PRE-PREPARATORY 2025

SCHOOL MAGAZINE

UPLANDS

Est. 1928













Today's thinking child is tomorrow's achiever

Chairman of the Board's Report

To the Uplands Family: Parents, Pupils, Team and Community.

On a beautiful autumn evening in May, we gathered once again to celebrate Founders and the remarkable journey of Uplands. As we move steadily toward our centenary in 2028, we do so united as one school: Prep, Pre-Prep, College, Outreach, staff, parents, past pupils and friends. Nearly 97 years after our founding families laid the first stones, the flame they lit continues to burn brightly.

It is my privilege to share that Uplands continues to go from strength to strength.

January 2025 saw the highest pupil enrolment in our history, with waiting lists across much of the campus. The first phase of our solar installation was completed, and during the April holiday the entire campus operated off solar power – a great achievement and meeting of goals. Our endowment fund continues to grow, strengthening our ability to expand scholarships and invest in future infrastructure. The campus itself reflects the care and dedication of our operational teams, and preparations are already underway for our 2028 centenary celebrations.

Most recently, we celebrated the outstanding 2025 IEB National Senior Certificate results. This cohort, whose high school journey began during the disruption of the global pandemic, concluded their schooling careers with exceptional resilience and achievement. Their results reflect not only their perseverance and commitment, but the unwavering standards and guidance of our academic staff.

The Class of 2025 achieved a 100% pass rate, with 98% earning Bachelor's Degree passes. Nearly a third of all subject results were awarded an A symbol, and 80% of results were above 60%. Multiple subjects performed above the IEB national average, with several achieving distinction rates that speak to depth of understanding and academic excellence. We are particularly proud of those pupils who ranked in the top 1% nationally in their subjects, as well as those recognised on the IEB Outstanding Achievement List for sustained top-tier performance.

These results affirm the strength of our academic culture: high expectations, structured support, innovation in teaching, and a belief in what young people are capable of achieving when challenged and encouraged.

This year, one of our central themes has been inclusion. When we truly include everyone, we unlock possibilities none of us could discover alone. Each individual on this campus contributes meaningfully to the whole.

In a world that can feel increasingly fragmented, we must consciously choose community. Through diversity of thought, background and experience, we become stronger together.

Alongside this commitment to inclusion sits a challenge reshaping our global landscape at unprecedented speed: Artificial Intelligence.

In just over two years, AI has shifted from novelty to daily reality. Predictions suggest that within a few short years, systems may outperform

Chairman of the Board's Report

humans across multiple intellectual domains. From an educational perspective, AI is already influencing how learning is delivered and assessed.

It is easy to feel daunted by such rapid change. Yet history reminds us that disruption also creates opportunity. The transition from horse-drawn carriages to automobiles transformed entire industries and gave rise to new ones. AI represents a similar inflection point. It is powerful and inevitable, but it must not be feared. The question for our pupils is not whether AI will shape your world. It will. The question is how you will differentiate yourselves within it.

Our role as a school is to cultivate adaptability, empathy and resilience. We must strengthen what makes us uniquely human. Beyond data and logic lies experiential intelligence — the ability to apply lived experience, reflect, find meaning, and make principled decisions in complex situations. Machines may process information at scale; humans bring conscience, depth and purpose.

And at the foundation of all of this lies one enduring quality: kindness. Kindness binds the community. It strengthens culture. As Bob Kerrey observed, unexpected kindness is one of the most powerful and underrated forces for human change.

As we look toward our centenary and beyond, I am confident not only in the strategic direction of Uplands, but in the character of our community.

You can be proud of where your school stands today and optimistic about where it is headed.

Let us embrace innovation without losing humanity.

Let us pursue excellence without losing empathy.

Let us remain adaptable, inclusive and kind.

Together, we continue to build something enduring.

Mr Greg Dane
Chairman



Executive Headmaster's Report

As we reflect on 2025 in this edition of the Uplands magazine, I feel proud and thankful for everything our school community has achieved. Uplands continues to be a place where tradition and innovation work hand in hand, and where every pupil is encouraged to grow and thrive.

This year has brought many highlights. Academically, our pupils have worked hard and performed well, supported by dedicated staff and a curriculum that now includes more innovation and interactive learning. In sport, our teams have shown great skill and teamwork, with strong results and even stronger character.

Creatively, our pupils have embraced opportunities in drama, music and art, adding colour and energy to school life. These moments have helped build confidence and connection across our community.

Our sustainability initiatives took off this year, with pupils getting involved in rewilding and sustainability projects. It's been encouraging to see their care for the environment grow through hands-on learning.

