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“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children”

Nelson Mandela
In this past year, we have focused on the Lynedoch Valley to consider deeply the need for and impact of our work in our community. We have dedicated our mission as a non-profit trust to have a transformative impact on the lives of the children and youth in the Lynedoch Valley through the educational programmes we offer.

Our three key education programmes are:

- Lynedoch Children’s House, 0 – 6 Years
- SPARK Lynedoch Primary School, 6 – 13 Years
- Lynedoch Youth Programme, 13 – 24 Years

Lynedoch Children’s House

Supporting 62 children, with our youngest learner this year at 4 months old, the Lynedoch Children’s House is becoming a jewel school, demonstrating how we hope early childhood development (ECD) can unfold for every child in this country.

We are incredibly proud of the Lynedoch Children’s House staff, many of whom have attended several accredited Montessori training programmes this year. The growth and leadership demonstrated by our teachers has become evident in the calm, focused hum of learning in the children each day. We have also pioneered the adoption of three primary languages of instruction - English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa - in the learning environment, to which the children and teachers are both taking to with great excitement and pride!

SPARK Lynedoch Primary School

Every morning is a celebration at Lynedoch, with Sparks Fly waking the learners (and the village!) up for another day of learning and growth. SPARK Lynedoch has grown from strength to strength and this year we supported 168 local learners on full bursary to attend what we feel is a truly innovative, values based and academically excellent model of education.

Highlights include the academic achievements our bursary scholars have made across all grades, and the incredible fluency we are noticing in many languages on the playground. Heritage Day was an especially vibrant celebration of the rich diversity of our scholars and we have just loved seeing the older grades engaging in research projects on solar energy and recycling! The blended-learning model used by SPARK has proven its success, and we are proud of the academic and personal growth in each of the children attending the school.

Lynedoch Youth Programme

We have built deep and meaningful relationships with the young adults in our youth programme this year, and are always honoured when our graduates come back to share their successes. Athalia is doing excellently in her hospitality studies at Boland College and Firstun continues to impress us with his carpentry skills and never-ending growth spurts. We have taken our senior class closely under our wings this past year, and all learnt an incredible amount of what it means to walk the journey from childhood to adulthood with these wonderful young people.

With our senior class graduating and heading to high school, the Lynedoch Youth Programme has consolidated, reflected and prepared for a re-launch in 2018. We have some new partnerships on curriculum and immersive learning, a new youth space and some great plans in store to build a truly impactful programme for 2018. We look forward to sharing these updates with you in due course!
Highlights across our programmes

A major highlight of the year across all our programmes is our bright and beautiful new (second-hand) bus! Thank you to all our friends and supporters from the Lexi and Nomad in the UK who made this possible, and the generous support of the Cape Wine Auction Trust that has kept our bus running this year! Our beloved Oom Kerneels is now the bus-driver for many, many young learners from across the Valley each day!

Another highlight of the year has been our fantastic and sustainable new sand sports court! With the support of Remgro, SAS and CSV Construction, facilitated by Jose Cabral, our children have had a dream come true which is a sports field of their own, or the biggest sand pit you have ever seen, all depending how you look at it!

We are also very grateful to the support of the Ackermann Pick n Pay Foundation who have invested generously into our learning gardens at Lynedoch. In support of sustainability and food security, they have invested into the spaces that are now taking root and flourishing as outdoor classrooms.

"Thank you so much for the bus. It makes such a big difference, we can now transport the kids safely. The children love the bus, and I am very proud to be the bus driver!"

Kerneels Claassen, Driver
Community Engagement

The shift in perception from our families and community at large has been a quiet but tremendous achievement this year as well. Parents have shared how they are adopting the positive narration and values that SPARK practices in their homes, choosing to engage in conversation rather than taking to physical measures with their children.

Our Children’s House now has a waiting list that is leading us to consider expanding the Infant Community and parents have shown up consistently across all our programmes, playing a vital and supportive role in the children’s development.

