looking for a school opportunity.

I am now doing basic computer skills. This course will help me apply for opportunities and look for jobs by myself. I will never give up on finding a school. I trust God, and I believe my breakthrough is still coming.

While I am staying with my mother and siblings, I wake up every day before class to help prepare my siblings for school. After they leave, I do small house chores such as sweeping and mopping so that my mother can do other chores when I leave for class.

I walk three kilometres to class. The class starts at 8:00 in the morning and ends at 13:00 in the afternoon. I walk to class with my sister, Ayabulela Candulwandle, who also attends the course. She passed Grade 12 in 2024 with a bachelor's pass.

During my first computer class, I had mixed feelings. I was excited and nervous at the same time. At first, I struggled a lot. But as days became weeks, my fingers started moving faster across the keyboard, and that made me happy. I had never used a computer before, but my facilitator was patient and supportive, so it became easier for me to learn.

With the help of Transcape Computer Skills, I have not lost hope. I hope to go back to school next year so that I can continue my education.

June Exams and Next Group

Each computer class runs for four weeks, which is one month. After four weeks, the students write exams to complete the course. The group I am currently teaching will write exams in June, and after that I will start with a new group.

We started writing the exams on 17 June because I had attended sewing training for two weeks. The last class will write on Friday, 19 June.

Afterschool Project.

Schools reopened for the second term on 8 April 2026. I started the afterschool programme with only 15 children. On the first day, I usually do not teach a full lesson. Instead, I talk to the learners about their progress and how they are feeling about the new term. Some learners brought their school reports for me to see. It made me happy to see their good results and the improvement in their schoolwork.

After looking at the reports, I read a story to the learners. We also played simple icebreaker games, such as name games, clapping games, and “tell us one good thing about your holiday.” These activities helped the children relax and feel ready for the new term.

English and Reading Lessons

On 16 April, I taught the older learners about opposites. Before starting the activity, I explained what the word “opposite” means. I gave examples such as big and small, hot and cold, up and down, and happy and sad. The learners then matched opposite words, made sentences, and played an opposite-word game where one learner said a word and another learner had to give the opposite.

On 17 April, I worked with the younger learners using the Gateway into Reading programme. They were on Step 6. We used alphabet cards to check the letter focus for the day. The learners completed worksheets step by step while I observed them. I always remind them to concentrate and not rush, because careful work helps them understand better.

We also did word-building activities. The children built words on their own using the sounds they had learned. Everyone had to participate because this helps me see which learners need more support. We used blending cards, picture cards, and storybooks. I read the first page of a story, and then the learners continued reading the next pages by themselves or in groups.

I have learned that if children do not know letters and their sounds, reading becomes very difficult for them. That is why I always encourage them to attend afterschool regularly. The more they practise, the more confident they become.

To make learning enjoyable, I added more fun activities in class. The learners played puzzles, chess, memory-card games, spelling games, and word races. Sometimes I divided them into small groups and gave each group a challenge, such as building the longest word, finding rhyming words, or reading a short story aloud.

The younger learners enjoyed drawing letters in the air, tracing letters on paper, singing alphabet songs, and clapping syllables in words. These activities helped them learn without feeling afraid. The older learners enjoyed quiz games, reading competitions, group discussions, and helping the younger learners with reading.

On some days, the learners chose books from the small library and read quietly. After reading, they shared what the story was about. I was happy to see that many learners can now answer questions in full sentences. This shows good progress.

On 17 April, only five children attended because of bad weather. Even though the number was small, we continued with class. The children played puzzles, chose books from the library, and practised reading on their own.

On 20 April, 15 new children joined the afterschool programme. Seven were boys and eight were girls. I asked them who had encouraged them to come, and they said their friends had invited them. Since that day, they have continued attending the programme.

