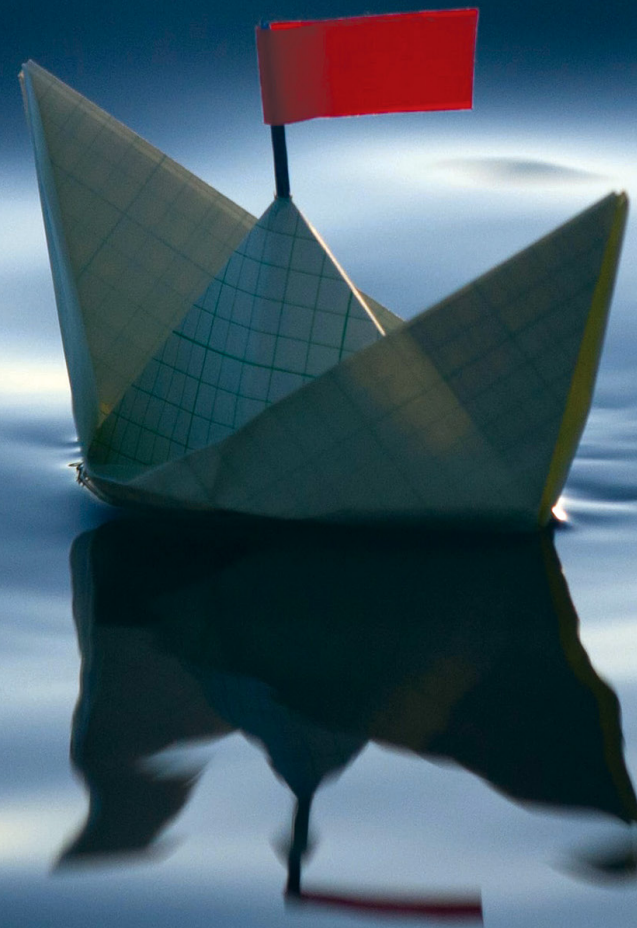


# Persevering in Hope

CIE Annual Report  
2021







# Towards Tomorrow Together

**I**n fidelity to Jesus Christ and the call of his Gospel, we celebrate the uniqueness of our schools' identity as part of the evangelising mission of the Church, honouring the past and welcoming the future.

We recognise our responsibility to contribute to the transformation of our country, towards a society fit for the children of God.

## Vision statement

3rd National Catholic School's Congress 2019





# Persevering in Hope

Always have an answer ready when you are called upon to account for your hope, but give it simply and with respect

(1 Peter 3 19)

**D**uring 2020 the CIE responded to the COVID 19 pandemic in hope. What was not expected was that in 2021 the pandemic would continue to remain a test of our faith, as the challenges to both schools and individuals were repeated. The strength and courage to serve education in our time and more specifically to serve education at any time became visible through the perseverance of all involved in Catholic Education. At precisely the moment we began to celebrate new hope in the form of vaccines and having made it through the coronavirus wave under lockdown, we came to realise that this was the first wave of many, that drastic measures taken early in the year to eliminate the virus, would not be enough. We celebrated the lockdown levels going down and were anxious when the levels went up. The reality that vaccines and other interventions would become a feature of a future where we live with the virus, rather than us returning to normal with the virus gone, became evident in January 2021 when schools were meant to open.

The start of the school year was delayed and independent schools who had opened in early January had to close urgently and revert to online schooling. As a result, 2021 was a continuation of what our schools had begun to positively call the “new normal”. The new normal was anything but normal. It was a period of uncertainty around when schools would open or close; a time of constant revisions of curricula; a test of the levels of digital and other non-physical connectivities. But despite an ever and rapidly changing environment, schools

**896**  
visits

workshops both face-to-face  
and virtual took place  
with schools



did everything in their power to keep the educational outcomes of learners normal. There were many more losses in 2021 as families and communities lost beloved members, parents lost jobs and some independent schools had to cut teachers' salaries but through the immense and sometimes solitary efforts of educators, principals and the wider schooling community, each loss was honoured with the dedication to continue to serve young people beyond our best limited and human ability. The CIE honours those who are no longer with us, and those with us struggling to come to terms with this new reality.

The pandemic continued to highlight the gap between schools within the Catholic network. Well-resourced schools in urban areas were able to teach online but even this provided challenges with the most serious being the personal disconnection experienced by both teachers and learners. Less resourced schools used a variety of communication means with What's App being the most popular. Due to inequalities standard online procedures could not be applied as each school context was vastly different.

The challenge for CIE staff was to be hope-bringers to stressed schools and teachers and to be accountable for their hope as I Peter 3:19 urges. Being able to access schools and to keep contact with the school leaders while schools were closed was a major challenge. Some regions were very successful in establishing regular Zoom connections but here again the difference in connectivity in regions is stark. Some schools were just unable to connect due to a

lack of infrastructure. An important part of being hope-bringers was enabling conversations in both schools and skills centres on the effects of COVID19, allowing people to share their loss, pain and fears.

However, of greater import is what are schools going to do about learning losses? Research across the world shows that the pandemic has devastated education and that no amount of trimming the curriculum or catch up plans will work. Professor Crain Soudien suggests that this crisis is an opportunity to deeply explore how we currently educate, by thinking about and exploring the process of learning. This requires a paradigm shift for all involved in mass education to develop teachers' ability to understand more than the narrow prescribed curriculum. Direction Statement 3 from the 3rd National Catholic Schools Congress, *Towards Tomorrow Together in Faith* addresses this but this requires school leaders to take time to explore how they can change the system.

