

VIA NOVA CURRICULUM NEWS

Quarterly Newsletter



OUR PRINCIPAL'S BIRTHDAY	AUTISM AWARENESS AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT DAY	CAPITAL RADIOLOGY	EARTH DAY	ENTREPRENEURS DAYS 2 ND QUARTER	FISHPOND PROJECT EXIT PHASE LEARNERS
FREEDOM DAY	INCURSIONS QUARTER 2	MEDICATION	NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS	SENIOR SKILLS PHASE BUILDING SKILLS FOR LIFE	EXCURSIONS QUARTER 2

Dear Parents and Guardians

As we come to the end of the second quarter, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and partnership throughout the term. Your involvement plays an important role in the success and well-being of our learners.

The past few months have been filled with learning, growth, achievements, and memorable experiences. We are proud of the progress our learners have made and appreciate the dedication shown by our staff, parents, and school community.

As we begin the winter holiday, we encourage everyone to take time to rest, recharge, and enjoy precious moments with family and friends. We also ask that you please stay safe and take the necessary precautions during the colder months. May this holiday period bring warmth, happiness, and good health to you and your loved ones.

We look forward to welcoming our learners back on the 22nd of July, refreshed and ready for the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

On behalf of all the staff and SGB at Via Nova School, may you enjoy your holiday.

**PRINCIPAL
EJ SARPONG**



VIA NOVA SCHOOL CELEBRATES OUR PRINCIPAL'S BIRTHDAY

Written by Calrine Nkuna

On 18 May 2026, the learners and staff of Via Nova School came together to celebrate the birthday of our principal, Ms E.J. Sarpong, in a joyful and memorable way. The morning began with a special surprise as learners and teachers gathered at the school gate to form a guard of honour, creating a warm welcome as she arrived.

Ms Sarpong was greeted with cheerful songs, smiles, applause, and heartfelt birthday wishes from the school community. The guard of honour stretched from the gate to the school hall, where she was proudly escorted by learners and staff in a touching display of respect and appreciation.

The celebration continued in the school hall, where teachers and learners shared messages of gratitude for her dedication, leadership, and commitment to Via Nova School. It was a heart-warming occasion filled with happiness, unity, and appreciation for a leader who continues to inspire excellence throughout the school.

This special birthday celebration created lasting memories and highlighted the strong bond shared by the principal, learners, and staff. The Via Nova School community wishes Ms Sarpong many more years of good health, happiness, and success.



**Happy
BIRTHDAY**

AUTISM AWARENESS AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT DAY

Written by Hazel Ngwanduli

Via Nova School proudly hosted its annual Autism Awareness and Family Empowerment Day on 18 April 2026 as part of its commemoration of World Autism Awareness Day. The event brought together families, professionals, advocates and community partners in support of autism awareness, inclusion and family empowerment.

Families travelled from across Gauteng, including Germiston in the East Rand of Johannesburg, to gain practical knowledge, helpful resources and supportive networks for their autism journey.

The programme opened with a keynote address by the Honourable Deputy Minister of Social Development and Member of Parliament, Mr Hanief Hendricks, who emphasised the importance of inclusive communities where autistic individuals and their families are recognised, valued and supported.

Parents received practical guidance from the school's occupational therapists, Ms Liana Reiners and Ms Nicole Potgieter, who shared strategies such as Makaton signs and DIR Floortime approaches to support communication, engagement and relationship-building at home.

Other valuable sessions included disability tax guidance from Mr Jaco Kruger, a presentation on healthy screen use by Dr Malebo Nonyane from the Steve Biko Hospital Paediatric Neurology Unit, and an introduction to autism support dogs by Mr Vincent Seaba from the South African Guide-Dogs Association.

The importance of community and advocacy was highlighted by Ms Kgomotso Moalusi, founder of the Active Autism and Neurodiversity Allyship Foundation (AANDAF), while Ms Lethabo Motaung shared a heartfelt personal reflection on supporting an autistic family member.

The day concluded with an insightful presentation by Lifeline Pretoria on "Caring for the Caregiver", reminding parents and caregivers to prioritise their own wellbeing and seek support when needed.

The Autism Awareness and Family Empowerment Day was a resounding success, providing families with practical knowledge, valuable resources and renewed confidence in supporting their children. Most importantly, it reinforced the message that families are not alone on their autism journey.