The Uplands Outreach programme continued to expand, strengthening ties with local schools and sharing resources to support education beyond our campus.

None of this would be possible without the people who make Uplands what it is.

Our staff have continued to grow professionally, our families have offered steady support, and our pupils have shown resilience, kindness and determination.

Thank you to everyone who played a part in making 2025 a successful and memorable year. Together, we've built something meaningful, and I look forward to what we'll achieve next.

Mr Sean Carlisle
Executive Headmaster



Chaplain's Report

The Uplands Chaplaincy in 2025 has been nothing short of a great success and a significant season of building for the future. It has laid strong foundations for all we hope to do and become — as a Preparatory School and as a school with a wide and ambitious vision.

The Chaplaincy is led by myself as Chaplain, alongside our dedicated Grade 7 Sacristans. This year, 16 Sacristans served — a remarkable group of young leaders who stepped into their roles with enthusiasm, responsibility and heart. It has been a tremendous privilege to mentor and grow them in spaces where they can shine their light, serve others, and exercise meaningful influence within the school community.

We continue to run weekly chapel services that are engaging, age-appropriate, and spiritually informative. Alongside these, a wide range of events and initiatives take place throughout the year, creating consistent opportunities for worship, reflection, service, leadership development, and community building across both the Foundation Phase and Senior Phase.

All Grade 4 - 7 pupils have a dedicated 30-minute session with the Chaplain each week. This provides an excellent opportunity to work through a curriculum focused on values, ethics, morals, and the life, example and legacy of Jesus Christ - who continues to empower us through His Spirit to shape the world in the way we live today.

From Pancake Races to the Pancake Evening, generous donations were raised for the Uplands Prep Hope Fund. We marked the beginning of Lent with a meaningful Ash Wednesday celebration, beginning our 40-day journey towards Easter, which was acknowledged and celebrated during the Term 1 holidays.

In May, we held our combined Ascension Day Service with the whole school on the Webster Lawn - a special and unifying moment as one community.

Our end-of-year Carol Service was exceptional. Despite gloomy weather, the hall provided a warm and joyful atmosphere, filled with festive spirit and community celebration.

One of the most significant developments this year was the election of the 2026 Sacristans. A new system was introduced, tested and successfully implemented. Fifteen new Sacristan Leaders were elected, with the role of Head Sacristan shared between one boy and one girl - Samuel Hauptfleisch and Sofia Dimitrou.

These newly-elected Sacristans led the final chapel service of 2025 - the Grade 7 Farewell Chapel - which was a solemn and special occasion marking the end of the year.

Overall, 2025 has been a year of momentum - strengthening what already exists while building intentionally for the future of Chaplaincy at Uplands.

Reverend Matthew Jennings
School Chaplain



UPLANDS Pre-Preparatory Staff



Introduction from the Head

There is something rather special about a school magazine. It invites us to pause, to look back, and to appreciate the many moments that so easily rush past in the busyness of school life.

As I reflect on 2025, I am struck not by one single highlight, but by the steady rhythm of connection, growth and joy that has shaped our year. So many of these moments have appeared in our newsletters and social media posts, a snapshot of a class project, a smile caught mid-laughter, a proud achievement shared - and this magazine brings them together into one collective story.

At the heart of our school is community. This year, we have seen children grow in confidence and curiosity, discovering not only new skills but also a deeper understanding of themselves and one another. We have watched friendships form, resilience develop, and kindness show itself in small but meaningful ways. These are the moments that matter most, even if they are sometimes quiet and unassuming.



Our staff have once again gone above and beyond, creating learning spaces that are warm, engaging and filled with purpose. Their dedication is evident not only in the outcomes we celebrate, but in the care, patience and encouragement they offer each child every day. I am deeply grateful for the professionalism, creativity and heart they bring to our school.

To our families, thank you for your trust, your partnership and your constant support. Whether cheering from the sidelines, engaging with our posts, attending events, or simply sharing in your child's daily stories at home, you are an essential part of our community. Together, we shape an environment where children feel safe, valued and inspired to learn.

This magazine is a celebration of all that we are and all that we continue to become. It captures the learning, the laughter, the challenges and the triumphs that define our year. I hope as you turn these pages, you see familiar faces, cherished memories and perhaps a few moments you had forgotten - reminders of how rich and full our shared journey has been.

As we look ahead, we do so with gratitude for the year behind us and excitement for all that lies ahead. May this magazine serve as a keepsake of 2025, and a testament to the spirit of our school - a place where we learn, grow and flourish together.

