

## **ZODIAC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

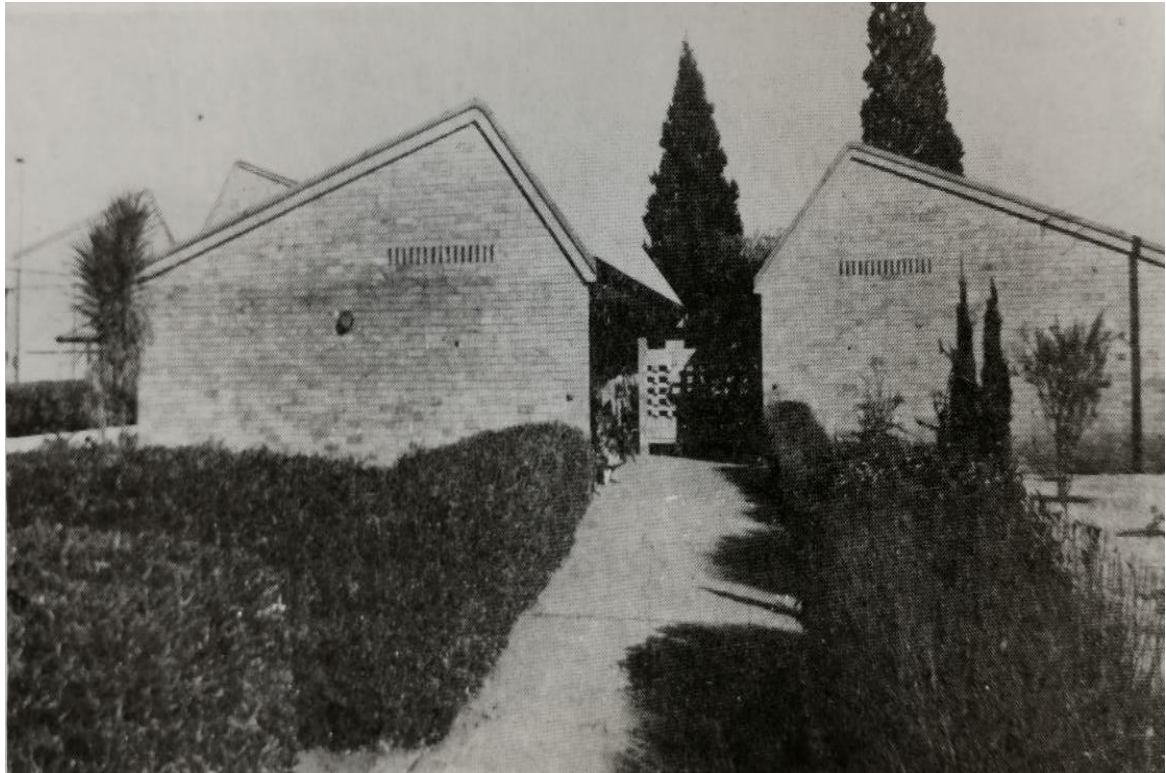
**Address: 7944 Scorpio Drive, Extension 9, 1827**

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### **Article on Zodiac Primary School**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Zodiac was established in 1980 on the 10<sup>th</sup> August. The school was initially referred to as School Number 11 and occupied the premises of the current MC Kharbhai School for the Deaf. It was managed by the then acting Principal Mr D Cheerbur. The total enrolment was 107 learners.