Underpinning our work are the values that drive us. We aspire to realise our vision by:

- Respecting and celebrating the full potential of each child, and their families
- Achieving integrity of place and learning
- Inspiring a love for learning
- Immersing our children in nature-based learning
- Empowering our educators
- Always undertaking this through a holistic approach – which includes removing all barriers to learning including socio-emotional support, nutrition, health and transport interventions

In this Impact Report, we are pleased to share with you the successes, lessons learnt and strategic priorities of the Lynedoch Children’s House, SPARK Lynedoch Bursary Programme and Lynedoch Youth Programme at the Sustainability Institute in 2017.

We also share the results from our first household survey in Lynedoch Valley, which has helped to build an understanding of the underlying challenges in our community and where to focus our attention in 2018. Lastly, we share our challenges, opportunities and goals for the year ahead.

Thank you to each and everyone who has made, and continues to make, our collective work with the children of Lynedoch Valley possible. We have much to be proud of, and much still to achieve. Together, big dreams are becoming reality for many young, precious lives in our community.

Jess Schulschenk, Director

We are fortunate to be situated in such a beautiful setting surrounded by nature as this is one of the most important parts of our daily work. Nature walks, caring, respecting, learning or just being in nature are aspects we care deeply about.
We learnt an incredible amount by using the Poverty Stoplight assessment tool which places emphasis on supporting households to identify and take action for themselves. Spending several weeks visiting close on 100 families of the estimated 160 in the valley so far - each for an hour or more at a time in the evenings - we also built more meaningful relationships.

The survey focused on six key areas:

- Income and Employment
- Health and Environment
- Housing and Infrastructure
- Education and Culture
- Organization and Participation
- Self-awareness and Motivation

In terms of income and earnings, 12% of the families earn less than R2 000 per household per month, 55% earn between R2 000 and R5 000 per household per month and 33% earn more than R5 000 per household per month. On average four people make up a household, and in some cases two families make up a household.

Stable employment and income sources refer to full-time employment and secured income. Twelve percent of the households do not have stable employment and depend on pension income from the elderly in the house to live from, while 38% of households depend on either grants or one unstable income for monthly expenses. Slightly more than half of the households, 51%, have at least one stable monthly income to live from.

Most households have access to health care in the form of mobile clinics that visit the farms, at 65%, while 34% of households are within easy reach of a clinic or hospital.

It was positive to see that 72% of households eat three meals a day, while 27% eat two meals a day. It is especially important for children to have adequate nutrition to be able to concentrate at school. All the children in the Lynedoch Children’s House receive breakfast and lunch with snacks while at school, while our bursary recipients at the SPARK school also receive breakfast and lunch with a snack.

Looking at parenting, 3% of households have no parents and are run by a grandparent. In 34% of the households one parent is present, while in 62% of the households both parents are present.

Alcohol and drug abuse that gets ‘uncomfortable and/or violent’ according to the families interviewed, happens in 42% of households, with the remaining 58% of households indicating that they only use alcohol during social gatherings.
In terms of the houses that the families live in, 3% live in unsafe structures, 30% live in semi-safe structures and 67% live in brick structures. Rooms are often shared within these structures due to the size or families sharing a house.

Being able to access clinics, services, shops and schools is difficult for 13% of households who predominantly go by foot or hitchhike to access these resources. This is due to the secluded location of many of the farms. Public transport is accessible for 43% of households, and 44% of households have access to transport onsite by means of own transport, or transport provided by the farmer.

Twenty five percent of adults are not able to read, write or speak English, while 38% can either understand or read simple English. The remaining 38% can read, write and speak English.

It is extremely positive to see that 88% of children have access to quality primary and secondary education, with only 12% not having access to quality education - all of these respondents referring to secondary high schools.

Unfortunately many households, 53%, felt that they do not have the knowledge and skills to generate additional income, which is an area that can be developed to enable families to increase their monthly income.

