



## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



**THEMBELIHLE SCHOOL**



## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRLADY

2022 was a year of new beginnings for Thembelihle School with a record enrollment of 427 learners, 82% of which have their school fees fully sponsored. After a two year period of constant disruption, implementing social distancing, wearing masks and contending with COVID-19 infection waves until half way through the year, we finally returned to “normal” with the reinstatement of classroom timetables, sports and our extramural programme. We embrace, and are extremely heartened, by our 96.5% school attendance rate. Thembelihle welcomed our new Executive Headmaster, Mr. Matthew Cocks, in January 2022. He is a passionate educator, with both local and international experience in teaching and educational management experience, with a particular focus on STEAM Programmes and holistic learning. He is hugely excited by our vision to implement and grow a fully integrated curriculum, focusing on developing the whole child, while preparing them for life-long learning so as to ensure their individual success amidst the changes and challenges of the 21st century.

A range of benchmarking tests of our student performance against other schools illustrated that on average our children outperform National Government Schools by 8%. This is largely due to the successful implementation of our STEAM approach to teaching and learning which, through experiential and integrated teaching, encourages children to embrace collaboration, persist in problem solving and to engage with the curriculum both thoughtfully and creatively.

Our alumni are a constant form of motivation for all as they continue to excel at a range of high schools and tertiary institutions. We are equally proud of the entrepreneurs who are already valued members of our community. A statistic which illustrates the strength of character and determination of our learners and the robust nature of our School culture founded on the Methodist ethos, is that over 90% of our past pupils complete high school compared to only 69,5 % nationally

As we continue in our quest to use education to encourage children from the most marginalized sectors of our society to achieve even during the most challenging times, I am reminded of a quote by T. S. Elliot who said “It is, in fact, a part of the function of education to help us escape, not from our own time — for we are bound by that — but from the intellectual and emotional limitations of our time.” The impactful education given at Thembelihle, which grows children’s hearts and minds to their fullest, is truly inspirational.

*Dr Carolyn Hancock*



# OUR MISSION

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Thembelihle School aims **“To be a Beacon of Hope in the Pursuit of Excellence”**.

It provides a quality education to under-resourced communities in the Howick area.

## What we do:

- Provide a holistic and multicultural education rooted in Christian values for children of all backgrounds.
- Ensure a safe environment to learn and grow academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.
- Equip learners for life through an education that fosters innovation and excellence.
- Partner with families in caring for the needs of the whole child beyond the classroom.

Working as a community, we will give each child the necessary tools to take their next steps and achieve success in every phase of their lives.

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## OUR VALUES

**Integrity**

**Partnership**

**Justice**

**Discipline**

**Diversity**

**Excellence**

**Respect**

**Growth**

**Courage**

**Impact**

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**77%**

Face food  
insecurity

**62%**

Live in women or  
child-headed  
households with  
little to no  
income

**30%**

Households have  
NO books

**82%**

of our children  
could not afford  
our school fees

## OUR CHILDREN

Our children come from poverty stricken, poorly resourced communities surrounding Howick, in the KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa.

- Those living in these communities are largely unemployed
- Many of our children are victims of circumstances due to HIV/AIDS and are therefore orphans or members of child headed households, or live with their caregivers, grandparents or relatives, often surviving on minimal state pensions
- In some cases they are immigrants, which means there is no state support
- Living conditions are very harsh and many of our children come from homes with no running water, electricity or sewage systems

**427 children were enrolled in 2022, of which (82%) were sponsored, with their school fees paid either locally or internationally.**



# 2022: ACADEMIC FOCUS AND PERFORMANCE

The impact of two years of lockdowns, rotational teaching sessions, social distancing protocols and wearing masks had a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning in South African schools. While Thembelihle dealt with the COVID-19 situation in a flexible and creative manner, there is no doubt that our children were also impacted by this situation.

Arriving back to school in 2022, under relatively normal conditions, our immediate academic focus was to re-establish the traditional teaching and learning pedagogics that were discarded during the disruptive pandemic period, while also strengthening the key focus areas of our academic programme. We also felt it necessary to assess the longer-term impact of the pandemic on our children's learning and development and design a series of interventions that can better support the children to 'catch-up' on any areas that were missed over the past two years.

The Academic Excellence committee consisting of a team of subject experts identified the following priority academic areas:

- **STEAM Programme**
- **English Improvement Programme**
- **Mathematics Improvement Programme**
- **Creative Arts Programme**
- **Learning Support Programme**

A series of workshops early in the school year established a set of protocols for continuous performance tracking of all children from Grade R to Grade 7.

- Each child's ability in the key subjects of English, Maths and IsiZulu are carefully recorded and communicated to parents and other educators when necessary.
- In addition careful consideration is given to any learning difficulties children may encounter so that timeous and appropriate remedial action can be put in place.
- As the development of each child's character is of utmost importance to us, their general behaviour and wellbeing is monitored.