Via Nova School extends its sincere appreciation to all the speakers, exhibitors, staff and families who helped make the event a memorable and impactful one as we continue building a more inclusive and supportive future.



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO CAPITAL RADIOLOGY FOR SUPPORTING AUTISM EDUCATION

Written by Liné Nieuwoudt & Masego Makumbila

We are delighted to share some wonderful news with our school community.

Through the kindness and dedication of Mrs Maryke Hartman, a parent at our school, we recently received a generous **donation of R10 000** from Capital Radiology. The funds were raised through the sale of Autism Awareness socks, an initiative aimed at raising awareness and supporting the valuable work done by autism schools.

A special word of thanks goes to Christelle, who collaborated with doctors and radiologists at the Urology Hospital in Hatfield, Pretoria, to make this fundraising project a success. Their commitment to promoting autism awareness and supporting our learners is truly inspiring.

This generous contribution will assist us in continuing to provide quality education, specialised support, and meaningful learning opportunities for our learners with autism spectrum disorder.

On behalf of our learners, staff, and parents, we extend our sincere gratitude to Capital Radiology, the doctors and radiologists at the Urology Hospital, Christelle, and Mrs Maryke Hartman for their generosity and belief in the work we do.

Together, we are making a difference in the lives of our learners every day.

Thank you for helping us create opportunities, build skills, and celebrate the unique potential of every learner.



“Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference. It is more rewarding to watch money change the world, than to watch it accumulate. At the end of the day it's not about what you have, or even what you've accomplished... it's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better.”



GOING GREEN FOR EARTH DAY: LEARNERS GET HANDS-ON WITH PAPER RECYCLING

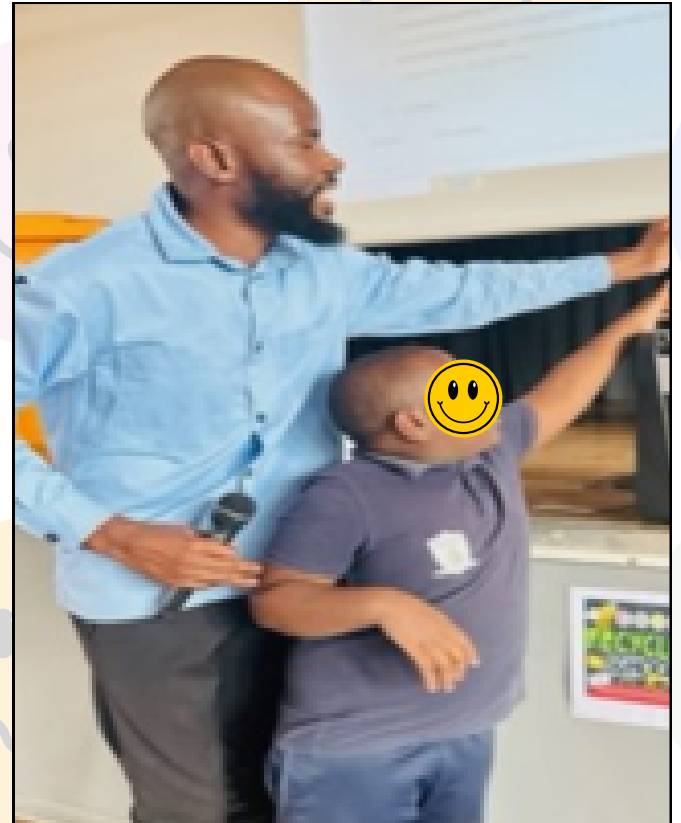
Written by Johanna Baloyi

In celebration of Earth Day on 22 April 2026, learners at Via Nova School participated in a fun and educational Environmental Awareness session. They discovered how small actions, like reusing paper and plastics, can help protect our planet.

With the help of Mr Mpontshane and Mr Lethamaga, they even tried out paper recycling themselves—from shredding paper to creating the final product, which was very cool to see! They also learned how to sort waste like pros.

Lots of hands went up, there was excitement all around, and we loved seeing that eco-spirit grow!

Let's keep it going at home and build a cleaner, greener future together.



ENTREPRENEURS' DAYS – QUARTER 2

The quarter 2 Entrepreneurs' Days were a wonderful success, with the different phases enjoying strong support and a vibrant atmosphere throughout their events.