The National Catholic Board of Education adopted a national strategic plan based on the Direction Statements from the Congress. A booklet for schools was developed and published to assist schools to evaluate and plan for improvements across the five direction statement. The strategic plan also aligns the work of the local Catholic Schools Offices and the CIE Regional Offices.

In spite of the challenges mentioned above both CIE and the CIE Thabiso Skills Institute managed to carry out meaningful work in schools and skills centres. This work is reported under the five Congress Direction Statements.

Our human  
compassion binds  
us the one to the  
other – not in pity or  
patronizingly, but as  
human beings who  
have learnt how to  
turn our common  
suffering into hope  
for the future.”

Nelson Mandela





### **Direction Statement 1**

Catholic Education Today and Tomorrow: Identity and Mission

### **Direction Statement 2**

Religious Education: Educating the heart, mind and soul

### **Direction Statement 3**

Liberating Education: the Catholic School response to the needs of the 21st Century

### **Direction Statement 4**

Governing and Leading Catholic Schools towards tomorrow:  
Ethics, stewardship, empowerment and collaborative practice

### **Direction Statement 5**

Sustaining and Growing Catholic Schools Today and Tomorrow:  
Ownership, advocacy and viable partnerships





# Catholic Education Today and Tomorrow: Identity and Mission

**D**eveloping and monitoring Catholic school ethos is an essential goal of CIE staff. During 2021 several activities took place. Firstly, a booklet outlining the Vision and Directions of the 3rd Catholic Schools Congress was developed and printed. During the leadership and support visits this booklet was handed out to all schools together with the letter from the Chairperson of National CBE. The booklet includes the strategic plan checklist to assist schools to identify and plan areas for improvements as well as to affirm where the school is doing well. Principals are encouraged to include the strategies in their school's strategic plans.

Through the generous donation of the Ryan Foundation a picture of Pope Francis was distributed to each school. This was greatly appreciated and many schools wrote letters of appreciation and the picture opened conversations around the school ethos. A short survey was conducted to ascertain how the Catholic school ethos was functioning in the schools. This pointed to the need to further develop Catholic school ethos committees. A pilot project will take place in 2022.



**The pandemic called on  
all involved in Catholic  
education to support and  
care for all in the school**

*Posters designed and distributed by CIE for primary schools within our network*



## Child Safeguarding

The National Catholic Board of Education (NCBE) Sub-committee on Child Safeguarding whose members are Sr Kathy Gaylor, Sr Shelagh Mary Waspe, Luke Lamprecht, Mduduzi Qwabe and Anne Baker, met twice during 2021. Terms of Reference were agreed to and ratified by the NCBE. CIE continued to support the Catholic school network with online formation events with expertise offered by Luke Lamprecht, a child protection activist. In addition to Catholic schools a webinar on Safety in School Sport by Luke Lamprecht attracted participants including the Anglican school network.

CIE staff supported schools through both monitoring incident books and assisting with abuse issues. With school staff turnover it was vital to induct new staff at Catholic schools into requirements of Child safeguarding.

However school closures and the pressures on schools to catch up with the curriculum sometimes made access to the school difficult. There was real concern about children's safety during lockdown periods and it was important to alert schools to this danger through the Designated Child Safeguarding Person (DCSP) which every school is required to appoint. The DCSP assists in the management of abuse which may occur either within the school or outside. CIE staff kept contact with both school leadership and DCSPs holding Zoom meetings or Whats App groups. The aim was to develop leadership capacity and to assist DCSP persons to understand their roles and responsibilities.

Border and schools' closures in Eswatini and Lesotho hampered the delivery of Child Safeguarding and the Building Peaceful Schools programme in these countries.





## Building Peaceful Schools

CIE continued to promote peace in schools during a period where violence in schools is increasing. South Africa is experiencing rising violence in communities and this can, and does, spill over into schools. The CIE signed an agreement with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) School Safety Department to share resources and support the DBE's efforts to reduce violence in schools. The Building Peaceful Schools programme is therefore more needed than ever and promoting it further than the Catholic schools network essential.

It was difficult to carry out workshops during this time but CIE staff were able to conduct the school climate survey and to give schools' feedback.

Circle time is a fundamental part of the programme's theory of change, and in 2020 and 2021 they were used for a variety of purposes: to discuss challenges, manage conflict, reflect on and respond to the School Climate Survey for Learners and Teachers, and develop strategies for responding to cases of abuse or reports of corporal punishment in the classes.

The Leadership Council of Consecrated Life (LCCL) invited CIE to present online the three aspects of the programme, namely Peacebuilding, Conflict Management and Restorative justice. Some 30 people attended each session.



## G.R.A.C.E. School Climate Lecture





## Climate Survey

Surveying learners in the Building Peaceful Schools programme is a central part of evaluation within the programme. The climate survey not only measures the climate in the participating grades in schools but also enables CIE to give meaningful feedback to school staff and learners. Through this feedback schools can decide on action needing to take place to further strengthen the school climate as one of peace and fairness. During 2021 we surveyed 4993 learners which show overall that less learners are harming each other, caring environments are increasing and there has been a decrease in harmful environments as shown in the table below.

