

VIA NOVA CURRICULUM NEWS

Quarterly Newsletter

Compiled by Miss C Siebert



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TALENT IN AUTISM EXHIBITION – CELEBRATING CREATIVITY AND ABILITY

Written by: Su-Mari Kriel

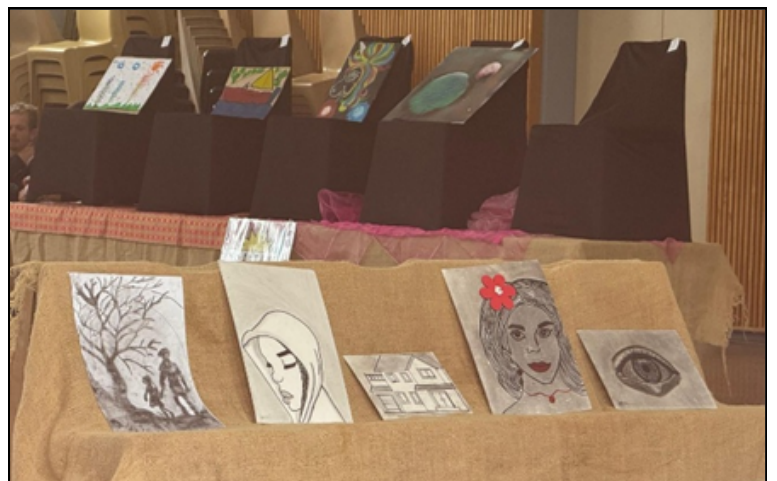
On 27 September 2025, Via Nova School proudly hosted its Autism Talent Exhibition, a vibrant showcase of creativity and skill. The event was planned by the Resource Centre under the leadership of Charlotte Siebert, with support from Autism Ekasi.

Learners participated across six exciting categories: recycled arts, painting, drawing, building, cooking, and clay art. Each entry reflected the unique talents, imagination, and determination of our learners. Prizes were awarded to the winners in each category.

A highlight of the day was the panel of five judges, which included two autistic adults and two much-loved retired Via Nova staff members, Kristel de Necker and Hantie Foley. Their presence brought both expertise and inspiration, making the judging process deeply meaningful.

The atmosphere was festive and welcoming. Families and learners enjoyed a variety of activities, including jumping castles, Edu Horse rides, and handmade items sold by the Exit Programme Phase. These added to the celebration and highlighted the many opportunities available to our learners.

The Autism Talent Exhibition was more than an event – it was a day of empowerment, inclusion, and recognition. It reminded us that every learner has a gift to share, and when given the platform, their talents shine brightly.



ATHLETICS DAYS: A CELEBRATION OF FUN, MOVEMENT, AND ACHIEVEMENT

Written by: Winnie Ntsoane

Each year, on the first Friday of September, we celebrate Casual Day in the country. The day is dedicated to persons with disabilities.

This year, it was celebrated on 5 September, with the theme “Beyond The Labels”.

Via Nova School, under the leadership of the Foundation Phase 2, went all out for the day. The learners were spoilt with jumping castles and other inflatables as part of the entertainment.

Each learner and staff member also received a hotdog and a Buddy Coke for lunch.

Merchandise was sold since May, and the funds will go towards supporting persons living with disabilities.



