

## OCTOBER 2019

Campaign will ensure Western Cape pupils arrive on time for school

By [Mthuthuzeli Ntseku](#) Oct 25, 2019

Cape Town - The Just Grace Community Development Programme in Langa has embarked on a "tardiness campaign" that will see pupils from four high schools and a primary school encouraged to be on time by giving them support and motivating them to take education seriously.

Nozibele Ndunge, a social worker at Just Grace, said: "Most pupils lack motivation and feel forced to go to school. We have noticed that they lack motivation, and we want to instil a positive attitude.

"We want our pupils to see that we are with them on the journey."

Ndunge said arriving late had escalated in Langa and needed urgent attention from not only the teachers but also the community. She said traffic was one of the major reasons given by pupils for arriving late.

Western Cape Education Department spokesperson Bronagh Hammond said the department was continuously engaging with schools with regards to arriving late.

"Arriving late affects not only the pupil who is late due to the loss of learning time, but can also be disruptive for other pupils in the class," she said.

Hammond said schools were allowed to take various disciplinary approaches when dealing with latecomers like detention, compulsory after-school activities, or activities such as picking up litter.

"Measures to curb late coming vary from school to school. While some measures such as detention work at some schools, at others they do not.

"Therefore, schools need to determine what measures work best for themselves. While there are often very valid reasons for late coming in some schools, in other instances pupils are habitually late. Schools must deal with this on a case-by-case basis, and monitor each pupil's attendance, as well as address habitual latecomers' parents or guardians on this behaviour," she said.

However, pupils could not be refused entry into a school for being late, Hammond said.

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## **JULY 2021**

Just Grace's programme helps keep underprivileged pupils on track

By [Mthuthuzeli Ntseku](#) Jul 20, 2021

Cape Town - When siblings Grant Edmond and Laura Macfarlane had a vision to make a difference in underprivileged communities, they knew they had to initiate a programme that would benefit under-resourced youth to equip them to become meaningfully involved in society through further education or employment.

Just Grace, a non-profit organisation that has been creating hope in the community of Langa was established in 2012. For nine years it has been assisting the youth in the area with its education programmes which involve after-school tutoring, mentoring, career guidance, university/college application assistance and computer training for Grade 10 to matric learners.

Just Grace business development office manager Lindiwe Kers said that when Edmond and Macfarlane conducted some research in various communities to see where there was a need, Langa was a good fit. She said they only started off in one high school tutoring maths and science to 30 Grade 10 learners for two hours on a Saturday.

Kers said an extra grade was then added each year with the goal of opening to all high schools in Langa.

"In 2016 we moved to our current premises at Langa High School and by this time we were working with Grade 10s-12s. In 2018 Grade 9s were added to the programme, as well as coding, book clubs and psychosocial support. This was part of the goal to teach learners how to learn using the resources that they have available to them," said Kers.

The organisation has expanded and is now offering four overarching programmes of which three are connected with the goal of youth empowerment.

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While the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has not been able to determine the number of learners who have dropped out of school in the province since the start of the pandemic, according to figures released by the Department of Basic Education in November last year, 114 588 public school pupils in the province could not be accounted for.

Executive director Grant Edmond said that to address the challenge of the school drop-out rate in Langa, the organisation framed the "Learner Engagement Programme" and piloted the programme last year. He said this was inspired by the 30.4% student drop-out of Langa students between Grade 10 and matric in 2017.

The initiative partners with principals and teachers working in high schools to identify learners at risk of dropping out. It also supports at-risk learners in schools and assists in trying to reintegrate those who have already dropped out back into the school system.

He said learners that were identified as high or medium risk were reclassified as low- or no-risk learners after participating in the programmes.

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<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/just-graces-programme-helps-keep-underprivileged-pupils-on-track-ee6c100e-b230-4088-8fa1-5554a4346f0f>

## **FEBRUARY 2022**

Winning with Grace: Langa civil society organisation awarded coveted French human rights prize

By Kristin Engel    Feb 8, 2022

Cape Town - A Langa-based non-profit organisation, Just Grace, was awarded the coveted 2021 Human Rights Prize of the Republic of France by the Ambassador of France to South Africa, Aurélien Lechevallier, on behalf of the French Republic during a ceremony at the Alliance Francaise du Cap on Monday.

The award, which aimed to acknowledge actions on the ground and projects relating to the effective protection and promotion of human rights, recognised Just Grace's efforts to reduce school dropout in Langa through their inclusive community-based programme during the Covid19 pandemic.

"In the context of the health crisis linked to the Covid-19 pandemic and the increased risk of children dropping out of school, the organisation designed an inclusive community-based programme to reduce dropout.

"This programme is designed to address drop-out in the early stages by identifying early warnings and supporting the learners as best as possible through the implementation of a personalised development plan," said the representative.

The French Human Rights Commission received a record number of applications and the jury had to select winners and special mentions from 260 projects across 68 countries on all continents.

Five organisations across the world were awarded the prize, including Just Grace in South Africa.

"We are humbled and grateful at the recognition of our efforts towards the protection and promotion of human rights. We appreciate the French government's dedication to the promotion of human rights in South Africa," said Just Grace executive director Grant Edmond.

The NPO runs three programmes aimed at empowering the community of Langa, which take place under their theory of change, to ultimately ensure the activities run result in measurable outcomes being achieved.

## **ADVERTISING**

"The programmes address societal ills that prevent residents of Langa from realising their rights. They do this by promoting access to quality education, psychosocial support and technical training and equipping community members to participate as active citizens in the economy," said Grant.



Ambassador of France to South Africa, Aurélien Lechevallier, handing over the 2021 Human Rights Prize of the Republic of France to Just Share business development officer Lindiwe Kers on behalf of the French Republic during a ceremony at Alliance Francaise du Cap on Monday. Picture: Kristin Engel/Cape Argus

With this prize, Lechevallier said France wished to support individual and collective actions that upheld and realised human rights in the world and recognised the fundamental role played by civil society in the promotion and protection of these rights.

Accepting the award from the ambassador, Just Grace business development officer Lindiwe Kers said their mission was to engage in people-centred community empowerment initiatives that contribute to meaningful and sustainable change in Langa.

Kers said their learning engagement programme aimed to reduce school drop out and foster lifelong learning as South Africa was dealing with a considerable dropout crisis.

“By final year, only 50% of learners in South Africa were still enrolled in school; only 32% to 40% that are enrolled pass the national matric exam due to absenteeism and other disengagement factors.

“Worryingly, during the pandemic there was a high increase in the number of children dropping out of school – it is recorded that an additional 750 000 learners did not return to school,” said Kers.

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<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/winning-with-grace-langa-civil-society-organisation-awarded-coveted-french-human-rights-prize-131eba5c-a4b1-410e-b83d-af5540ba317b>