For ease of reporting, the National figures for the School Climate Survey for Learners are aggregated into 6 indicator groups. Each of these groups contains within it specific items, as follows:

### Learners Harming



other learners threatening, being unkind, getting one into trouble, hitting, compelling one to do something wrong or spreading rumours

### Learners Caring



other learners helping, being kind, sharing or talking about things of mutual interest

### Teachers Harming



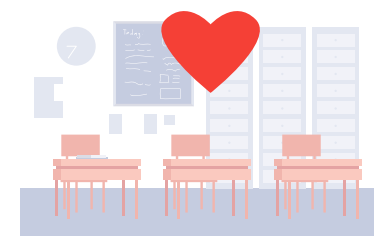
teachers threatening, shouting, being unkind, name-calling, ridiculing, or hitting learners

### Teachers Caring



teachers helping, being kind, praising or making learners feel safe

### Caring Environment

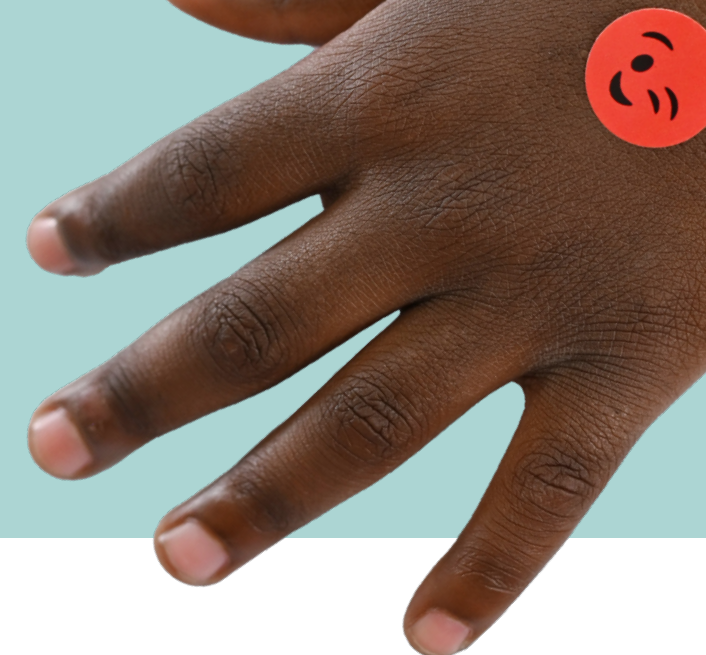


liking being at school, toilets safe and clean

### Harming Environment



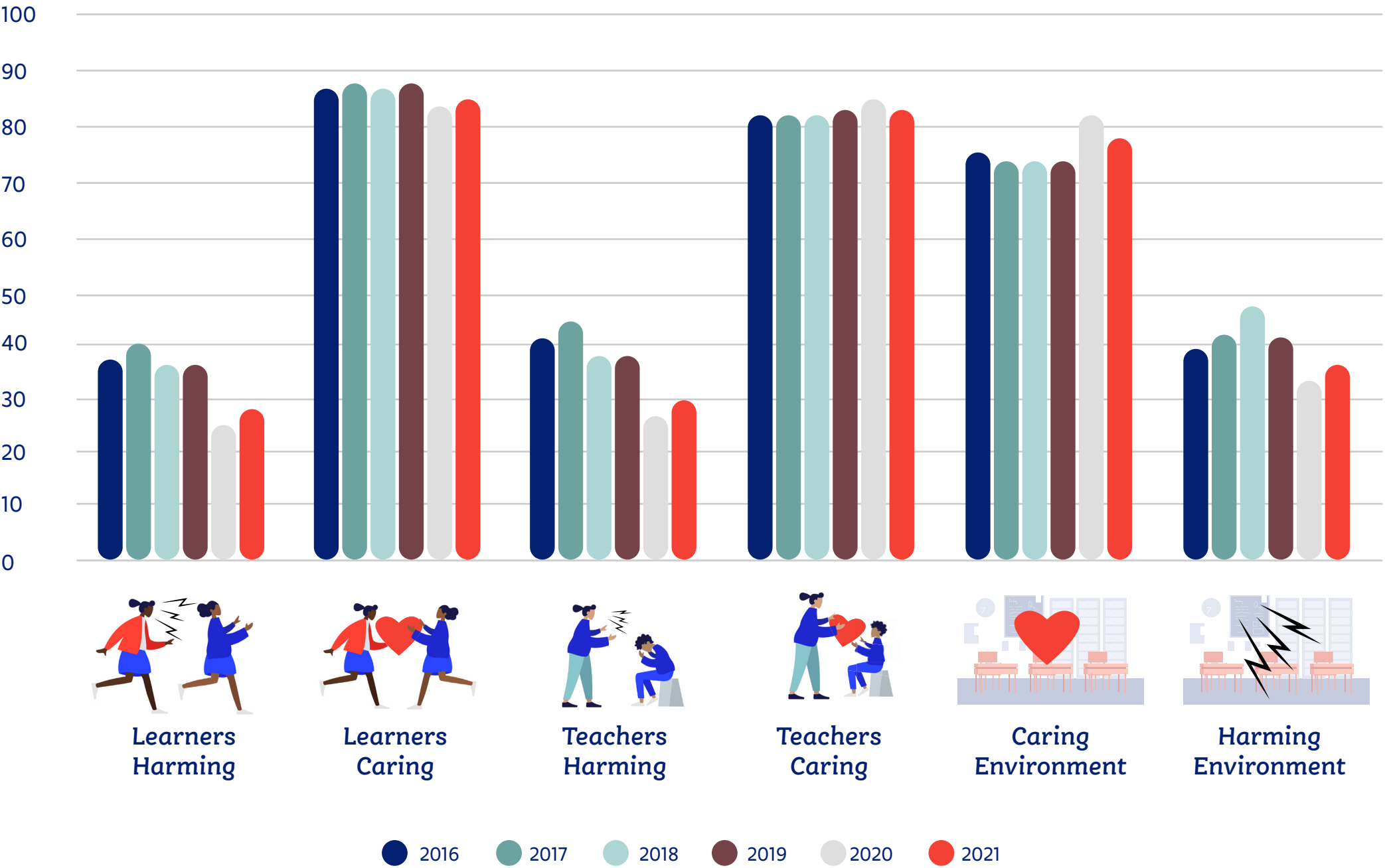
feeling disrespected, bored or scared at school