ASD FOUNDATION PHASE

Written by Mieke Kraamwinkel

The ASD Foundation Phase Entrepreneurs' Day on 10 April 2026 was a wonderful success! The stalls offered popcorn, Zoom drinks, and chocolate, creating a lively and festive atmosphere. The event brought the phases together and highlighted the spirit of our school that makes the Foundation Phase so special.

We are truly grateful to our parents and families for the incredible support shown throughout the day. Your participation and support ensured that the event ran smoothly and that everyone enjoyed the experience.

Together, we continue to build opportunities that celebrate growth, connection, and achievement. Thank you for helping make this Entrepreneurs' Day truly memorable.



ASD INTERMEDIATE PHASE 2

Written by Elize Scheepers

The ASD Intermediate Phase 2 learners showcased their entrepreneurial skills on 23 April 2026 during a successful Entrepreneurs' Day. Excitement filled the air as the delicious aroma of freshly popped popcorn drifted through the corridors, attracting many eager customers.

The learners were actively involved in the event, assisting with popping and packaging the popcorn, as well as helping with sales. A variety of treats were available, including popcorn, cooldrinks, and Easter eggs.

The day provided a valuable opportunity for learners to develop practical skills while having fun and interacting with the school community. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and the event was a tremendous success.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who supported the learners and contributed to making the day such a memorable and rewarding experience.



ASD INTERMEDIATE PHASE 1

Written by Winnie Ntsoane

On 11 June 2026, ASD Intermediate Phase 1 hosted a successful Pyjama Day. On the day, all learners and staff were invited to come to school wearing pyjamas for a cost of R10. Hot chocolate and doughnuts were also sold.

We wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all staff members and the parent community for the wonderful support we received.



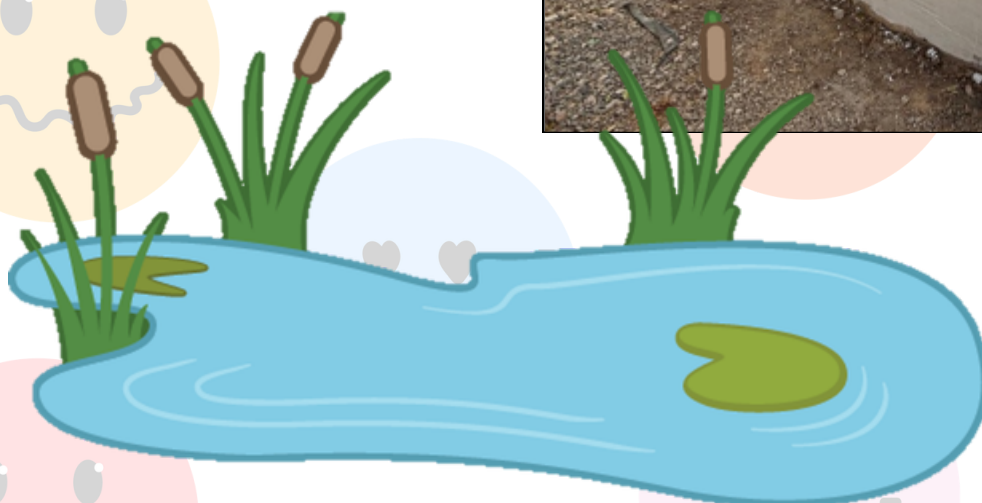
EXIT PHASE LEARNERS BUILD SKILLS THROUGH A FISHPOND PROJECT

Written by Tebogo Lediga

In the Agriculture subject, learners from the Exit Phase embarked on an exciting new project: building a fishpond. Although the pond is not yet complete, the progress made so far has been encouraging. Step by step, the learners have been actively involved in shaping the structure, gaining valuable hands-on experience and showing great enthusiasm throughout the process.

It has been inspiring to witness their dedication and teamwork as they bring this project to life. The school is proud of their efforts and looks forward to sharing updates on the ongoing progress. Once the project is complete, we will celebrate and showcase the final outcome.

This initiative not only develops practical skills but also highlights the learners' passion for creating something meaningful and lasting.