Warmest wishes!
Ms Janine Stott

GRADE 0000

Cuddly Cubs

A Year Wrapped in Wonder

What a joy-filled year it's been with our Cuddly Cubs! From our tiniest littlies to our busy 2- and 3-year-olds, they embraced each day with curiosity, laughter and messy enthusiasm. We shared special moments like our Teddy Bears' Picnic, Reptile Visit, Water Fun Day, nature walks, and a magical Christmas concert. Through play, exploration and friendship, their independence, confidence and communication blossomed beautifully. They arrived as tiny, dependent babies, and leave as capable, confident little people - growing not only physically, but emotionally too. The cuddles, the trust, the unconditional love - this is the magic of Cuddly Cubs.

Teachers:
Mrs Amber Pretorius and
Mrs Natalie Alsworth-Elvey

Teachers Assistants and Helpers:
Miss Sophia Mbiba, Mrs Busi Gazite and Miss Mabu Mahlangu







Cuddly Cubs









GRADE
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Cuddly Cubs Class Photo



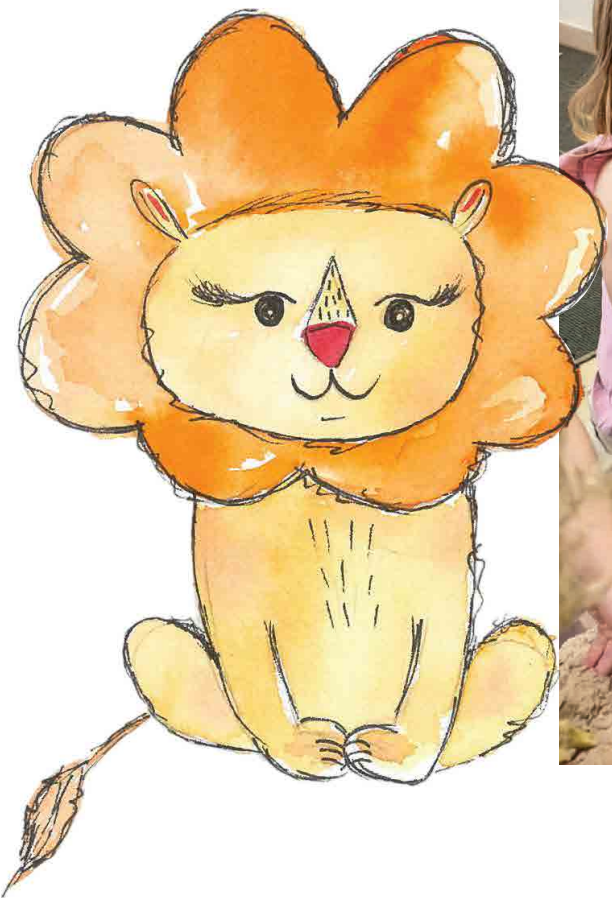
Teacher: Mrs Natalie Alsworth-Elvey

Cuddly Cubs

GRADE 0000









Cuddly Cubs

GRADE
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Cuddly Cubs Class Photo



Teacher: Mrs Amber Pretorius

Zippy Zebras

GRADE 000



The Zippy Zebras have had a wonderful year filled with learning, laughter and discovery. Through play and experimenting, they have grown in confidence, curiosity and independence. Every day they explored, asked questions, built, created and learned new skills while having fun with their friends. Play has helped them develop their language, problem-solving and social skills. We are so proud of how much each child has grown this year, and it has been a joy watching them learn and develop together.

Teachers:
Mrs Hayley Armitage and Mrs Jacqui Smith

Teachers Assistants and Helpers: Mrs Thandi Magagula, Mrs Precious Mbeye and Miss Zinhle Mashigo









GRADE 000

Zippy Zebras









Zippy Zebras Class Photo



GRADE
000

Zippy Zebras







Zippy Zebras

GRADE 000









Zippy Zebras Class Photo



Teacher: Mrs Hayley Armitage

Happy Hippos

GRADE 00

The Happy Hippos have had a truly joyful and memorable year, filled with laughter, learning and wonderful growth. This lively group of 5-year-olds embraced each day with curiosity and enthusiasm, diving into new themes, creative activities and exciting discoveries. From building imaginative worlds in the sandpit to exploring early numeracy and literacy concepts, their confidence and independence have blossomed beautifully.

Friendships have flourished as the children learned to share, collaborate and support one another, creating a warm and caring classroom community. Their days were brightened with music, movement, storytelling and plenty of giggles, making every moment meaningful and fun.

