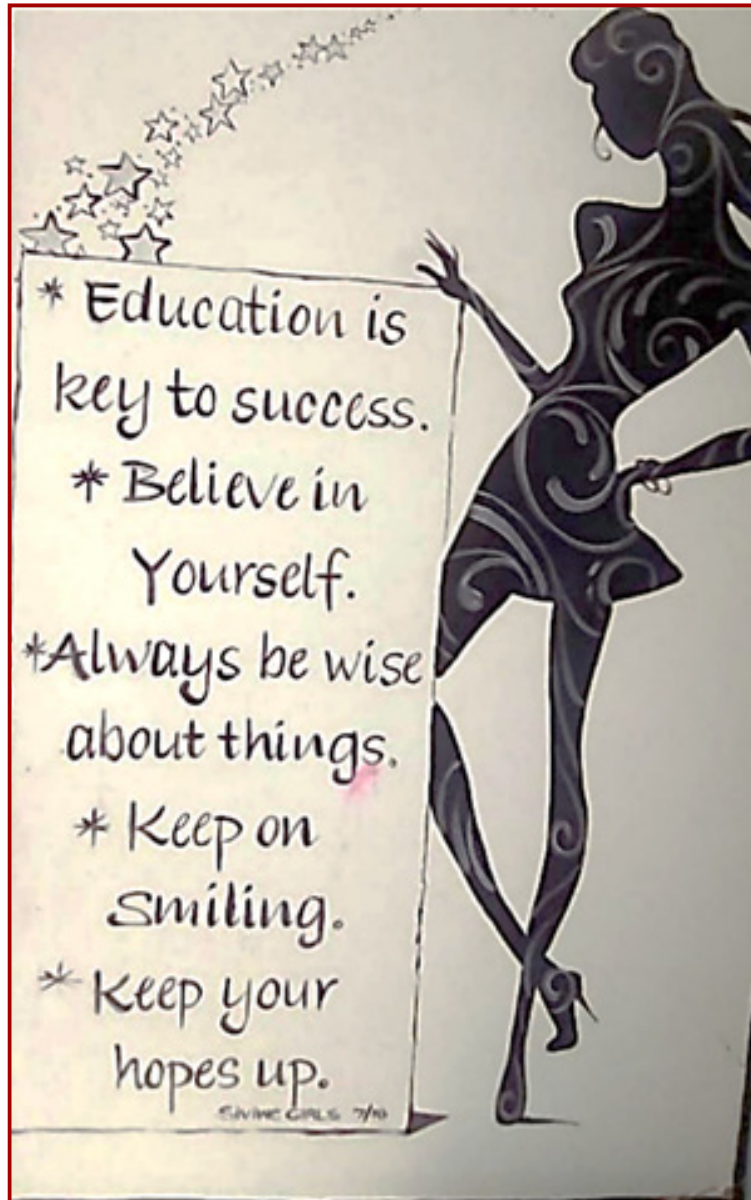




# Ons Plek Projects

*for girls at risk of becoming street children*



## 2020 Annual Report

*We extend a warm invitation to everyone in the area to attend our*

## 2020 Annual General Meeting

**DATE:** THURSDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 2020  
**VENUE:** ROSEBANK METHODIST CHURCH HALL  
**TIME:** 17:00 for 17:30  
**RSVP:** Tel 021 685-4052/49 or Email [onsplek@onsplek.org.za](mailto:onsplek@onsplek.org.za)

Please help us cater  
for everybody by  
bringing a  
plate of eats

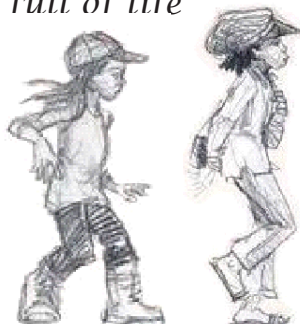
# Our children want YOU at our AGM

Ons Plek children want YOU at our Annual General Meeting. So do the staff! But for the children it is more than an AGM. Remember parents' days at school? And concerts, sports days, etc. Where every child wanted a parent to "see" them perform. Our children prepare for this day. And their parents are seldom there.