The following table shows the pattern of change in these indicators since 2016 (the instrument's inception).

School Climate Comparison over 4 years  
National Aggregate Figures (%)



In 2021, half the expected number of learners was surveyed, though almost all the schools took part. This was largely due to rotation of learners at the school to prevent COVID-19 transmission. On the surface, the fact that fewer learners were surveyed might contribute to an overall change in the trends in 2021. However, in discussion with learners and teachers in feedback sessions, it is more likely that the size of classes in schools, as mandated by the Department of Basic Education's response to COVID-19, had the biggest part to play in changing the trend.

As evidence of stress and anxiety amongst school staff in schools became more apparent it was decided to offer schools the opportunity to express how they experienced the pandemic. Peace circles were developed and offered as part of psycho-social support for teachers where they were able to share their experience of COVID 19. While challenging due to the loss to both facilitators and participants, these went well and those who participated appreciated being supported and cared for.

“Dit was goed om to hoor hoe elke person  
voel en van sy/haar emosies ontlaai. Jy  
kon hoor wat elke persoon se ervaring  
was met die COVID tyden die trauma wat  
darmee gepaard gaan.”

“It was good to hear how each person  
felt, also to share in their experiences of  
how each one released (get rid off) their  
emotions. One could from hear each  
person how they experienced COVID 19  
and the trauma that was caused by it.”



## Peer Mediation

Peer mediation involved formation for learners to be peacemakers in their schools and to defuse bullying or fights. The following words from a peer mediator clearly illustrates how the programme can work:

“I found out who or what started the disagreement, showed them both where they were wrong and made peace between them. What I did was to talk with them firstly one-on-one trying to clarify the conflict between them, then combined them to solve the conflict in terms of apologizing since I thought fighting will not be a solution.”

“Firstly, we separated the two boys so that we can get both sides of the story. After talking to the boys individually we then got them together to try to resolve the conflict. At first they wanted to fight but then we got them to calm down and we talked about the whole thing and the other boy apologized for his behaviour.”



The Peer Mediation programme gave learners a sense of agency in a time when there was a prevailing sense of despair - it brought hope into their lives, and gave them the tools to deal with the crises they were facing. This programme illustrates how when young people have agency change can take place. The response from learners was proactive and engaged - they are prepared (even at primary school level) to have an influence on their schools' climate of care and peace. However this needs consistent formation as learners progress through grades and support from an interested, committed teacher.



Peer mediation formation





## Health Screening

The health screening project has proved an important part of improving children's lives. The health screening team incorporating professional nurses supported by CIE staff visited five schools in the Free State during 2021. One hundred and twenty-eight learners in the Foundation Phase were screened resulting in 28 referrals to health care institutions.

Overall, most learners who were screened looked healthy and their personal hygiene was good. As expected during early childhood, most learners were referred for dental caries. Whilst many learners were given the antifungal cream for ringworm, few had to be referred for severe skin related illnesses. Less than 10% of the referrals were for eye related problems like spring catarrh, poor eyesight and squint. A few concerning referrals were for conditions like poor speech, loss of hearing which could have been caused by TB treatment, otitis media and uncontrolled urine flow.

35  
visits  
or workshops

## Education Access Programme (EAP)

The Education Access Programme supported vulnerable learners in low-fee independent schools. By the end of 2021, a total of R3 016 719 had been dispersed to 42 EAP beneficiary schools. Towards the end of 2021, teachers from EAP schools were offered an opportunity to attend two virtual sessions conducted by facilitators from the Johannesburg Child and Parent and Child Counselling Centre. The purpose was to offer teachers much needed psychosocial support at a time when the COVID pandemic presented them with many challenges.

EAP numbers

33  
visits  
or workshops

R3,016,719  
dispersed to 42 EAP  
beneficiary schools  
in 2021







## Leave your print

The National Catholic Board of Education (NCBE) through its Leave Your Print initiative, aims at bringing the Catholic Network together for the purpose of assisting under resourced school. In 2021 the campaign raised an amount of R 108 448.50 from a total of 46 schools that were able to participate. The campaign was run at various times from September 2021 during the remainder of the 2021.