**We are proud of the following academic achievements in 2022:**

- **100% pass rate for Grade 7, with an overall student average of 68 %.**
  - **98% pass rate for Grade R to 7**
  - **70% pupil average for English (Grade R to 7)**
  - **71% pupil average for Mathematics (Grade R to 7)**
  - **73% pupil average for isiZulu (Grade R to 7)**
  - **96,5% annual attendance of all of our children at School during 2022**
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# OUR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE COMPARED TO OTHER SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS



Thembelihle prides itself on the standard of its teaching and learning programmes, and on the academic performance its students' produce annually. When considering where our students reside, their socio-economic background, and their constant exposure to multiple social-ills in their communities, it is very impressive that our school is able to out compete the academic results of the National averages of South African Government Schools, and is also able to track better, or alongside, many of the local government and independent schools within the uMngeni Municipality.

Below are the results of our benchmarking process, and illustrates the academic performance of Thembelihle compared to other schools.

The Foundation Phase includes Grade 1 to 3; and Intermediate and Senior Phase incorporates Grade 4 to 7.

- The process is broken up into two sections:
  - Thembelihle School vs. National Average
  - Thembelihle School vs. Local Government Schools
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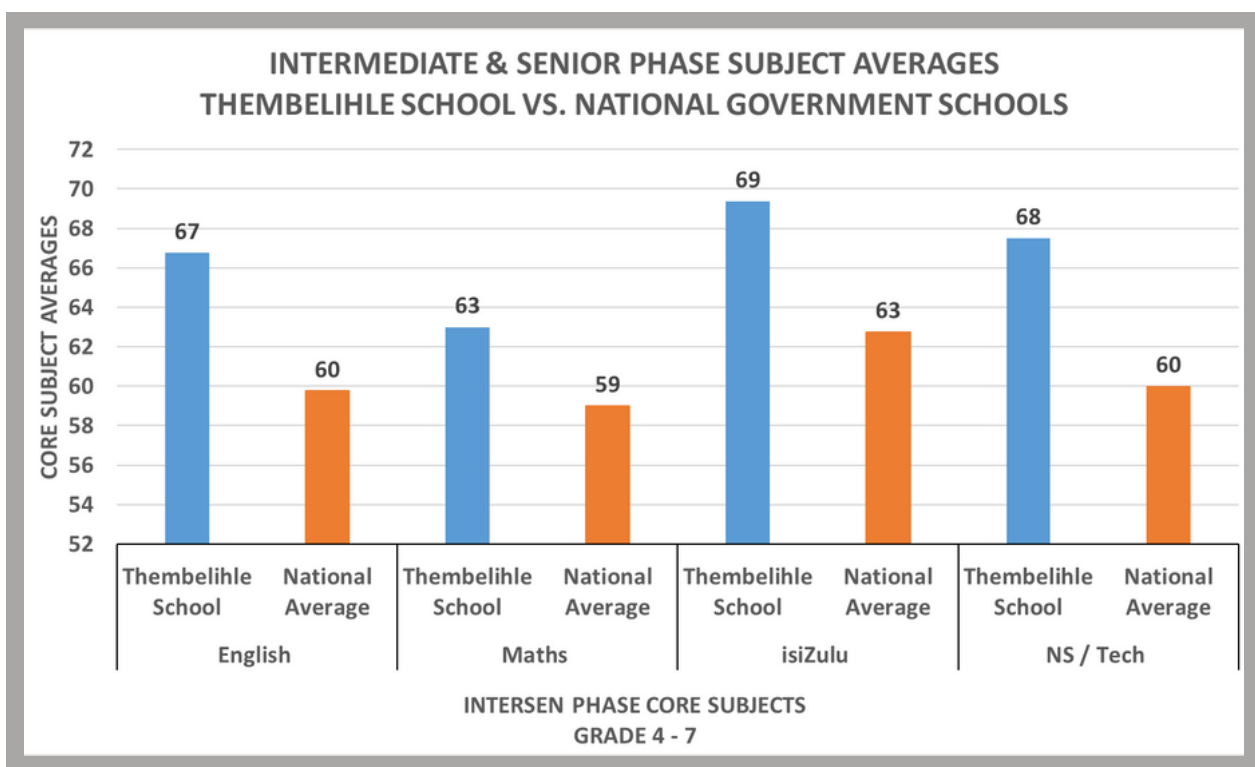
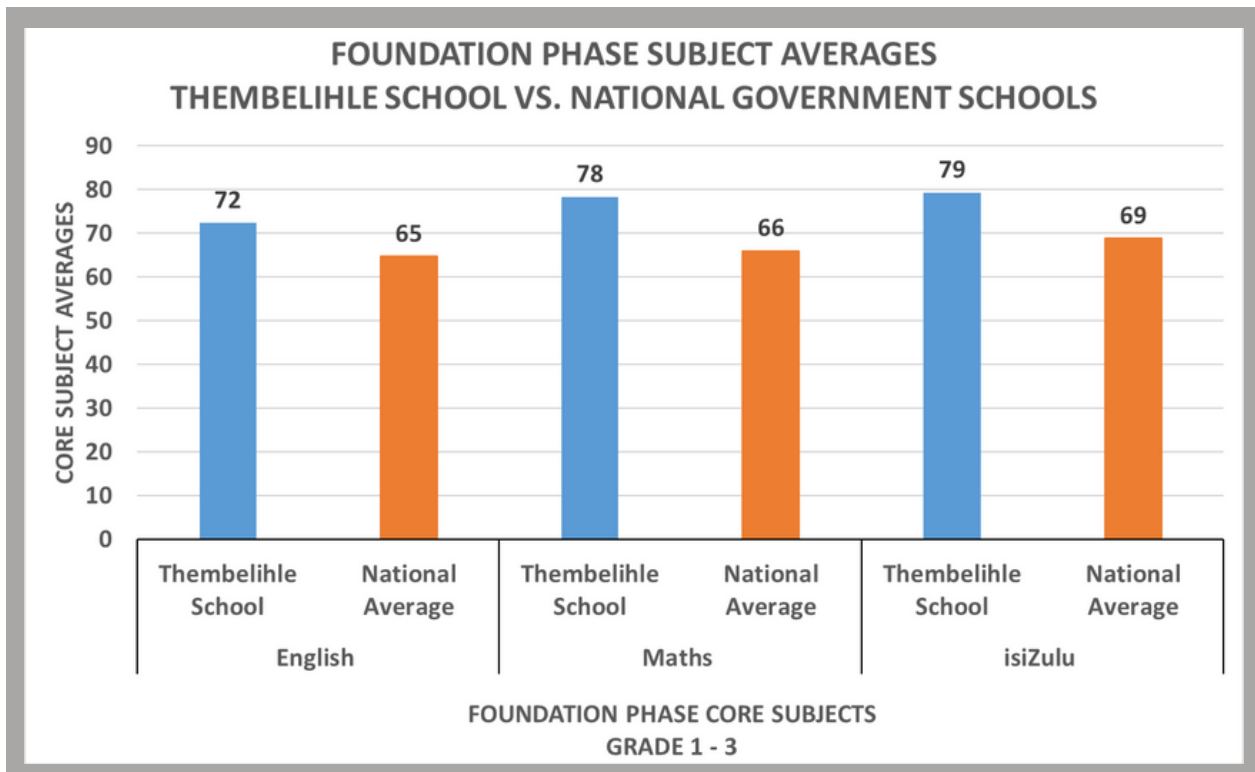