Old School Facade



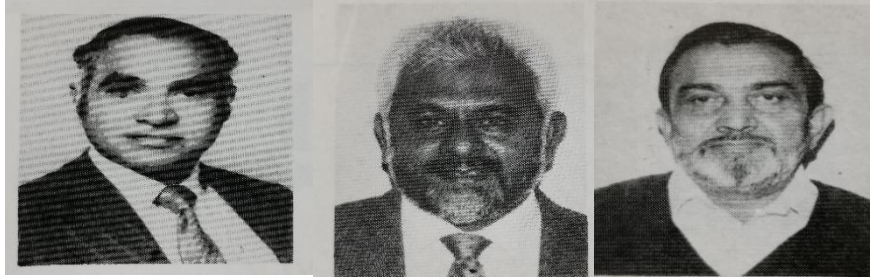
New school facade

### DEVELOPMENT OF EXT 9

Through the enforcement of apartheid's Group Areas act, many Indian citizens were forced to relocate to Extension 9 from Vrededorp, popularly known as Fietas. They moved into Extension 9 rapidly and in large numbers. The community pressurised the apartheid government to provide education for their children. The result was the establishment of the current school building completed in 1981. In April of 1982, the school was relocated from MC Kharbhai to Scorpio Drive in Extension 9. Mr A.S Munshi officially became the principal. The school enrolment increased to 279 learners with a staff roll of 9 educators. In August 1982 at a general meeting of parents, the name Zodiac Primary School was officially adopted. The name coincided with the astrological street names in the area. Mr O. Allie, together with his team in the Parents Teacher Association, played a pivotal role in getting things off the ground.

### PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

Over the 44 years the school was managed by several principals, some in acting positions and others in permanent positions. Mr D Cheerbur, Mr AS Munshi, Mrs M Pukubye, Mr M Jivan, Mr A Baba, Mr JB Badal, Mr RV Masher and Mr S Singh have served in these capacities. The longest serving educators at Zodiac are Miss J Ismail (33 years and now retired), Miss L. Sooka and Mr A. Lalloo (both 36 years and currently still at the institution.) Key roles were played by Messrs JB Badal, BG Ranchod, A Lalloo, AS Salijee and K Lalla in steering the ship at crucial times.



Mr M Jivan      Mr AS Munshi      Mr Allie  
 Acting Principal    First Principal    First PTA chairperson

Mr D Cheebur (acting)	1980
Mr AS Munshi	1981 to 1991
Mr Baba (acting)	1992
Mr RV Masher	1993 to 2007
Mrs M Phukubye (acting)	2008 to 2010
Mr S Singh	2010 to current

### SCHOOL COLOURS

The school colours are reflected in the logo and the original uniform was black, white and yellow initially. Around 2005 the colours were changed to blue, red and white. The motto Reach for the Stars, has been a constant feature.



School logo and motto



Small class of 27 learners in 1990

### Covid 19 PANDEMIC

In 2020 the COVID 19 pandemic created havoc around the world. Schools also faced turmoil. New timetables were drawn up to allow 50% of learners to attend school on alternate days. The curriculum was modified to adjust to this unique situation. Personal protective equipment was sourced through sponsors and the GDE. Managing learners was challenging. After Equal Education won a case against the department of education to keep nutrition programs open during the lockdown, the school had to make daily contingency plans to allow one grade per day to collect food hampers. Sadly the school lost one educator, Madam Busi who succumbed to the virus.

### HUB OF COMMUNITY

Business people, residents and private individuals contributed greatly to the finance offers of the school. These financial resources were put to excellent use. The school developed a sports field, catering for soccer and cricket, grandstands, a multi- purpose court in partnership with Crescents, a library and a school bus in a relatively short period of time. The school played host to annual sports tournaments spanning entire weekends. An annual Big Walk was held for the community from 1989 to 1992.

### FORMATION OF THEMBELIHLE SETTLEMENT

Around 1989 African residents, moved into Lenasia, in the Thembelihle settlement adjacent to the school. The settlement arose because people came to seek employment in the Lenasia business district. Residing in the settlement offered close proximity to businesses. Zodiac, like many other schools in Lenasia, joined the “opens schools” campaign. The campaign promoted the enrolment of African learners into schools governed by the House of Delegates, an apartheid created Indian educational department.

The population of the school gradually transformed as learners of all races were accepted into the school over time, staff and general assistant population also transformed. Through visionary leadership at the time, the school kept pace with the broader transformation in the country despite serious challenges.

#### POST 1994

In the first democratic elections on 27 April 1994, the school was utilised as a voting station. Staff members manned the station after intensive training. After 1994 the roll of the school increased to close to 1300. Around 2012, under GDE pressure, an extra class was added to each grade, Class sizes were increased to 42. Sadly, the infrastructure, including ablution and water facilities, furniture, walkways etc. did not meet the challenges of the day. The school has through its own initiative repaired and maintained the institution. A palisade fence was put up, a modern library and a hall erected. Currently the school with the assistance of the Gauteng Department of Education's nutrition programme and its own resources feeds 1100 learners daily. Learners from severely poverty-stricken backgrounds are dependent on this programme to function effectively at school. Recently with the assistance of Earth life vegetable garden has been set up.



