

Term 2 2025 Newsletter

Dear Bridges Community,

"We tell people to follow their dreams, but you can only dream of what you can imagine, and depending on where you come from, your imagination can be quite limited." -Trevor Noah, Born a Crime.

This powerful quote captures the heart of why our work at Bridges matters. In Term 2, we witnessed imaginations expand and new dreams take root as 1103 children from under-resourced communities were exposed to new experiences, perspectives, and possibilities through visiting Bridges and partaking in our outdoor education programme.

Thank you for continuing to make this transformation possible - your support is helping young people dream bigger, grow stronger, and reach further. We hope you enjoy reading about the activities and impact made possible by your partnership.

Warm regards,
The Bridges Team

Term 2 Camps Overview: Expanding Horizons and Deepening Impact

Term 2 saw us hosting **13 fully funded outdoor education camps**, reaching **1103 learners** and **51 educators**, from **9 partner schools**.

From Strand to Malmesbury, from Gugulethu to Durbanville, children from under-resourced communities were immersed in experiences that sparked imagination, built confidence, and cultivated leadership.

Across all camps, learners engaged in hands-on, values-based activities that brought our core themes - **teamwork, trust, respect, courage, and social awareness** - to life. Whether building rafts, navigating the "A-frame," or tackling challenges like "Leaky Pipes" and "Toxic Waste," children collaborated, communicated, and discovered their own potential.

At several camps, **educators reported noticeable shifts in learner behaviour**: typically shy or disengaged students stepped up to lead; those struggling academically showed new confidence; and emerging leaders were identified for prefect roles back at school.



"Our usual problematic kids at school were well-behaved and cooperated during every task. It really shows how Bridges gives our kids hope to be and do better. Bridges brought out the best in our kids and brought out their hidden skills and potential."

- Educator, Cascade Primary



"I saw boys who don't open their mouths at school leading activities with boldness." -

- Educator Alpha Primary



"By the second day, our learners were sharing snacks and stories with new friends."

- Educator, Bonga



"The shy learners came forward and were involved in the camp activities. Something happened on this camp with this boy who definitely learnt something and adjusted his behaviour with the coaches. Shows you can change."

- Educator, Bergendal Primary

Meaningful relationships formed between learners from different schools and backgrounds at our combined camps-bridging language and demographic divides-highlighting the importance of inclusion and shared experience.

Educators were not only participants but partners-eager to implement what they had **learned back in their classrooms**, particularly the cognitive and social-emotional skills embedded in our workshops.



"The Pyramid activity will help them when doing geometry. I saw real excitement from a child who usually struggles in class."

- Educator Dalubuhle



"Learners are more confident now because the competition is not about winning - it's about how you work with people. All learners are now able to socialise better and are very mindful of others."

- Educator, Dalubuhle

Learners repeatedly referenced their favourite moments-such as hikes, fashion shows, skits, and new camp songs-showing how joy and learning go hand in hand.



"On a personal point, I learnt and experienced something I probably never would have in the classroom."



"Our girls really did not want to leave as they really enjoyed their stay and for

- Gr 6 Educator, Simondium

some of our girls this is the only time of the year they sleep on their own beds and they lways look forward to it."

- Educator, Elnor Primary.

Despite rainy weather, load shedding, and other challenges, the resilience of learners and coaches shone through. The sense of safety and affirmation at camp provided children with space to open up, reflect, and simply be children - often in stark contrast to their daily environments. A highlight for many was receiving **toiletry packs and warm, hand-knitted beanies**, small acts of care that made a lasting impression.

We're deeply grateful to our partners and donors for making this transformation possible. Thank you for helping unlock imaginations, plant new dreams, and empower a generation of young South Africans to grow in hope, courage, and possibility.



Term 2 Impact



13
CAMPS



1,103
LEARNERS



51
EDUCATORS



2,308
WARM BEDS &
SHOWERS



8,078
NUTRITIOUS MEALS



10
PARTNER SCHOOLS



2,992
FACILITATOR
/ COACHING HOURS



1,156
VOLUNTEER HOURS



222
CURRICULUM
ALIGNED ACTIVITIES

Learners Feedback

Here is some feedback from the learners who visited Bridges this term- this was what they said they learned, loved and will always remember about camp;

"I learned that to be patient will help you. And teamwork."

"I learned that social awareness is being aware of others emotions and feelings."

"I loved swimming and the delicious food and games."

"I learned to have sportsmanship, respect, trust and courage."

"I liked the games and art and music."

"I learned that it is important to support your teammate and to congratulate the other team when they win and do well."