VIA NOVA SCHOOL CONCERT - MUSICAL

Written by: Malusi Nyawose

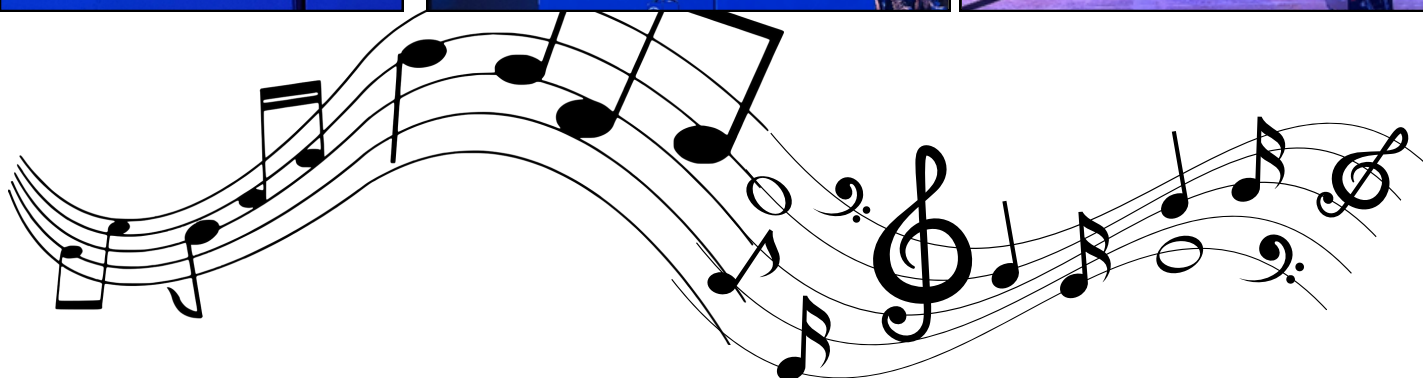
Via Nova School proudly hosted its annual concert on the 27th of August 2025 for our junior learners and on the 28th of August 2025 for our senior learners. The event was a great success, marked by enthusiastic participation from our learners, staff, and the wonderful parents who came in large numbers to show their support.

Our learners truly shone on stage, showcasing their incredible talents and hard work. These memorable performances were made possible through the dedicated guidance and support of our teachers, class assistants, and therapists, who worked tirelessly to help each learner prepare for their moment in the spotlight.

Parents expressed their joy and pride as they watched their children perform with confidence and enthusiasm. Many were pleasantly surprised and deeply impressed by the skills and talents on display.

We are sincerely grateful to all the parents and guardians who took the time to attend the concert and support their children. Your presence made the event even more special and meaningful.

As the Via Nova family, we extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this event a success from staff members to our supportive parent community. Together, we created memories that will be cherished for years to come.



EISTEDDFOD: OUR TIME TO SHINE

Written by: Winnie Ntsoane

On the 12th and 13th of August, Via Nova learners proudly took part in the annual Eisteddfod competition. This event takes place every year during August, bringing together learners from across Gauteng.

On the 12th, the ASD Foundation Phase 2 and ASD Intermediate Phase participated in the folk-dance category. The ASD Foundation Phase 2 group performed a funky dance, while the ASD Intermediate Phase presented a Sepedi dance. These groups were accompanied by teacher Thoko Nkambule, assistants Nadine Mashego and Reineth Zimbaye, as well as teachers Freda Masemola and Martha Makinita, with assistant Johanna Maila. The ASD Foundation Phase 2 learners had so much fun, earning an impressive 93%, while the ASD Intermediate Phase achieved an outstanding 95% – a huge improvement from last year's 85%.

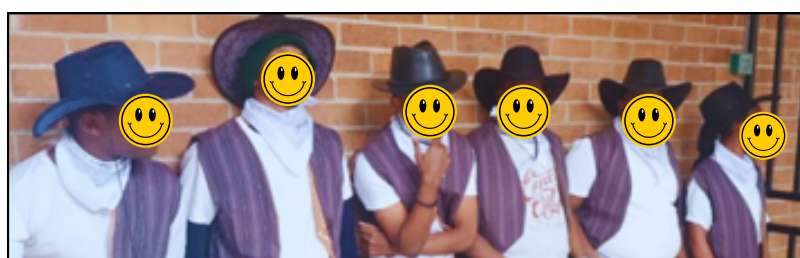
On the 13th, the ASD Senior Skills group showcased a gumboot dance led by Mr. Hebrone Mokheseng, while the Cowboy (line dance) dance was led by Liné Niewoudt, Tlhalefang Themane, and Sonja de Bruin. Both groups performed exceptionally well, each earning 94%.

Behind the scenes, Marietha Vermaak and Kgothatso Maako ensured that everything ran smoothly on the administrative side and also assisted with supervision during the event.

With results like these, it is safe to say that both learners and staff worked incredibly hard to make the Eisteddfod a shining success. The entire Via Nova community is proud of these wonderful achievements



talent



SCOOPS OF SUCCESS – INTERMEDIATE PHASE ENTREPRENEURS' DAY!

Written by: Su-Mari Kriel

On 9 September, the Intermediate Phase hosted their Entrepreneurs' Day, bringing lots of excitement to the school. A variety of treats were on sale, including ice cream, Nik Naks, and cold drinks. The ice cream was especially popular and a great hit on the warm day, making the event even more enjoyable.