It has been a privilege to watch the Happy Hippos grow into capable, expressive and eager learners, ready to take on the next adventure that awaits them. We are so proud of each and every one of them and will treasure the special memories made this year.

Teachers:
Mrs Natalie Brits,
Mrs Jade Möhle and Mrs Miriam Bundo

Teachers Assistants and Helpers:
Miss Lethu Lubisi and Mrs Roster Thabethe



Happy Hippos

GRADE 00B







Happy Hippos

GRADE 00B









Happy Hippos Class Photo



Teacher: Mrs Natalie Brits

Happy Hippos

GRADE 00M











GRADE 00M

Happy Hippos









Happy Hippos Class Photo



Leaping Leopards

GRADE OK

The Leaping Leopards enjoyed a joyful year of discovery, creativity and growth. Through hands-on play, songs, stories and sensory exploration, children developed confidence, friendships, and early literacy and numeracy skills. Each day was filled with laughter, curiosity and meaningful moments that nurtured a love for learning and built strong foundations for future success. We proudly celebrate their wonderful achievements.



Teachers:
Mrs Megan Stephen and Mrs Liesa Korb

Teachers Assistants and Helpers: Miss Mmathapelo Mashigo, Miss Noma Nyasenga and Mrs Simangele Sibili







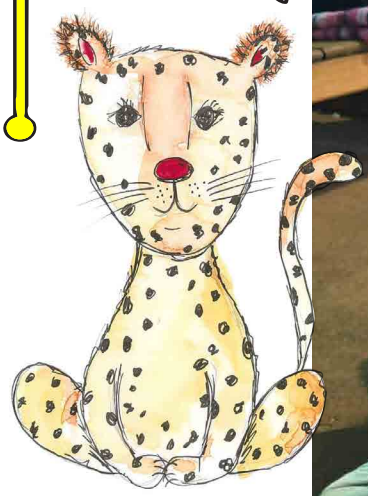






Leaping Leopards

GRADE OK

















Leaping Leopards Class Photo



Teacher: Mrs Liesa Korb

Leaping Leopards

GRADE 0S







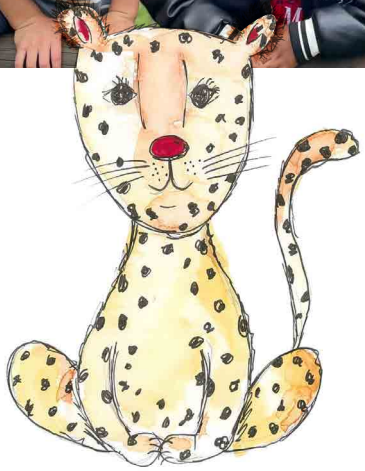












Leaping Leopards Class Photo



Teacher: Ms Megan Stephen

Aftercare

Our Aftercare group has been a vibrant and happy space where children of all ages come together to relax, play and connect after a busy school day. This mixed-age environment created a special sense of community, with older children naturally guiding and supporting the younger ones, while younger children brought energy, curiosity and joy to every afternoon.

Days were filled with a balance of structured activities and free play - from creative art and building projects to outdoor adventures and imaginative games. Whether enjoying a quiet moment with a book or engaging in lively group play, each child found their place and felt a sense of belonging.

Throughout the year, we've seen beautiful friendships form across age groups, along with growth in confidence, cooperation and independence. Aftercare has truly been a home-away-from-home, filled with laughter, kindness and meaningful moments that we will fondly remember.











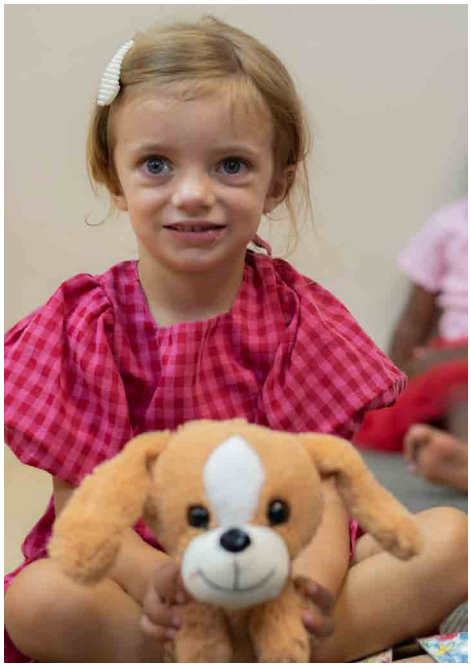
Teddy Bears' Picnic

Our little Uplanders had a beary wonderful time at the Teddy Bears' Picnic to celebrate Valentine's Day 2025! Laughter, games, and cuddles filled the air as each child brought their favourite teddy for a magical day of storytelling, fun activities and yummy treats.