"The coaches were patient and kind. I learned not to be a bully."

"I learned that if you work with your team, it will make things go easier."

"I liked my room, it was nice and clean."

"I learned about social awareness. I learned how to treat others."

"I will remember everything, because everything was special."

"I learned to respect each other is important."

"I like to wash in the shower."

"I will remember the activities, the camp fire and the swimming."

"I will miss camp- I wish I could stay here the whole week!"

"I learned that working together is a good thing."

"I will remember that I was excited at camp!"

"I will remember that they helped me improve my courage."

"I will always remember to be kind to others."

"That working as a team makes a difference."

"I will always remember sleeping in the soft bed."

"I will remember the swimming, my room and the food."

"I will always remember the fun I had at camp."

"I will never forget how good they treated me."

"I will remember staying here, the food and the games I played with others."

"I will always remember how well and nice the coaches treated me."

Bridges OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Tell us something special you will always remember about camp?

I will always remember sleeping in the soft bed.

Thank you for your feedback! Your responses will help us improve future camps and understand how this experience has impacted you.

Bridges OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Tell us something special you will always remember about camp?

** I will always remember the games we play and the food is cooked on the cooking place.*


Thank you for your feedback! Your responses will help us improve future camps and understand how this experience has impacted you.

** I liked the games art and music*

** I learned that is important to support your teammate and congratulated other team when they win and do well.*

DALUBUHLE PRIMARY
P.O. BOX 11
LA MOTTE
7691

TEL: (021) 876 3957
FAX: (021) 876 3957
EMIS: 0108042115



E-Mail: Dalubuhle.prim@wcpschools.gov.za

Date: 17 June 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: APPRECIATION FOR HOSTING OUR LEARNERS FROM 3 TO 5 JUNE 2025

On behalf of the Dalubuhle School Management Team, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to The Bridges Academy Camp Site for warmly hosting our learners from 3 June to 5 June 2025.

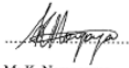
The camp was an incredibly enriching and educational experience for our learners. The well-structured activities helped to build essential life skills such as teamwork, leadership, self-confidence, and problem-solving. It also provided a valuable opportunity for our learners to engage in experiential learning outside the traditional classroom setting.

We particularly appreciated the professionalism and enthusiasm of your staff, who ensured that the environment was safe, welcoming, and conducive to learning and growth. The balance between fun and education was perfectly executed, making the experience both enjoyable and meaningful for our learners.

Camps like this play a vital role in holistic education by encouraging personal development, resilience, and social interaction in a unique and inspiring setting. Our learners have returned with renewed motivation and positive memories that will stay with them for years to come.

Thank you once again for your dedication and support in making this camp a success.

Yours sincerely,


Ms K. Nomnganga

Western Cape Education Department
Dalubuhle Primary
P.O. Box 11
La Motte
7691
Tel: 021 876 3957
Email dalubuhle.prim@wcpschools.gov.za
Date:

Principal: N.L. Mbenenge, Deputy Principal: V. Yeko, HOD: N.Nikani F/P, K. Nomnganga Intersen, M. Jamba Intersen