## Thembelihle School compared to the National Grade Average

In comparing Thembelihle School's performances to the National Average our School is tracking above the National Average for all of the core subjects across all Grade levels from Grade 1 to 7. Very encouraging is that our English and Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology results are exceeding the national average by 8% showing that our STEAM Programme is effective and producing encouraging results at the School.

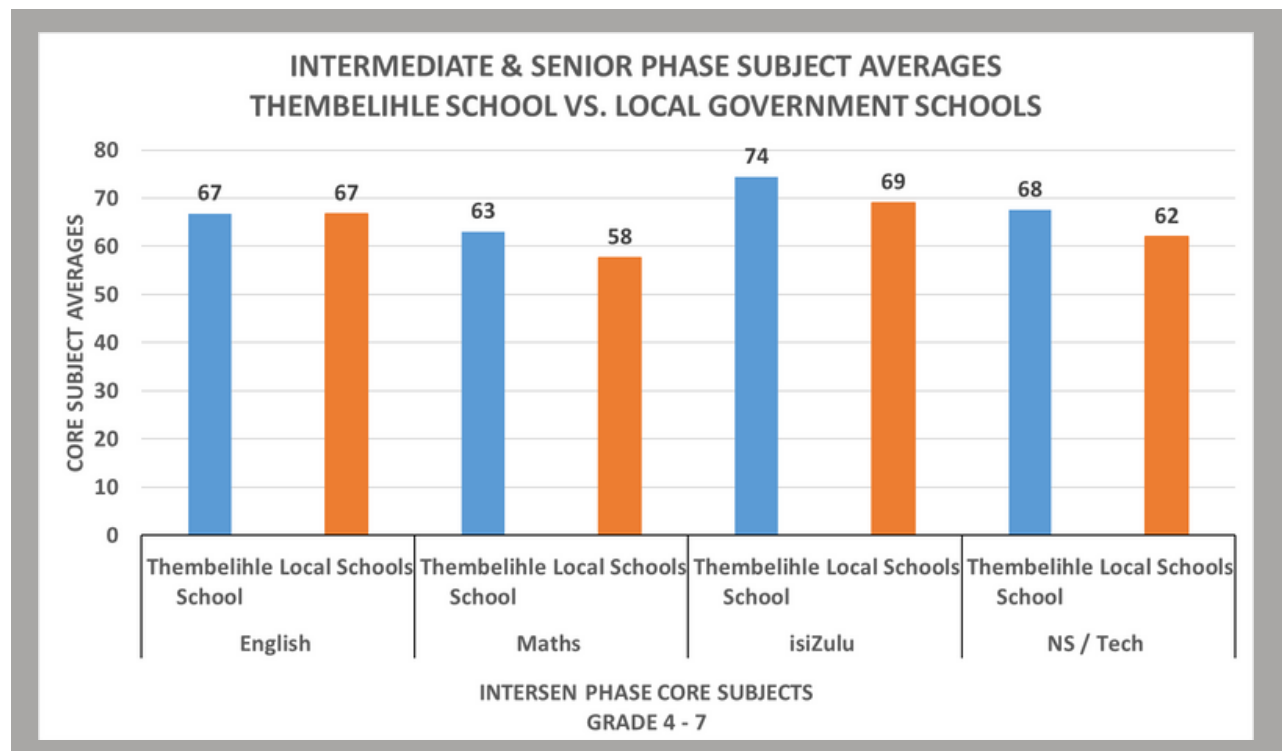
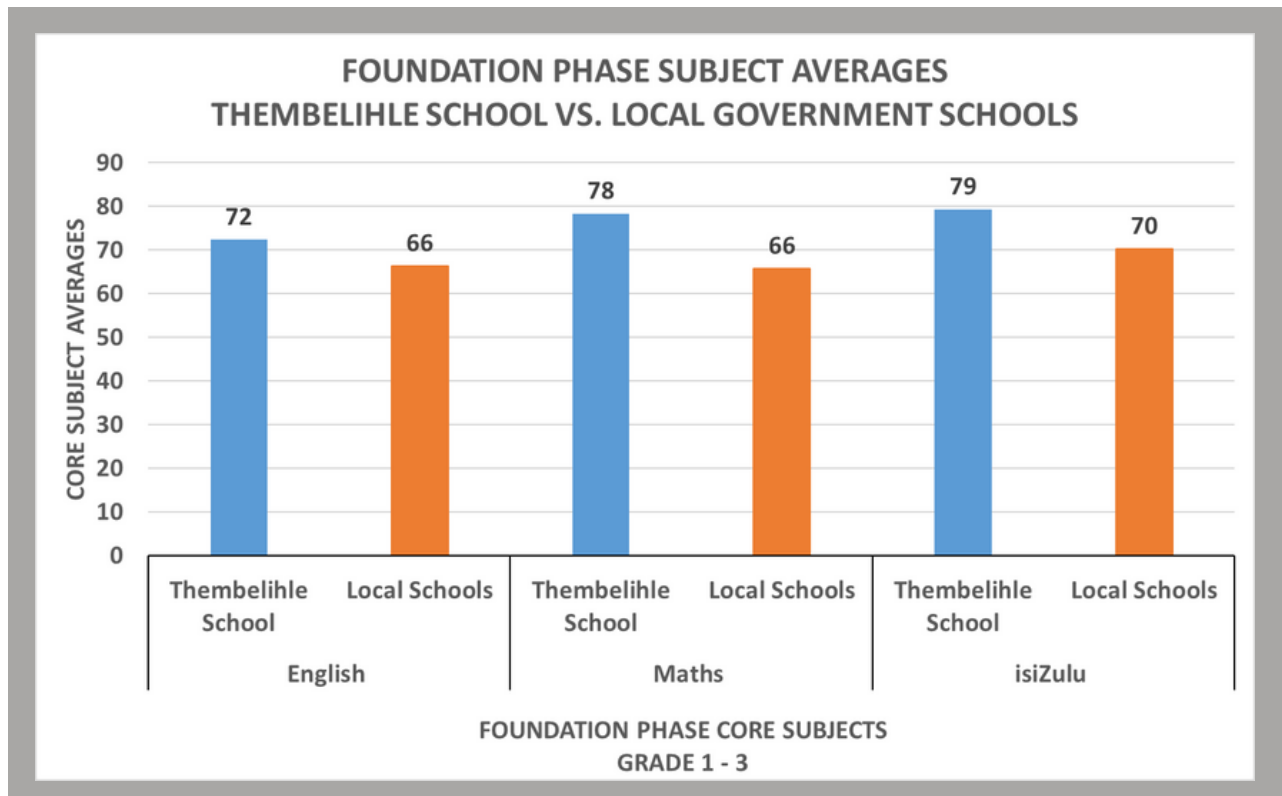
Additionally our isiZulu performance is pleasingly 7% higher.

The graphs below show a comparison of both our Foundation Phase, and Intermediate and Senior Phase against the National results of government schools in South Africa.



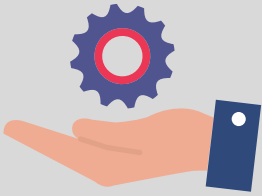
## Thembelihle School performance against Local Government Schools

Thembelihle School is producing superior results compared to the 5 local Government schools within the uMngeni Municipality. Results show that Thembelihle, on average, outperforms local government schools by 8 % in the Foundation Phase; and 3% in the Intermediate and Senior Phase.