Vegetable garden with assistance from Earth Life

**Zodiac Primary School Library Launched...**






**Madam Tahilram.**      **Mohau Tapala.**      **Kgothatso Sebobane.**

Charles W. Elliot once said, "Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors and the most patient of teachers." The Zodiac Primary School learners can attest to this. After years of struggling to conduct their research, the collaboration between the school and the Habbatul Ilim Trust has bridged that gap. The trust has sponsored a library and resource centre. This has been commended by the school management, the teachers and the learners. Speaking to the Rising Sun, school teacher Mr Lallo conveyed his gratitude to the trust and to the school leadership. He believes that the centre will play a vital role in the growth of the learners. Moulana Ravat delved into the importance of education and a reading nation. He encouraged parents to instil the culture of reading in their children.



New library donated by Merchants of Light

### ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SCHOOL

Over the 45 years the school has achieved much success in the various sporting codes offered by the Lenasia School Sports Association. Some have gone on to district and even provincial representation. At annual competitions held under the auspices of the English Teachers Society such as the book quiz, newspaper quiz and speech contests, the school constantly features at the top of the list. Accolades have been received by learners in Maths, NST and Social Sciences Olympiads. Learners have also brought honour in the subject areas of EMS, Art and Culture and Technology. Zodiac are the Champions in athletics for the past three years. They are also defending Champions in cross country. The school has excelled in mini- cricket and are part of the Gauteng cricket development project. Zodiac has produced Spell- Bee winners at district level and have produced Math challenge champions. These achievements are remarkable, in both academics and extra- curricular activities, since English is not the learner's first language and facilities for sport are non- existent or inadequate. Despite these challenges several

learners have since gone onto great professional careers in legal, medical and public services.

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## Redwood Academy hosts annual Newspaper Quiz


**R**EDWOOD Academy had the privilege of hosting the annual Newspaper Quiz. The quiz is an initiative of the English Teachers Society. The members of this society are passionate about promoting literacy amongst our learners. Twenty-one schools participated in the primary division and nine in the high school division. Both teachers and learners are to be commended for their hard work and dedication in preparing for the quiz. The top-achieving schools in the primary division were: Zodiac Primary in 1st place

Park Primary - 2nd place and Redwood Academy in 3rd place.

In the high school division: Redwood Academy took 1st place, AL Aqsa Extension 10 in 2nd place, and Johannesburg Muslim School in 3rd place.

Redwood Academy would like to thank the ETS for allowing them to host the quiz, and the Redwood Team for their tireless efforts in putting together an educational and memorable day.

*Submitted by Redwood Academy.*



Teachers and learners receiving Transvaal Colours



ZODIAC Primary standard four pupils who signed The Indicator Peace Pledge; back row, from left, Fatima Samsodeen, Zakkiyya Gaffoor, Naadiera Patel, Shamina Joojee, Deneshwar Pillay, Summaya Maiter, Nafeesa Ismail, Farhana Gori, Fatima Saloojee, Rezina Joojee, Meesha Manga. Front: Irfaan Kajee, Aadi Bham, Mohamed Chopdat, Tariq Labhadur, Zahir Dhunib and Mahmood Bhyat.

English teacher Mr Attish Laloo said: "The pupils signed the pledge out of their own understanding. They have their own perspective about the on-going violence in the townships. They are aware of the train massacres." He said the pupils were given the pledges to take them home. "None was forced into signing. The decision to sign was undertaken by them through their understanding of the situation around them," said Mr Laloo.

### PEACE PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

## How to achieve peace

THESE are the pledges submitted by pupils of Lenasia's Zodiac Primary.

**Mahmood Bhyat:** We must try to make people not commit crime.

**Mohamed Chopdat:** I say they should not have violence.

**Zahir Dhunib:** They must stop fighting, poor people must not starve. They must not have VAT or GST so that poor people can buy food to eat.

**Farhana Gori:** Alert police should patrol areas so as to avoid disgusting incidents.

**Zakkiyya Gaffoor:** I'll convince others to join the peace pledge and tell them the disgusting violence will destroy

our lives and cause innocent deaths because of us, their fellowmen.

