

Prioritising Learner Welfare in Bojanala



The National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) is supporting the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Health in conducting health screening in schools for the welfare of learners.

Worldwide, there are children who are forced to drop out of school due to certain circumstances which may result in them not completing their schooling. Sickness, poverty, and disabilities are just some of the factors contributing to the dropout rate. It is for this reason that the Department of Health and Department of Basic Education are conducting school visits for health assessments of learners; of course with the parents or guardians express permission.

At Maruatona Primary a total of six professional nurses from Madibeng Sub-district under the leadership of Sister Ratlabyane visited the school on 23 February, 2016. They did a Human papillomavirus (HPV) campaign for girls, which is the most common sexually transmitted virus in the United States, and they also did a deworming campaign for all the learners. A brief presentation was conducted on HPV, which prevents cancer on the mouth of womb for girls, and on deworming as worms can cause serious illnesses, long-term mental

retardation and reduced scholastic progress, and in severe cases, may even cause death. The NECT Learner Welfare coach, Elma Maaga, is involved with Fresh Start Schools (FSS) in the Bojanala district such as Maruatona Primary. She guides, monitors and mentors school management when dealing with learner challenges, be it internal or external that may hinder the development and learning progress of learners.

Maaga also assists schools in building and maintaining the necessary relationships, and tools that will help learners to perform better in school. Meanwhile, at Mphela Secondary, due to their homes being a long distance away from clinics, learners seldom go for health check-up at clinics. They also struggle to go to the clinic as they either do not have money or there is no transport. Fortunately, there is a mobile clinic which visits the community once a fortnight. As there is no school-based nurse the school organises its own health campaign.

On lighter news, the Lotto has donated funds and a sports pro-court is being erected for learners to play netball, tennis and other sports. The official handover was made by Lotto on 24 February, this year. Sports gear will also be donated, and will have the Lotto emblem on it. Learners will now be able to play sports and games at school, encouraging fitness, teamwork and a “go getter” spirit on their new pro-court.