The event created a cheerful, festive spirit as learners and staff enjoyed their favourite snacks together. It was a wonderful way to bring joy, raise funds, and celebrate the creativity and energy of the Intermediate Phase.

A big thank you goes out to everyone who supported the day and helped make it such a memorable success!



**BE A YOUNG
ENTREPRENEUR**

COMBINED EXCURSIONS

FOUNDATION PHASE – BOUNCE, MENLYN MAINE

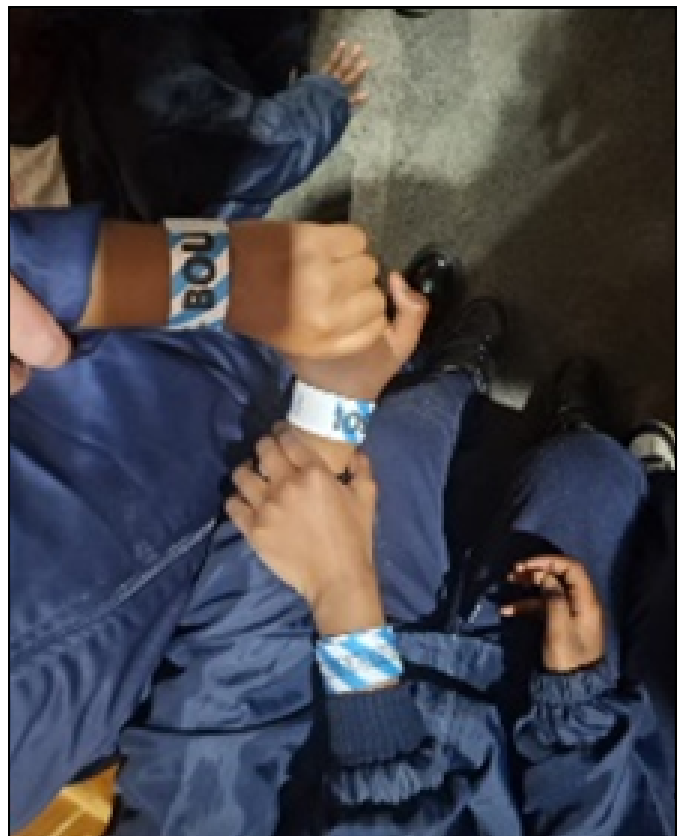
Written by: Mieke Kraamwinkel

On 20 June, Autism Foundation Phase 1 learners embarked on an exciting excursion to BOUNCE in Menlyn Maine.

The event was specially chosen for our small developing learners with autism, providing a unique opportunity for them to engage in physical activity, social interaction, and sensory exploration.

Learners enjoyed two hours of hosted activities, including VIP access to the trampolines, where they could jump, play, and develop their motor skills. The day was filled with laughter, fun, and confidence-building experiences.

Bounce!



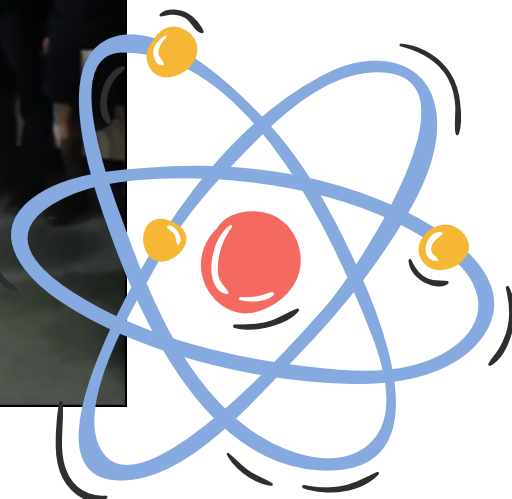
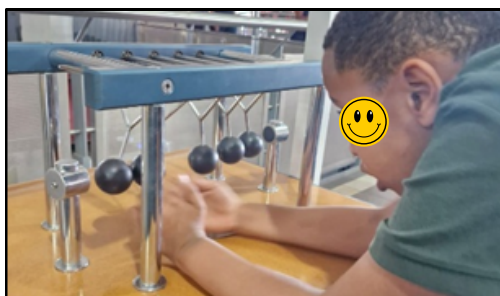
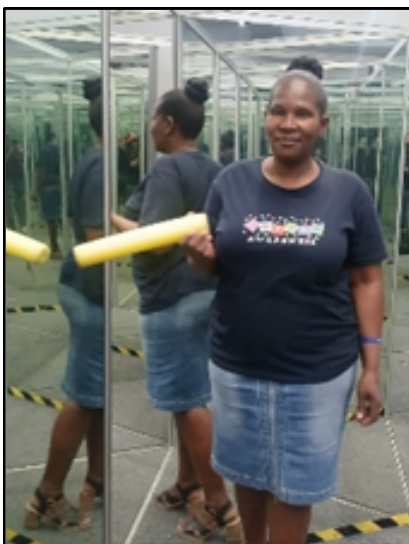
INTERMEDIATE PHASE – SCI-BONO DISCOVERY CENTRE