**Nafeesa Ismail:** We should stop all fighting and killings in the townships and also in our country. Let's hope the new South Africa will make it possible.

**Rezina Joojee:** Have more peace talks with the blacks, whites, Indians, coloureds and other nations. Let's give peace a chance.

**Shamina Joojee:** We should stop fighting. We should respect the different racial groups and we should unite ourselves with all racial groups.

**Irfaan Kajee:** Stop the fighting between the ANC and IFP by having more peace talks with these two groups.

**Tariq Labhadur:** I want to promote peace by stopping clashes and violence. By clashes I mean the ANC and Inkatha fighting.

**Summaya Maiter:** There should be peace in our coun-

try and all violence should be stopped.

**Meesha Manga:** I think we should stop all fights. We should have a city where we can sleep with our doors open and let this peace pledge work out for everyone of us. Let's give peace a chance.

**Naadiera Patel:** Police should control violence in our country to make it a better place. Murders for possessions should be stopped.

**Deneshwar Pillay:** I condemn the scourge of violence which has afflicted our country and all practices that have contributed to such violence. I pledge myself with integrity of purpose to make this land a prosperous one where we can all live, work and play together in peace and harmony. I accordingly solemnly bind myself to the principles contained in the National Peace Accord and will respect its underlying rights and values.

**Fatima Samsodeen:** The ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party should stop all the violence.

Peace project in tumultuous period of 1993



Thabang Mathebula (High Jumps) and Mzimkulu flanked by educators BG Ranchod and A Laloo. Learners made the Gauteng provincial squad.



Book quiz winners in 2011



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## Jabulani leaps to new record

ZODIAC Primary's Jabulani Malinga leaped to new heights when he set a new South Gauteng long jump record of 5.57m smashing the old one by 8cm at the South Gauteng Championship held at the P de Villiers Stadium in Sasolburg on 15 March.

Over 500 schools participated in the event. Ten Lenasia athletes competed in the event.

The Std 5 pupil broke the existing record in the boys U13 long jump event. His leap has earned him a place in the South Gauteng squad and he will now represent the region in the United Schools' Sports Association

of South Africa's National Championship meeting in East London on 1 and 2 April.

Malinga becomes the first athlete to represent South Gauteng in athletics since unification in 1995.

The Lenasia Primary Schools' Sports Council said it was thrilled by his success and hoped it was an inspiration to all Lenasia's young aspiring sportspersons.

A school spokesperson said the progressive Malinga took first place in the school's long jumps and at the inter-primary athletics meeting on 27 February at the Lenasia Stadium where he also took first position in

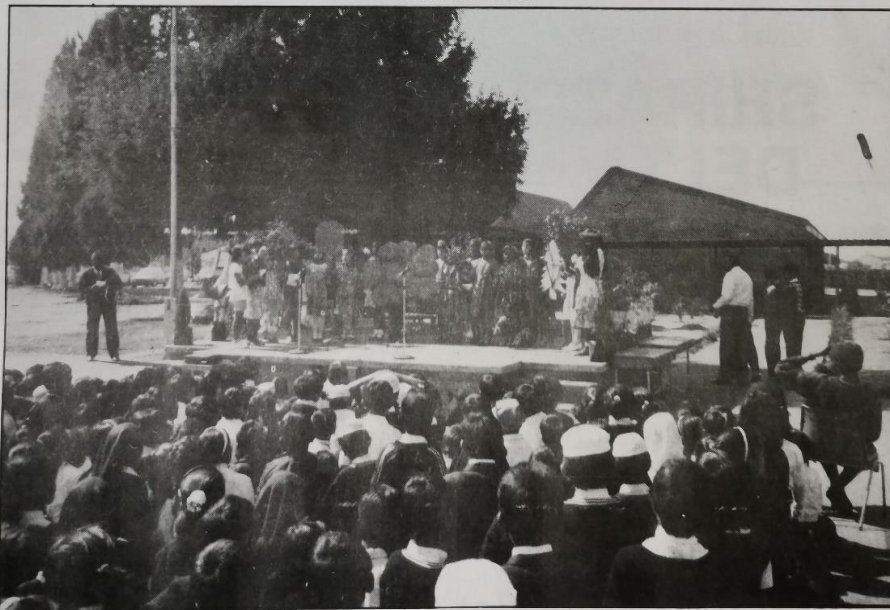


Jabulani Malinga set a new South Gauteng record

the 150m sprint.