In the spirit of kindness, our extra teddies were donated to two much-needed charities, GRIP and the Millennium Home of Hope, spreading love and comfort to children who need it most. It was a heart-warming day of friendship, imagination and giving - creating memories to cherish forever!















Teddy Bears' Picnic















Sports Day

On Saturday 1 March 2025, we held our annual Sports Day. The event was all about fun, teamwork, and plenty of cheering as our little athletes - from our youngest Cubs to our Grade 0s - took part in their annual Sports Day. The children participated in a variety of sports games and fun events and the day culminated with sprints, as well as parent and sibling races. Participation and fun were the focus of the day, where each effort was celebrated and encouraged. It was a day filled with excitement, laughter, and proud moments, with parents, grannies, grandpas and siblings all there to cheer them on!



The air was filled with laughter and excitement, but the true magic came from the kindness shared between friends. As children cheered each other on, their smiles grew brighter with every helping hand and encouraging word. Whether it was high-fives after a race, a friendly hug for a teammate, or joining in with excitement, the day showed that the best victories are the ones where kindness shines the brightest.







Sports Day













Grandparents' Day

What a day to remember!

Our Grandparents' Day was celebrated on Friday 4 April 2025. Despite the rain, the Grade 3s warmly welcomed grandparents (and grand-friends) with umbrellas in hand and escorted them to the hall.

The celebration began with a beautiful mix of IsiZulu, Afrikaans, and heartfelt songs expressing love for our cherished visitors.

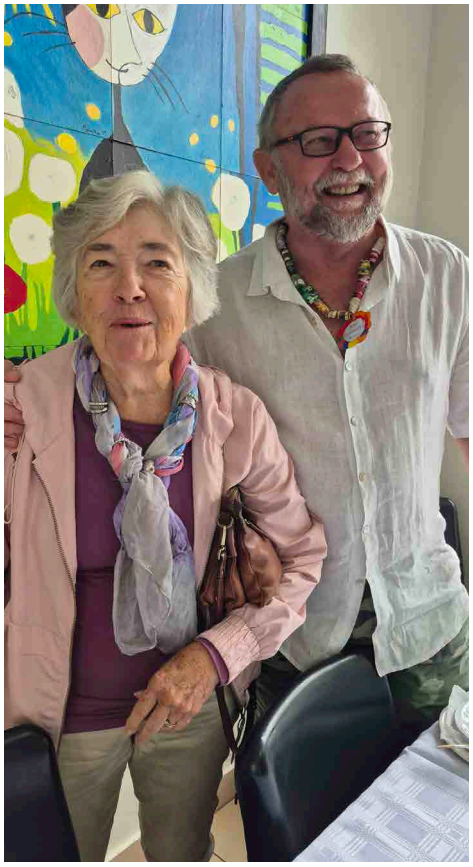
After the performance, grandparents joined their grandkids for an interactive morning of cupcake decorating, classroom fun and storytime, creating precious memories.

The day was made even more special with a delightful tea spread, lovingly prepared by Chef Molly and her team, and a beautifully decorated tea room by our amazing mums.

So much warmth, joy and love filled the air !















