

IMIBALA TRUST MID-YEAR NEWSLETTER

the **mibala**
trust



WITH HEARTFELT THANKS

To our sponsors, partners, and supporters,

Every story in this newsletter exists because of you. The children we teach, the families we walk alongside, the communities we serve - none of it would be possible without your generosity, your trust, and your belief in what we are building together.

This year, once again, you showed up. You gave your time, your resources, and your encouragement, and in doing so, you gave our children something even greater. You gave them hope, opportunity, and the chance to dream bigger.

As we look ahead, we carry your support with gratitude and renewed commitment to our mission.

Thank you for being part of The Imibala Trust family. We could not do this without your support.

With appreciation,
The Imibala Trust





Sponsor-A-Child

The first half of 2026 has been another remarkable chapter for Imibala's flagship Sponsor-A-Child School Uniform Programme, ensuring that thousands of children begin their school year with dignity, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, **3,189** learners have already received brand-new school uniforms this year, with a further **491** learners to be dressed in the coming months. In 2026, the Sponsor-A-Child Programme is supporting **3,680** learners across 41 schools in Somerset West, Graaff-Reinet, Hermanus, Moorreesburg and for the first time, Hoedspruit.

One of the year's biggest successes has been taking our uniform dressing days directly to schools, by transforming school halls into professional fitting stations.

Complete with private changing cubicles and carefully prepared uniform packs, our team has been able to dress up to 180 learners each day, making the process more efficient while creating a wonderful experience for every child!

This year has been filled with many meaningful moments as some of our sponsors met the children whose lives they are changing. We were delighted to welcome our long-standing supporters!

Another special moment was the annual cheque handover at ACJ Phakade Primary, which saw 31 learners receive their new uniforms thanks to the generosity of our Swedish sponsors.





Visual Arts

This year, our Visual Arts learners have continued to explore their creativity through exciting projects inspired by Surrealism, including owl paintings, charcoal portraits, collage self-portraits and imaginative pillowcase designs.

A special highlight was a monoprinting workshop presented by guest artist Jo Shepperd from *Mooyo*, giving learners the opportunity to experience a new artistic technique.



We are also delighted to have welcomed three new volunteers to the programme, bringing fresh inspiration and support to our young artists!



Pottery

The Pottery Studio has enjoyed a wonderful first half of the year, with many learners returning for their second and third year, allowing them to build on their skills with confidence.

Inspired by this year's theme of Surrealism, learners explored hand-building and glazing techniques while creating textured bowls, heart-shaped pinch pots, and imaginative ceramic pieces. The Tereo class filled the studio with laughter as they transformed playful ideas into unique creations, including a fun collaboration with the Art Department which resulted in two beautiful ceramic hand bowls created as fundraising pieces!



The first two terms have been filled with creativity, collaboration, and joyful learning, making the Pottery Programme a space where every learner can express themselves and grow.



Drama

The Drama Programme has enjoyed a productive and creative first half of the year, with learners actively developing their performance, storytelling, and stage skills.

The Zandvliet High learners have been involved in scripting, casting, and the early conceptualisation of their production - all in preparation for this year's Imibala Showcase, *Chaos in the Channels!*

Classes continue to be filled with energy, creativity, and laughter, creating a space where learners feel confident to express themselves and explore their talents.



Music

The Music Programme has experienced exciting growth during the first half of the year! Our drum groups have begun developing their performance skills, with a focus on stage presence and preparing for future collaborations with the newly established Imibala choir.

Looking ahead, learners will take part in designing and creating their own performance drums, adding a creative, hands-on element to their musical journey.



Dance

The Dance Programme has enjoyed an energetic and exciting first half of the year as learners prepared for the Imibala Showcase. Learners have shown increasing confidence, embracing the opportunity to express themselves through movement.

Following the Showcase, our dance groups will enjoy special outings in celebration of their hard work and dedication. We look forward to seeing the outcome of their efforts and all they have achieved as they take to the stage!



Ballroom

This year, we launched our new Ballroom Dance Programme lead by Nigel Lucas, which has had a promising start! Learners have embraced the opportunity to develop new dance skills in a fun and supportive environment, demonstrating enthusiasm, respect, and a genuine excitement to learn a new skill.