"The lad also triumphed at the Zone C athletics meeting at the Johannesburg Stadium. Again he won the long jump breaking the previous record of 5.3m by 22cm."

## EARTH DAY



EARTH DAY – Pupils display their talents by staging a play on the importance of conserving the natural resources.



Newspaper Quiz 2024

## Zodiac reaches for the stars

**ZODIAC Primary caused a major upset in Athletics when they toppled reigning champs, Flamingo Primary, at**

**this year's LPSSC athletics meeting at the Lenasia Stadium last month.**

Hosts, Greyville Primary ensured that

the day was an exciting one.

Zodiac swept the medals on the day.

They received 41 medals (15 gold, 12 silver, 14 bronze).

Runners up were Progress Primary with 8 gold, 9 silver and 6 bronze, followed by Libra Primary with 8 gold, 4 silver, and 8 bronze.

Zodiac athletes dominated the area that was selected to partic-

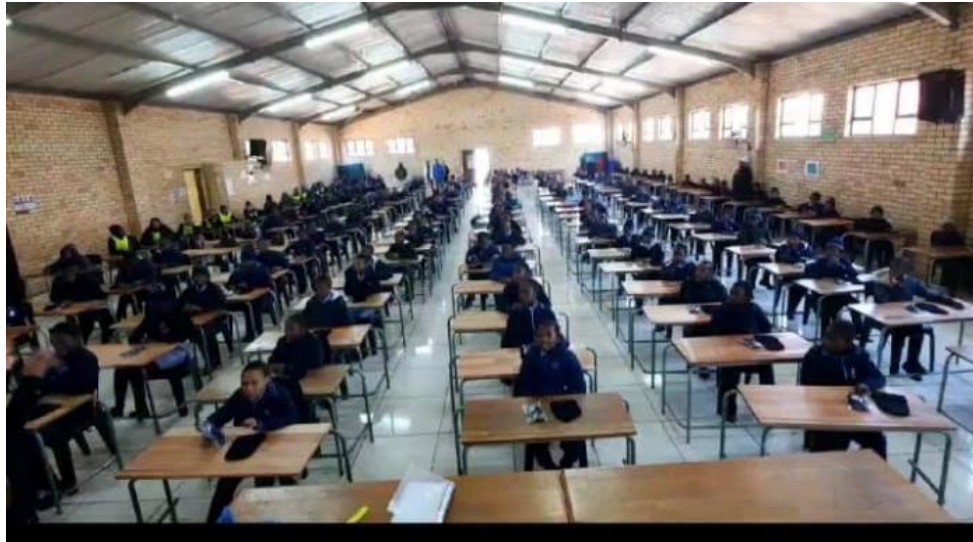
ipate in the district championship held at Danie Theron in Kibler Park. At this meeting, Thembehle Ntuli received an award from Milo, for outstanding performance (gold-80m and 100m, and silver in high jumps).

Together with her teammates Faith Mlubelu, Sindiswe Nkonyana, Lerato Chuene, Lenie Muabadzi, Dumsani Nsibande, Mzimkhulu Msimango, Keneth Mbekwa and Bradley Bareki, they represented the district at the regional championship held at Ruimsig Stadium in Roodepoort.