Written by: Elize Scheepers

On 16 September, the Autism Intermediate Phase learners set off on their first excursion of the year to the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Johannesburg.

Guided in groups, they explored dinosaurs, found their way through the mirror maze, cycled to generate electricity, and experimented with magnets, water, and lights.

Although there was still so much more to experience, time passed quickly. A heartfelt thank you goes to our parents for their support in making this memorable day possible.



**FUTURE
SCIENTIST**

ADL SENIOR PHASE – MENLYN MALL

Written by: Johanna Baloyi

On 17 September, the ASD ADL Senior Phase learners stepped out of the classroom and into the exciting world of real-life shopping at Menlyn Mall in Pretoria.

It was more than a shopping spree – it was a step toward independence, confidence, and inclusion. Learners dashed into shops with a great deal of excitement, sometimes grabbing items before remembering the importance of "paying first."

Fortunately, our caring teachers quickly stepped in, turning those little hiccups into valuable teaching moments. We are proud of their joy, resilience, and determination throughout the day.



FOUNDATION PHASE 2 – TOTAL NINJA, KOLLONADE MALL

Written by: Winnie Ntsoane

On 23 September 2025, the ASD Foundation Phase 2 went on a trip to Total Ninja at Kollonade Mall. The long-awaited excursion was planned by teacher Thoko Nkambule, an educator in the phase. Before heading to Total Ninja, the learners went to Mochachos, where each learner was served a burger and cold drink, which came with a free toy.

At Total Ninja, the learners had fun jumping through the different inflatables and swinging through some of the obstacles. This put big smiles on their faces, with some even confessing that the excursion had to be repeated, as they had not had so much fun in a very long time.

A few learners were also excited to go on a bus for the very first time. It is evident that each child experienced something new on the day. A big thank you to all parties involved in making this day a huge success.



GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

Written by: Tebogo Lediga

In a heartwarming celebration of perseverance, achievement, and growth, Via Nova School will host its annual graduation ceremony for the school leavers on 14 November 2025, marking a momentous milestone for learners, families, and educators alike.

The event, set to take place at Via Nova School, will honour the unique journeys of each graduate - recognizing not only academic accomplishments but also the personal victories that have shaped their educational experience.

These learners, who have worked tirelessly to overcome challenges and reach their goals, will be recognized for their dedication, courage, and resilience. For many, the path to graduation has included individualized learning plans, therapy support, and strong partnerships between the school, staff, and families.

This is more than a graduation - it's a celebration of every small step that led to this moment. Each learner has shown incredible determination, and we are proud to recognize their achievements.



CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE AWARDED TO THE GROUNDSMEN OF VIA NOVA SCHOOL

Written by: Kobus Pretorius

On 26 June 2025, the groundsmen of Via Nova School proudly received a Certificate of Excellence at a prize-giving event in Boksburg. This award recognized their outstanding creativity and dedication to making the school a safer, cleaner, and more functional environment for learners and staff.

In 2024, the team enrolled to showcase the many ways in which their daily work help overcome challenges faced in school life. Their creative solutions speak for themselves: dangerous plants were removed, overgrown bushes blocking walkways were cleared, and a gate was built to provide access to a previously closed playground. Beehives were safely relocated, shaded parking areas were prepared for teachers, and wet, cluttered gutters were cleaned and replaced to prevent rust and costly damage.

They also looked to the future by setting plans in motion to harvest rainwater for flushing toilets and to use solar energy to keep the school's administration running during load-shedding. Delegates from Gauteng National Education visited Via Nova to verify these achievements and were pleasantly surprised by the impressive results.