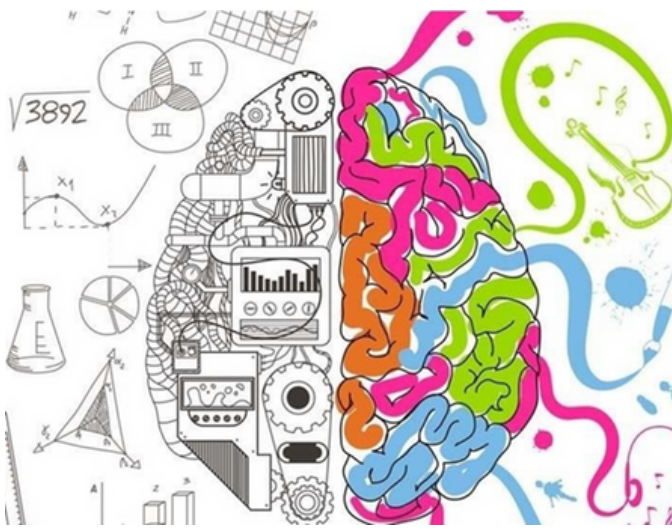


**Thembelihle School consistently produces academic results exceeding schools, with similar student demographics, both locally and nationally.**





# STEAM EDUCATION



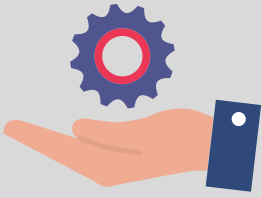
<b>S</b>	• Science - natural science, physics, chemistry, biology, ecology
<b>T</b>	• Technology -computers & tablets, data-loggers, renewable energy resources, coding
<b>E</b>	• English - literacy, comprehension, speaking • Engineering - robotics, design & technology
<b>A</b>	• Creative Arts - dance, drama and theatre arts, music, and visual arts.
<b>M</b>	• Mathematics

**STEAM Education** is an approach to learning that uses **Science, Technology, English the Arts and Mathematics** as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. Using STEAM education results in students who take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process. STEAM Education encourages students to think logically, laterally, critically and creatively so that they achieve academic success.

The STEAM Philosophy is based upon the concept of **Skills-Based (SBL)** and **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** approaches to specific themes or concepts. By approaching the curriculum from a 'design-thinking' and 'ideation' point of view, the students are able to link all problems and solutions to Science, Technology, English , Arts and Mathematics through an integrated approach across all subjects.



**Nurturing tomorrow's leaders, thinkers and innovators!**



# STEAM EDUCATION



During 2022, our STEAM Team mapped out core focus areas required to ensure we are delivering academic excellence when delivering the STEAM Curriculum.

## These areas include:

- Technology skills development
- The Creative Arts programme
- Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology
- The Outdoor Classroom
- The Makerspace Classroom
- Entrepreneurship Education

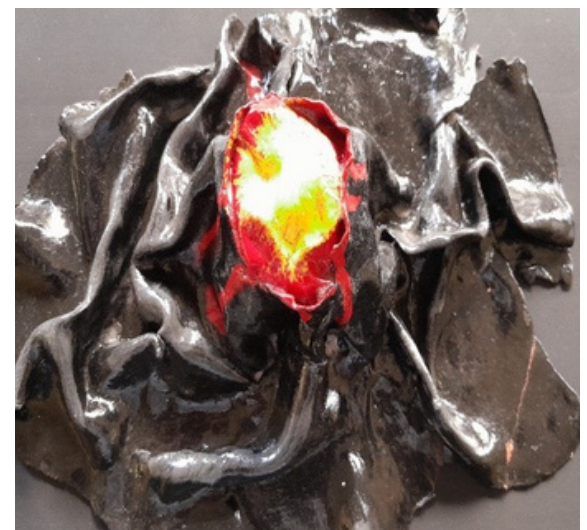
The integration of technology into our classrooms remains a key focus and teachers are using creative ways to use our sets of tablets for exciting and stimulating STEAM lessons each week.

Through our creative Arts Programme, several projects have been designed to explore geological formations, including volcanoes and the Earth, with creative models being produced by the classes.

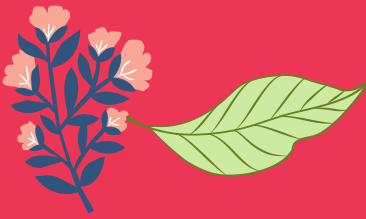
Our Intermediate and Senior Phase students attended the annual National Science Festival, where they learned about electricity, circuits, renewable energy resources, and how to build sustainable energy solutions.

The School has also integrated regular visits to the local Symonds Stream and wetland area behind the School, where several ecological studies have been conducted. They also learned about classification, food chains and food webs, and many physics concepts including velocity, depth, volume, gradient and measuring stream size.

We have registered as part of two programmes with a focus on experiential and hands-on learning, that expose the children to sustainable technologies and environmental issues with a focus on climate change. These have resulted in several projects that the different grades, and the Eco-Club have implemented.







# THE CREATIVE ARTS



## Music at Thembelihle

The year 2022 started on a high note with the KwaZulu Natal Philharmonic Orchestra educational program where they demonstrate the performing arts as well as music fundamentals. Music directly benefits the ability to learn words, pronounce them correctly, and process the many new sounds they hear from others. Thembelihle is very passionate about the musical arts, so during 2022, the school purchased 16 Djembe drums as additions to our other musical instruments at the school.

## African music and dance. (AMD)

Our art and music club continues to grow in numbers and also in music theory. This has enabled the learners to improvise any piece of music. Through music our children are able to express their uniqueness as well as improve their confidence and self-esteem.