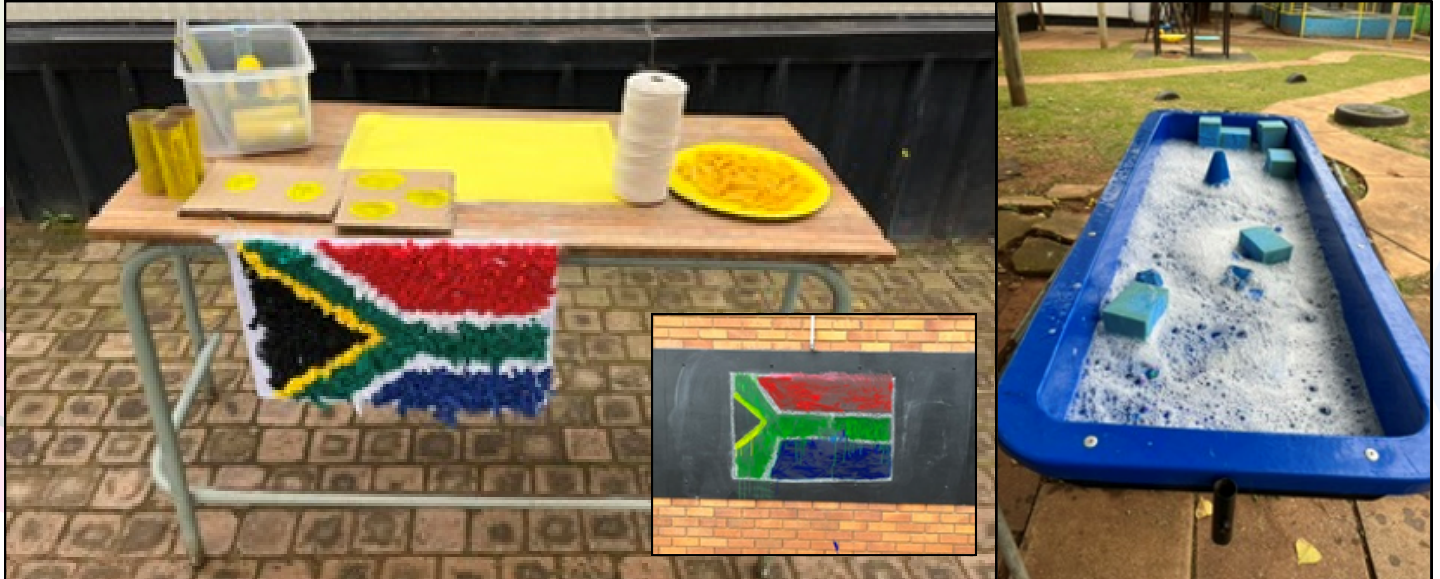
FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS AT VIA NOVA SCHOOL

Learners across different phases at Via Nova School celebrated Freedom Day on 30 April 2026 through meaningful and engaging activities.

PID AND FOUNDATION PHASE FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS

Written by Lianri Neethling

The PID and Foundation Phase learners celebrated Freedom Day in a way that was meaningful, engaging, and lots of fun—through sensory play using the colours of the South African flag. Instead of a traditional approach, learners explored the concept of freedom through hands-on activities with sand, water, paint, and pasta.



Each sensory station gave learners the opportunity to express themselves freely, make choices, and experience creativity in their own unique way. The sand play encouraged exploration and imagination, while water activities brought excitement and calm through movement and touch. Painting allowed for self-expression in bright, bold ways, and the pasta station added a playful, textured element to the day.



Through these activities, learners not only developed important sensory and motor skills but also experienced the joy of freedom—the freedom to explore, create, and simply be themselves. It was a beautiful reminder that learning can be both purposeful and playful.