Families interviewed generally felt that they lived in a healthy environment with fair basic services and infrastructure in place. Access to quality education, and support which enabled their children to benefit from this education, was one of the highest ranked areas in the survey. Respect for other cultures, moral values and conscience were also areas where our community felt they were succeeding in.

Key challenges, however, included:

- Income levels and lack of family savings, with a need for financial literacy and skills - broadly linked to a need for skills training and developing an entrepreneurial mindset.
- Social networks, access to information and the means to communication, entertainment and recreation. Alcohol and drug abuse also ranked highly as an area of concern in our community.
- Other issues also included legal property rights and access to quality health care centres.

We will be focussing our Youth Programme in 2018 to place more emphasis on skills development and job opportunity recognition, whilst across all our education and community programmes we are working on improving communication with parents and families.

With the families’ permission, we share some of the success stories in our valley on the next pages.
THE CONRADIE FAMILY

This family is very driven and have clear goals for the future. This is an all-female household that wants to own their own house one day. The mother of the house, Lena does cleaning work, her one daughter, Shane is the secretary at Compagniesdrift and her other daughter, Lucrecia is currently looking for work.

Both granddaughters are involved in SI programmes. Little Marcha from the Children’s House had a turnaround this year - she would not let go of her mother in the beginning of the year and could not stop crying. Today she engages openly and with open arms asking for a hug. Lekeisha is in SPARK and she is doing very well.

THE OCTOBER FAMILY

All three children are involved in SI programmes. The oldest daughter Claudine is part of our youth programme and Bronwyn and Anthea are in SPARK.

We recently invited Claudine to be a part of the high school programme as she showed amazing potential during our home visits. Today she is one of the leaders in the programme and will be starting matric in 2018.
**THE JACOBS FAMILY**

This is a very loving family. Nikita (on the right) and Veronisha (left) are cousins and both go to SPARK Lynedoch.

Nikita’s brother is involved in the youth programme and we are very excited for him to pursue his dreams in becoming a chef.

These two will always greet you with a hug and a smile and they have a very positive outlook on life.

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**THE JORDAAN/DANIELS FAMILY**

This is a young and vibrant family with a promising future.

Ronald is the father of the house. He is the production manager at Meerlust. The mother, Zandria is waiting for little Keyonn to go to the Lynedoch Children’s House in 2018 and will then look for a job.

They both have matric which is something to be proud of.
OUR PURPOSE

Our objective as a non-profit trust is to have a transformative impact on the lives of the children and youth in the Lynedoch Valley through the educational programmes we offer.

We hope that the holistic and place-based models we are building can offer lessons learnt and inspiration to other communities for approaches to learning that are generative and, ideally, scalable.

We value our research partnerships to ensure that we are continuously monitoring and improving our programmes, and their impact.

Who we help

Within the Lynedoch Valley and surrounds, over 250 children and their families benefit directly from interventions made by the SI. This entails school bursaries, the youth programme, sport, assistance with further education or job placements and full or part-time employment where possible.

Most of the families on the farms in the Lynedoch Valley earn between R2 000 to R5 000 per household, and for school going children attending one of the schools, transport is provided to remove this barrier to receiving quality education.

Where needed, children receive meals in partnership with the Lunchbox Fund to ensure they can focus while attending school - every school day more than 200 children receive meals. The Lunchbox Fund provides us with essential dry goods and additional support for our onsite feeding programme, and focuses on fostering education via nutrition by providing a daily meal at school for impoverished and at-risk school children in township and rural areas of South Africa. This combined support enables the children to focus better at school, and reach their full potential. Emotional support and guidance is also given by teachers and the Community Keepers office supported by Spier.

We have experienced that investing, from a young age, in the education and personal development of children can have tremendous impact on their formative years, as they grow into young adults.

Many of our graduates are living independent lives and provide for their own families, drawing on the education, skills and believe they received during their years with us.
DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE

We continuously encourage our staff to focus on personal and professional development, and realise the importance of well-functioning teams that are equipped to perform their duties to the best of their abilities.