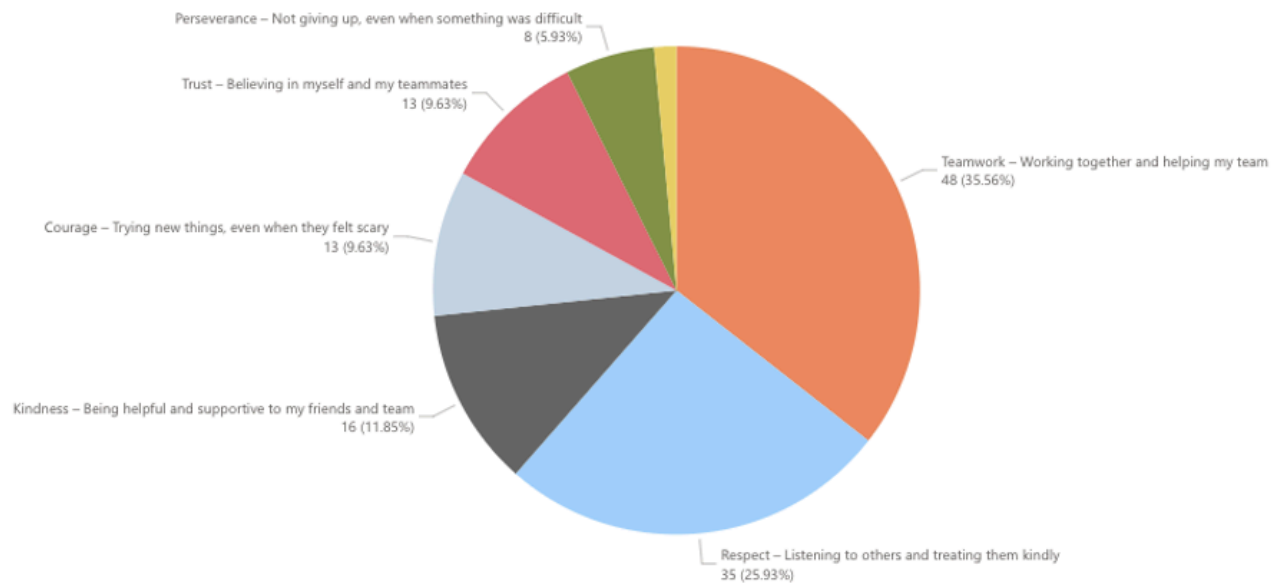
Data Dashboard is Live

We're excited to share that our new **Power BI data dashboard** is now live! Using a 10-question pre- and post-camp survey completed by each learner, we're gathering valuable data that provides deep insight into how learners are experiencing the Bridges Outdoor Education Programme.

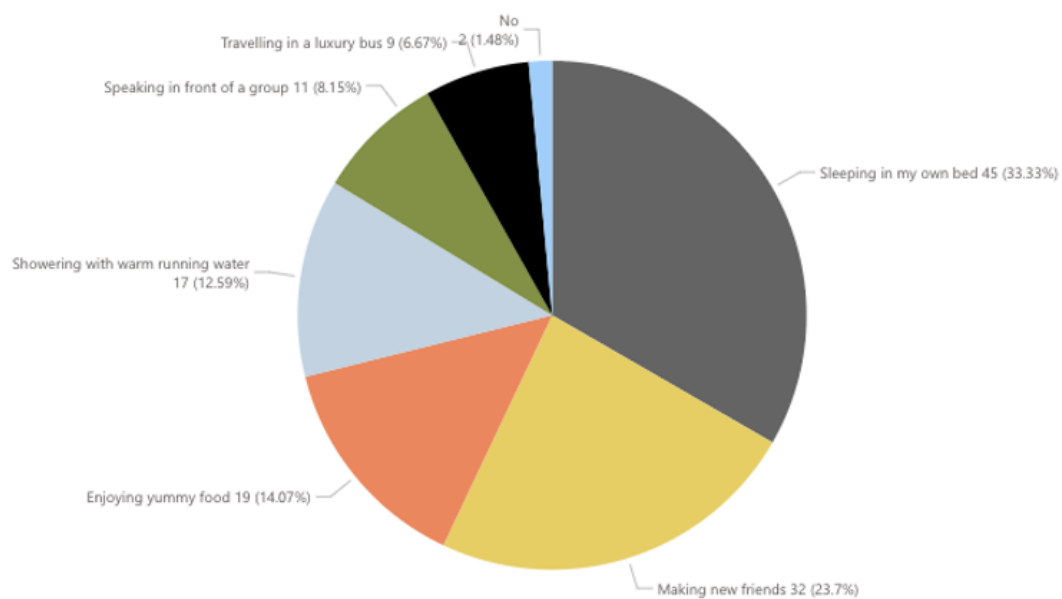
This real-time feedback empowers Shernel, our Camp Manager, and her team of coaches to understand each group's journey and continuously adapt and improve the camp experience. It ensures every moment on camp is optimised for learning, growth, and fun.

The dashboard also offers clear evidence of the programme's impact on learners' lives. Here's a snapshot of what the data is revealing:

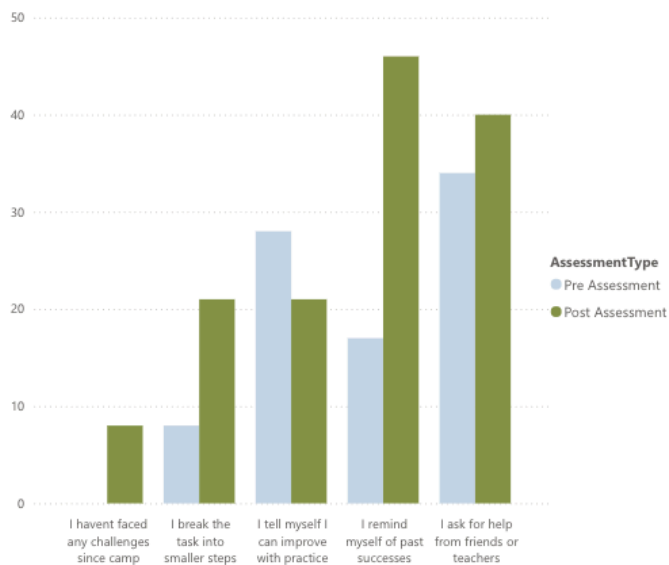
Q10. What is one important value you learned or practiced at camp that you can take back to school