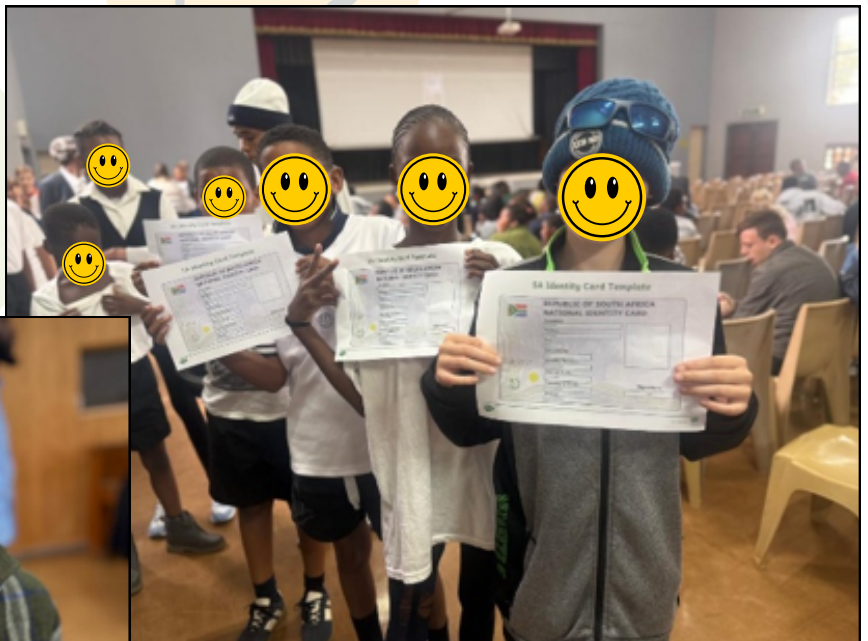
Written by Calrine Nkuna

Learners and educators from the Intermediate, Senior & Skills, ADL, and Exit Programme phases gathered in the school hall to commemorate Freedom Day and celebrate the freedom and democracy that South Africans enjoy today. The celebration began with an educational discussion about the significance of Freedom Day, encouraging learners to appreciate the freedoms they have and to become responsible citizens of the country.

A highlight of the event was the learners' joyful performance of the song "*Freedom Is Coming Tomorrow*". The hall was filled with excitement as learners sang and danced together, reflecting on the meaning of freedom, unity, and national pride.



To help learners understand the democratic process, a special mock voting station was organised. Learners eagerly participated by casting their votes in a simulated election, learning about the importance of voting and having their voices heard in a democracy. This activity helped learners gain a deeper understanding of South Africa's journey to freedom while promoting active citizenship and participation.



INCURSIONS TERM 2

Term 2 provided learners with exciting, hands-on learning experiences through educational incursions across two phases of the school.

LEARNING THROUGH DOING – SOUP DAY IN THE PID PHASE

Written by **Happy Masondo**

The PID Phase recently enjoyed a fun and meaningful Soup Day activity, giving learners the opportunity to explore, prepare, and enjoy healthy ingredients through hands-on learning. The activity encouraged participation, communication, and sensory exploration, while also promoting healthy eating habits.

From washing the vegetables to helping sort them, our learners took great pride in being part of the process. These tactile, real-world experiences are incredibly valuable, helping to develop fine motor skills, language, and communication as learners discussed the names, shapes, colours, and textures of each vegetable.

By the time the soup was served, the learners were excited to taste the final product. There is nothing quite like watching children eagerly enjoy their vegetables because they spent the morning exploring and preparing them.

Soup Day provided a wonderful opportunity for learners to learn through doing, while building confidence, independence, and an appreciation for healthy food choices.



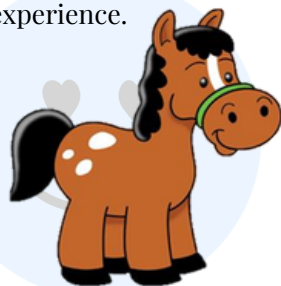
FARM CORNER VISITS ASD INTERMEDIATE PHASE 1

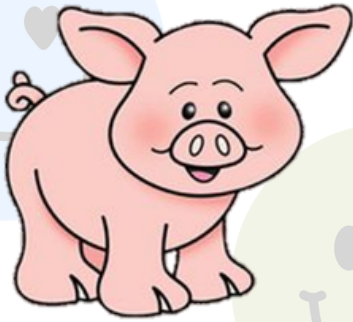
Written by **Winnie Ntsoane**

On 14 May 2026, *Farm Corner* visited the ASD Intermediate Phase 1 as part of the conclusion of the Farm Animals theme. Learners eagerly looked forward to spending time with the animals and brought along fruits and vegetables to feed them.

Among the animals were a duck, chicken, cow, guinea pig, goat, sheep, and a pony. The highlight of the day was the opportunity for each learner to enjoy a pony ride.

The day concluded with a picnic, providing learners with a wonderful opportunity to relax, socialise, and reflect on an enjoyable and educational experience.