Within the Lynedoch Children’s House, a team of eight skilled and qualified teachers and assistants work with the children. The Youth Programme has five team members. Continuous skills development is important to enable us to ensure our teachers are continuously upskilled, to create an environment conducive to learning and that the children look forward to coming to every day.

This year many of our staff members involved with the Trust activities of the SI, underwent training and / or skills development, with some staff members being promoted as well.

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<th>Lynedoch Children’s House Team</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff member</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Colleen Erasmus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christelle Jansen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackie Plaatjies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julia Jansen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Plaatjies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandisa Sakawuli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melicia Van Wyse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nosakumzi Maneli</td>
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<td>Zelda Nero</td>
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We congratulate Colleen Erasmus on her appointment as Principal of the Lynedoch Children’s House as she takes over from Naledi Mabebo who has taken a faculty role on Indigenous Knowledge with our partner, Indaba Montessori Institute.

Colleen is AMI 0-3 (London) qualified and has been with us since the start of her journey in Early Childhood Development in 2014.

“...It’s the first time after completing this training that I will have a qualification behind my name and that makes me very proud,” Lisa Plaatjies on ECD level 4 training

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<th>Lynedoch Youth and Aftercare</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff member</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashleigh Seals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duran Byman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerald Swartz</td>
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<td>Natasha Rossouw</td>
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<td>Ross van Niekerk</td>
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“The AMI training helps me to understand children from the ages 0-3 and to understand their development better. I have gained so much experience already,” Christelle Jansen on AMI 0-3 Assistants to Infancy Training
OUR PROGRAMMES

Lynedoch Children’s House

The Lynedoch Children’s House is a Montessori preschool situated in Lynedoch just outside of Stellenbosch and opened its doors in 2000. Today the school is a learning space for more than 60 children from the Lynedoch Valley and surrounding areas such as Eersterivier, Stellenbosch, Kayamandi and Jamestown to name but a few.

At the Lynedoch Children’s House we cater for children from 4 months to 3 years in our birth to three Infant Community and three to six year olds in the Children’s House.

We aim to promote independence, peace, love and practical skills to guide our children in realizing their full potential. Practical skills include things they will be able to do for themselves when they are older such as tidying up after yourself, learning how to clean your nose by yourself or washing and drying dishes. Our children learn about loving themselves, others and the environment which is guided in Grace and Courtesy lessons they partake in.

We are fortunate to be situated in such a beautiful setting surrounded by nature as this is one of the most important parts of our daily work. Nature walks, caring, respecting, learning or just being in nature are aspects we care deeply about.

We strive to promote healthy minds and bodies and for our children to strive for a better life and in so doing give them the tools to have a positive outlook on learning, life and themselves.

“Our young ones are thriving in the beautifully prepared learning environment under the graceful guidance of our teachers. Watching the children come through the Lynedoch food and indigenous gardens each day is a true highlight of being a part of a community that values the deep and profound importance of place-based learning, immersed and held by nature.” Jess Schulschenk, Director
**Beneficiaries**

The children are the main benefactor, yet it is evident that parents also benefit greatly from the quality education that their children receive. Education that is focused on instilling independence, a love for learning and exploration, results in young people that have the confidence to take ownership of their own futures.

“The education of even a small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing him for school, but for life.” Maria Montessori

The largest age range of children attending the preschool is between 3 to 4 years, totalling at 33 children. Acknowledging the importance of the first 1000 days of a child’s development, we encourage parents to enrol their children from an early age into an early childhood development school to give their child a head start in life. Apart from actively working with the child, parents are expected to contribute voluntary hours to the school annually, allowing them to engage on a more personal level.

**Community involvement**

To enable us to acquire additional educational materials for the children, we initiated several fundraising activities that were supported by SI staff, the Lynedoch Village community and parents. Apart from the actual raising of funds, this is also a way in which we encourage parent participation.