On the same day, there were 25 learners in class. Some were attending afterschool for the first time. While we waited for the right time to start, some learners chose books from the shelves, some played chess, and others played puzzles. I have introduced my learners to participate in choosing what they want to learn sometimes because I want them to think for themselves and become independent.

On 28 April, the older learners did algebraic expressions in maths. They worked with multiplication and simplifying expressions. On 29 April, they worked on dividing trinomials and monomials. This was difficult for them, so I explained the meaning of terms such as monomial, polynomial, and trinomial before we started the activity.

On 6 May, the younger learners did addition, subtraction, and expanded notation. On 7 May, the older learners did problem solving. They substituted given values into variables and calculated the answers. The younger learners also practised counting games, number matching, and simple mental maths activities to make maths more fun.

Story Time and Life Lessons

For the younger learners, I read a story called *Bedtime for Little Bears*. The story was about a bear named Barney who did not like to wash. When it was bath time, he always made excuses. His father tried different ways to make him interested in bathing, but they did not work.

One day, Barney went out with his family. It started to rain, and he did not want to get wet. His grandmother told him that getting wet could be fun. Barney then started enjoying the rain. When he got home, he wanted to bath so that he could be clean and feel good.

After the story, I asked the learners what they had learned. We spoke about cleanliness, confidence, and respecting one another. I reminded them not to laugh at others, because jokes can sometimes hurt people. The story helped the children understand the importance of washing and taking care of themselves.

Outdoor Activities

We also included outdoor activities to keep the children active and happy. The learners played running games, skipping rope, ball games, relay races, and catch-and-count games. These activities helped them work as a team, follow rules, and build confidence.

Sometimes we used outdoor activities for learning. For example, the children collected stones and used them for counting, addition, and subtraction. They also used sticks to form letters and numbers on the ground. The older learners helped the younger ones during these activities.

We also had movement games such as “Simon Says,” spelling races, and opposite-word actions. If I said “up,” the learners had to crouch down to show the opposite. These games made the lessons exciting and helped the children remember what they had learned.

Support From Parents

One day, a parent came to the afterschool programme to ask for space for her son, Yolo, who is in Grade 5 and repeating the grade. She said she wanted him to attend afterschool because he needed support. This showed me that some parents take the programme seriously and see it as helpful.

Yolo does not attend every day, but when he comes, he participates. I asked him where he needed help, and he said his spelling was very weak. He can understand and speak English well, but spelling is difficult for him. He has confidence in class, and I will continue supporting him so that he can improve.

Art, Games, and Group Learning

On 22 May, the older learners continued with Gateway into Reading. They were on Step 6, Lesson 1. They read words through pictures, said the words aloud, and wrote each word two times.

On 27 May, all the learners did art and craft. They drew bubble dinosaurs and coloured them using colours of their choice. Some learners do not enjoy drawing because they feel they are not creative, so I encouraged them to try and enjoy the activity without worrying about perfection.

On 29 May, we played games together. The children had a lot of fun. One girl became upset because her team did not win after one learner did not follow the rules. I explained that games are for learning, sharing, and enjoying time together. After that, she understood and became happy again.

After the games, we continued with English activities. The older learners were doing Gateway into Reading fast track, and their letter focus was “e.” I like that they do not look down on the programme or think it is only for younger children. The programme is also helpful to me as a teacher because it gives me clear steps to follow and helps me teach with confidence.

June Lessons and Tests

On 3 June, the older learners did fractions in maths. They learned about improper fractions and mixed numbers. They can now convert improper fractions into mixed numbers and mixed numbers into improper fractions.

I also did division with the younger learners. Learners from Grade 1 to Grade 3 did short division, while learners from Grade 4 to Grade 6 practised long division. In English, the younger learners started Step 7, while the older learners continued with Step 6, Lesson 5.

The younger learners wrote an English test on Monday, 8 June. There were 22 learners who wrote the test. Fourteen were girls and eight were boys.