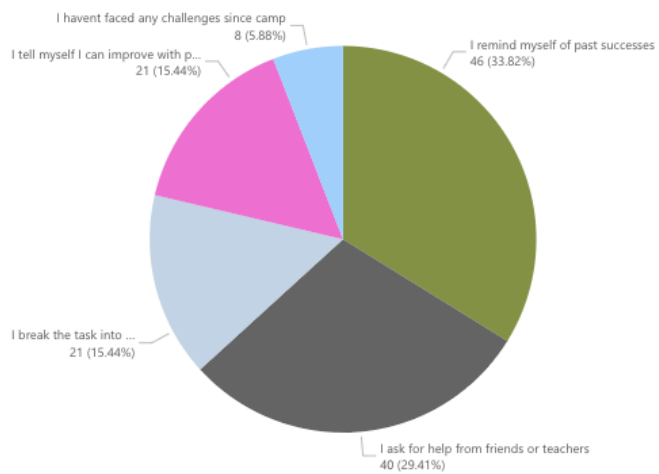
Q11. Did you try something new or exciting at camp



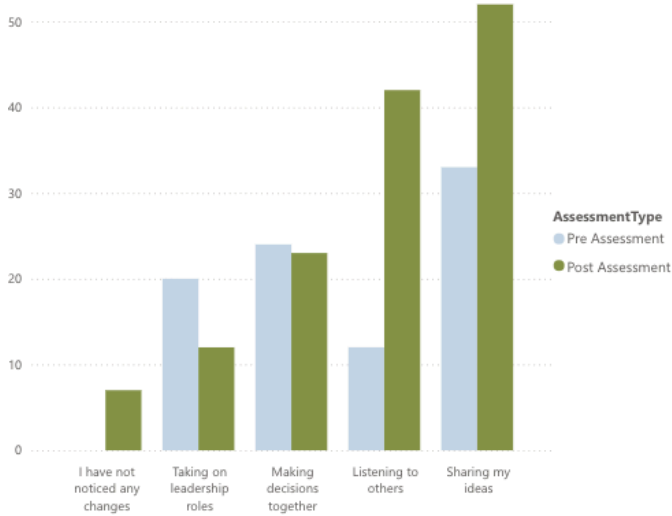
Shift from Pre to Post



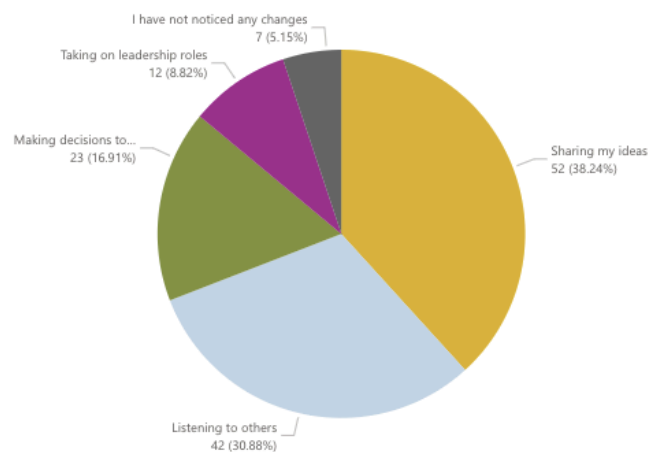
Q8. When you face a challenge now, how do you motivate yourself



Shift from Pre to Post



How has the camp changed how you think you can work in groups at school going forward





News

JOY! Magazine Feature

We were thrilled to be featured in JOY! Magazine this term—both online and in print. This article gave us a wonderful opportunity to share the heart and impact of Bridges with a wider audience.

[Read Article](#)

EDUCATION

Bridges

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Providing enriching & educational camp experiences for children from under-resourced communities.