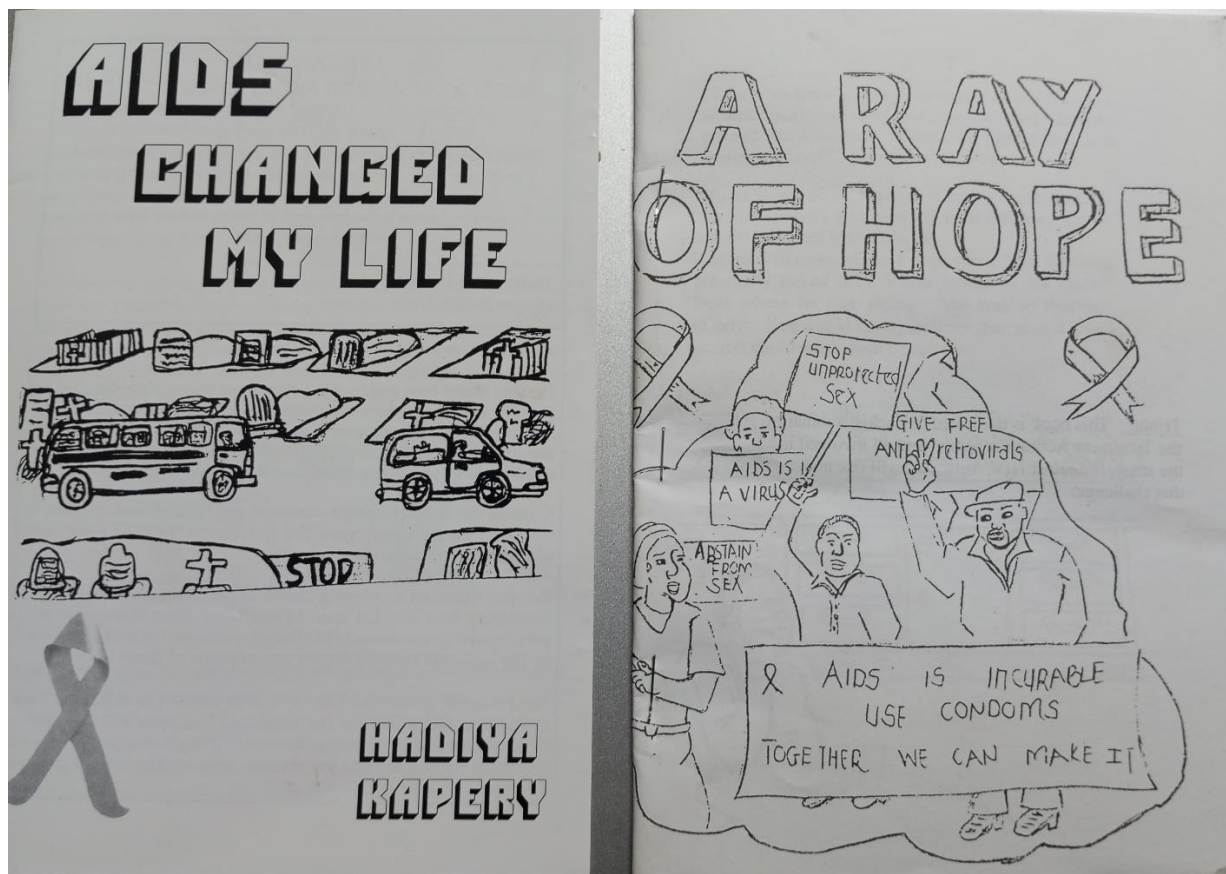
Zodiac will also be elected to participate in the ABSA Mega Cup at the Bob van Reene Stadium on the 21 March and the District Rely Challenge to be held in Ennerdale on 30



Book Quiz winners



Art of Living donating beanies, gloves and scarves to learners



During the height of HIV and AIDS around 2000 Hadiya Kapery authored two books on the topic. Mzimkulu Msimango illustrated the book. Both books were sold at R1 a copy at every primary school in Lenasia. Profits to the tune of R25000 was made and handed over to Cotlands Orphanage in Rosettenville to purchase ARV's for HIV AIDS patients.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Over the last decade Bankserv South Africa and Habbatul Ilm Trust have formed a partnership with the school. Their magnanimous efforts allowed the school to erect a fully-fledged kitchen and a library. They have provided stationery, uniforms, gloves, beanies and tablets for the learners. The school has, with much difficulty erected a hall in 2008. At the time an organisation called the Diwali Feeding Scheme greatly assisted the school with its financial commitments regarding the hall.