The Lynedoch Children’s House was selected as a Santa Shoebox recipient this year, and each child received a box lovingly prepared for them. When the children received their boxes, the excitement was tangible and it was truly inspiring to see that even though they can’t wait to open the boxes, everyone waited patiently until everyone received their boxes.
Celebrating our children

Our graduating Grade RR class celebrated the end of their preschool years at the Lynedoch Children’s House during November, and left a reminder of themselves by making colourful handprint images.

Fourteen children will be going to primary school next year, 12 of whom are going to SPARK Lynedoch. It remains inspiring to see how our little ones grow and develop during the time they spend at the Children’s House, and the confidence with which they leave as they look forward to going to a new school.
Looking ahead

As we think about the new year, we will again endeavor to accommodate as many children as possible from the Lynedoch Valley in the preschool. The surveys done recently in the Lynedoch Valley has built new relationships with the community, many who did not know about the preschool previously.

Maintaining focus on upskilling staff remains important, and this will continue be it through in-house workshops or professional training.

What we have realised is that as much as we can learn from other people, the children themselves teach us many things every day that we work with them - keeping this open mindset and approaching learning in a fun, collaborative way ensures that we truly take the children’s developmental needs into consideration when developing programmes and activities.

A shift will take place to allow for deeper and more meaningful work to be done. Sharing learnings, increased engagement with parents, holistic planning and a bigger focus on grace and courtesy lessons will take precedence next year.

Funders and partners

The work that we do and the beautiful environment provided for the children to learn in, will not be possible without the support from our funders and partners. It is a privilege to have the support of organisations and individuals that truly believe in the work that we do, and that care about the development and growth of our children as much as we do. We extend a heartfelt thank you to each of our funders and partners - especially the Indaba Education Fund and Indaba Montessori Institute, the Lexi and Nomad, and Meerlust Estate, and look forward to continuing this journey with you.
In the second year of SPARK Lynedoch, the SI has supported 168 learners with full bursaries to attend the primary school.

The school also supports learners with transport, meals and socio-emotional support through the placement of a Community Keepers office onsite made possible with the generous support of Spier. Community Keepers provide a range of psychological and social services to improve the social and emotional well-being of learners, and create supportive school communities where learning and development can prosper.

In terms of academic growth, we are very proud of the progress that the scholars are making. Many of the scholars were four to seven years behind their expected grade levels when they started in January 2016 and this year they have made considerable progress.

Our younger grades (especially Grades R and 1) are making outstanding academic progress. On average, over 80% of the bursary scholars in these grades are performing at international benchmarks for literacy and numeracy – which means that they are performing 18 months above national averages!

The majority of scholars in our older grades are not yet performing at these international standards, but have all seen tremendous increases in their academic results. Almost all scholars have doubled their results, and we are seeing some scholars increase by as much as 60% or more in certain subjects! We are now focussing on the missing ‘academic building blocks’ that these scholars may have missed out on before they joined SPARK, and the additional support the scholars may need to make these up. Across all grades, our bursary scholars are represented in the top 5% of academic achievers in their grade.

At SPARK, every family is required to commit to 30 Volunteer hours for the year. We have seen steady increases in the number of volunteer hours from bursary recipient families and continue to celebrate their participation with them.

“The subtle but significant shifts in our learners is a tremendous achievement in the school. We notice how our scholars use their words tool to deal with challenges, including their courage tools to do the right thing, their breathing tool, when they need to, and their apology and forgiveness tool too. The children at SPARK Lynedoch take responsibility for their actions, and strive to serve their classmates, community and country. They are our future leaders, and our everyday inspiration.” Jess Schulschenk, Director
Heritage Day Celebrations

The diversity of our rainbow nation is celebrated by the children through song, dance, food and people. Scholars have fun by dressing up in their own culture/culture of their choice for the day, and they learn more about various cultures by tasting traditional foods, doing dances and presenting a Show & Tell.