Personal Story of Amahle Masimini

My name is Amahle Masimini. I am 14 years old and I am in Grade 6. I am a quiet girl and I do not talk a lot. Some people think I come from a different culture because of my complexion, but that is not true.

I have eight siblings: four brothers and four sisters. My mother is a widow. My father passed away in 2010. I started Grade R when I was five years old and graduated in 2018. In 2019, I dropped out of school.

I struggle with speaking, and this caused me to start school later than other children. My mother took me to Mthatha to stay with her and to see doctors about my throat. The doctors did not find a problem with my throat. I still struggle with speaking, but it is better than before.

When I shared my story with the other learners, my afterschool teacher was touched. She said she did not know that I had gone through such a difficult situation. She encouraged me and told me that school has no age limit. Her words made me feel relieved and gave me hope.

My aunt looks after us while my mother works as a painter and sells steel. Life at home is not always easy. Sometimes there is not enough food, and I have to wash my own school uniform. I also help with chores such as fetching water and making firewood for cooking.

There are many people living at home. We have two buildings: one rondavel and one flat with two rooms. I fetch water from a tap that is about 15 minutes away from our house.

I also have a brother who is living with autism and has a disability. He does not have an ID, and he needs care and support. Even though he cannot speak clearly, he can hear and understand instructions.

Afterschool is the programme I love most. My teacher is always there for me and makes sure that I am okay. The programme helps me with my schoolwork, gives me confidence, and makes me believe that I can still do well in life.

Conclusion

The second term was active and productive. The learners improved in reading, writing, maths, confidence, teamwork, and communication. The programme also became more enjoyable because we included games, art, reading groups, outdoor activities, and life lessons. I will continue encouraging the learners to attend regularly, work hard, and believe in themselves.

Scholarship Project.

Schools reopened for the second term on 8 April 2026. Yhoyho did not have a holiday because she remained at school to continue learning. Asonela also returned to Sikoma Junior Secondary School on the same date. She was excited and looking forward to starting the second term.

After the schools reopened, I went to collect Onelihle's first term report from Nogemane Senior Secondary School. She passed with a bachelor's pass, which was a very exciting achievement for her. She knows that she must work even harder in June so that she can apply to university.

On the day I went to the school, I woke up early at 5:30 in the morning and took a bus to Ntibane, where Nogemane Senior Secondary School is located. The bus arrived at 6:30, so the trip took about one hour. When I arrived, I could already see learners preparing for class.

I went to the security guard at the gate, and she directed me to a teacher. The teacher asked me to wait until the learners were in class. While I was waiting, I went to the kitchen and spoke to the aunties who prepare food for the learners. They told me that the learners eat breakfast at 7:00 because classes start at 7:30. They also eat lunch at 12:00 during break time

At 8:30, Onelihle's class teacher called me. Onelihle was already in class studying. I had a short conversation with her teacher. The teacher said that Onelihle is a quiet learner who does not get involved in mischief. She focuses on her schoolwork and has never been called to the office for bad behaviour.

The teacher checked the results book and confirmed that Onelihle had passed with a bachelor's pass. She also promised that Onelihle would work harder and improve her results in the June exams.

The teacher then took me to the principal's office. I explained how the Transcape scholarship programme works. The principal was happy to know that they had a scholarship learner at the school. I also explained that Transcape would like to place more scholarship learners at Nogemane because it is a strong rural school that performs well, especially in Grade 12.

I noticed that the school is safe and well secured. The security is strict, and the fencing is high. It would be difficult for learners to leave the school yard during school hours. The security guard also walks around the school yard to make sure that learners are not outside when they should be in class.

I left the school during the short break at 10:00. I saw Onelihle, and she was surprised and happy to see me because I had not told her that I was coming. I asked if I could take photos of her, and she agreed.

After taking photos, I asked Onelihle how school was during the holidays and how she felt about not being at home with her parents. She said it was difficult at first because it was her first time being away from home during the holidays. However, she accepted the situation because she is doing matric, and she knows that she must focus on her studies.