School Hall built with DFS Organisation

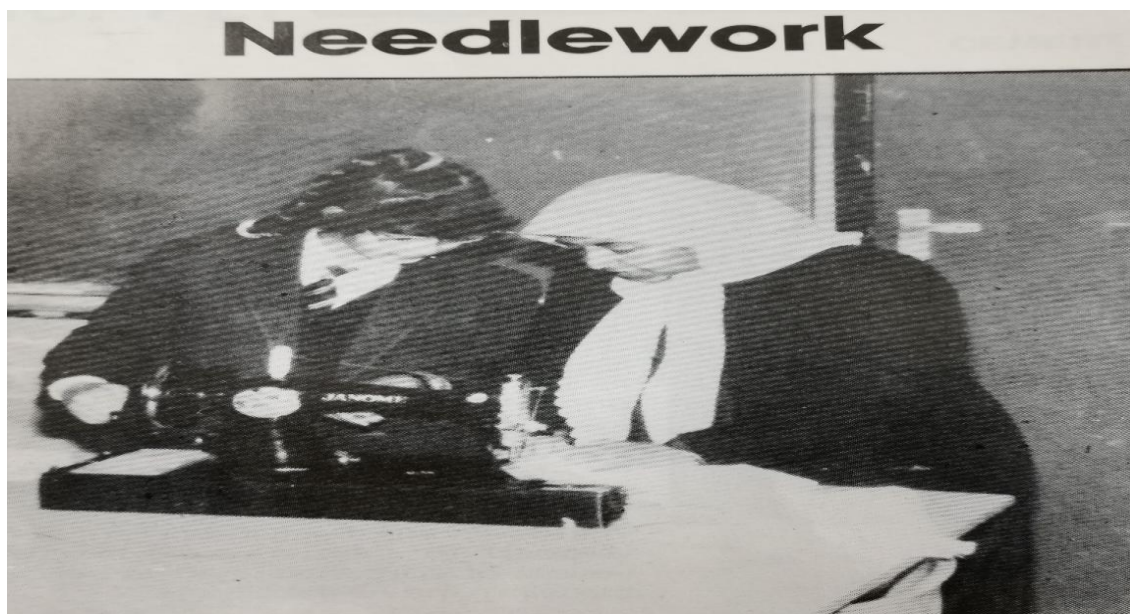
## CURRICULUM MATTERS

Matters regarding curriculum have been dynamic and transformative, notwithstanding the challenges. It began with a House of Delegates syllabus, moved to Outcomes Based Education (OBE) then to the Revised National Curriculum Statements then to curriculum assessment (CAPS). The school has constantly kept themselves informed and adapted to the changes. The biggest setback of these changes was when in 2004, the Education Department removed Arts, Culture, Right living, Handicraft, cookery, music, motor mechanics and technical drawing from the syllabus. This effectively destroyed learner with potential artisanal skills.

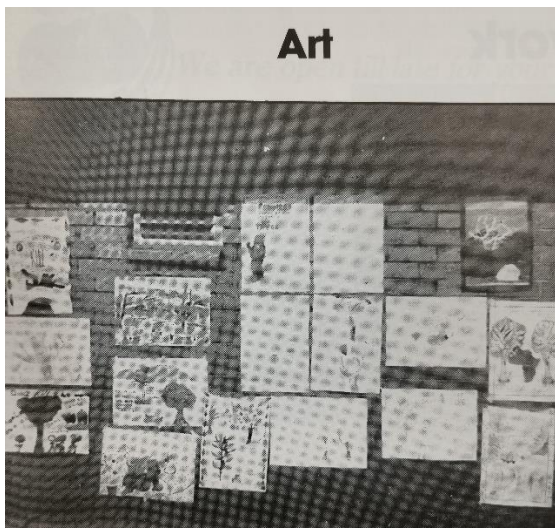
Currently the school gets its learners population from Lehae and Thembhelihle. Over time, a very good relationship has been established with the community through the School Governing Body (SGB), Soul Buddies team comprising of 25 learners is elected and mentored annually to assist with learner welfare This project aims to inculcate good values and leadership in learners.



Learners busy with technical drawing. Mr S. Padayachee teaching music to a class.



Madam R Bhayat teaching learners to use sewing machine.



Artwork by learners



Fully- Fledged laboratory centre

### CHALLENGES

The schools biggest challenges are raising literacy levels and providing resources for the fourth industrial revolution. To tackle the literacy challenge they have an on- going programme to address this concern. Technical resources such as smart boards requires vast financial resources and remains problematic.

### CONCLUSION

There is sufficient evidence that Zodiac Primary is on stable ground. Education, in its nature is dynamic and in a constant state of flux. They aim to adapt, innovate and find creative ways to meet the challenges of the next decade. Training and empowering educators to meet societal as well as the countries needs will be part of the vision.

STAFF PHOTOS





# ZODIAC PRIMARY SCHOOL



STAFF



## ZODIAC PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF 2003