MEDICATION

A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE: HELPING LEARNERS THRIVE

Written by Refentse Bogopa (School Nurse)

Medication can play an important role in helping many learners with special needs reach their full potential at school and in everyday life. Conditions such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), epilepsy, autism spectrum disorder, anxiety disorders, and other health conditions may require ongoing medical treatment. When medication is taken consistently and as prescribed, it can support concentration, behaviour, emotional regulation, and overall well-being.

School nurses and healthcare professionals work closely with families and schools to support safe medication use. They can help monitor progress, address concerns about possible side effects, and encourage open communication between parents, educators, and healthcare providers.

If medication is stopped or changed without medical advice, learners may experience challenges with learning, behaviour, social interaction, and academic performance. For this reason, parents and caregivers are encouraged to speak to a doctor or healthcare professional before making any changes to a learner's medication routine.

By working together and staying informed, families and schools can help create a caring and supportive environment where learners with special needs receive the care they need to learn, grow, and thrive.

1 Medication to Support Attention, Hyperactivity & Concentration
Helping the brain focus so learning can happen

COMMON UNDERSTANDING

- The goal is NOT to change who your child is.
- The right dose should not change their personality.
- It is just to help them focus, listen and complete tasks.
- Medication needs vary, follow the doctor's advice for the best routine.
- When used as prescribed, these medications are not addictive.

GOOD TO REMEMBER

- Every child is different.
- Doses may change over time.
- Regular reviews with the doctor help find the best plan.

TOGETHER WE HELP YOUR CHILD THRIVE
When medication is combined with the right supports, children can build skills, confidence and independence.

2 Medication to Support Anxiety & Emotional Regulation
Helping the brain feel safe so learning can happen

COMMON UNDERSTANDING

- Medication does NOT cure autism.
- It is not to sedate or make a child "quiet".
- The goal is to reduce anxiety so your child can engage, learn and connect.
- Anxiety can be overwhelming and can stop a learner from learning, communicating and participating.

GOOD TO REMEMBER

- Reducing anxiety helps the brain feel safe.
- Learners may become more available to learn, communicate and connect.
- Small changes can make a big difference.

TOGETHER WE CREATE SAFETY AND GROWTH
When anxiety is supported, learners can take part in life more fully and build the skills they need.

3 Medication to Support Regulation & Behaviour
Helping the brain and body stay regulated so learning can happen

COMMON UNDERSTANDING

- It is NOT to control or punish my child.
- It is to reduce distress and dysregulation so your child can be safer and more successful.
- When regulation improves, learning and relationships can improve.
- Medication is one helpful tool along with many other supports.

GOOD TO REMEMBER

- The goal is regulation, not suppression.
- When behaviour improves, learning and relationships improve too.
- Safety for your child and others is essential.

TOGETHER WE BUILD SUCCESS
When regulation improves, learners can join in, learn, make friends and feel proud of their progress.

REMINDER: LET US KNOW WHEN YOUR CHILD IS VISITING THE DOCTOR
Please let us know at least **1 WEEK BEFORE** your child's doctor appointment.

- This gives us enough time to share important feedback with the doctor.
- This helps the doctor make the best decisions for your child, not only for home, but also for school.
- Together, we make sure your child can benefit from both home and school environments.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU
We will always work in partnership with you, with respect, compassion and understanding.

SCHOOL TEAM
We support your child every day.

FAMILIES
You know your child best.

DOCTORS
We work together for the best plan.

TOGETHER
We help children reach their potential.

IMPORTANT REMINDER
Medication decisions should always be made together with a qualified medical professional who understands your child's individual needs.

- Every child is unique.
- Every step forward matters.

Working together helps your child thrive every day!

Medication is one tool. Love, connection, understanding, structure and support are what help our learners grow and shine.



VIA NOVA SCHOOL EDUCATORS SHINE IN THE NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS

Written by Liné Nieuwoudt

Via Nova School is proud to celebrate the achievements of several exceptional educators who represented our school in the 2025 National Teaching Awards (NTA), in the Special Needs Education Category.

We are delighted to share that, at the prize giving held at Laerskool Anton van Wouw on 23 April 2026, Mrs Su-Mari Kriel achieved 2nd place in the Tshwane South District, while Ms Liné Nieuwoudt was awarded 3rd place. We also proudly acknowledge Ms Patience Nonjiko, Ms Gcinile Gumbi, Ms Leandi Arbuthnot, and Ms Veronica Khumalo for taking part in the competition and representing Via Nova School with dedication and professionalism.