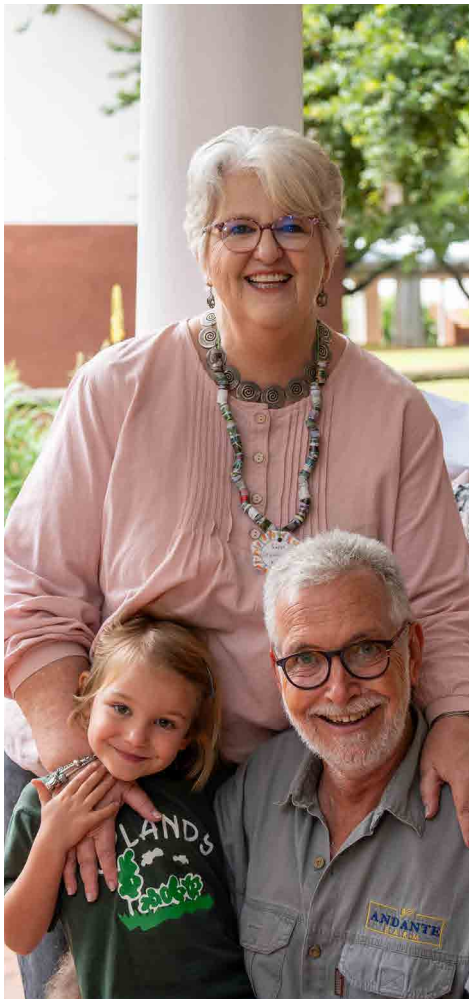
Grandparents' Day











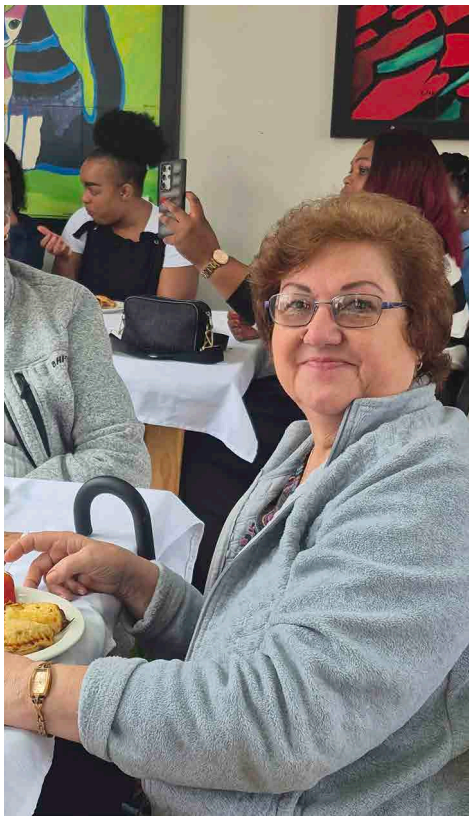




Grandparents' Day



















Workers' Day

What better way to kick off the second term's theme of inclusivity than by celebrating Workers' Day on 1 May 2025 together at Little Uplands!

Our little ones came dressed as all kinds of workers, from chefs to firefighters, and it was amazing to see their imaginations at work! They got to interview some of our wonderful staff and even a few awesome parents who kindly came in to share aspects of their jobs.

It was so sweet watching the little Uplanders ask thoughtful questions and really connect with the people who help make our school community so special. They learned that every job matters, and that everyone belongs here, no matter what uniform they wear.

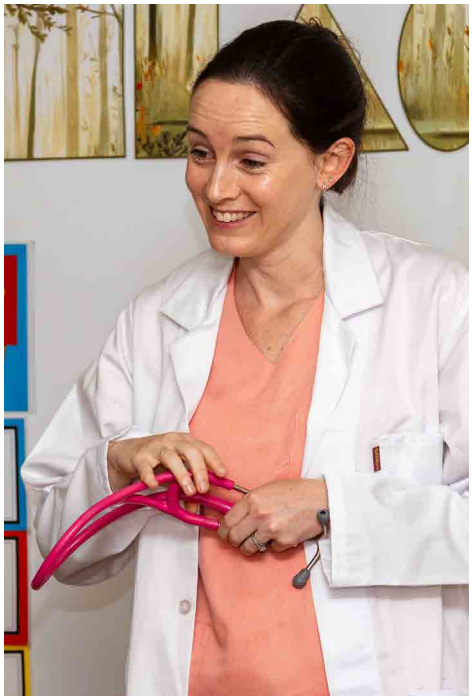






Workers' Day













Mother's Day

Pamper Day at Little Uplands

On Friday 9 May, we celebrated our incredible mums with a morning full of love, laughter and connection. Our Pamper Day was a chance to slow down and honour the beautiful bond between mums and their little ones.

The Little Uplanders opened the celebration with heartfelt songs, followed by precious one-on-one time where they pampered their mums with gentle hand massages, sweet nail painting, and thoughtful flower arranging.

And because every mum deserves to feel like royalty, our little ones created special crowns - decorated with love and imagination - so their mums could truly be Queen for the Day. These crowns were worn with such pride!

To end the morning, mums and children packed a little party snack box together - something special to share and savour together ! It was a morning filled with giggles, hugs and happy tears - just the way Mother's Day should be.