She said their classes during holidays start at 6:30 in the morning to 13:00. They only get breaks for food and rest during the day. Starts again at 21:00 end at 22:30 night, I asked her about her matric jacket, and she said they were going to receive them the following week.

I also asked if they were satisfied with the school food. She said they were not always full after eating, so some learners bring cereal from home to eat when they need extra food. I also asked about the sleeping arrangements. She explained that the boys and girls sleep in separate rooms.

After the short break, Onelihle returned to class, and I left the school.

Yhoyho's Challenge

The main challenge for Yhoyho is that she does not yet have an identity document. She will need it when she writes her final exams. Her mother is still working on getting the full birth certificate from Home Affairs. This process has taken a long time because she started applying last year. We hope that the issue will be sorted out before the final exams.

Asonale's Second Term

When Asonale returned to school, it was almost time for the Grade 9 tie ceremony, which was planned for 24 April 2026. This was an exciting moment for her because she was going to wear a different jersey and tie, just like the other Grade 9 learners.

When the ceremony took place, parents were invited to represent and support their children. Asonale's mother attended the ceremony on her behalf. The school holds this ceremony every year for Grade 9 learners because Grade 9 is their final year at the school before they move on to the next level.

Asonale likes to be involved in school activities. She also attends computer classes at the Computer Lab at Sikoma Junior Secondary School. She attends these classes after school.

She also received her first term report and passed with very good results. Asonale is not shy, although she sometimes does not listen carefully. However, when it comes to her schoolwork, she performs very well.

On 17 May, I visited Asonale at home to see what she does when she is not at school. I arrived at 12:00 noon and found her cooking for her family. She was preparing rice and meat, and I also ate some of the food. It was very tasty.

While she was cooking, I noticed that her bed was not made. When I asked her why, she said she was planning to sleep again after cooking. Her siblings were playing outside, and her parents were at home waiting for the food.

Asonale had also prepared dough to bake bread. Because it was cold that day, she kneaded the flour and covered it with blankets so that it could rise quickly. I asked her where she learned to cook and bake. She told me that she is curious and always watches her mother when she is doing something. That is how she learns.

At Asonale's home, there are three rondavels and a shack. The family uses the shack for cooking when it is rainy, cold, or windy. Her home is surrounded by forest.

Conclusion

The second term showed good progress for scholarship learners. Onelihle is working hard in matric and passed her first term with a bachelor's pass. She continues to focus on her studies, although her identity document remains an important challenge that must be solved before final exams. Asonle is also doing well at school, taking part in activities, attending computer classes, and helping at home. These visits showed that the learners are committed, but they still need regular support and encouragement. We will continue doing school visits, home visits, and follow-ups with families and schools to make sure the learners stay motivated and ready for the rest of the year.

Nonqubela Pre-School

Nonqubela Pre-School continued to grow during the second term. We opened after the school break with the same energy and excitement that we had in the first term. The learners were now more settled, more confident, and more familiar with the school routine. This made the second term easier because most of the children already understood what is expected of them during the day.

At the beginning of the year, we started with 42 learners. The group included 20 girls and 24 boys. This was different from previous years because we usually have more girls than boys. Even though the number was higher than we expected, we were happy to welcome all the children and give them a safe and caring learning space.

During the first term, some of the younger children cried a lot and struggled to understand that they were now in school. By the second term, there was good improvement. Many learners were now able to arrive happily, greet their teachers, put their bags in the correct place, and join the morning routine without crying.

Our school opens at 7:00 in the morning, and the children arrive between 7:30 and 8:00. We serve morning porridge at 8:00 and start classes at 8:25. The learners are now familiar with the daily programme. Some of them already know what activity comes next before we even tell them. This shows that they are growing, listening, and becoming used to the school structure.