Be a parent for 10 minutes to our children when they present in singing or dancing. But especially when each one is paired off with an AGM attendee for 10 minutes to show their favourite school work person to person.

And our AGMs are full of life and fun!

Pam Jackson  
Director



## OUR DETAILS

We invite you to visit all our Projects,  
to meet the staff members  
and the children

**DIRECTOR: PAM JACKSON**

### ONS PLEK

Assessment centre, intake shelter and offices

7 Malleson Road, Mowbray, Cape Town 7705  
P O Box 12924, Mowbray, Cape Town 7700  
Tel: 021 685-4052/49 \* Fax: 021 685-3128

Email: [onsplek@onsplek.org.za](mailto:onsplek@onsplek.org.za)

Website: [www.onsplek.org.za](http://www.onsplek.org.za)

NPO No. 009-578 \* PBO No. 930-001-457

### SIVIWE

Second-stage shelter

7 York Street, Woodstock 7925

Tel: 021 448-6529

### OUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:

#### UKONDLA 1

City Council Community Hall, Browns Farm, Philippi, Cape Town 7750

#### UKONDLA 2 and 3

Premises of Sizakuyenza Safe House, cnr Eisleben and Phumelele Roads, Philippi, Cape Town 7750

## NOMINATIONS for the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE of Ons Plek Projects

Nominations for election to the Management Committee must be received at our office by **4th September 2020 at 17h00.**

Nominations must be in writing and must have been seconded. Your nomination form is on the back page. If you are in need of more nomination forms, they are available from **Adele** and **Nicolette** at our office. **ONLY MEMBERS of Ons Plek Projects** are entitled to nominate and second persons for election.

Anyone who has donated to Ons Plek in **any** way is considered a member.

**We thank the following current Committee Members who are willing to stand for re-election:**

- \* Greg Becker
- \* Christiana Nel
- \* Allerease Olanrewaju
- \* Fiona Ronquest-Ross

- \* Cabangile Mduli
- \* Hannes Noval
- \* Monica Pike

# Ons Plek ❀ Siviwe ❀ Ukondla

## Ons Plek Projects consist of:

- ❖ **Ons Plek**, an intake shelter for girls doing comprehensive assessment and development care with reunification as a priority.
- ❖ **Siviwe**, a second-phase shelter for girls focusing on therapeutic and developmental children's home with reunification as a priority.
- ❖ **Ukondla**, a community project with prevention as a priority run at three venues in Philippi for boys and girls at risk of becoming street children.

## ~ Mission Statement ~

**Ons Plek Projects has a simple and passionate mission:**

**To make a substantive improvement in the lives of female street children and to prevent children at risk of becoming street children from doing so.**

Ons Plek Projects provides places where children find opportunities to build their lives and their self-esteem. Places where a sense of belonging helps them to take responsibility for themselves and for others.

The preparation for the future lives of each child takes into account the innate potential of the individual within the realities of her life circumstances.

These realities are mirrored in all aspects of our projects which enables us to model coping mechanisms; children participate fully in decisions about their lives; residential staff members share the lives of the girls; office staff members make do in cramped quarters with only the essentials for the job; and our community projects model how a lot can be done by dedicated staff members with few resources.

***Ons Plek is not an escape — it is a real home in a rough life***

## Ons Plek's Vision ...

*That female street children will be successfully re-united with their families and that failing that, they will be sufficiently empowered at Ons Plek Projects to grow into healthy, independent functioning members of society.*

*The children at risk of becoming street children will use our interventions to keep them as constructive members of society.*

*That children living in communities with their parents who are at risk of becoming street children will be enabled to remain in school and with their families.*