The number of participating schools and contributions increased from 2020. During such difficult times brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic, it was humbling to see the passion and energy teachers and learners put into running the campaigns in their respective schools.

The funds collected from the 2021 campaign will be targeted at assisting schools that are still using pit latrines. With the assistance of the Local Offices, proposals are being put together of the schools most in need of assistance and these will be brought forward to the NCBE.



### Leave your print in numbers

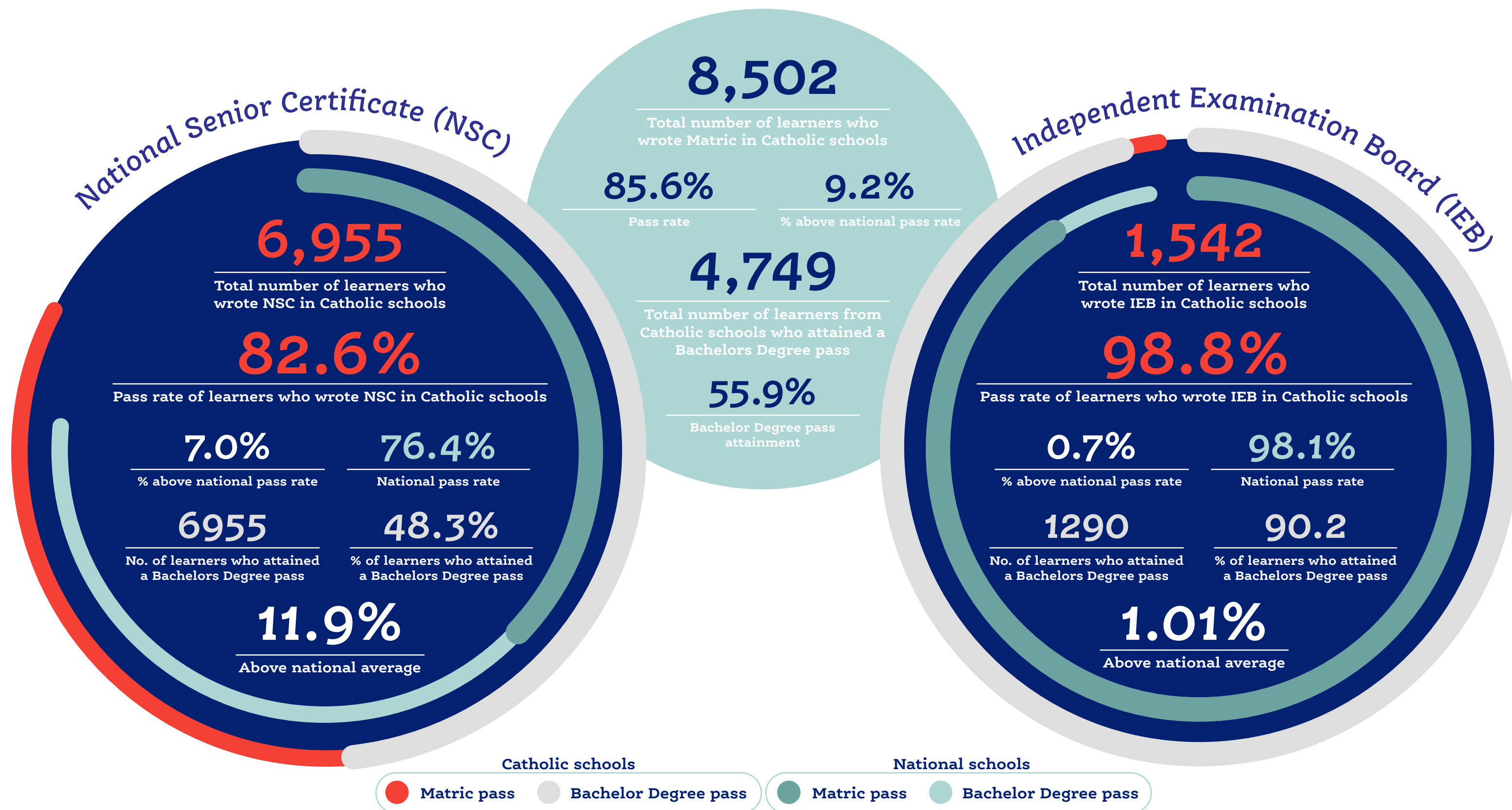
**46**  
schools  
contributed

**R108,448**  
funds raised by the  
campaign





# 2021 Catholic National Senior Certificate Results







## Religious Education: Educating the heart, mind and soul

The NCBE Religious Education sub-committee members, John McCormick, Dominic Moeshoesoe, Sr Patricia Finn, Evona Rebelo and Anne Baker, met four times with the review of the evaluation tool *Signs of God's Presence* central to its' deliberations. In December the NCBE accepted the reviewed *Signs of God's Presence* which was then sent for design and printing.

The ability for schools to offer Religious Education according to the Religious Education Policy, *Fostering Hope*, was seriously compromised by the pressure in schools.

Schools were supported and encouraged to keep prayer central to the school life.

A national virtual prayer meeting took place on the Monday after Pentecost to pray for all in our school communities who had passed away or suffered through COVID-19. This was very well attended and appreciated.