As interest in ballroom dancing continues to grow, we look forward to welcoming more learners and expanding the programme with additional classes.

We are especially excited to see our ballroom dancers make their debut at the Imibala Showcase, where they will have the opportunity to share all they have been working towards.



Ballet

The Ballet Programme has had a wonderful start to the year, welcoming many new learners who are eager to develop their skills and discover the joy of dance, under the watchful eye of Gail Hattingh.

At the same time, our returning dancers continue to flourish, with several learners now having been part of the programme for a number of years. Their dedication and progress are evident as they refine their technique and take on more challenging choreography.



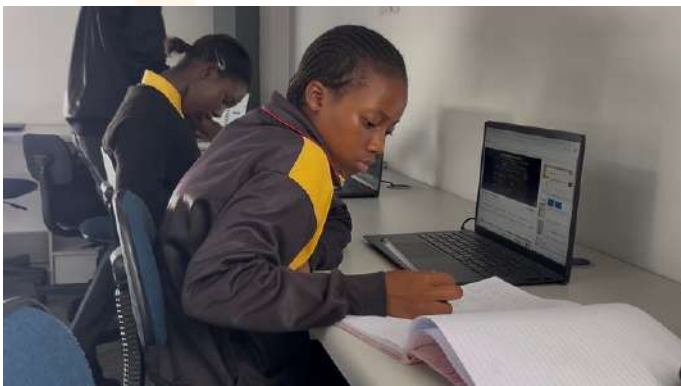
Together, all of our ballet learners are working hard in preparation for the Imibala showcase, and we look forward to celebrating their achievements on stage.



Mathematics

Our Mathematics learners have continued to grow in confidence through interactive lessons and practical problem-solving.

This year, our Grade 7 learners strengthened their understanding of fractions, percentages, algebra, geometry, and integers, while our Grade 11 & 12 learners focused on preparing for assessments through revision of trigonometry, analytical geometry, statistics, probability, and financial mathematics. It has been encouraging to see learners tackle every challenging concept with confidence.



LEGO Play & Coding and Robotics

Creativity, teamwork, and innovation have been at the heart of our LEGO programmes this year. Learners worked together to design imaginative structures, solve challenges, and a special exercise had our learners create LEGO hearts representing kindness and compassion.



Through LEGO Coding and Robotics, learners strengthened their logical thinking and coding skills while discovering how much fun learning can be.

Our Coding & Robotics programme continues to equip learners with valuable digital skills while encouraging logical thinking and innovation.

Imibala Awards & Little Lions

Our Awards learners have continued to challenge themselves through engaging English, Mathematics, and Coding activities while developing valuable life skills during the first half of the year. A highlight was a special visit to the *Helderberg Nature Reserve*, where our learners spent the afternoon connecting with one another and with nature.



The Little Lions Programme has showcased wonderful interactive games, creative activities, and practical learning experiences this year, including many fun sessions where learners celebrated one another's strengths, encouraging kindness, confidence, positive relationships, and teamwork.



Our Little Lions team has grown, with more staff members being trained in order to mentor learners through this programme.

Literacy & Our Library

Our Literacy Programme continues to bring learning to life through engaging, hands-on experiences. This year, our learners have explored where food comes from, discovering the journey from farm to table through classroom activities and a guided tour of the Imibala garden.

By combining reading, discussion, and real-world learning, the programme continues to strengthen literacy skills while encouraging curiosity and a lifelong love of learning.



Between April and July of this year, more than 520 books were borrowed by 238 active library members, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for reading among our learners!

Time Well Spent!

A group of sixteen of our young learners had the incredible opportunity to partake in a Swiss watchmaking experience, hosted by *RLG Africa*, where they were introduced to the fascinating world of Swiss horology - the art and science of measuring time.

Learners completed the FHH Level 1 examination, where the top two performers will have the opportunity to progress to the next stage of the programme, including a visit to the *RCS Customer Service Centre* in Johannesburg, with the potential for future internship opportunities in Dubai or with the manufacturer.



We are incredibly proud of every learner who embraced this unique experience with curiosity and enthusiasm!