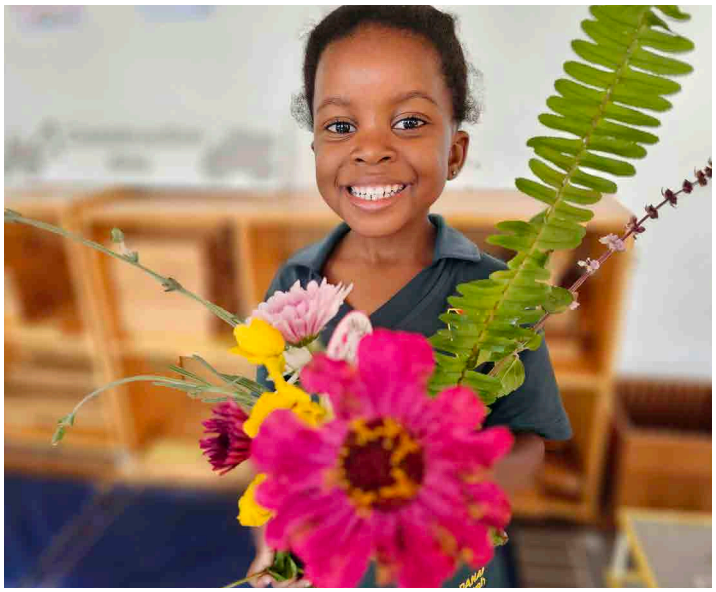


Mother's Day













Father's Day

Superhero Day

Celebrating Our Real-Life Heroes

On Friday 13 June 2025, we celebrated the real-life heroes in our children's lives - our dads and special guests who showed up with big hearts and open arms. Some came suited up in capes and masks, others came as they are - but every one of them was a hero in their child's eyes.



Together, they built shields and masks, crafted box creations, and some even launched handmade boats to see if they could float. The playground became an action zone with our superhero obstacle course, dads sliding, climbing, and racing alongside their little sidekicks. Face-painting was a highlight and even dads got superhero makeovers from their little artists.

The day ended on a sweet note as each dad and child shared a special picnic moment, just the two of them, side by side.





Superhero Day





















Mandela Day

In the true spirit of Mandela Day, our "Little Uplanders" came together with kindness and generosity to give 67 minutes of their time in service to others. With hearts full of love, they created beautiful stationery packs for the children at Enkhokhokhweni Primary School. Each child decorated a bag with care and added a special message, making each gift truly meaningful.

There was so much joy as the children packed the bags, carefully selecting a variety of stationery to ensure each child would receive a thoughtful and useful collection to support their learning. Thanks to the generous donations from our families, these thoughtful packs will soon be delivered by our Uplands Outreach team. We hope they bring joy and inspire hours of learning and creativity for the pupils at Enkhokhokhweni.

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others."

– Nelson Mandela









Mandela Day










Heritage Day

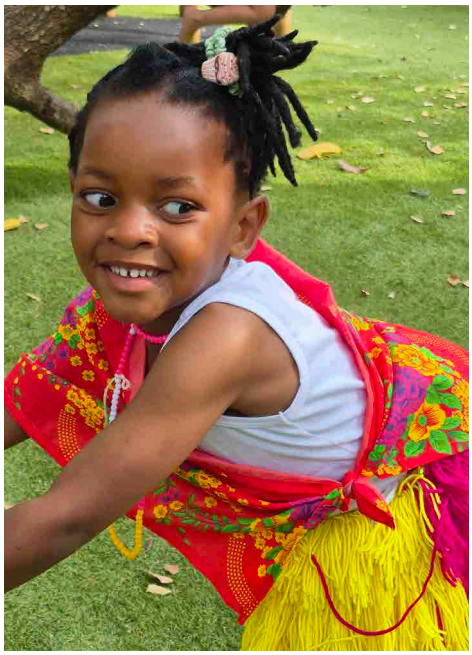
Heritage Day at Uplands Pre-Preparatory - Vibrant colours, Drums, Smiles and Heritage!

What a vibrant celebration of culture and community! From the moment our families arrived and enjoyed the traditional photo booth, it was clear that this day would be extra special. Everyone celebrated with enthusiasm, proudly wearing outfits that represented their culture or one they wanted to honour.

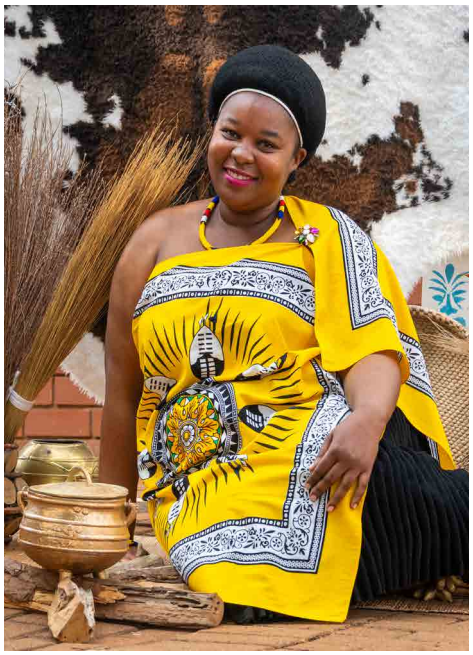
Our teachers made South African culture come alive for the children! From Xhosa face painting and Venda clay pot decorating, to traditional community games, learning African dance songs and a Voortrekker Volkslied dance, and even an African drumming experience, the day was full of excitement and learning!