Literacy/Mathematics picnic

This year SPARK hosted a fun and interactive Literacy/Mathematics picnic. During the picnic, parents are taken on a journey through their child’s learning day, and the child can share learnings with their parents. The children feel very proud to show to their parents what they can do, and this is a great opportunity to connect and to gain deeper understanding of the entire learning experience.
Success stories

We have been humbled to witness the exceptional academic and personal growth of each bursary scholar at SPARK Lynedoch. In under two years, our children are now comfortable speaking two or more languages and are engaging in learning with a passion that must be witnessed to be believed.

SPARK has created a culture of respect and learning in which the scholars excel not only academically, but also in their socio-emotional development. Indeed, we are seeing scholars excel academically because of the culture in which they are rewarded for demonstrating values such as Service, Persistence, Achievement, Responsibility and Kindness, and because they are supported with the intra- and inter-personal skills to take responsibility for their own learning.

As a result, we have many success stories of learners who otherwise would not be realising the achievements we are seeing today. Here, we share just a few of these wonderful success stories.

**Anthea October, Grade R**

When she started at SPARK Lynedoch in January 2017, Anthea could not speak one word of English. She has progressed to the point where she can read a story (as seen in the photo) without any help. She sounds out words perfectly, she reads sight words with so much confidence and she writes great sentences using phonics. She is currently on a 1C for writing and there is no doubt that she will be on a 1C by the end of this term for reading. Her Mathematics marks are also extremely high. Anthea is a great example of someone with a lot of persistence and responsibility. She exceeds all expectations in the classroom. She is a role model that if one sets their head to a task they can surpass their circumstances.

**Onikayo Mini, Grade 2**

Onikayo has shown a tremendous improvement in terms of his Social and Emotional development. When Onikayo started in the beginning of the school year he would throw a temper tantrum when he received consequences for his actions, that would involve him either running out of the classroom and climbing on a ledge or crying very audibly and kicking the chairs in the class. Throughout the year he has become more and more mature in accepting responsibilities for his actions. With regards to academic progress, Onikayo has started to communicate in English with ease which was his biggest barrier. His love for learning has increased so much, he refuses to go to another class until all his work is complete. When you see Onikayo in the corridor now, he will behave responsibly even though no one is there to monitor his behaviour and has started to set a standard for the rest of the class up to the point where teachers have started to recognize this. Onikayo is setting an example of a true SPARK scholar.
VERNON ADAMS, GRADE 3

Vernon started his journey at SPARK being very distracted and easily choosing to make wrong choices in terms of his behavior. Due to his low self-esteem, he never completed work and would act out aggressively. Intervention strategies were put in place, with his parents showing incredible investment and always attending meetings and supporting next steps. By the second term of this year, Vernon made an incredible turnaround. He now makes good choices, interacts well with peers and teachers and is less reactant. This has resulted in the withdrawal of possible retention as his academics have significantly improved.

CARLTON FLANDORFF, GRADE 4

Carlton started off last year as a very difficult child, wanting to fight as often as possible and having very little regard for his academics. Through the course of this year Carlton has changed completely. He has grown into a well-mannered, kind and caring individual.

His literacy has improved considerably and rapidly, and he is currently the highest achieving scholar in Mathematics in Grade 4.

HOWARD MULLER, GRADE 5

Howard had many behavioral concerns, such as teasing of other scholars and rudeness to teachers, with academic challenges involving the language barrier which affected his ability in Mathematics. Since the beginning of the year he has come a long way and made huge leaps and bounds in both his behavior and academics. Firstly, he was placed on an individualised behavior plan (IBP) which will end this year, due to his major improvement in behavior. Secondly, his understanding and use of the English language has improved which has had a positive effect on his Mathematics marks as well. He has succeeded in going from a scholar who had 11% for Mathematics in term 1 to having 61% by the end of term 3. We are so proud of him and commend him for his hard work!
Looking ahead

We are excited to be offering Grades R through to 6 next year, with the school growing by a grade each year until we reach full capacity.