### Key Information with regard to the Work, and the Context of the Work, of Ons Plek Projects

- Ons Plek is the only comprehensive program for girls on the streets in the Unicity of Cape Town.
- Our intake shelter is situated in the CBD of Cape Town, because it is central and is where children and youth run to for relative safety if city security systems allow them.
- The sources of the children's problems are not easily solved – deepening poverty, abuse, lack of affordable safe housing, unemployment, crime, family instability, alcohol abuse, family violence, etc.
- Girls come or are referred to us from different areas. Some girls roam around their home community with inappropriate friends, often hanging around cheap local liquor and entertainment centres, before seeking help further afield.
- Girls who seek help are often teenagers, but also younger girls, sometimes girls with babies.
- Children tend to cope with an inordinate amount of trauma before leaving their home environments. These psychological scars may take a long time to heal for many of the girls.
- Those girls who find it the most difficult to reintegrate with mainstream society are often also living with learning difficulties and even severe mental health problems.
- Unaccompanied foreign minors are very vulnerable, and are ending up in the 'street children' sector.
- Ons Plek works with an average – 100 to 150 girls per year.
- Our community based prevention programs successfully keep 'at risk' children from running to the streets. They provide a support structure in community for children from the shelters when re-unified with their families.
- The work of our three main facilities is all interlinked. The three programs integrate to form a whole.



## WE ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GRATITUDE THE VALUABLE SUPPORT OF OUR MAJOR DONORS

- \*Claude Leon Foundation
- \*Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church — USA
- \*Division of Overseas Ministries
- \*Douglas Jooste Trust
- \*E R Tonnesen Trust
- \*F H Baumann/St Olas Trust
- \*Investec
- \*IOM
- \*JDI Events Trust
- \*Percy Fox Foundation
- \*South African Association of Hong Kong
- \*S Spiegel
- \*Streetsmart SA
- \*Woolworths Trust



To the various individuals, families and Trusts,  
a huge "Thank You" for your continuous  
financial and material support.



### Keeping track of your donation

If you are depositing money straight into Ons Plek Projects' bank account, please enter your surname AND initials, or your company's name, or Anonymous (if you prefer) in the REFERENCE BLOCKS on the DEPOSIT SLIP.

This information then appears on the bank statement and identifies who we need to receipt and thank for the donation.

#### OUR BANKING DETAILS:

**Bank:** FIRST NATIONAL BANK

**Account No:** 620-529-16908

**Branch:** WOODSTOCK

**Branch Code:** 255005

**In name of:** ONS PLEK PROJECTS

**Swift Code:** FIRNZAJJ

Monies being deposited from overseas (telegraphic transfer) must please reflect the swift code.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

First National Bank has advised that cheques **will not be accepted** if the full name i.e. 'Ons Plek Projects' is not reflected on the cheque ... and we would be so sorry to have to return any cheques!

### Corporate Social Responsibility

#### Pay less estate duty:

Being a Section 18A Tax Benefit company means that your family will save on estate duties i.e. exempt from payment of estate duties.

#### Tax Deductible Benefits:

We are registered as a Public Benefit Organisation and thus all donations to us are tax deductible under Section 18A of the Income Tax Act.

### HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please advise us of your change of address if you have moved home or office ... it's so disappointing when the 'thank you' letters that the girls have written, or our newsletters, are returned to us!

# Living through Covid-19 in a Children's Home

by Director, Pam Jackson  
and Manager, Lee Anne Dolley with input from girls



**Pam Jackson**  
Director

The biggest event to affect Ons Plek has been the Covid 19 pandemic. Although it occurred in the last month of the April 2019 - March 2020 year and strictly speaking, should not be reported on, we want to share what it is like to be in a Children's Home for the girls.

The year was tough, financially, as previous years were for all South Africans, but we were helped by a couple of very generous donations. However, the year's statistics also show a greater proportion of girls were stable, attending school and generally doing well.



The comments below are taken from discussions between girls and social worker and Manager, Lee Anne Dolley on their understanding and fears of Corona virus.