## Music fundamentals and music tech

In 2020 we started teaching IT Skills to the grade 3 learners to prepare them for grade 4 where STEAM is comprehensively implemented. This has continued to enrich the learners through educational games. We have also introduced The Garage Band app to learners, which enables them to study different musical instruments, listen and compose songs. The art club was invited to share a stage with St. Maris at Oasis primary school, this exposure was highly appreciated by our learners.

## Visual Art

At Thembelihle we have a minimum of four STEAM themes within a year which are incorporated with the Arts. The learners construct, draw, paint, and sculpt what they learn in other subjects. This assists them with visualising what they are learning in other subjects.

## Ardmore Community Fund Arts program.

Thembelihle School has partnered with the Ardmore Community Fund through their fully sponsoring our Arts Program. This has helped immensely with our reaching all 500 children within our care the magic of Art. The Ardmore Arts Programme, along with Thembelihle, aims to enrich countless young lives and encourage children to think critically and creatively. We regard music, visual arts and drama to be vital components in any children's educational journey.





## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### Sporting Successes

2022 was a year with many individual and team successes for Thembelihle School. We operated a full schedule of sporting practices and fixtures for Cricket, Netball, Soccer, Athletics and Hockey, and also introduced swimming to the school in the 4th Term. We had regular fixtures against Oasis Prep School, Mount Carmel, and Howick Prep School, and also took part in several tournaments in Pietermaritzburg for different sporting codes and age groups. Our annual sports day was a great success, and all children were encouraged to participate in as many events as possible.

### Some of the Sporting Highlights include:

- The first ever School Cross-Country Team of 3 athletes made the Howick Circuit team.
- The Girls First Soccer team made it to the final of the Howick Circuit Finals.
- The Boys First Soccer team has been included in the uMngeni Soccer league for 2023.
- The Girls First Netball Team had an 87% win record, and represented the Howick Circuit in the district netball championships in Pietermaritzburg.
- Two netball players were selected for the district team; and Buhlebenkosi Coka was selected to represent the U12 Netball Team for Kwazulu-Natal.
- The Cricket teams won 5 out of the 6 scheduled fixtures against Howick Prep School.
- The Chess Team was successful in several inter school and district competitions, where several of our players received certificates for their outstanding games.
- The successful Inter House Competition included all of Thembelihle's sporting disciplines, including a very successful Inter House Athletics Day.
- The growth of the sports coaches programme has doubled our coaching team.
- Mr. Nyoni received recognition both from the KZN Inland KFC, and as the National KFC mini-cricket coach of the year for 2022.
- SIKA Forestry sponsored the 4th Annual Thembelihle Sports Awards.







## LIFE SKILLS AND SOCIAL AWARENESS

### Celebrating culture and diversity

We truly believe in Ubuntu - 'we are because of others', at Thembelihle. With this in mind we celebrate diversity amongst us and remember the importance of each and every culture. Our Cultural Day at Thembelihle is more than just a day where the children get to come in their traditional attire, it is a symbol of the past and a beacon of hope for a united and fruitful future in our country. We believe that Thembelihle is unique in the ways in which we approach and focus on the incredible diversity of backgrounds, cultures and family dynamics of our children. Our children are therefore very self aware and buy into and live by the values of the school. Through the many life skills programmes that we have, our children are given the tools to succeed and the experiences to open minds and dreams. Some examples of experiences are working with Angel Paws, baking, environmental clubs, theme days and so much more.

We were so pleased when we received a call from the Principal of Howick West Secondary School to praise us on the behaviour, manners and respect of our Grade 7 students who have been granted places for 2023. This feedback means that our children are not only receiving an excellent education, but are also being taught the necessary values and the personal resilience which will ensure their success in their future High School and afterschool career.







# OUR CULTURE OF HOLISTIC CARE



At Thembelihle we have always focused on providing for all our children's needs; body, mind and spirit. During times of crisis this becomes increasingly crucial and we are thankful and proud that we are not only continually able to ensure the academic progress of all our learners, but also ensure that their general health and wellbeing including access to nutrition is never compromised.

We are proud and thankful that we have the opportunity to greatly impact each child's growth and development during their 10 year journey with us which starts with our little 3-4-year-old children entering Grade RRR and is completed when they move onto high school after Grade 7.

We continually focus on the following areas of each child's development:

- **Emotional wellness**
- **Physical wellness**
- **Spiritual wellness**
- **Occupational wellness**
- **Social wellness**
- **Environmental wellness**
- **Intellectual wellness**

Our immense impact on every child is achieved through:

- Medical care and counselling which is available to all our children through our association with Angels Care Centre's General Health and Crisis care division.
- The school's sporting programmes that encourage physical development and teamwork.
- Access to quality nutrition through the provision of two meals daily; a nutritious breakfast and lunch. For many these are the only meals they will receive.

These interventions allow every child to more easily focus on their studies so that they achieve academic success.

With every programme that is put into place to support our children, we always keep in mind their home environment, ensuring that we offer the correct support.