The National Teaching Awards recognise educators who show excellence, innovation, and commitment to learning. This achievement reflects the meaningful work being done at Via Nova School to support learners with diverse educational needs.

Through their passion and learner-centred teaching, these educators continue to make a positive difference in the lives of our learners.

Via Nova School is immensely proud of these educators for being outstanding ambassadors for our school and for special needs education.

A special word of appreciation is extended to Teacher Michelle de Klerk, our NTA Coordinator, for her leadership, organisation, and support throughout the process.



From left to right: Mrs Su-Mari Kriel (2nd place), Ms Liné Nieuwoudt (3rd place), Mr Malusi Nyawose, Ms Patience Nonjiko, and Ms Gcinile Gumbi at the prize giving held at Laerskool Anton van Wouw on 23 April 2026.

BUILDING SKILLS FOR LIFE IN THE SENIOR SKILLS PHASE

Written by Liné Nieuwoudt

At Via Nova School, the Senior Skills Phase helps learners build practical, vocational, and life skills while discovering their interests and strengths. Learners take part in a range of skills-based subjects designed to develop confidence, independence, and future employability:

Needlework

Learners develop fine motor skills, creativity, and patience while creating practical items through sewing, embroidery, and textile projects.

Maintenance

The Maintenance Programme equips learners with essential skills related to basic repairs, tool use, safety practices, and workplace responsibility. These hands-on experiences encourage problem-solving and teamwork.



Food Production

Learners gain experience in food preparation, hygiene, safety, and production-line systems. Through projects such as soups, burgers, wraps, pancakes, and baked goods, they develop valuable kitchen and hospitality skills while learning to work both independently and collaboratively.



Arts and Crafts

The Arts and Crafts Programme encourages creativity, self-expression, and entrepreneurship. Learners create a variety of handmade products, including cards, candles, soaps, decoupage items, canvases, and decorative crafts, many of which can be sold at school markets and fundraising events.



Nails and Beauty

Learners gain hands-on experience in personal grooming, nail care, hygiene, customer service, and professional presentation. These skills help build self-confidence while learners explore potential career opportunities in the beauty industry.



Woodwork

Learners learn to use tools and equipment safely while designing and constructing practical wooden products. This programme develops planning skills, precision, perseverance, and craftsmanship.

Celebrating Our Dedicated Skills Educators

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to our dedicated Skills Educators for their passion, commitment, and hard work in empowering our learners every day.

Through their guidance and encouragement, learners are developing valuable practical and vocational skills in Needlework (Teacher Noxolo), Maintenance (Teacher Kobus), Food Production (Teacher Liné), Arts and Crafts (Teacher Sonja), Nails and Beauty (Teacher Anite), and Woodwork (Teacher Wynand). These educators go above and beyond to create meaningful learning experiences that build confidence, independence, creativity, and workplace

readiness.

Their patience, expertise, and unwavering belief in our learners' potential make a lasting difference in the lives of the young people they teach. Thank you for inspiring our learners to grow, achieve, and discover their strengths through hands-on learning opportunities.

Your dedication does not go unnoticed, and we are grateful for the positive impact you make each day. Thank you for helping our learners develop skills for life.

EXCURSIONS - QUARTER 2

Term 2 excursions provided learners with memorable experiences filled with learning, adventure, and new discoveries.

INTERMEDIATE PHASE 2 BOUNCES INTO FUN AND NEW ADVENTURES

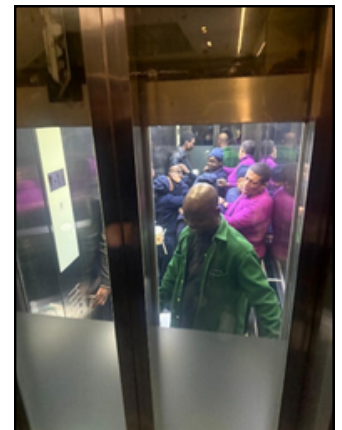
Written by Su-Marie Kriel

The ASD Intermediate 2 learners enjoyed a memorable day to Bounce Menlyn Maine on 18 June 2026.

