

A valued international partnership continues to make a meaningful difference, as St Faith's has once again supported community initiatives in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa, through generous donations to Makukhanye Primary School and the SOS Project.

St Faith's revisited Jeffreys Bay in April for the sixth time in the past 23 years. The visit highlights the school's enduring commitment to outreach and global citizenship. Mr Ed Johnson and Miss Elizabeth Kennerley led a group of 44 pupils and six staff members on this year's visit.

Makukhanye Primary School, located in Pellsrus, serves approximately 1,300 pupils. Like many public schools, it faces challenges including large class sizes and limited infrastructure. Mr Johnson explained that the relationship began in 2003, when a St Faith's rugby coach, Mr Mitchell, initiated fundraising efforts to support a project in a South African township. At the time, his mother-in-law, Mrs Martie Viljoen, was volunteering as a music teacher at Makukhanye Primary School.

"Since then, St Faith's has contributed almost R1.5 million over 23 years," said Mr Johnson. "These funds have supported the development of classrooms, a medical centre, a netball court, and numerous other improvements."

During this year's visit, the St Faith's group formally handed over a number of newly completed facilities and upgrades. These developments, finalised in 2025, reflect the continued growth of the partnership. An existing classroom has been thoughtfully converted into a multi-purpose space, functioning as a library, boardroom, and skills room where pupils can learn practical crafts such as crocheting, knitting, mending, and sewing. In addition, an unused container has been transformed into a welding centre. Under the guidance of Pastor Luthando Eric, pupils will gain valuable skills in welding and will help repair essential school furniture.

"The jewel in the crown is the new computer centre," Mr Johnson added. A classroom has been converted into a dedicated computer room, and St Faith's has donated 35 computers to support digital learning. The school is now seeking volunteers to assist in training both staff and pupils, with the aim of establishing a sustainable "train the trainer" programme.

Mr Johnson emphasised the importance of the partnership for both communities: "This relationship is particularly valuable as it allows pupils from very different backgrounds to learn from one another – developing an understanding of both the contrasts in their daily lives and the



shared aspirations, goals, and dreams they have, despite being 12,000 kilometres apart.”

This year's visit also saw an exciting new development. Both Mr Johnson and Miss Kennerley were inspired by a local news article about the SOS Project, a non-profit organisation serving the Jeffreys Bay community. Miss Kennerley explained that St Faith's has now adopted the SOS Project as one of its partner charities. “St Faith's has donated R18,900 to the SOS Project, enabling them to expand their outreach by adding a second weekly soup kitchen on Fridays,” she said. The funds were raised through a concert held at St Faith's, showcasing the talents and generosity of the school community. In addition, Miss Kennerley and Mr Johnson sourced African fabrics during their visit to Cape Town. These will be used to create handmade items such as scrunchies, purses, pencil cases, and pouches, which will be sold to raise further funds for the SOS Project.

Through initiatives such as these, St Faith's continues to foster compassion, creativity, and global awareness among its pupils, while building meaningful and lasting partnerships across the world.





