

Engen Libra helps transform children's lives at Tjhabelani Primary School

Eleven years ago the rural Tjhabelani Primary School was just a dream. Today, Engen Libra Motors has helped it grow offering its learners the kind of educational opportunities they never thought possible.

The school, which opened 11 years ago in Bainsvlei, 15km outside Bloemfontein, has blossomed, thanks in no small part to the partnership with Engen Libra Motors. Not only does the dealership sponsor daily transport to school for the 125 children to the tune of R60 000 annually, but also assists with donations such as clothing and food.

Engen Libra works closely with OFM radio DJ, Shandor Potgieter, who is also the school's project manager.

His vision for Tjhabelani Primary is to guide the children on a journey that builds their confidence and independence, allowing them to live meaningful lives. To make this possible however, partnerships with stakeholders such as Engen are crucial.

"We are so grateful for their incredible support," Potgieter says.

Engen Libra's Drene du Plessis shares Potgieter's passion for the children, and says she believes that giving back to the local community is the right thing to do.

Of her chosen focus on education, she says: "We help by ensuring that the learners are transported to and from school every day. We also started a forecourt collection campaign in November, 2017 which allows customers to add R2 to their basket. This money is donated to the school. To date, R2500 has been raised".

In addition, as part of Engen Dealer Community Partnership Programme, Engen donated an additional R5000 to the school.

Du Plessis says she loves children because children hold the key to South Africa's future, "it is essential to ensure that they are supported and receive the best possible education and chance to succeed in their lives.

"We do a host of things for them, including contributing funds and help at school events, collecting clothes from the local community, donating beverages and fresh baked goods from our Quickshop, and printing posters and certificates to acknowledge learners' achievements at their sports days."

Her service station has also donated tablecloths for the school cafeteria and helped start their vegetable garden.

"The most amazing thing is that the entire community pulls together and contributes in any which they can, which is very positive and uplifting," says Du Plessis.

Their future fundraising plans include organising a cycle race, while other negotiations are under way with stakeholders who have committed to some exciting new developments. There is also an adopt-a-learner campaign planned to help boost funds.

"It costs around R35 000 a year to educate one learner at the school, so they really need all the help they can get," she says.

Adhila Hamdulay, Engen's Corporate Social Investment Manager, says the company views

its responsibility to society with the same gravity as its responsibility to its shareholders and employees.

“As Engen, we are conscious of our need to build and maintain a credible profile as a responsible corporate citizen. We are therefore committed to conducting business in a manner that uplifts the economic, social and environmental needs of the communities in which we operate.”