

TLC for science pupils as close to 90 teaching and learning centres built to help pupils tackle the subject

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Cape Town - Close to 90 schools across the Western Cape have been empowered with practical learning experiences and experiments required for comprehensive teaching. The Science Teaching and Learning Centres (Science TLCs), serve as creative spaces to teach science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, agriculture and coding (Steamac). This project which started more than a decade ago, was made possible through a partnership between Advancing Knowledge NPC, the Archway Foundation and the Western Cape Education Department(WCED). Among the schools which received the facility is Ashton Secondary School in 2011.



More recently, West Bank No. 1 Primary School, opened its Science TLC. Principal Greg Gordon said: “Hopefully in a few years our learners will graduate as scientists in different fields having started their journey at West Bank No. 1 Primary School.” Physical science and natural science teacher at Ashton Secondary School, Gert Jacobus, said: “Pupils are now doing experiments in the centre and not outside on the field. The centre has touched so many as pupils can observe, improve and enjoy themselves. “Pupils' observation and experimental skills have increased and the number of pupils who take physical science as a subject. The highlight for us was when former pupil Leonardo Abrahams passed physical science in the 2018 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations with an A aggregate,” Jacobus said.

Porterville Primary School received a TLC in 2016. Natural science teacher at school, Kayleen Arendse, said: “There was a significant growth in the number of pupils who joined the science club of the school. “The centre is of significant importance. It gives the opportunity to pupils to do practical work and experiments related to the curriculum. They can explore and gain knowledge through experiments,” she said.

Chief executive of Archway Foundation, John Matthews, said they were ecstatic to have been partners of this fantastic initiative. “The provision of these facilities would not have been possible without the collaboration of our partners, he said.

Director of Advancing Knowledge NPC, Shaheed Hartley, said: “A number of reports have highlighted how the number of pupils taking science and mathematics as pure subjects has dwindled so much that many schools have closed their science streams. “The Science TLC project is more than just the actual infrastructure as it provides the support and space where the teachers and pupils can really delve into both curricular as well as everyday application of science. “Once the Science TLC has been established we stay in contact through various routes including through the science subject advisers, the ongoing training with the science teachers, and the involvement of their pupils in our various science activities,” he said.

Education MEC David Maynier said: “It is important for pupils to have access to these state-of-the-art facilities to increase the number of pupils who enrol in science subjects in Grades 10 to 12. The Department will also provide support to the schools, and training for the teachers, to ensure that we deliver quality teaching and learning in the sciences in the Western Cape.”