The student body currently consists of 279 scholars and SPARK are aiming for an enrolment target of 571 scholars for 2018. As a result, the staff body will be growing from 34 staff members to 52. Leadership will consist of a Principal, two Assistant Principals and a School Operations Manager to best support the development and growth of staff which will ensure the sustained success of the school.

The school site will also be expanding, taking up more classrooms in the main building of the SI, to make provision for the growing number of scholars.

SPARK’s focus areas for 2018 will include:

• A focus on parent academic support to support children’s academics
• Extending our Environmental Education initiatives with the scholars and teachers
• School & Community initiatives and events, including building more relationships with the farms
• Communication with parents and families

Funders and partners

We are incredibly grateful to the support of Remgro and Cape Wine Auction Trust who have supported the school from its inception, and continue to make this model of private-public partnership possible. We are indebted to the support and dedication of the WCED officials we get to work with who assist us in accessing the government support so critical to the school’s success. A special note of thanks to Spier for supporting the Community Keepers office and Meerlust for their ongoing support. And to Community Keepers and the LunchBox Fund who are incredible partners in support of our education initiatives.
We believe that every single person has amazing potential and we aim to unlock that potential in every participant by focusing on the needs of the group as a collective and on the needs of every individual. We provide support in practical ways and make sure that our programme is informed by our participants.

Activities and interventions
This year the three regular programmes that youth participated in was Karate, holiday programmes and the Lynedoch United Football Club.

The Youth Programme focuses on supporting and equipping high school students from the Lynedoch valley with the necessary tools to complete their secondary education and encourage them to develop into responsible adults, in control of their own destiny.

"Here at the SI, we want to ensure that the youth of the Lynedoch community are supported in identifying and developing their skills optimally through a journey of personal discovery, healing and development. We aim to achieve this by exposing them to a broader field of career opportunities whilst guiding them in their holistic personal development. We strive to unlock meaningful livelihoods for our youth that benefit them, their families and the broader community." Natasha Rossouw, Youth and Community Coordinator.

Karate is presented by Sensei Tony Edwards, and takes place during school hours. Kushido is an international karate system that was founded in South Africa in 1963. Classes concentrate on developing self-defence skills and true Martial Art characteristics within the practitioner that include: a healthy body and mind, discipline, focus and respect.
During **school holidays**, programmes are facilitated at the SI and youth from participating schools are invited to join in the activities.

During the October school holiday, the Youth Hub arranged various fun activities to teach the children about hygiene and teamwork. One of the activities challenged them to build an object, using marshmallows and spaghetti, to create a phone stand. Needless to say they had great fun in building their designs! The youth also had to construct their own mouth and teeth from clay, as part of the lesson on personal hygiene.

Holiday programme activities include sessions on personal development, creative learning experiences and excursions. During the July school holiday, the youth learned more about road safety, which they thoroughly enjoyed!

This year, **afterschool care** was provided to children from the Lynedoch Community School, Blaauwklippen and Meerlust farms.

Apart from academic support, the time spent with the children is used to focus on personal development - such as developing problem-solving skills - and self-awareness development. These skills are developed through educational videos, activities, discussions and visits from organisations or individuals specialising in specific areas of development.
The Lynedoch United Football Club meets twice a week, where 40 youth train and exercise to partake in matches in the Stellenbosch LFA over weekends. There is also a senior soccer team with 23 members. This team competes in the Promotional League which is managed by SAFA Cape Winelands.

Apart from the physical exercise enjoyed by the youth, being part of a team has helped to foster a spirit of camaraderie, brotherhood and discipline in the young members. As their coach Shaun Claasen, so aptly states: “It’s not about winning or losing but more about taking a lesson from the results, good or bad and trying to improve in the next match.”

