



→ Provincial Winner

Best Teacher Award

Name: Llewellyn van der Ross
School: Tuscany Glen Primary School,
Tuscany Glen, Eerste River
District: Metro East

When passion meets purpose

Mr Llewellyn van der Ross's teaching philosophy is deeply inspired by Kofi Annan's quote, "Literacy is the bridge from misery to hope," and he is passionate about teaching reading for meaning and therefore is awarded the Best Teacher Award for his exceptional contributions to English and Life Orientation (LO) education.

Originally from Wesbank in the Western Cape, Mr Van der Ross hails from a government-initiated RDP project area, characterised by low income with significant socio-economic challenges. Raised in a single-parent household, Mr van der Ross's mother worked tirelessly as a factory worker to support him.

Despite the adversities of his upbringing and the challenges of his community, Mr van der Ross has demonstrated a profound commitment to education. His dedication serves as an inspiration to his students and colleagues alike,

embodying the transformative power of education in bridging gaps and nurturing hope in disadvantaged communities.

Llewellyn van der Ross has dedicated the past seven years to teaching at Tuscany Glen Primary School, where he serves as both an educator and departmental head for English. His role extends beyond the classroom as he is also a member of the school's Senior Management Team, contributing to strategic decisions. Additionally, he plays a crucial role as the lead educator for English at the Metro East district and serves on the school's governing body.

Llewellyn is deeply committed to lifelong learning, reflecting his personal values and professional growth. He holds a BEd, an Honours degree in Education, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Stellenbosch.

Through his initiatives which are focused on teaching reading for meaning, Mr Llewellyn van der

Ross has significantly elevated the academic standards at Tuscany Glen Primary School. His approach has had a transformative impact on the school's systemic results within the province. Previously perceived as under-performing, Tuscany Glen Primary School has now achieved exceptional results under his leadership.

His dedication to improving literacy and comprehension skills among students has not only raised academic standards but has also enhanced the overall educational experience at the school. His efforts highlight the potential for targeted teaching strategies to bring about positive change, demonstrating his commitment to educational excellence and student success.

Llewellyn has pioneered the involvement of Tuscany Glen Primary School in the Cape Argus Quiz, which had traditionally been a high school-focused event. This initiative marked Tuscany Glen as the first primary school to take part in the quiz, showcasing Llewellyn's innovative approach to expanding educational opportunities. Over 1300 learners from Tuscany Glen Primary School benefited from various sponsored goodies in preparation for the Cape Argus #PrimarySchoolQuiz. Additionally, Mr van der Ross introduced Newspaper Day, held every second Wednesday of the month, where students engage with local and international news and sports.

Mr Llewellyn van der Ross is actively involved as a facilitator at the CTLI, particularly focusing on courses related to reading for meaning. His role includes conducting workshops and training sessions aimed at equipping educators with effective strategies to promote comprehension and critical thinking skills among students. These efforts are instrumental in supporting both urban and rural schools in the Western Cape, ensuring that educators have the tools and knowledge necessary to enhance literacy education.

At Tuscany Glen Primary School, Mr Van der Ross draws from his experiences to support cutting-edge approaches in Multilingual Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education (DBE). This initiative aims to enhance academic outcomes for non-English speakers, potentially catalysing positive effects across the province and nation. Addressing significant educational challenges, particularly the reported 80% of learners struggling with reading for meaning, Mr van der Ross's expertise aims to promote proficiency in reading comprehension through innovative educational strategies.

"This is what I do, to raise literacy levels. Hope is our common denominator to contribute to our National Development Plan" – Mr Llewellyn van der Ross