67  
visits

consultations or  
workshops







# Liberating Education: the Catholic School response to the needs of the 21st Century

**T**his is an unfolding area of work for CIE. The 5Cs of 21st Century skills: Critical Thinking & Problem Solving, Communication, Collaboration, Citizenship (global and local) and Creativity & Innovation are encouraged within CIE's conceptualisation of programmes and how these are delivered.

The Building Peaceful Schools Programme, and particularly the Peer Mediation component, is as much an Ethos response as one which models 21st Century thinking. More specifically, this area is part of CIE's commitment to working with Teaching and Learning in the network.

CIE in partnership with Molteno delivered numeracy and literacy in 40 schools as part of the Anglo American South African education programme. This involved 216 teachers in the Limpopo region. Through the support of the Panahalo Development Trust CIE facilitated for the fifth year the establishment of reading clubs for Grade 3 to Grade 7 learners in 26 Schools in Limpopo through the employment of Story Sparkers from the local community. Story Sparkers work in schools to develop reading clubs. They encourage reading for enjoyment and train learners to start their own reading clubs. CIE continues to support six schools with foundation phased literacy in the Sunday's River Valley.

In Lesotho the continuing COVID-19 pandemic with schools being closed for almost a year had a devastating impact on the Lesotho education system. A great deal of work was carried out by the local compliment of the two full time staff. They were assisted where possible by staff from the CIE who met with them three times in 2021 to train them on leadership, Professional Learning Communities, literacy and numeracy.



**94**  
visits

meeting or workshops  
excluding the CIE  
Tabiso Skills  
institute visits



## CIE Thabiso Skills Institute (TSI)

Like other educational institutions, the Thabiso Skills Institute found 2021 a challenging year for all. Many experienced pain but also hope and commitment. In all of this, centres have continued to provide training and opportunities to many young, unemployed people. In spite of the sporadic lockdowns and its concomitant stoppages, the CIE Thabiso Skills Institute and its network centres were busy and innovative in their offerings during 2021.

One of the key pillars of the TSI Skills Institute is the Life Skills programme. During 2021 the Life Skills manual was updated to include lessons and information on gender-based violence, the POPI Act and its implications for the centres and learners, as well as discussions on the informal economy. A lesson and posters on the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic was included. The Safeguarding Policy for skills centres was introduced along with the Umbrella of Care chart which enables centres to contact nearby assistance when needed.

A further Train the Trainer Workshop, a follow up to the workshop which took place in Nigeria in 2021, took place in Nairobi Kenya in August. Attending were 16 delegates from 15 African countries, which are part of the Salesian network, with facilitation by three CIE TSI staff. These attendees will offer the Life skills course in their respective TVET Colleges and train other facilitators in the programme. The manual has been translated into French and Italian.

### Numbers from centres

**22**  
centres

Number of centres

**5,069**  
learners in total

54% female | 46% male

**1,779**  
learners

attending academic  
type courses

English for Foreigners or  
stand-alone Life Skills  
programmes

**3 290**  
learners

attending vocational  
skills training

### Most subscribed training programmes

Bricklaying,  
plumbing,  
electrical etc.



**553**

84% male

IT related



**547**

68% female

Welding



**314**

Baking &  
catering



**260**

Mechandising



**151**



## Work Place Based Learning (WPBL)

A concerted and co-ordinated drive by the CIE Thabiso Skills job placement team, together with the skills centre staff, to boost work place-based learning exposure for the learners on the various programmes proved successful. Finding formal work places is difficult due to South Africa's tough economic environment. After advocacy and contact with businesses learners had access to either formal WPBL or alternate/informal WPBL.



Caption needed

## Monitoring and Evaluation

A telephonic survey to assess how learners had fared since completing a course in 2020 or 2021. The following was their input on economic activities: 112 learners declared that they were either 'hustling' or self-employed in the informal sector (59) or fixed-term or permanently employed in the formal sector (53). Of these, 38 had undergone accredited training – mainly in building-related, agricultural, ECD and computing skills.

Based on the telephonic survey with learners they also reported on their personal development journey with the Life Skills component of their skills training. Life skills are abilities and adaptive behaviours that enable young people to deal effectively with the challenges of everyday life.



Survey results from learner graduates in 2020 or 2021







Life Skilly training for facilitators



## What learners had to say about Life Skills training

“

“It has helped me on how to deal with challenges, I am prepared to deal with anything presented to me”

“Yes, I believe it because now my life is changed I know how to deal with my problems and understand it because of life skills course”

“I learned how to deal with conflict and gender-based discrimination”

“The training has absolutely changed my life for the better”

“By completing the training, I immediately started working and I thank the life skill programme for that”

“It gave me a better understanding of myself and the world”

“It has enhanced my communication abilities, boost my confidence to work in a team and it also built my work morale”

“It has helped me on how to deal with challenges, I am prepared to deal with anything presented to me”

”

Learners report being happier with life and agreeing that life prospects have improved since attending the life skills course.





# Governing and Leading Catholic Schools towards tomorrow.

## Ethics, stewardship, empowerment and collaborative practice.

**T**he relationship with school leadership is central CIE's support of schools. Principals support visits or contacts with school leaders offer an opportunity for CIE staff to not only support leadership but also understand the schools' contexts. CIE staff visit each school at least twice per term. The strain suffered by school leadership as outlined throughout this report called for CIE staff to be hope-bringers through their listening ear. A further avenue of support is Principals' Forums where peer support from colleagues and CIE support takes place.