## Living through Covid-19

*Comments from the girls:*

*—When we first heard about Corona virus early in March it felt unreal. Seemed too far away for us to be worried about it. We made up silly songs about it as the Aunties tried to teach us about it. At first it all seemed like the aunties were over-reacting, reminding us about washing our hands, wiping down everything and extra cleaning. Making us watch the news and so many talks about it, but then lockdown...*

## Lockdown

*—At first some of us felt angry, some frustrated how could Ons Plek force us to stay indoors? Not allow us to see our families or allow family to visit us. We missed seeing our friends at school and we couldn't smoke. Then one girl got sick! The aunties said she must isolate herself in the school room. She refused to go. She said she had a normal flu. In the end they had to force her because she would give it to us. And we have some sick children here, who are very scared of getting this. This girl even broke the table when they forced her. Some of us blamed Ons Plek for having such strict rules but as we learnt more about the virus during group time the anger left but the worry started. What about my education? Will I finish school? How is my family eating? What if I get sick? So many other questions...*

*—Lockdown made me miss my family and it also hurt for me to not see them but could only hear their voices.*

*—I am scared that I can get infected.*

*—I worry that one of my family can get infected or that there is death that I don't know about.*

## Further lockdown

*—21 days, the countdown was almost over. Then we watched the news and the President says more lockdown. More anger, more worry. Will this ever end?*

*—I felt like it was very unfair for us as home children because now none of our family can visit us and I feel very angry about that.*

*—It took us a long time to get use to the new way of living especially the home schooling. Lots and lots of cleaning and only talking to family over the phone. For some of us we couldn't get hold of our families, left wondering if they were fine. Not going outside started to feel normal but we missed seeing people. Doing home schooling was difficult, sometimes the Aunties were not able to help us. Some of us had work from school but others not, does this mean we will have to repeat the Grade? Auntie Grace made sure we all had schoolwork even if our schools didn't send any.*

*—I miss my family a lot and I will never know if something may go wrong with them while I'm sitting in this place.*

*—Not being able to go to school. Not being able to find my sister and have contact with her.*

## Did we learn anything during lockdown?

*—Even though lockdown is very difficult we are learning from it. We have built better relationships with others especially the Aunties. We learnt the importance of hygiene. We are learning about saving and the importance of taking responsibly for our learning at school.*

*—Learn how to save e.g. food and water. How to support each other. How to wash hand before eating and cooking. How to clean surfaces all the time. How important the aunties are during this time.*

*—Learn to put school work first and learn that you can do schoolwork online.*

*—Also that it made me realise that I need to appreciate the little that I have because people out there don't have what I have.*

*—It gave me an opportunity to experience learning in a different way.*



## What we are grateful for

—Even though we get angry that we are not able to go out to see our families we know that Ons Plek is keeping us safe. We do not have the virus because we are being kept safe.

—It help me to stop smoking and it made me feel like a new person and made me feel like smoking is not everything in my life.

—We start appreciating the roof we have, the food and warm clothes, we know now the importance of being grateful for what we have.

—I am fortunate to be living in Ons Plek where as there are children out in the country that is hungry and does not have a place to sleep.

## Comments from Child Care Workers

When I first heard about Covid 19 I did not really understand what it all meant until we had our team meetings and discussed it, then I became scared the more I learnt about it.

The first challenge was getting the girls into a new routine of washing hands more regularly, and teaching them about social distancing. They had to be reminded so often and we had to have many group discussions about it. There was a lot of worries, anxiety and anger we had to manage.

The girls needed to be educated and we needed to make sure we understood it so that we could educate them.

The change in shifts was a big adjustment for me and my family. It was good that we reduced how often we had to travel in but managing home schooling and my

children's anxiety was initially very difficult. ( Child Care Workers now come in once a week in pairs and work for 7 straight days and, on standby, at nights). My children didn't understand why I needed to stay at work for longer and I had to rely on family to help them out with home-schooling.

I found that I had to educate not only the girls in the facility but my own family in the community. They were not watching the news, and some had no insight about what was going on. I had to spend time teaching them everything I was learning from work. We found the same problem with the girl's families, when we phoned, they would be walking around. We had the responsibility to educate the girl's family as well because this created more anxiety for the girls, knowing their families were not keeping safe.