Children shared a taste of the food that is part of their culture, which made the day even more memorable. Together, we celebrated the rich diversity that makes our country, and Uplands, the incredible place it is!









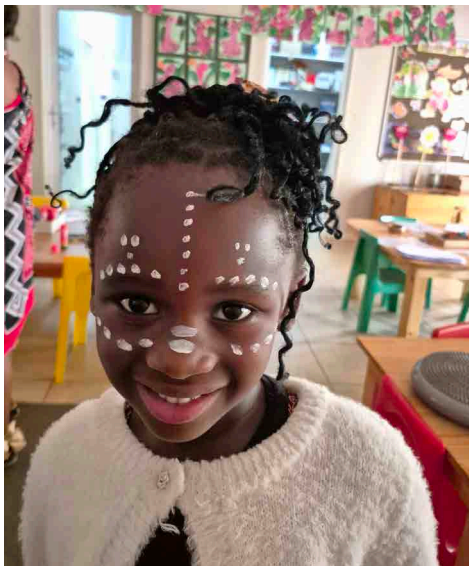




Heritage Day

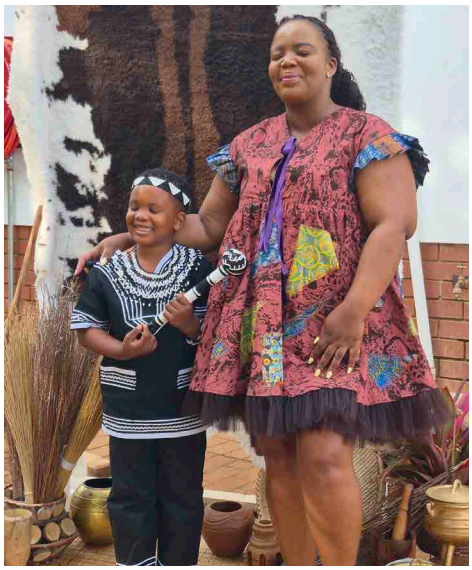
















Spring Day

We held our annual family Spring Day picnic on Saturday 6 September. We loved celebrating the season with our Uplands Pre-Preparatory families. Our little Uplanders, siblings big and small, moms, dads, grandparents and even cousins joined us for a morning filled with picnics, laughter, bikes, scooters, and plenty of fun activities for the children.

Parents had a chance to engage in sports and games with the children, little ones danced in the bubbles, and colourful faces were seen everywhere after the face-painting fun. It was wonderful to see our community come together; sharing blankets, snacks and smiles, while teachers connected with families outside of the usual school routine.







Spring Day

















Musical Nativity

Our little ones took to the stage for our much-loved Nativity concert - and goodness, did they shine! Enthusiastic singing, adorable wiggles, huge storytelling moments, and dancers who were either giving it their all or suddenly freezing in the sweetest way... it was everything we love about pre-school magic.

We captured the sweetest scenes - tiny faces lit up with excitement, little stars who couldn't stop smiling, and giggles that bubbled up at just the right moments. Every photograph holds a bit of that warm festive sparkle.

And of course, the best part of any pre-school concert... the tiny mishaps, the unexpected pauses, the little interactions that remind us just how wonderfully real and joyful children are. These moments are the ones we treasure most.









Musical Nativity













In Loving Memory of Precious



This year we were saddened by the passing of our beloved Grade 000 teacher helper, Zanele Mbeye, affectionately known as Precious.

Precious was a gentle, nurturing presence in our classrooms and a much-loved member of our Uplands family for 11 years. During that time, she touched the lives of so many children and families with her warmth, kindness and quiet devotion.

Jacqui, who worked closely with her, said it so beautifully: "She really loved her job and being around the children. She loved sitting with them, and she always believed that all children are special."

This touching reflection captures so much of who Precious was to all of us — warm, present, and deeply committed to the children in her care.











UPLANDS

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ISASA

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LESSONS IN CONSERVATION
SERVING TO SAVE

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Investing in a thinking generation