The official handover of the prize in Boksburg was a proud moment for the groundsmen. The celebration not only honoured their achievements but also inspired them to continue serving the learners of Via Nova School in creative, innovative, and impactful ways.



HERITAGE DAY – CELEBRATING CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Written by: Su-Mari Kriel

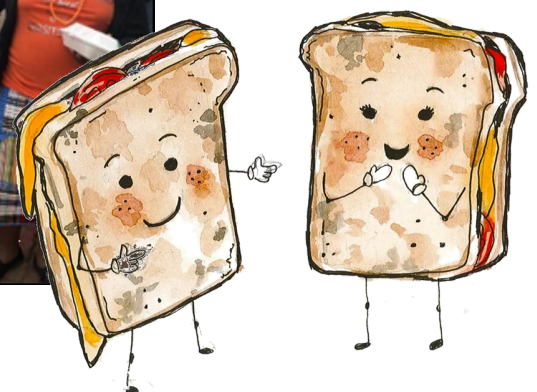
On 26 September 2025, Via Nova School proudly celebrated Heritage Day, with the Intermediate Phase taking responsibility for organizing the event. The day was filled with colour, culture, and togetherness as both learners and staff arrived dressed in their traditional attire, proudly showcasing their heritage.

The delicious aromas of the braai filled the air as boerewors rolls and pap & wors with sheba were prepared and sold. Learners were actively part of the process, spreading their own buns and then sitting outside to enjoy their meals in a festive atmosphere. Sharing food in this way created a sense of unity and gave learners a chance to experience independence in a practical and enjoyable setting.

The combination of vibrant clothing, tasty food, and a cheerful outdoor gathering made the day a wonderful celebration of diversity and community. It was a true reminder of the importance of Heritage Day – honouring our roots while coming together as one school family.



HERITAGE Day



HORSE WORX – HORSE RIDING THERAPY

Written by: Mieke Kraamwinkel

Via Nova School has been truly fortunate to welcome Horse Worx every Thursday for the past two quarters. Their visits have quickly become a highlight of the week, and the impact on our learners has been remarkable.

Horse riding therapy, or equine-assisted therapy, is especially beneficial for children with Autism and special educational needs. The horses bring a unique blend of movement, calmness, and connection that nurtures both body and mind. Learners eagerly await their arrival, and once sessions begin, they take turns riding, grooming, and interacting with the horses. These moments are filled with smiles, laughter, and a sense of calm, with many learners returning to class more regulated and focused.

Beyond the emotional benefits, the rhythmic movement of riding strengthens core muscles, improves posture, and enhances coordination. Guiding the horse also develops fine motor skills, concentration, and problem-solving. From the youngest in Foundation and PID phases to our Senior and Exit phase learners, all show enthusiasm and genuine affection for the horses.

We are grateful to Horse Worx for enriching our school community with this joyful therapy that touches hearts, strengthens bodies, and nurtures growth. Parents wishing to extend this opportunity can enroll directly with Horse Worx via the link on our school website (please note that costs are covered by parents)



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

Written by: Michelle De Klerk

As a Special School, Via Nova School also serves as a Resource Centre, providing training on a variety of relevant topics not only to its own educators and parents, but also to interested stakeholders from the wider community. These sessions are facilitated by both our internal team and external service providers who generously share their expertise.

During Term 3 of 2025, the following trainings took place:

- Code of Conduct for ASD-learners (2 August, 44 Attendees)
- Individual Support Plans (16 August, 135 Attendees)
- Makaton for Parents and Caregivers (23 August, 9 Attendees)
- First-Aid Level 1 (30 August, 43 Attendees)
- Makaton Level 3 (13 September, 6 Attendees)
- iAfrica iPad Training (Ongoing, 8 Educators)

We would like to extend our gratitude to every participant both within and outside of Via Nova School for attending, as well as to each and every trainer and service provider who share valuable knowledge with us, as it is through learning more, that we become equipped to serve better! Thank you also to every staff member who works behind the scenes to make these trainings possible.



MANDELA DAY 2025 – VIA NOVA SCHOOL LEARNERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Written by: Su-Mari Kriel

On 25 July 2025, Via Nova learners and staff came together to honour Nelson Mandela's legacy of service, kindness, and unity. In the true spirit of "67 minutes for Mandela," every phase of the school took part in activities that improved our environment and built a sense of community.