The longer shifts, although very difficult also gave me an opportunity to build better relationships with the girls it was easier to follow the case through and have consistency of one person. The new way of working makes me feel safer, but I miss the relationships with my colleagues. I feel disconnected to the team but also building a stronger relationship with the colleague I'm on duty with.

Travelling into work I feel anxious, I wear my mask and take precautions but in the taxi you find people not wearing masks. Someone coughs and you panic. I pretend not to hear them when they tap on your shoulder wanting to pass their fares along.

My fear is getting infected and being far away from my family who live in another province. The girls are safe because we know they do not go out, but I worry that we carry the risk of bringing into the house because it is our responsibility to keep the girls safe.



## Having good times at Ons Plek!!



We were part of an informative outdoor planting activity sponsored by Greenpop



We love visiting the play park



The girls enjoying the demonstration by a group at Greenpop

# A Brief Description of Ons Plek's Programs

A summary of the programs is presented for those not familiar with our work. More detailed information on these programs can be found in previous Annual Reports or on our website.



## Family Reunification Program

Family reunification is one of the core functions of the work at Ons Plek. In some cases it requires months or even years of painstaking work to make a home placement possible. It takes place in our Stabilization and our Long Term Treatment Program.

### ■ First Stage of Reunification

**24-hour Accessible Early Intervention Stabilization Program. Treatment Residence is Ons Plek**

Up to 22 years ago the first stage of reunification often began with the process of weaning the child off the street. For many years we have also specialised in early intervention to prevent children who are candidates for street life from actually becoming street children. Street girls are still referred to Ons Plek Intake Shelter within hours or a few days of arriving in the Cape Town CBD but the proportion of girls arriving in this way is greatly reduced. This is because over the years we have reduced the number of girls living on the streets of Cape Town to an average of 4 girls. **Every child on the street or at risk of being on the street is an emergency for us.**

The girls may be running away from abuse or neglect at home or be influenced by the wrong friends. Her circumstances are assessed immediately on arrival and then referred to our family preservation or family reunification programs.

### ■ Second Stage of Reunification

**Long-term Treatment. Treatment Residence is Siviwe**

Siviwe, meaning God has heard us, provides the second phase of treatment. Once the girls have weaned themselves from street life at Ons Plek or are more stable, they leave to be accommodated at Siviwe for the next phase of treatment. Separated from the girls at Ons Plek, who are still making the

transition to a structured life, girls at the Siviwe shelter can focus more intensively on building their lives.

It is our core aim to reunify children with their families.

### ■ Reunification and Preservation Program

Children who have only been away from the family for a day or two weeks, would fall under the preservation program. If the family bonds are still sufficiently intact for the child to return home while the problems are worked on, it is called family preservation. Staff members hold family meetings and family building sessions with families. Our Ukondla Program focuses primarily on preservation (see Ukondla Program below).

## Reunification of Children — Statistics

13	Reunified home
5	Transferred to other long-term care
0	Placed in foster care
1	Refused help and returned home without our blessing. Designated Social Workers were informed.
32	In care on 31 March 2020
2	On leave of absence
<b>52</b>	<b>Total</b>

*The total for the year in Stabilization Program was 38 and in Long-term Program was 21.*

### ■ Home Visits — local and rural

Home visits are important in making family reunification possible. We have done no long distance visits to the Eastern Cape again due to fewer Eastern Cape children this year.

### ■ Intervention Programs, Life Skills and Skills Training as related to Reunification

A healthy self-image and feeling of belonging and mastery is crucial to the girls' willingness to engage in problem-solving with their families and their communities.

A range of skills training and development programs are provided while the reunification process proceeds, however long that may take. Every activity we offer has a goal and purpose in the children's lives.