The importance of good governance cannot be emphasised enough. For public schools new School Governing Bodies were elected in March and April 2021. While obtaining time to carry out workshops for the new governing bodies was not easy cluster workshops and online workshops took place.

Support for independent schools Board of Governors is vital with several boards being assisted during the year. Functioning and informed Boards of Governors are essential for the survival of independent schools and finding competent members to serve on these boards is increasingly difficult.

**260**  
visits  
or workshops







# Sustaining and Growing Catholic Schools Today and Tomorrow.

Ownership, advocacy and viable partnerships.

## Network and Advocacy

Advocacy and Networking is a vital aspect of CIE's work which includes relationships with a number of organisations. Enabling the Catholic schools network to meet and collaborate is an essential aspect of our work. Two virtual gathering weeks took place during 2021 with guest speakers on Child Safeguarding and Restorative Practices.

CIE supports owners with a variety of issues including support for the regional Catholic Boards of Education in the Central and Limpopo/ Mpumalanga areas.

The NCBE held a two-day virtual consultation with owners to report to owners on issues of relevant to them:

- The South African context
- Catholic identity and Religious Education,
- Pastoral care and Building Peace
- Implications of Ownership of public and independent schools
- Public Schools on Private Property and the Deed of Agreement
- Independent Schools issues
- Boarding Schools
- Child Safeguarding - Safe schools need safe environments
- Policy matters
- Future possibilities

CIE enjoys good relationships with the Department of Basic Education who have assisted the Catholic network when issues arose. CIE Regional Managers liaise with Provincial Departments of Education officials around issues facing schools. This is vital in advocating for Catholic Public Schools on Private Property but also independent schools which face increasingly difficult compliance requirements.

CIE as part of the National Alliance of Independent Schools Association (NAISA) engaged on a regular basis with the Department around COVID 19 procedures and the massive effort to vaccinate as many teachers as possible. The CIE has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of School Safety in the Department.

Collaboration with the Department of Higher Education – Community Education and Training Branch around skills centres took place throughout the year.

Principals' Upfront, the partnership between CIE, Bridge, Sasol and the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance held several online meetings during 2021.

The relationship with the International Catholic Education Office has led to further contact with Catholic universities in the USA and UK, the publication of a paper on the Building Peaceful Schools Programme in the International Studies on Catholic Education





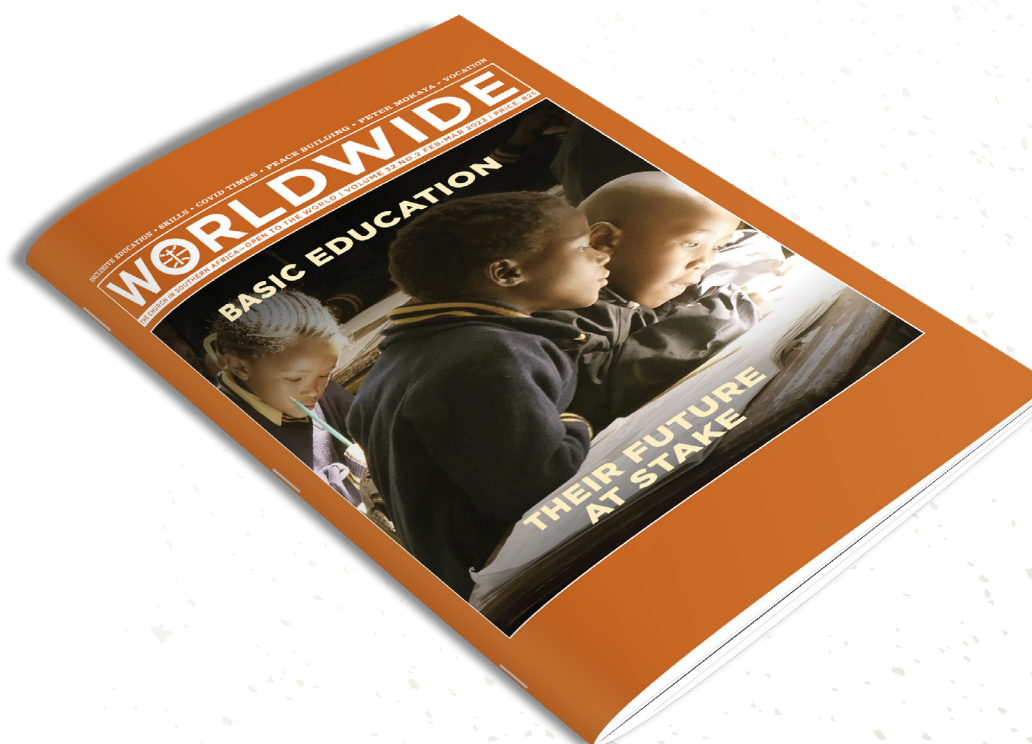
## Communications

The work of the communications department like all other areas of work has, during the pandemic, shifted rapidly based on demand. The department manages both internal and external communications and in this regard the drive to vaccinate educators was a key highlight as we played a role in disseminating information and collating data to ensure the maximum number of teachers could be registered and access vaccines. With regards to print media which is currently our key delivery mechanism, one Catholic Education magazine was published, two articles to the Catholic media, several radio interviews, three presentations (two on Building Peaceful schools and one on racism, produced information for research papers on Education in the time of COVID and coordinated regular communications to schools through email lists.

