

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG
South Africa
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
– A FLAGSHIP

Funda Ujabule: A Primary School for
Teacher Education and Research

South Africa Research Chair:
Integrated studies of learning language,
science and mathematics in the primary school.





IN THE BEGINNING

The Department of Childhood Education at UJ was founded in 2010. In the same year the Funda UJabule School was opened on the university's Soweto campus. Research for the programme is conducted in the Centre for Education Practice Research, close to the school.

In 2014 the Childhood Education programme area was awarded Flagship status by the University of Johannesburg.

In 2015 A South Africa Research Chair was awarded to the director of the research centre.

Cover photo: Nozipho Motolo of the South Africa Research Chair, administering a numeracy test with a grade 1 learner



CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG CHARTING NEW TERRITORY



TEACHER PREPARATION COURSES FOR THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Foundation phase education: preparing students to teach children from Grade R –Grade 3.
- Intermediate phase education: preparing students to teach Grade 4 – 6.
- The Funda UJabule primary school is a partner in the teacher education programmes.
- All students spend time in the school throughout their degree study.
- Students observe school life, learn to teach and learn to research children's learning and development longitudinally.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE: THE DEVELOPING CHILD

The childhood education programmes share one guiding principle for teacher education and research: the developing child.

At the heart of teacher education, research, and all other initiatives in these programmes, the focus is on knowledge of children in contemporary South Africa.

Teachers are seen as a most important element of schools, classrooms and the country's education system. Not only are teachers required to know subject knowledge and methods of teaching and assessment, but they also need to know children. They have to know how to identify individual children's strengths and know how to assist children if they struggle.

The university founded the Funda UJabule School on its Soweto campus so that student teachers can observe how children develop over the years and how teachers adapt their work as children grow. A school on the campus is an ideal place to observe the national school curriculum in action over a few years as well. For students, it is also the ideal space to learn to conduct research. They can learn research methods to investigate classroom practices and how individual young learners come to grips with school life and the curriculum.



PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE TEACHERS

Student teachers of Childhood Education study academic subjects such as Education Studies, English Language Studies, Teaching Studies, Mathematics, History and Geography, Science, Technology, Subject Didactics (Teaching Methodology and Practicum) and African Language Studies for isiZulu and Sesotho.



RESEARCH OF CHILDHOOD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Childhood Education Flagship research focuses on child development and learning.

Current projects

- Mathematics, arithmetical competence: standardised test development for Grade R and Grade 1
- Mathematical concept development
- STEM education in the primary school
- Reading and writing academic language
- Mathematical learning difficulties
- Reading STEM texts in the primary school
- Service in childhood education
- Teacher education and development for the primary school







THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES: Knowing the child to educate the child

BEd in Foundation Phase Teaching

BEd in Intermediate Phase Teaching

In these professional programmes students learn

- To teach children
- To be a teacher-researcher
- To work with the school curriculum
- How schools function
- How classrooms function
- How teachers collaborate
- How children's home background manifests in their learning





POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

BEd (Hons) Childhood Education

MEd Childhood Education

Full dissertation studies in one of the research projects.

MEd coursework and short dissertation in Childhood Education.

PhD

Students are invited to study in the research projects and to apply for bursaries in the SA Research Chair and the Department of Childhood Education.

Postdoctoral fellowships in the South Africa Research Chair and in the Department of Childhood Education.

UNIQUE STUDIES IN CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN A LABORATORY SCHOOL

IsiZulu and Sesotho

Curriculum Leadership

Instructional films with a focus on concept development

#Taximaths: How children make their world mathematical

#Taxiscience: How children learn to see their world scientifically

Remedial programmes for mathematics and reading in the primary school

Test development and standardization for maths in the foundation phase

Test development for academic language reading and writing in English

Test development for reading STEM texts in the primary school

Book (forthcoming): Teacher manual for mathematics learning support. #MeerkatMaths: Helping children to enter the world of mathematical thinking in the early grades





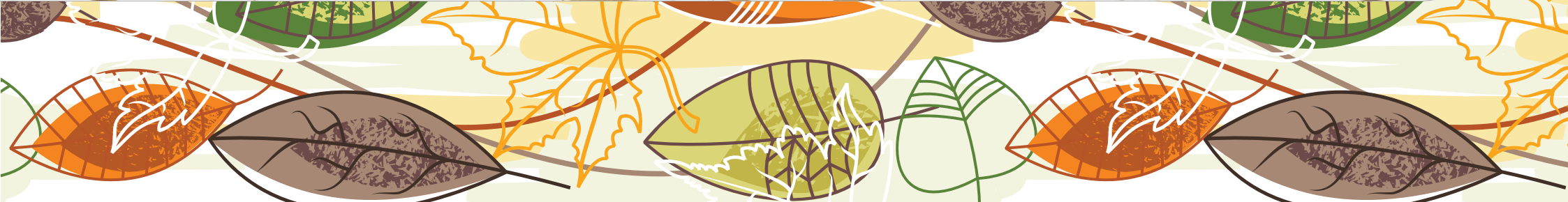
Fairy Elephant's Foot (*Frithia pulchra*)
The signature plant of the Childhood
Education Flagship

UNIQUE TEACHER EDUCATION IN A TEACHING SCHOOL

In a teaching school, where students see the practice side of their professional education, they also witness how schools are managed and what the demands of proper school administration are. At Funda UJabule School, which is a public school in the Gauteng Department of Education system, students see how

- Teachers interact with parents and form collaborative relationships
- Children learn to become 'little citizens' of the classroom where they are free to learn and express themselves, while respecting the social protocols
- Children who struggle receive attention from the support teams
- Teachers adapt and mold the curriculum to address the needs of individuals and groups
- Children learn in more than one language
- Children's learning is assessed with both standardised tests and classroom assessment instruments
- Public school education operates in a province and in a school district







Faculty of Education: www.uj.ac.za/edu

Funda Ujabule School: www.uj.ac.za/fundaujabule

Department of Childhood Education: <https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/facultyofeducation/DepartmentofChildhoodEducation>

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