*If reunification fails, the same process enables them to engage constructively in society.*

#### ■ Social and Practical Skills — Household Duties

On a daily basis the girls do individual cleaning duties as decided by the Child Care Worker. The girls are responsible for making their beds, cleaning the rooms and the house in general. School uniforms are washed and ironed in the afternoon. The girls prepare a weekly shopping list and actively do the shopping as well as cooking the meals for the household. During lockdown, food had to be brought in.

## Counselling Program

- Trauma counselling
- Life Story sessions to root the child in her history
- Family Therapy sessions

## Social Skills Program

- House Meetings  
House meetings take place as determined by household needs. During meetings the girls learn to practice listening skills, respect each other's opinion and share ideas in an accepting and non-judgmental way.
- Church/Mosque/Youth Attendance  
Most girls attend the local Methodist Church on Sundays where they interact with the community and experience a sense of inclusion and acceptance.
- Cultural and Traditional Activities
- Groups on Relationships, Friendships, Sexual Relationships and Body Care  
The purpose and content of the groups is to educate the girls on positive ways to deal with people in their lives and to gain self-respect. Topics include body change and growth, good relationships/bad relationships, teen pregnancy, contraceptives and HIV/AIDS.
- Preparation to Graduate  
CV preparation, job interview, skills, budgeting. Our whole program is preparing children to graduate in that they learn everything they would

learn at home re shopping, cooking etc., which is very unusual for a Children's Home. Usually Homes have food delivered, they have a cook and dishwasher. The children live in the equivalent of a hotel.

## Education Program

11 in Informal Bridging School  
42 in Formal Schooling

*Once settled the children return home and attend their own schools better equipped to cope there. Those children who are long-term with us attend formal schooling. Children stay in the Stabilization Program for 3-6 months.*

#### ■ School Assessment and Bridging Program for girls not yet ready to return to school

Our school runs from Mondays to Thursdays 09:30 to 12:00, with art and other creative programs on Fridays from 08:00 to 12:00. Their education abilities are assessed and they learn to re-adapt to routine and structure and gain confidence in their abilities.

#### ■ Formal Attendance at Formal Schools

As soon as possible children attend formal schooling.

#### ■ Homework Sessions

The girls at formal schools attend our homework program every afternoon from Mondays to Thursdays.

## Prevention Project

#### ■ Ukondla Program in Philippi (Browns Farm) Community

*The highlight of the year has been the enthusiastic participation of the parents in our Parenting meetings.*

In addition to our overall strategy for dealing with girls vulnerable enough to dwell on the streets rather than in their homes, we are running 3 preventative programs in Philippi community to preserve families. **As children drop out of school before they drop out of home, a homework support program coupled with counselling to parents and children, helps them stay in school.** At Ukondla 1, 2 and 3 a group of ±24 children at each Ukondla attend homework support, enrichment programs and weekly counselling sessions. The program runs on Mondays to Fridays and is similar to the in-house support program at Ons Plek, **except that the children live in their own homes.**



### ■ Home Visits

Staff members regularly visit all the children's family homes, and their parents are now very supportive of the program. The response to Ukondla's work from teachers, parents and children has been to beg us to open a centre in their schools as Ukondla's children's school performance improves so markedly.

### ■ Parenting Course and Domestic Awareness Courses

These Courses have reached 20 community members this year. (This figure has been greatly reduced due to lockdown). The parents notice the change in their children's behaviour and several have changed their parenting techniques after discussions with our staff who are trained in parenting techniques. The children themselves are enthusiastic about the activities. Several reveal very traumatic stories in their counselling sessions and healing can begin to take place. A partnership with Sizakuyenza has been fruitful where we have two venues on their property.

### Prevention Project — Statistics

<b>70</b>	<b>Total children</b>
85	Home visits (100 conducted for research purposes)
172	Counselling sessions
32	New children this year
13	Children discharged

## Holiday Program for Residences and Philippi

- As with all other programs at Ons Plek, the Holiday Program's aim is to include preparing the girls for life in their homes and communities, and to give them opportunities for development — intellectually, socially and emotionally. The aim is to engage the children in activities that they will be able to afford for their own children one day. We allow for some unusual activities to enrich their lives, such as ice skating, but take care not to over-spoil.