We are also very grateful to the parents who came to school after the break and shared important updates about their children. These conversations helped us understand our learners better and care for them properly during the day. Some parents told us that their children had minor fever during the break and left pain medicine with us to use only when necessary. Another parent told us that her child had a small burn on the hand, so we knew

to pay extra attention and make sure the child was comfortable and safe. These updates reminded us that children do not come back to school exactly the same after a long break. Things happen at home, and as teachers we need to know so that we can support them with love and care. Because of this, we have now decided to make parent updates an official part of our school routine. From next term, all parents bringing children back after a long break will be asked to share any important changes about their child's health, behaviour, or home situation. This will help us re-learn our learners and give each child the attention they need.

At Nonqubela Pre-School, we do not only focus on keeping children busy during the day. We focus on developing the whole child. This means we pay attention to learning, health, safety, behaviour, confidence, communication, and emotional growth. The second term helped us see how important it is to know each child well and to work closely with parents

Health and safety remained very important during the term. We made sure that the classrooms were kept clean, the yard was safe for play, and the children were supervised during indoor and outdoor activities. We also checked the children during the day, especially those whose parents had told us about sickness, small injuries, or changes at home. This helped us act quickly when a child needed extra care.

The morning porridge continued to help the children start the day with energy. Some children arrive at school hungry, so food is an important part of their learning. When children have eaten, they concentrate better, play better, and participate more during class activities

We continued teaching the children good hygiene habits. They are learning to wash their hands, use the bathroom properly, clean up after activities, and keep their belongings in the right place. These small habits are very important because they help children become independent and responsible.

We also encouraged the children to do simple things for themselves, such as carrying their bags, packing away toys, putting crayons back after colouring, and waiting their turn. These routines help prepare them for Grade R and primary school.

One of our important needs this term is support with report writing. We want our reports to be clear, well written, and able to show the real progress of the children at Nonqubela Pre-School. We would also like to ask for a school phone. This phone would help us take clear pictures of the children's activities, learning progress, and special moments at school. It would also help us write and prepare proper reports. At the moment, we are using one phone that often gives us problems, which makes it difficult to take good photos and

complete school reports properly. If we receive a phone, it will be used for school and office work only.

HIV and Counselling Report for the Second Term 2026

During the second term, the HIV and counselling programme was very active. Our HIV counsellor was busy with home visits, school education, counselling support, and a one-week training. She jokingly said that this was the term when she felt like a celebrity, because learners would call her name whenever they saw her walking around the community. This showed that the learners were becoming free, comfortable, and confident around her. It also showed that the education sessions were creating friendship, trust, and respect between the counsellor and the young people.

Home Visits

During home visits, the counsellor continued giving education about HIV and AIDS. She focused on homes that she had not reached in the previous term. While walking around the community, some people called her and asked when it would be their turn to be visited. Others asked for educational booklets so that they could read more information at home. This showed that the community is becoming more interested in learning and talking openly about HIV and AIDS.

In total, 35 homes were visited during the term. The number was affected by one week of heavy rain and strong wind, which made it difficult to move around safely. During the visits, the counsellor gave general HIV education, but she focused more on PrEP awareness. This was because, from the previous term, we had received information that we needed to spread awareness about prevention pills and injections that can help reduce the risk of HIV infection.

PrEP became one of the main topics in almost every household. Many people were interested in the six-month prevention injection because they felt it would be easier than taking pills every day. The counsellor explained that PrEP is helpful for HIV prevention, but she also emphasised that it does not mean people should live carelessly. She reminded households that PrEP does not prevent other sexually transmitted infections, so people still need to make safe and responsible choices.

School Education Sessions

The counsellor also visited four schools during the term. Each school was visited once a week for three months. The learners were between the ages of 13 and 17 years. In total, 142 learners were educated. At the first school, 36 learners attended the sessions.