# OUR CULTURE OF HOLISTIC CARE

## SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT



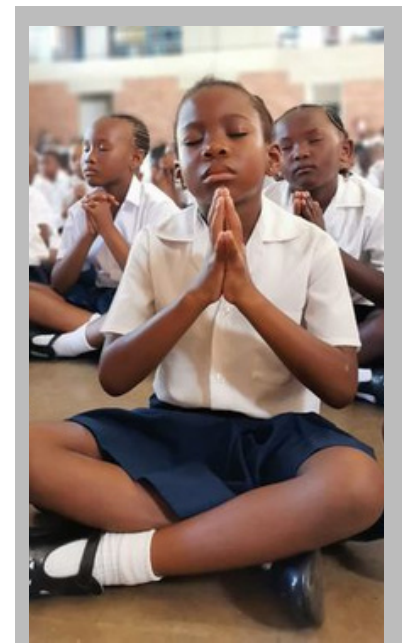
At Thembelihle, the provision of spiritual support and guidance is key to ensuring all children are supported so that they are able to cope with issues such as grief, isolation from their friends and numerous other forms of trauma which sadly affect so many of their young lives. We prepare our children for life by providing them with the necessary resilience and values to be able to cope with adverse circumstances and find joy and hope through our culture of love formed by relationships with Christ and others.

As the development of each child's unique character in their formative years is one of our primary aims, we are guided by faith and the Methodist ethos of our School which is our very foundation.

In 2022 we were delighted our chapel could once again be freely opened to all our staff, children and parents as it is a space where we can meet as a school community at times of worship and also alone when seeking peace and guidance.

Our children begin their daily routines with prayer. Additionally, all our lessons incorporate discussions on, and adherence to, our Christian values. Spiritual enrichment literature centered on bible stories that impart values and ethics are shared with the children to bridge cultural divides and embrace holistic skills such as prayer and forgiveness.

A team of volunteers from the Methodist Church spend time weekly with each class to facilitate the School's spiritual enrichment program and reinforce our faith-based values system. As our learners prepare to leave Thembelihle, Reverend Lombard from the Howick Methodist Church, spends time with the senior classes during chapel services.



## NUTRITIONAL PROGRAMME

We strive to ensure the optimal growth and development of every child through our nutritional offering. We do this through:

- The provision of breakfast and a hot lunch meals to all our children by our dedicated support staff. Meals are prepared in our fully equipped kitchen.
- Utilise a menu that ensures all children receive a well-balanced diet.
- Improve our children's ability to fight chronic diseases such as TB and HIV, which plague the communities in which they reside. This is greatly assisted by our strong partnership with Angels Care Centre and their nutritional programmes and team of healthcare professionals.
- Increase children's ability to learn and achieve their full potential in the classroom by ensuring they are able to concentrate on their studies and not be preoccupied by hunger.

# OUR AMAZING ALUMNI

Our Alumni still continue to shine. We have gathered impressive statistics that show that our alumni have a High School Dropout rate for 18 year olds which is currently **above 90%** vs. the National Average of 29,3%. This shows that our children want to attend school and are well equipped to cope with the challenges of High School.

Congratulations to Luyanda Shelembe, our 2022 Headboy, who received a 70% scholarship to attend Treverton College in the KZN Midlands. Based on the feedback received from the Treverton interview panel, Luyanda's maturity, excellent manners, and honesty shone through and he is well placed to have a very successful high school career at this wonderful boarding school.

We received fantastic news from our 2014 graduate, Ndlela Khalipha, who spoke to our Grade 7s about the challenges in life and why it is so important to never give up. She related how she really struggled to gain any acceptance to university, even after completing her matric with a Higher Certificate. When she started applying for university she was initially rejected several times, but through hard work and perseverance, was able to register at the Plaseslar TVET College and complete an engineering course. She has now been employed at the Toyota Plant in Prospecton, where she is flourishing within their internal training programme.

We received a letter from Lebotsa Letjeloane, who is an alumni of our Thembelihle Pre-Primary School. He spoke very fondly of the impact our school had on his life, and remembers how Mrs. Rejoice Mncube and Mrs. Nonhlanhla Khambule cared for him during his time at the school. Lebotsa matriculated from Asibemunye High School in Mpophomeni Township with 6 distinctions in 2017, and he is now completing his 4th year of medicine at the University of Pretoria.

Our amazing Old Boy Jojo, who is currently at Maritzburg College, in grade 12, has been working hard on his academics as well as all his incredible sporting achievements. He recently went to the South African school championships for athletics and came first in the 100 and 200 metre running races. He also still holds provincial records, and continues to break records both at school and other events. Jojo was given a chance to compete while at Thembelihle and it has truly changed his life. He was identified as a fast runner during inter house athletics day and within a few months had broken Provincial records and was offered a scholarship to a quality high school. His first pair of running shoes was purchased by Thembelihle before he began competing. We are so proud of the man he has become and LOVE that he still comes to visit us.