Learners & staff enthusiastically joined in a school-wide clean-up, collecting litter, raking leaves, and tidying the grounds. Others washed windows, cleaned chairs, and took pride in keeping classrooms and shared spaces neat. What may seem like small tasks carried great meaning, as learners discovered responsibility, teamwork, and the value of service. For many, it was not only a hands-on experience but also a joyful one, filled with laughter and a sense of purpose.

The day reminded us that Mandela's message still lives on: kindness and service, no matter how simple, have the power to create lasting change. By working together, Via Nova once again showed that even small actions can make a big difference.



NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS – A PROUD MOMENT FOR OUR SCHOOL

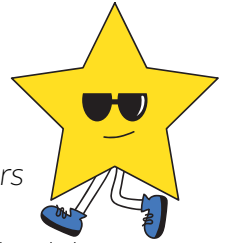
Written by: Liné Nieuwoudt

On 22 July 2025, the National Teaching Awards (NTA) presentations for the Gauteng North District took place at The Willows High School in Pretoria. This special event brought together teachers from across the district to celebrate those who inspire, guide, and open doors for learners.

We are proud of our teachers who passed the interviews and represented Via Nova at this level. Results will follow soon.

Our 2025 representatives were:

- Liné Nieuwoudt - AI-Driven Task Boxes: Food Production Education for ASD Learners
- Malusi Nyawose - Independence through Activities of Daily Living
- Su-Mari Kriel - Creating Structure & Stability for Autism Learners through Visual Schedules
- Leandi Arbuthnot & Veronica Khumalo - Bridging Developmental Gaps through Early Identification and Screening
- Gcinile Gumbi - The Role of Mindfulness in Learning
- Patience Nonjiko - The Calming Power of Needlework: Supporting Self-Regulation



The NTA is more than an award ceremony. It brings recognition to teachers' hard work, shares innovative ideas, offers opportunities for growth, and strengthens school pride. Training and support from the NTA nomination team and district officials helped prepare our staff for this platform.

The day was filled with stories of resilience, innovation, and love for teaching – a reminder that every great achievement in education begins with a teacher who cares. As a school community, we celebrate this milestone together, because when one of us shines, we all shine.



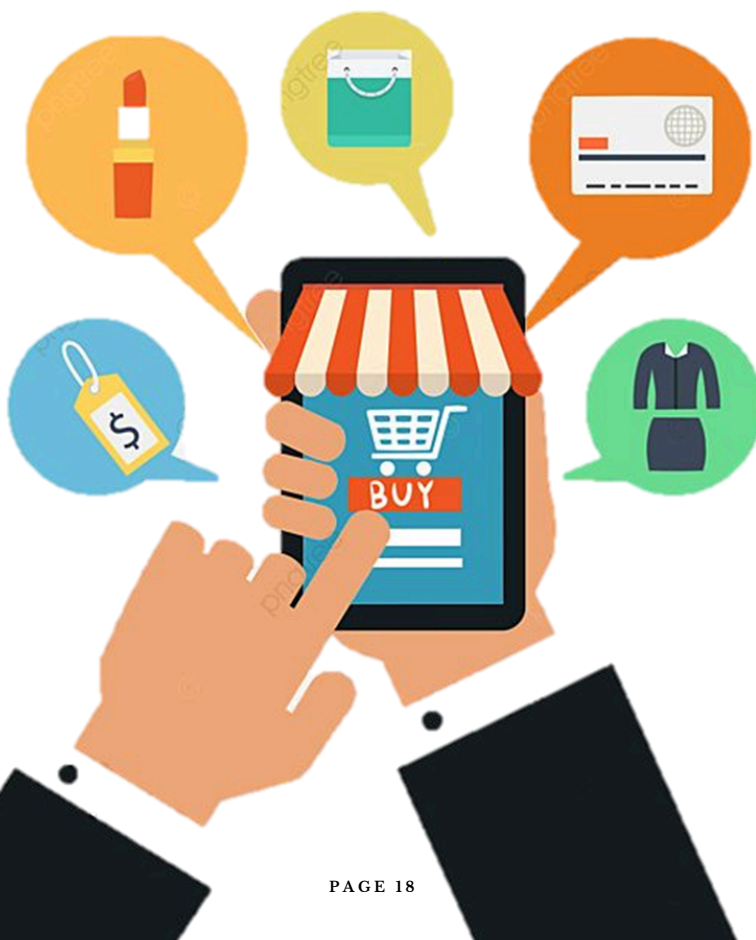
2025
excellence
in Education
AWARDS

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ONLINE SHOP

The Exit Programme will be launching its online shop. We can't wait to introduce you to all our products that will be featured. From our minds to your cart!!!

