



UK Registered Charity no. 1138863

To advance the education of disadvantaged children of pre-state school age attending the UdobO School, Montclair, Durban, South Africa

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Newsletter - No. 34

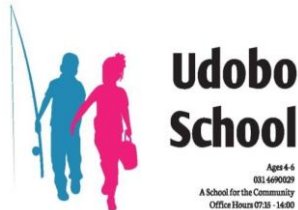
November 2020

The Trustees sincerely thank all of you who have supported their appeal for extra funding this year, and especially our new donors.

As this newsletter was being prepared for distribution a new lockdown in England was announced, and we cannot be sure how and when this newsletter will reach you. This may well be the last communication you receive from us in this strange year of 2020, and we wish you and yours every blessing for the coming few months. As such a time, it is heartening to have some good news:

We are delighted to tell you that UdobO School has managed to deal with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated funding crisis, and is up and running once more.

Here is the account of its progress in the words and pictures of the Principal, Anne Snyders:



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Date: October 2020

Newsletter 3rd Quarter

Dear friends,

We finally managed to open on the 24th August after uncertain months – the whole staff had come in to clean and sanitize the school to open in July. However, our President closed schools until 24th August, 2020. We are a private school and could have opened but parents of our children were nervous so we decided to wait and invited Social Development to visit. Three women arrived and thoroughly searched the school – they examined every part of the school and asked many questions. Pat was asked about some things while I was questioned about others.



Children's masks were lovingly made by the women of Yellowwood Park Evening Women Institute

Before the women left they announced themselves very pleased with what we had done and how ready the school was to safely receive learners. Later that day we received a message from them on WhatsApp: 'Hi there, I just wanted to thank you guys about how you have prepared yourself and your facility. I was very impressed'. We were very pleased with this as we seldom get feedback unless we have forgotten to do something!!

We were only able to welcome 8 children in most classes as our class rooms are small. The families brought their children on 24th and there was so much excitement about being back at school. We had painted lines for social distancing and had stations for sanitizing hands and bags and a basin to sanitize the children's shoes. Each child has to have their temperature taken and is asked questions relating to their health before being sent to their class where their teacher was waiting for them. The children are amazing and wearing their masks and social distancing and hand washing has just become part of their lives!

We then had to make a further adjustment for our Grade R children – they are now divided into two groups and come to school on alternate days. Our younger groups come every day – we have 1 Grade 000 class and two Gr 00 classes. One of the middle groups is run by a teacher-in-training while being supervised by a teacher and he is doing a marvellous job. Yes, I did say he – this young man has completed his training with his college and now gives 18 months to the school to do the practical side and put into practice what he has learned. We also have a young lady who has almost finished her 18 months and these two have been so helpful during this time.

The protection items that had to be bought became an expensive outlay but items such as bleach and disinfectant, temperature 'guns', posters about Covid19, hairnets and aprons for our kitchen staff had to be bought. We also equipped our kitchen staff with a course on 'Food handling during the Covid19 pandemic'. We set aside a quarantine room in case of a child showing signs of not being well and sent two teachers on a course on 'First Aid during Covid19'.

The staff benefitted from these courses and felt more able to manage the months ahead.

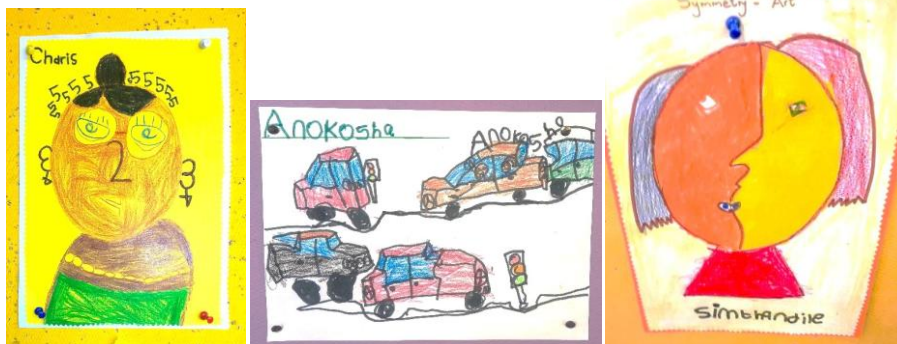
Of course, our fundraising has taken a knock and we have not been able to organise any special days or outings. However, we have opened our tuck shop again as children were coming with money for tuck.

We did have a very low key celebration for Heritage Day on the 24th September – this was a public holiday so we had Tuesday and Wednesday where the children could dress in their cultural outfits. We treated them to vetkoek and polony, which was thoroughly enjoyed!



Social distancing in the classroom

At present we are working towards recouping school fees from some parents who have not paid anything this year despite sending their children to school. This is a difficult situation as in some cases people have been retrenched or been unable to work at the ‘piece jobs’ that they had previously been doing. In the midst of all the doom and gloom there is always a light – a family who had nothing and could not contribute a cent came in to see me to say that they had been selling vegetables and would like to give the school R200.00 every month. I cannot begin to tell you how wonderful that made me feel – they have so little but out of gratitude to the school they are prepared to give. A father phoned in just to say how grateful he was for the work we are doing with his daughter. We are so blessed by families such as these.



Work done by Grade R learners

We have had three students from a college who each had to give the school ten days in which they acted as assistant teachers and presented a lesson. They were lovely young women and we enjoyed having them at the school.

For the past two weeks I have been very busy re-enrolling children who are returning to us in 2021. On Saturday 17th October we had a very successful Open Day. Parents had been wanting to see around the school and we could not show them around while the children were at school, so a Saturday was a good option. We had many families come in and there was great excitement as they saw what we have to offer their children. This week we began enrolling new children and it has been a very busy week. I am praying that we reach children who need us and that 2021 will be a God-honouring year.



Parents had to be sanitized, temperatures taken and questions asked before the family could be welcomed into the school.

We break up for a week on Friday and my staff will need to have a good rest in order to tackle the last term. The children and their teachers have worked very hard and especially the Grade R children and teachers have been working at getting ready for 'big school'.



Maintenance continues around the school

We ended the term with a baby shower for our assistant teacher, Mawande. Everyone had kept it such a secret that she burst into tears when she walked into the room that had been beautifully decorated by the staff. It was a joyous occasion and now we are waiting in excitement to meet baby Bandile.

A huge thank you to Action Udobo for ongoing support without which we would have struggled during this time especially because of all the extra purchases we had to make to keep the staff and children safe. A special thank you to the Governing Body secretary, Joan Prenger, who organised TERS to top up the salaries – the staff were fully paid throughout the lock down – Praise God! Thank you to Eric Manicom, the Governing Body treasurer, for his amazing help with getting our books sorted out. David Scott, our maintenance man, has made the school look great by painting the outside area. Thank you to the Rev Philippa Cole as our minister with oversight and for all the Governing Body members who added wisdom to situations and who continue to pray for the school.

That is my greatest plea, that prayer would continue to cover the school – this is a school dedicated to nurturing and teaching but most of all a place where lives can be changed as children are led to know Jesus.

God bless,

Ever grateful,

Anne Snyders - Principal

Baby shower held for Mwande pictures:



pg. 6 The Udobo Pre Primary School is funded through parents' contributions, fundraising and donations from charitable organisations. Telephone & Fax +27 (031) 469 0029 E-mail: anneudobo@gmail.com Website: udoboschool.com Fund-raising No. 031-161-NPO



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