

# THEMBELIHLE SCHOOL

2020 UPDATE - SURVIVING COVID-19



At the end of March 2020, South Africans were all told to stay at home and a national lockdown was implemented. The COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating to educational institutions as well as our economy. We have been very lucky with all our incredible staff, who have worked so hard to ensure that the children were looked after and supported.

We had an exciting start to the year as the school expansion project was completed at the end of 2019 and the children and staff have been loving the new phenomenal space. This extra space has been a huge blessing with the reopening of the school as many strict social distancing protocols have to be adhered to.

We believe that it is only onwards and upwards as we start to come to terms with the 'new normal'. Change is never easy but we will get through this together.





## FEEDING SCHEMES AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.

Thembelihle partnered with Angels Care Centre to send out a total of 960 family food parcels. Each Thembelihle family received a food parcel three times during the time school was closed. This was to ensure that our children were still receiving food as most families either do not have jobs or have lost their jobs. Through Angels Care Centre daily food parcels were/are handed out to 350 children in Shiyas informal settlement, where many of our Thembelihle children reside. The food parcels also created an avenue for the school to send out work booklets to every child. As most of our children live in households without access to electricity, running water or services, online teaching was not an option. These workbooks gave the children creative ways to stay busy and to hopefully keep them up to speed.



## CHANGE

We regret to announce the departure of Principal Damon Shaw. We thank Damon for his passion and commitment in leading the School for the benefit of all learners, staff and friends of Thembelihle. Damon has been integrally involved in the expansion of the School and leaves Thembelihle is a much brighter place than when he arrived. We wish him everything of the best in his next chapter and the new challenges that will inspire him.

The chairman Dr. Carolyn Hancock has started to engage with the key leadership of existing staff members and will take care of the day to day running of the school. In addition, Carolyn will play a key role in the search of our new leader. The Board and staff will work tirelessly to identify a passionate educator who can inspire and lead Thembelihle to our vision of being a beacon of hope in the pursuit of excellence.





# THE COVID-19 ZONE

## HOT SEATING

June saw a phased in approach of all children from Grade R to Grade 7. This was after almost 3 months away from school. Grades were slowly reintroduced to ensure the health and safety of all the children and staff. The health of our learners, their families and our staff are our primary focus, followed by ensuring the continued academic progress of every child. Thembelihle has started a system at school called “hot seating”. Hot seating means that half the children are at school from 7:30 - 11:00am and the second half of the school from 11:30 - 15:00. The reasoning for the “hot seating” approach to the re-opening of School during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic was to comply with social distancing requirements and to keep the number of children in a classroom at any one time to a minimum.

## HOLISTIC APPROACH

The smaller class sizes have been a wonderful success so far as teachers have more one on one time with children. All children have time in the classroom each day and when they are not at school they have workbooks to complete. Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms and all other areas of the School. All classrooms are sanitised between each academic session and all bathrooms are sanitised at least twice daily. At the end of the school week and when deemed necessary, the entire School, or parts of the School will also be deep cleaned to ensure the health and welfare of everyone on our property. No extra mural activities will be taking place at the moment.

We are confident that with our dedicated teachers and wonderfully adaptive children that we will be able to cover the yearly curriculum.