HOSPITALITY TRAINING

Hospitality Training Programme

From celebrating graduations to welcoming a new generation of hospitality students and expanding into an exciting new café, 2026 has already been a remarkable year for our Hospitality Programme.

We proudly celebrated the graduation of both our first and second hospitality intakes, with graduates embarking on work placements, further studies, and exciting new career opportunities.

One of the year's biggest highlights so far has been the opening of our second *Imibala Café* at *BMW Motoradd* in Stellenbosch. Since opening its doors, the café has earned wonderful feedback for its exceptional coffee, warm hospitality, and the professionalism of our learners.

Both our Somerset West and Stellenbosch Café, have provided students with invaluable real-world experiences, allowing them to build confidence while serving customers in a warm and professional environment.



Earlier this year, our learners were inspired by entrepreneur *Gary Hirson*, whose motivational talk, *The Recipe to Success*, encouraged them to dream big and believe in their own potential.

July welcomed our third intake of students, who have already begun developing their barista, customer service, and hospitality skills through practical, hands-on training. We look forward to watching our learners continue to grow as they prepare for successful careers in the hospitality industry.





SKILLS

Golf

The Imibala Golf Programme continues to inspire and equip learners with skills that extend far beyond the fairway. Through weekly coaching, learners develop confidence, discipline, perseverance, teamwork, and respect while refining their golfing abilities.

A standout highlight from the first half of the year was the opportunity for our learners to attend the *Investec South African Women's Open*, where they spent one-on-one time with top golfers. Experiences like these expose our young learners to the professional game while motivating them to pursue their own goals.

Under the guidance of PGA Professional *William Guy*, this programme continues to nurture not only sporting talent but also valuable life skills, creating opportunities for learners to grow both on and off the course.



Earth Buddies

Our Earth Buddies programme has continued to nurture curiosity and environmental responsibility inspiring a love for nature through fun, hands-on gardening activities.

This year so far, learners explored plants, soil, and environmental care while taking responsibility for growing their own creative self-portrait planters, where leaves would grow into their “hair”. These interactive experiences encourage a deeper appreciation for the natural world while getting creative!



Cooking

Our Cooking Programme has been filled with lots of creativity and delicious achievements this year.

Learners have developed essential kitchen skills while preparing a variety of recipes, including scones, popcorn chicken, pumpkin fritters, sweetcorn and cheese muffins, Nutella French toast rolls, and Romany Cream biscuits.

Alongside all the tasty creations, our learners developed practical kitchen skills, food hygiene knowledge, teamwork, and confidence in preparing meals independently.



Work Readiness Programme

This year saw the exciting launch of Imibala's General Residential Repairer Programme, equipping learners with practical trade skills including painting, glazing, paving repairs, health and safety, and firefighting.



Learners are currently completing both theoretical and practical training at *Tjeka Training Matters* in Fisantekraal, where they are learning a number of valuable maintenance skills.

Upon completion, the learners will begin their six-month workplace placements with industry partners before completing their final assessment to earn a nationally recognised qualification.





Yes-Ya-Yebo! & The Imibala Choir

It has been an outstanding first half of the year for Yes-Ya-Yebo! Productions and The Imibala Choir, starting with a VIP tour of the RMB Starlight Classics and a number of extraordinary performances, our talented young stars have captivated audiences across the Western Cape.

Together, the groups delivered memorable performances at the *ABSA REIS Stakeholder Dinner* at the *Zeitz MOCAA*, the sold-out *Human Rights Day Sunset Concert* at *Lourensford Wine Estate*, the *Momentum Africa Roadshow Grand Finale*, and the sold-out *Best of the West* production at the *Drama Factory*. Through these opportunities, learners have continued to grow in confidence, professionalism, and stage presence while sharing their incredible talents with audiences.