Bridges is a retreat centre and campsite situated in the beautiful Transhok Valley. Whether it's a school trip, church camp, conferencing, team building or a spot for solitude and silence - Bridges is a uniquely positioned solution. Bridges Retreat Centre is a Christian, faith-based organisation that aims to empower lives through transformative camp experiences. It seeks to provide an inspirational space where other community serving organisations can host focused, short-term retreats. Part of Bridges' mission is its outdoor education programme - where every year, thousands of children, most in need of transformational experiences, are able to leave the realities of life for a few days and engage in learning and growing emotionally, mentally, relationally, and spiritually in the beauty of creation.

Bridges combines the beauty of a retreat centre with the purpose of an educational programme.

Bridging gaps with adventure and learning
At the core of Bridges is its outdoor education programme, designed to uplift children through enriching experiences that teach crucial life skills and values. This programme is not just about outdoor fun; it's a structured educational journey that helps shape the futures of its young participants by providing them with the tools to change their life paths positively.

Fostering skills for the future
The Bridges programme promotes holistic development through a values-based curriculum that incorporates adventure and team building. It enhances cognitive skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and environmental awareness, adapting the CAPS curriculum for effective outdoor learning. It also builds social-emotional skills, including communication, teamwork, and leadership, along with physical wellness and co-ordination - equipping each learner for comprehensive growth.

Expanding horizons
The impact of Bridges is significant, having completed over 7283 camp experiences with the help of 363 educators and provided over 45 262 meals across 80 camps. These numbers reflect the extensive reach and positive influence of the programme, affirming its role in transforming lives.

Inspiring dreams and building futures
Bridges is dedicated to offering life-changing experiences that go beyond typical camp activities. It provides children with a glimpse of life outside their everyday constraints, inspiring them to dream bigger and explore their potential. The camp offers a mix of fun, education, and personal growth that helps foster new aspirations and confidence.

Creating a safe and nurturing space
Bridges provides more than just accommodation; it offers a safe haven where children can experience peace and a sense of belonging. The camp's supportive environment is enhanced by the

presence of caring mentors and role models (the facilitators), giving children, perhaps for the first time, the chance to see positive male figures in action. This supportive setting allows them to focus on personal growth and build lasting connections.

Mission-driven educational retreat
Bridges combines the beauty of a retreat centre with the purpose of an educational programme. It is committed to offering fully-funded experiential learning camps for middle school learners from underprivileged backgrounds in the Western Cape, fully integrating academic pursuits with personal development. Bridges nurtures future leaders armed with strong values and a solid educational foundation, ready to tackle life's challenges.

Our mission
Our mission is to provide fully-funded experiential learning camps, aligned to the national curriculum, for Grade 5-7 learners from under-resourced communities in the Western Cape. Our outdoor education programme fosters cognitive, social-emotional, spiritual, and physical growth while developing values and leadership skills.

32 JOY! MAGAZINE

If booking a camp at Bridges, you are supporting the outdoor education programme.

Looking to book your Alpha weekend away? Bridges is an ideal venue!

Need a break from the usual? Book a retreat at Bridges for your church leadership/visitation team (bookings of min 20 pax)

Want to take your youth group on an exciting weekend camp? Book your spot at Bridges Retreat Centre.

Prices: R290 pp/pn.
Variety of catering options available.
Group bookings 20-200

R201 Wemmershoek 7690
FRANCISBAK, SOUTH AFRICA

076 679 5896
info@bridgesretreat.co.za

bridgesretreat.co.za

Thank You To our Donors

We're also incredibly grateful for the generous donations we received this term:

- Coast and Country Sales provided several food donations
- Common Ground Church Holiday Club collected two boxes of games, books, and toys for our campers
- Banhoek Coffee Roastery donated hessian sacks—perfect for our outdoor games

- And the talented knitting group ‘Vlytige Vingers’ gifted us a batch of beautiful handmade beanies to keep our learners warm this winter

Thank you to each of these partners for your kindness and support—it makes a real difference in the lives of the children we serve.

Bridge the Gap

We're excited to share that we've reached 70% of our fundraising target at the halfway point of the year!

We have 10 more camps still in need of sponsorship, so if you'd like to support a camp and help us continue this vital work, please get in touch—we'd love to have you join us in this mission!

Donate



Snap Scan



Peach Payments

Thank You!

To each of you who supports us—thank you. Your generosity makes every moment of impact, growth, and joy shared above possible.

We're excited for what's to come in the second half of the year and look forward to welcoming hundreds more young learners to Bridges for unforgettable experiences.

With love, The Bridges Team



Bridges Retreat Centre

Klein Lusthof Farm Erf 1600 R301 Wemmershoek, 7690, Franschhoek

You've received this because you've made a donation or are interested in Bridges.

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