



## **Rock-Solid Mindsets**

February 2012

*“The golden thread perceptible in truly successful and contented people is a rock-solid mindset. Such a mindset consists of qualities like determination, persistence, good values, adaptability, discretion and long-term orientation.*

*Our education system is an Achilles heel endangering our future economic prosperity. We need to act urgently.*

*If we want to attract the world’s attention, we have to focus on education. We can change South Africa’s future for the better. An economy is nothing but people – a great economy is nothing but relevant people.” (JP Landman and Louis Fourie; “South Africa, how are you?”)*

Two years ago, Nokuphila School (NS) opened its doors for the first time to 45 wide-eyed preschoolers from impoverished areas of Tembisa. Two years on, 20 of those pioneers began Nokuphila’s first Grade 1 class. Our school has now grown to accommodate 130 learners, from Grade 000 to Grade 1. It is our hope and prayer, that these children will go on to develop the ‘rock-solid mindsets’ described above, and fulfil the Love Trust vision of growing into servant leaders of their communities.

Our teachers will largely determine the success of our school. It is a well known fact that the teaching profession is in crisis. There is a shortage of at least 30 000 teachers with only 6000 new teachers entering the profession (Landman and Fourie).

Recognising this, we continue to invest in our teachers. We recently employed two new teachers to accommodate the increase in learners, one being a qualified Grade 1 teacher who also has an Honours in Remedial Teaching, which will be a great additional asset to the school. We have four student-teachers currently studying for their teaching degrees through Unisa – sponsored by Love Trust. We are also currently supporting two GAP year students (GAP -Guided Approach to Pedagogy). These students from the local community who’ve expressed a sincere interest in the teaching profession are supported by NS in their studies and gain hands-on experience at Nokuphila School on a daily basis.

The Nokuphila Teacher Training Centre provides Early Childhood Development (ECD) training for preschool teachers and is run by an experienced ECD trainer Megan Helsby. The Centre continues to prosper. There are currently about 50 preschool teachers attending the training from both Nokuphila and other ECD centres in the Tembisa community. Megan provides an interactive and fun environment to learn, as well as support to Nokuphila teachers with application in the classroom.



The interest and support from teachers is enthusiastic and given increased funding, the centre could grow significantly. The Nokuphila Teacher Training Centre is another wonderful way for us to serve the Greater Tembisa community.

With the growth of our school, we continue to work towards developing our primary school. This will clearly require significant resources – human and capital – as well as significantly increase our running costs.

Late last year, the Love Trust participated in a meeting of the ‘South African Extraordinary Schools Coalition’ which is a collaboration of largely independent schools across the country who have sought innovative ways in which to provide top notch education. It has been encouraging and inspiring to participate in such a coalition and we hope to learn from those who’ve had success in delivering excellent education to the marginalised.

Most exciting is the growth of the Love Trust Association this year. You may recall from the previous newsletter that Love Trust hosted a conference for non-profit organisations in October 2011. The intention was the creation of an association of organisations that share common values, ethics and the Christian faith.

In January this year, two new preschools – based largely on the Nokuphila model and ethos – were opened in Mitchells Plain (Trinity Children’s Centre) and Fish Hoek (iThemba) catering to needy children in the surrounding communities. Robyn Kynaston (our first NS Principal) is working closely with St James Educational Trust which supports existing severely impoverished schools in Mannenberg on the Cape Flats – providing intensive academic support as well as social/life skills to children at the schools. The St James Trust is also assisted by Love Trust and the experience of Nokuphila School. Organisations with a longer history – Arise and Uturn – have also indicated their interest in joining the Love Trust Association. Arise is an organisation that works with families who are looking to foster and/or adopt orphaned children. Uturn works with homeless men providing rehabilitation, reintegration and skills training to their beneficiaries.

A range of organisations such as these – with diverse expertise and a common vision - under the umbrella of Love Trust Association will certainly enhance ways in which to reach those in need across the country.

As always, we thank you for your faithful and committed support. Please pray for those who lead Nokuphila School and Love Trust, in order that we may be not falter from a rock-solid mindset and determination in making a difference in our country.

**Sarah Cairns**  
**Love Trust**

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