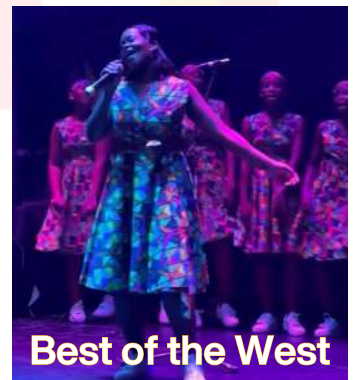
Zeitz MOCAA



Lourensford



Momentum Africa



Best of the West

A special focus this year has been building a strong relationship between the Yes-Ya-Yebo! cast and the newly established Imibala Choir. Through dedicated rehearsals and a shared passion for performance, learners have formed meaningful friendships while developing teamwork, discipline, and artistic excellence.

The choir also enjoyed a special excursion and photoshoot at Lourensford's *Helderberg Nature Reserve*, celebrating both their achievements and the strong bonds they have built together.



With so many exciting milestones already achieved, we can't wait to see what the rest of the year holds. Keep an eye out for what's next for our incredible young stars!



Moorreesburg

The first half of the year has marked an exciting new chapter for The Imibala Trust Moorreesburg. Earlier this year, we proudly celebrated the official opening of our Moorreesburg centre - a welcoming space where children are encouraged to dream big, explore their creativity, and discover their potential.

A highlight of the year was a special visit to the *Maggie Laubser Exhibition* at the *Malmesbury Museum*, where learners had the opportunity to experience the work of one of South Africa's most celebrated artists. Back in the classroom, it has been wonderful to witness the remarkable growth in learners' confidence, creativity, and enthusiasm across both the Literacy and Arts programmes.

Our holiday programme brought together volunteers, schools, and the wider community for days filled with arts and crafts, dance, outdoor games, sport, and plenty of laughter. We also had the pleasure of welcoming the ladies of the *Moorreesburg ACVV* for a special afternoon of tea and conversation, sharing the vision of Imibala while strengthening meaningful community connections.



Hoedspruit

This year, through Imibala's Sponsor-A-Child Programme and in collaboration with the *Serondella Foundation*, 101 learners at Welverdiend Primary School in Hoedspruit proudly received their brand-new school uniforms, ensuring they can attend school with dignity and confidence.



We are excited to see the positive impact continue to expand in Hoedspruit with the Serondella Foundation and The Imibala Trust.

Graaff-Reinet

Our Graaff-Reinet branch continues to flourish! Across the Creative Arts, Learner Advancement and Earth Buddies programmes, children have developed confidence while discovering new talents and strengthening important academic and life skills.

This year, our Creative Arts learners transformed recycled materials into imaginative works of art while our Drama students built confidence through role play and storytelling. Literacy sessions have inspired a love of reading through engaging books and interactive discussions, including a visit from a local author, *Ruth Maya*, who read to us from her book, *A Horse Playing Hopscotch*, based on real-life events, the story celebrates resilience, family bonds, and the power of believing in your own potential.

The Mathematics programme has introduced exciting new educational software that allows learners to strengthen their numeracy skills through interactive digital learning, making mathematics both enjoyable and accessible. Meanwhile, Earth Buddies has encouraged environmental awareness through hands-on gardening activities, teaching learners about sustainability and the importance of caring for the natural world.



Hermanus

It has been another exciting year for our Hermanus branch, where learners continue to embrace every opportunity to learn, create and grow. Excellent attendance across our Literacy, Music and Creative Arts programmes reflects the enthusiasm and commitment shown by learners.

Our young artists have explored a variety of creative techniques, Literacy sessions continue to nurture a love of reading and strengthen communication skills, while Music lessons have introduced learners to rhythm and singing through joyful weekly rehearsals.

Every programme is designed to provide children with a safe, supportive environment where they are encouraged to discover their strengths, celebrate their achievements and believe in their own potential. We look forward to seeing the Hermanus family continue to flourish during the second half of the year.





New York Fundraiser

One of the highlights of the year was our unforgettable fundraising evening at the *Lalique Maison d'Artiste* in New York City. The event brought together generous supporters from around the world for an inspiring evening celebrating the work and impact of The Imibala Trust.

Guests enjoyed an extraordinary programme featuring heartfelt stories of transformation, exciting auction items and opportunities to invest directly in the future of our learners. Among the evening's highlights were a one-of-a-kind *Panerai* timepiece, a stunning *Lalique* crystal bust of *Nelson Mandela*, an exclusive golfing experience and a luxury African travel package, all generously contributing towards raising funds for Imibala's programmes.