The day started with a stop at McDonald's Menlyn Retail Crossing, where learners enjoyed their Happy Meals, shared conversations with friends, and practised valuable social skills in a real-life community setting. The phase was also spoiled with a generous gift of six soccer balls and whistles from McDonald's, which was greatly appreciated.

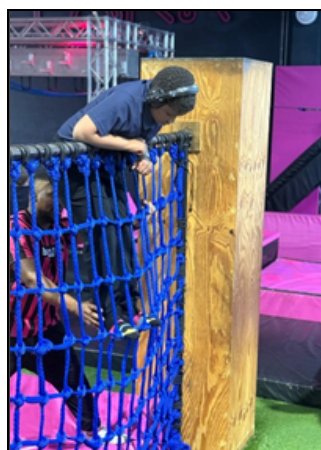


The adventure continued as learners made their way through Menlyn Maine to Bounce. For some learners, this journey brought its own achievements – facing fears of elevators and escalators, while others experienced using them for the very first time.



At Bounce, learners were divided into coloured groups, each guided by a dedicated instructor. They explored a variety of exciting activities, including trampoline dodgeball, obstacle courses, balancing beams, rock climbing, ziplining, jumping into soft landing areas, and, of course, endless bouncing.

Many learners truly surprised their teachers by attempting activities they were initially nervous about. Fears turned into excitement, hesitation became confidence, and every small achievement was celebrated. It was wonderful to see learners encouraging one another and proudly showing what they were capable of.



FOUNDATION PHASE EXPLORES MINI TOWN

Written by Mieke Kraamwinkel

On 19 June 2026, the Autism Foundation Phase learners enjoyed an exciting excursion to Mini Town. Accompanied by educators and support staff, learners had the opportunity to explore and experience this unique attraction, many for the very first time.

The day began with an informative road safety lesson, after which learners had the opportunity to meet and take photos with the mascot. They also enjoyed playing on the jungle gym, spending time outdoors, regulating through play, and enjoying the fresh air and sunshine.

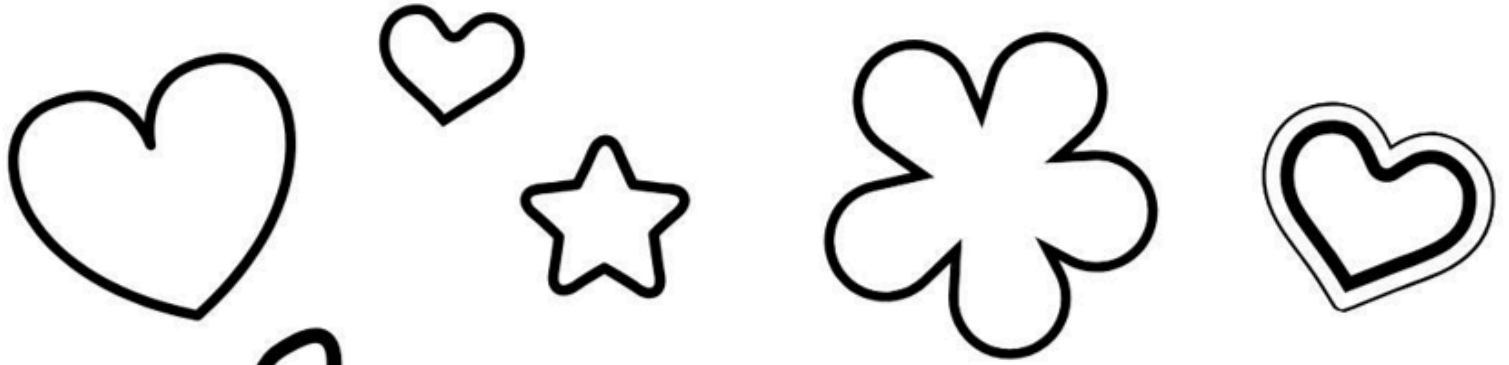


One of the highlights of the visit was exploring the miniature houses, each thoughtfully designed with furniture perfectly sized for the learners. This created a fun and engaging environment that encouraged exploration and imaginative play.

The day ended on a happy note with burgers and juice for everyone to enjoy.

It was a wonderful day filled with fun, sunshine, learning, and many new experiences that created lasting memories for our learners.





★ happy

★ LAST



★ day of



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