Sports are so important not only for the health and wellbeing of children, but also building positive self-esteem and confidence that comes with engaging in active and team sports. Sport develops the values of perseverance, commitment and team work, as well as the learning of life lessons both on and off the field.

“We are a team, we play as a team, we lose as a team, we win as a team, and when a team mate gets disciplined, we get disciplined as a team.”

Team motto

Our youth developed a keen interest in chess this year, and participated in various competitions with other schools locally.
Reflections

This year has been very fruitful, and we celebrate every student that was involved in our programme. Every participant has shown amazing personal growth and are dedicated towards working hard at making their own personal dreams and aspirations, come true.

Amongst the many successes achieved we celebrate a few that stood out for us this year:

• A brand new “Dream House” which is a space completely dedicated to our youth
• Developing increased ownership and responsibility within participants
• Alumni of the programme, such as Athalia and Alistair, returning to share their journeys and support and inspire youth currently in our programme
• Increased parent involvement through parent workshops
• Home visits in the Lynedoch Valley contributing towards relationship building
• Cultivating a passion amongst our youth to dream big

Looking ahead

Stepping in 2018, we are very excited to work in collaboration with The President’s Award, an internationally accredited programme as well as with Sp(i)eel, an arts therapy collective to provide practical as well as emotional development and investment into the participants of our programme.

Next year we will also be working with a group of unemployed youth from the Valley to support them in finding their passion and to equip our youth with the necessary skills needed to flourish.

Funders and partners

Helping to shape the futures of young people is an extreme privilege and responsibility. Having the support of funders and partners that equally want to invest in the futures of our youth, is extremely encouraging and enables us to achieve the goals we set out for ourselves to achieve. We extend a big thank you to our funders and partners for 2017, especially the Lexi, Nomad and Meerlust for their continued support, and we look forward to working with you again in 2018.
We are learning the importance of deep relationship building in our community, and how long this work takes. We are humbled and encouraged by the progress we have made, and acutely aware that there are more children to be reached.

Our key goals in 2018 for our three programmes include:

**Lynedoch Children’s House**
- Continuous training for teachers
- More Indigenous Knowledge in curriculum
- Increased parent engagement
- Ensure structure supports growth and that intake numbers are optimal
- Health and wellbeing interventions for staff

**SPARK Lynedoch Primary School**
- Funding security for school, including incoming Grade Rs
- Increased parent involvement
- Stronger focus on place-based learning
- Programme for at-risk learners in partnership with school

**Lynedoch Youth Programme**
- Well-functioning youth space
- Engaged youth
- Curriculum focused on self-discovery and skills development
- Exposure to a network of options (Secondary schools, Tertiary, jobs)
- Specialised interventions for at-risk youth

To achieve these goals, we need human and financial resources as well as strong partnerships with organisations and service providers in the community that share our vision and can work with us.

The Sustainability Institute is a non-profit trust and can issue tax certificates for donations received from both individuals and organisations. Please contact us if you are interested in making a financial contribution that will translate into meaningful and transformative change in the lives of many young people, today.
OUR FUTURE

Our survey has shown us that we need to increase our funding to reach more children, and we are looking to build meaningful partnerships to achieve this.

Going forward, we aspire to serve every child from the Lynedoch Valley.

We invite interested organisations and individuals to visit us if you would like to find out more about our activities. Alternatively, please visit any of our online platforms for more information.

The SI is a registered non-profit trust and public benefit organisation. Our board of directors is governed by interim chair Naledi Mabeba, with Heidi Newton-King, Jess Schulschenk and Eve Annecke as fellow directors. The SI has developed clear reporting structures with programme coordinators taking full responsibilities of their programmes and that the staff is able to identify between core and non-core responsibilities.

The SI complies with all statutory requirements and is subject to a full annual audit conducted by auditors Theron du Plessis in Somerset West. The SI receives an unqualified audit report each year.

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https://www.givengain.com/cause/4603/campaigns/12784/