In addition to policy briefs which were regularly provided based on lockdown levels especially during lockdown level 4 in the third wave, which affected school operations, we shared key information on the Protection of Public Information Act and supported schools with a series of webinars on the Act by one of South Africa's experts.

This year also marked an important milestone in the creation of video products internally which will improve in future as the network gains media competencies. Educator filmed material on peer education, zoom recordings of the child protection webinar and the use of professional animations have doubled our limited YouTube content in one year. We will see positive growth in media generation in the network in the coming years. The increase in new media tools will serve our existing print base in communications.

### Article published in **Worldwide Magazine**



**184**  
visits

consultations, meetings  
or orkshops





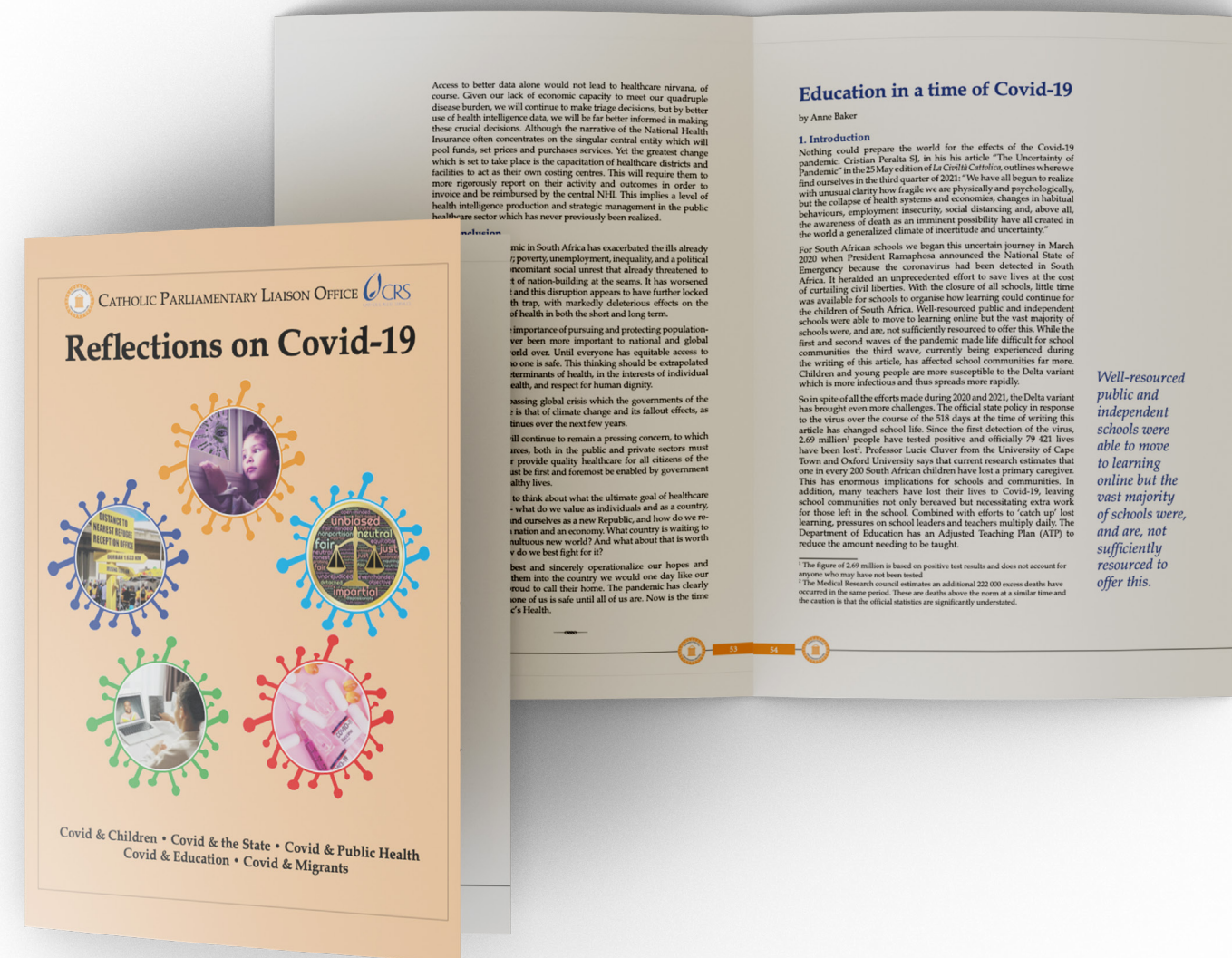


The communications department also manages key data on schools and this year we piloted a semi-automated school statistic form. Many lessons have been learnt in the process.

While the year has been extremely fruitful, the shifting tides of COVID and the consequent lockdown levels have led to a process of ongoing reprioritization which has been a major challenge. The year felt like chasing a slow moving train and as long as one kept moving forward, a short sprint to hop on board was always possible.

The CIE continued to support low fee independent schools with the administration of their finances and preparation for audits. They ensured schools follow good practice and are able to comply with all legal obligations. In addition, the finance section of the CIE offers an advisory service when required. This is the foundation from which shared services can develop further.

## Article published in **Reflections on Covid-19**











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