# OUR PAST PUPILS EXCEL AGAINST ALL ODDS

Tawananyasha Hwata, whose mother, Mrs. Tsitsi Hwata, is a teacher at Thembelihle School, blew us all away with his incredible matric results, but more importantly his attribute awards. He received a distinction for EVERY single character attribute which is tracked at Howick Secondary High School. He also won awards for Life Science, as well as achieving academic distinctions for Life Science, Engineering, and Graphic Design. We truly believe that the values and quality education that a child receives at Thembelihle, equips them to not only cope in any high school they move onto but to thrive and achieve their dreams.

Alwande Ndlovu who was in grade 10 (2022) at Treverton had very pleasing results and has been promoted to grade 11. She grabs every opportunity she is given and has thrived in boarding school.

Aphile Dlamini came 2nd in Grade 10 at Howick Secondary School.

Kemsile and Charmaine Chirembiri matriculated with 7 distinctions between them, Kemsile attained 3, and Charmaine attained 4.

## **Our St Anne's Diocesan College Girls**

Khanya Shelembe - who was in grade 9 (2022), received 83% at the National isiZulu Olympiad, and was recognized by the School for her achievement. She has settled in extremely well and continues to thrive.

Lwandisa Mkize - who was in Grade 8 (2022), has done remarkably well at St Anne's. She was given the opportunity to become a full-time boarder halfway through the year, which she has welcomed with open arms. The School Head commented, "She has embraced her opportunities by being fully involved, and she can feel proud of her achievements. She is a caring and kind friend, and her sincerity is appreciated by others".

Nolwazi Xaba- who was in Grade 8 (2022), has settled in incredibly well at St Anne's. She achieved 80% and above for 4 of her subjects. The School Head commented, "She is a warm, friendly and courteous young woman who is kind and caring to others. She has embraced her opportunities with a positive attitude".



# ALIGNMENT TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Thembelihle School is a supporter and believer in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, and we continue to align our offerings and programmes to the 17 goals and their impacts. The graphic below shows the specific goals that we believe our school contributes towards through our various offerings. Each is described below:



**Goal #1 – No Poverty:** Our school focuses on the most marginalized and poorest communities within the uMngeni Municipality, where we sponsor 80 % of our children to attend our school, and support their families through our holistic and psychosocial support programme.

**Goal #2 – Zero Hunger:** Our school feeds all of our 430 children two nutritional meals every school day.

**Goal #3 – Good Health & Well-Being:** Our school includes sports, extramurals, and access to both medical care and regular check-ups to ensure our children remain healthy and happy.

**Goal #4 – Quality Education:** Our teaching and learning programmes are benchmarked against other independent schools, and our children excel in their learning. Our teachers and our facilities are of a very high standard.

**Goal #5 – Gender Equality:** We are a co-ed school, that promotes gender equality, and we run regular workshops and programmes on GBV, girlchild and boychild health and well-being, and counselling programmes.

**Goal #6 – Clean Water and Sanitation:** Our school has installed water harvesting systems, and we are working in our local Symmonds Stream, to clean up the wetland and to remove aliens and pollution from the waterway. We also pride ourselves on the quality of our own facilities, when compared to where our children live at home.



# ALIGNMENT TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**Goal #7 – Affordable and Clean Energy:** Our school is installing a solar array, and using this to teach our children about renewable energy resources and their importance in combatting climate change.

**Goal #9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:** Our STEAM programme promotes creative and design thinking, ideation, and also teaches our children about technologies, thinking outside the box, and building prototypes for 21st century solutions.

**Goal #10 – Reduced Inequalities:** Our school focuses on uplifting marginalized families through educating children who can eventually be successful in lifting their families out of poverty.

**Goal #11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Our school contributes to creating sustainable development for the informal settlements in the uMngeni Municipalities.

**Goal #13 – Climate Action:** Our school is both a registered Eco-School and Sustainable School, and we teach our children about climate action and protecting our environment.

**Goal #14 – Life Below Water:** Our school teaches our children about the importance of protecting our local streams, and teaches the mini-SASS and bioindicators in the form of invertebrates.

**Goal #15 – Life on Land:** Our school teaches our children to protect nature, including both terrestrial and aquatic animals. We also plant a sustainable garden and run regular nature walks.

**Goal #17 – Partnerships for the Goals:** Our school works with multiple local and international partners, and we pride ourselves in the way we contribute to the larger community upliftment programme within our town and municipality.





# HOW TO HELP

- Sponsor a child's education R7200
- Sponsor a teacher R156 000
- Sponsor a support staff member R65 000
- Sponsor a specialist STEAM program R350 000
- Sponsor a child's meals for a year R3 500
- Sponsor a class their meals for a year R100 000
- Sponsor a computer station R15 000
- Sponsor a computer lab R350 000

*Together we can rebuild our community and make a South Africa we are all proud of, and create a bright future for all our students.*





## CONTACT US:

Audited financial statements available on request.

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### **We are a non profit, public benefit organisation**

- Public Benefit Organisation - 930042047
- Non Profit Organisation NPO - 064-090

### **BANK DETAILS:**

Thembelihle School  
First National Bank: Business Cheque  
Howick Branch: 220725  
Account: 6201 447 4225  
Swift code : FIRNZAJJ



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