**Coming
Soon!!!**



LEARNING FROM SIZANANE SCHOOL – EXPLORING SCREEN PRINTING OPPORTUNITIES

Written by: Su-Mari Kriel

On 26 August 2025, Lezanri Snyders, Veronica Khumalo, Bridgette Masuku, and our principal, Ms. EJ Sarpong, visited Sizanane School in Bronkhorstspuit to learn more about their inspiring screen-printing project. The visit was an exciting opportunity to see firsthand how printing can be introduced as a practical and creative skill at our own school.

The team received valuable advice on purchasing a screen-printing machine and saw demonstrations of how the process works. They were also given sample prints and guidance on how to get started. To gain hands-on experience, the group first practiced hand-printing on cloth before moving on to jeans – even completing the hand-printing on the jeans themselves!

The visit was both informative and inspiring, sparking ideas for how we can implement a similar project at Via Nova. With screen printing as a new skill, learners will have the opportunity to explore creativity, develop practical abilities, and possibly open doors to future entrepreneurial ventures.



SCREEN PRINT



THE FARM CORNER – AUTISM FOUNDATION PHASE 1 INCURSION

Written by: Mieke Kraamwinkel

On 25 September 2025, the Autism Foundation Phase 1 was visited by The Farm Corner, bringing a variety of animals for the learners to experience. The children had the chance to pet, feed, and interact with the animals – and even enjoyed dancing with the chickens!

The visit began with the guinea pig, a small, soft, and gentle animal that quickly became a favourite. Learners loved feeding it and stroking its soft coat. The pigs were smelly and required careful handling because of their teeth, but the learners discovered that pigs will eat almost anything. The giant bunnies were another highlight – soft and fluffy, with children lining up to pet them. The ducks seemed frightening at first, but soon their beautiful feathers were admired, and learners learned that ducks don't bite because they don't have teeth.

The goat impressed everyone with his soft coat and playful tricks, while the sheep offered a chance to learn about the uses of wool. A miniature cow also captured the learners' attention, and with the help of guides, they safely petted him and even had a look at his teeth.

The biggest highlight of the day was the pony. Learners took turns riding her for a few steps. Some were cautious at first, but once in the saddle, they didn't want to get off!

The day ended with laughter, joy, and calm moments as learners deepened their understanding of farm animals. The Farm Corner visit created an unforgettable experience that combined fun with valuable learning



VIA NOVA SHINES BEYOND DERDEPOORT - UNISA PERFORMANCE

Written by: Masego Makumbila

The University of South Africa (UNISA) held a conference from the 5th to the 7th of August. This conference was attended by international scholars, who came together to discuss Inclusive Education.

This is a subject very close to our hearts as we advocate for the inclusivity of every learner in our school. Inclusive Education speaks to the importance of ensuring that all learners, irrespective of their abilities, disabilities, learning barriers, and backgrounds, have the right to learn together without any discrimination. This is one of the values we uphold at Via Nova School.

Our gumboot dance group, The Movers and Shakers, led by Mr Hebrone Mokheseng, and the Kasi Dance Group, led by Mr Morena Mokhatle, were among the groups that were selected and invited to perform and showcase their talent at this top-notch event.

Our learners were beaming with pride at the discovery of how important they were on the open day of the conference, and they certainly put their best feet forward. The Exit Programme also had the opportunity to be part of the exhibitors, and they left a great impression on the majority of the conference guests, who were taken by the creativity of our learners and the products exhibited over the three days of the conference. This really proves that indeed, a child with special needs will inspire you to be a special kind of person!



CELEBRATING WOMEN'S DAY: A DAY OF JOY AND SPECIAL TREATS

Written by: Happy Masondo

On 11 August, Via Nova School proudly celebrated Women's Day, and the event was a resounding success filled with joy, appreciation, and special moments. Female staff were divided into different stages – cooking, agriculture, needlework, arts & crafts, pottery and the sensory room – each offering its own unique experience.