At the schools, the sessions started by answering questions that learners had asked during the previous term. This helped the learners feel that their questions were important and that the counsellor had listened to them. After answering the questions, the sessions focused on HIV and AIDS, PrEP awareness, sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancy, stigma, testing, and making healthy choices.

The learners asked many questions. Some questions were serious, while others came from curiosity, but all of them created a good learning opportunity. They asked about how HIV is transmitted, how PrEP works, whether a person can look healthy while living with HIV, where young people can test, and how to support someone who is HIV positive. They also asked about sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancy, and why some young people are afraid to speak to adults about these topics.

Some of the questions the learners asked included: What is the difference between HIV and AIDS? Can HIV be cured? Can someone get HIV by sharing food or a cup? How does PrEP protect a person? Does PrEP stop pregnancy or other infections? Where can a young person go for testing? What should a learner do if they are afraid to test? How can we prevent teenage pregnancy? These questions showed that learners need safe spaces where they can ask freely and receive correct information.

One of the unusual but positive experiences happened at Gqirha School. A Life Orientation teacher joined the session because she wanted the counsellor to also speak to the learners about teenage pregnancy. The teacher said she did not want any learner to later say that they did not know the risks and consequences. This may have been because she had noticed learners becoming more interested in dating.

At first, the learners were uncomfortable because the topic felt sensitive. However, the teacher showed strong support, and this helped the learners become more relaxed. By the end of the session, they were listening well and asking questions. This showed how important it is for teachers and counsellors to work together when educating young people.

Trust building became one of the most important parts of the counselling work during the second term. As the learners became more familiar with the counsellor, they started to greet her freely and call her by name when they saw her in the community or at school. This

showed that they no longer saw her as a stranger, but as someone they could approach for guidance and support.

During the school sessions, 6 learners waited until after the group discussions before speaking privately to the counsellor. They found it easier to ask personal questions when they were not in front of other learners. The counsellor listened carefully, gave simple explanations, and encouraged them not to be ashamed when they needed help. She reminded them that asking questions is a sign of courage and that it is better to seek correct information than to remain confused or afraid.

The counsellor also explained the importance of confidentiality. She told learners that counselling is a safe space where they can speak honestly and be treated with respect. This helped learners feel more comfortable, especially when talking about sensitive topics such as HIV testing, relationships, teenage pregnancy, stigma, and family challenges.

In the community, trust was also built during home visits. Some households welcomed the counsellor warmly because they had heard about her work from neighbours or learners. Others were shy at first, but after the counsellor explained the purpose of the visit, they became more open. She used a calm and respectful approach, which helped people feel that the visits were not about judging them, but about sharing information and offering support.

One important lesson from the term was that counselling is not only about giving advice. It is also about listening, being patient, and allowing people to speak at their own pace. When people feel respected, they become more willing to share their worries and ask for help. This approach helped strengthen relationships between the programme, the schools, learners, and families.

During the second term, our HIV and AIDS counsellor also attended a short one-week course. The course focused on new developments in HIV and AIDS education, including the reasons for the rise in new HIV infections and the areas that need the most attention in rural communities, especially in Nyandeni Municipality in Ngqeleni.

The training helped her understand that rural areas still face many challenges that increase the risk of HIV infection. These include limited access to health information, fear of testing, stigma, difficulty reaching clinics, and a shortage of prevention resources. The course also discussed the importance of focusing more on young people, schools, households, and areas where people have limited access to regular health education.

Another important topic covered during the course was the distribution of vaccinations and the shortage of contraceptives. The counsellor learned that these shortages can affect

the health choices of young people and families, especially in rural communities where clinics are far away or where people do not always receive information on time. This showed the importance of strengthening health education and making sure that communities know where to go for support.

After attending the course, the counsellor was very excited and confident. She was happy to share the new information with schools, villages, and the community at large. The training gave her more knowledge and motivation to continue educating people about HIV prevention, testing, PrEP, contraceptives, teenage pregnancy, stigma, and responsible health choices.