We extend our sincere gratitude to *Lalique* for their incredible hospitality and to every guest whose generosity continues to help create brighter futures for children across South Africa.



German Golf Day

This year marked our very first German Golf Day, bringing together friends, sponsors and long-standing supporters in a shared commitment to changing lives through education.

The event was filled with camaraderie, friendly competition and generosity, once again demonstrating the incredible international community that continues to stand behind Imibala.



Every swing, every sponsorship and every conversation contributed towards creating opportunities for young people thousands of kilometres away in South Africa.

Swiss Golf Day

Following the incredible success of last year's golf day, Imibala proudly returned to Switzerland for our second Swiss Golf Day in the beautiful alpine setting of Crans-Montana.

The event brought together supporters, sponsors and friends from across Switzerland and surrounds in celebration of our shared vision of empowering young people through education. Beyond the golf itself, the day provided another wonderful opportunity to strengthen relationships with our international supporters while raising valuable funds for Imibala.

We are sincerely thankful to every player, sponsor, and supporter who helped make the event such a success.



Mandela Day

Mandela Day, once again, reminded us of the extraordinary difference that can be made when communities come together in the spirit of service.

With the generous support of *Meridian Realty*, *ConverStation Events* and an incredible team of volunteers, the Yes-Ya-Yebo! Productions space was transformed into a vibrant explosion of colour through the creation of a beautiful new mural. Guided by the talented mural artist, "*Mural Maniac*", volunteers worked together to bring the artwork to life, creating a welcoming and inspiring creative environment for our young performers.

The transformation was about much more than painting walls, it was about creating a space where creativity, imagination and confidence can continue to flourish for years to come. We are immensely grateful to everyone who dedicated their 67 minutes (and much more!) to making this special project possible.



Play Therapy Update

Terms 1 and 2 have been a meaningful season of therapeutic play at Imibala Somerset West, as we continued to provide children with a safe, nurturing space to express emotions, build resilience, and heal through play. Through the consistency of weekly play therapy sessions, we have witnessed encouraging growth in confidence, as well as emotional wellbeing.

We are delighted to welcome Melindi Douglas to our Play Therapy team. With more than 20 years of experience supporting children's emotional wellbeing, including her recent role as a trauma counsellor, Melindi has brought a wealth of knowledge, compassion, and care to Imibala.



A Donation That Warmed Our Heads & Hearts

Just as the winter months began to set in, we were delighted to receive a very generous donation of beautifully hand-knitted beanies for every learner across our Somerset West programmes.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our talented knitters for their kindness!



First Aid Training for the Imibala Team

Earlier this year a number of Imibala team members completed Level 1 First Aid training, equipping staff with the knowledge and practical skills to respond confidently in emergency situations.

Well done to our team for making the safety and wellbeing of our learners a priority!



Our Sensory Garden Revamp

To celebrate *Earth Day 2026* our amazing helpers from *Montgomery & Miller Academy* gave our Sensory Garden a revamp!

Our learners have been enjoying the new smells, sounds, tastes, textures and sights in this beautiful space. A huge thank you to our lovely volunteers, we cannot wait to see this garden bloom even more.



Giving Our Library Books a Place on the Shelf

We are incredibly grateful to have received a donation of bookshelves for the libraries at our various Imibala centres. These shelves have created welcoming, organised spaces where our learners can easily access and enjoy a variety of books.



Sponsor a Child in 2027!

FOR AS LITTLE AS

R1,650

€90 / \$105 / £80 / CHF 82

PER CHILD

Give a child the essentials to start school with confidence: A summer and winter school uniform, leather school shoes, a jersey, rain jacket, socks and underwear, a T-shirt, and a school bag stocked with essential stationery. *It is more than a gift, it is the start of a brighter future.*

Trustees: Gaynor Rupert | Hanneli Rupert | Lindy White | Sipho Puwani | Gloria Theiler

The Imibala Trust is a South African non-profit organisation that provides school uniforms, educational support and extra-curricular programmes to children from impoverished backgrounds.

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