The COOKING CLASS turned the school kitchen into a hub of laughter and good food. Our incredible women spent their time preparing and enjoying a delicious meal together – a wonderful way to relax, connect, and celebrate one another's hard work and dedication.



At the AGRICULTURE GROUP, teachers rolled up their sleeves and engaged in practical, hands-on activities that highlighted teamwork and creativity.



The NEEDLEWORK GROUP showcased their talents by creating handmade, personalized gifts. These unique items were a testament to the dedication, skill, and artistry of our teachers.



During ARTS AND CRAFTS, teachers expressed their creativity and enjoyed the fun of making together, strengthening bonds while exploring their artistic side.



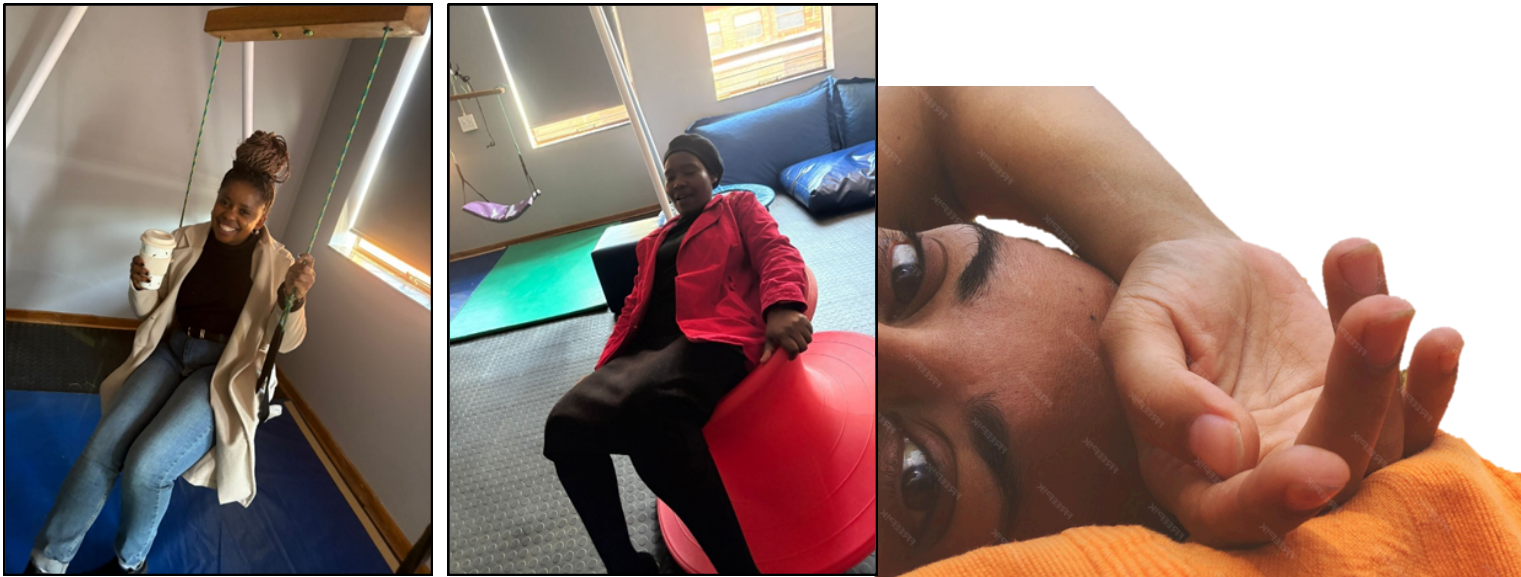
The NAILS AND BEAUTY CLASS brought a touch of pampering, as teachers were treated to simple but refreshing beauty activities that left them feeling appreciated and cared for.



At the POTTERY STAGE, teachers shaped clay into bowls, discovering the joy of working with their hands while experiencing the calming and creative process of pottery-making.



Finally, the SENSORY ROOM offered a truly special experience. Teachers engaged and relaxed their senses at different stations and were treated with small delights such as coffee, biscuits, fruit, and chocolate – the perfect way to de-stress and recharge



The atmosphere throughout the day was one of gratitude and community.

It was a celebration dedicated to honouring the hard work, resilience, and contributions of the women of Via Nova – making it a truly unforgettable and heartwarming occasion.