Most vacation days at Ons Plek are spent at home — playing games, doing puzzles, playing “poppie huis”, chatting, walking to the local park, and just being children. Also educational visits such as museum, art gallery, Jewish Museum.

## Volunteer Program for Residences and Philippi

### ■ Recruitment, Orientation, Supervision

This year we continued to make intensive use of local and international volunteers (2) and student interns (2) who work part-time or full-time for Ons Plek for periods ranging between 3 and 10 months. They provided a range of activities, including computer skills training, reading, art, drama, education, leadership training, swimming and baking. As we had many girls in formal and bridging school this year, the volunteers had to work hard at supporting the girls in these programs.



Holiday Program ... having fun together under the trees



After school session



Holiday Program ... playing games is fun!



Having good times at Ukondla!!

# Our Wish List ...



All donations are dropped off at our house at 7 MALLESON ROAD, MOWBRAY.

We currently have 34 girls in our care and you can donate the following items listed below:

## BASIC GROCERIES PER WEEK:

Sugar, Maize, Rice, Flour, Yeast, Bread, Samp, Dry Beans, Meat, Chicken, Sausages, Viennas, French Polony, Pasta, Beans (tinned), Pilchards, Peanut Butter, Jam, Spices, Beefstock, Salt, Oil, Margarine, Amazi, Eggs, Milk, Tea, Coffee, Mayonnaise, Chutney, Tomato Sauce, Cordials, Washing Powder, Sunlight Soap (Green Bar), Sunlight liquid, Handy Andy, Bleach, Black Garbage Bags, Steelwool.

## VEGETABLES AND FRUIT:

Potatoes, Onions, Carrots, Cabbage, Beetroot, Pumpkin/Butternut, Tomatoes, Green Pepper, Apples, Pears, Bananas, Oranges, Naartjies.

## TOILETRIES:

Toilet paper, Shampoo, Conditioner, Vaseline, Bath soap, Body lotion, Roll-on Deodorant.

## SCHOOL CLOTHES:

School tracksuits, Grey pants/skirts, White shirts, Jerseys (school colours), School socks, Black tights, Rain jackets.



Aftercare Program activity  
at Ukondla

## CLOTHING (small to large):

Tights, Jeans (26-36), Flops (2-7), Takkies (2-7), Shoes (1-8), Bras (all sizes), Panties (small, medium and large), Pyjamas, Long Sleeve T-shirts, Closed Jerseys.

## STATIONERY:

Pritt (43g), Erasers, Pens black/blue/red, HB Pencils, Reams white paper (80gsm), Hardcover books (196 and 288 pages), Examination pads, Exercise Books (72 pages), Plastic covers, Brown Paper Rolls, Paper Grafton Bright A4 Rainbow, Board Bright A4 160gsm, Whiteboard 160gsm A4 and A3, Project Paper A3 (White), Maths Sets.

## APPLIANCES/FURNITURE/HOUSEHOLD ITEMS:

Couch, Irons, Kettles, Brooms, Mops, Dustpans, Plastic cups/mugs/plates/bowls, Table/tea spoons and forks, Can openers, Potato peelers, Egg lifters, Saucepans, Batteries (AA and AAA), Globes (energy saving/rechargeables).

Please do not hesitate to contact Ons Plek  
at 021 685-4052/49, if you require any further information.

## ONS PLEK PROJECTS' ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Salty Print 021 448-5620 (for printing) and Wendy Wilkinson of The Write Setting 082 773 7421 (for typesetting).

✓ Please cut along the dotted line and forward completed Nomination Form to Ons Plek Projects by **4th September 2020** ✓

## NOMINATIONS FOR ONS PLEK PROJECTS' BOARD

I, ..... hereby propose .....

for the Board of Ons Plek Projects for the ..... term of office.

Seconded by .....

I, ..... hereby accept the above proposal.

Signed .....

Date .....