



## PUTTING CHILDREN IN THE CENTRE

CIE, through its cohesive and inter-linked programmes and activities, aims at all times to improve the education and lives of the children who attend Catholic schools and the youth who are trained at skills centres. During 2017 CIE continued to support school and skills centre leaders and teachers through its different programmes.

In February 2017, addressing the Congregation for Catholic Education, Pope Francis stressed the need for a culture of dialogue in the world. He said that there are many forms of violence, poverty, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization and restrictions on freedom that create a culture of waste and that "Within this context, Catholic educational institutions are called to be on the front line in practicing a grammar of dialogue" which, he said, is the basis of encounter and of the enhancement of cultural and religious diversity.

The CIE's Building Peaceful Catholic Schools programme is aimed at just this – improving dialogue in schools. In 2017 a second round of learner surveys took place. These indicated that there continue to be real concerns about children's lived experience in some schools. The Education Access Programme which supports over 1000 learners, was reviewed through a

conference entitled *Journey of the Carer*. Through this process principals and teachers discovered their own stories and how to care for themselves.

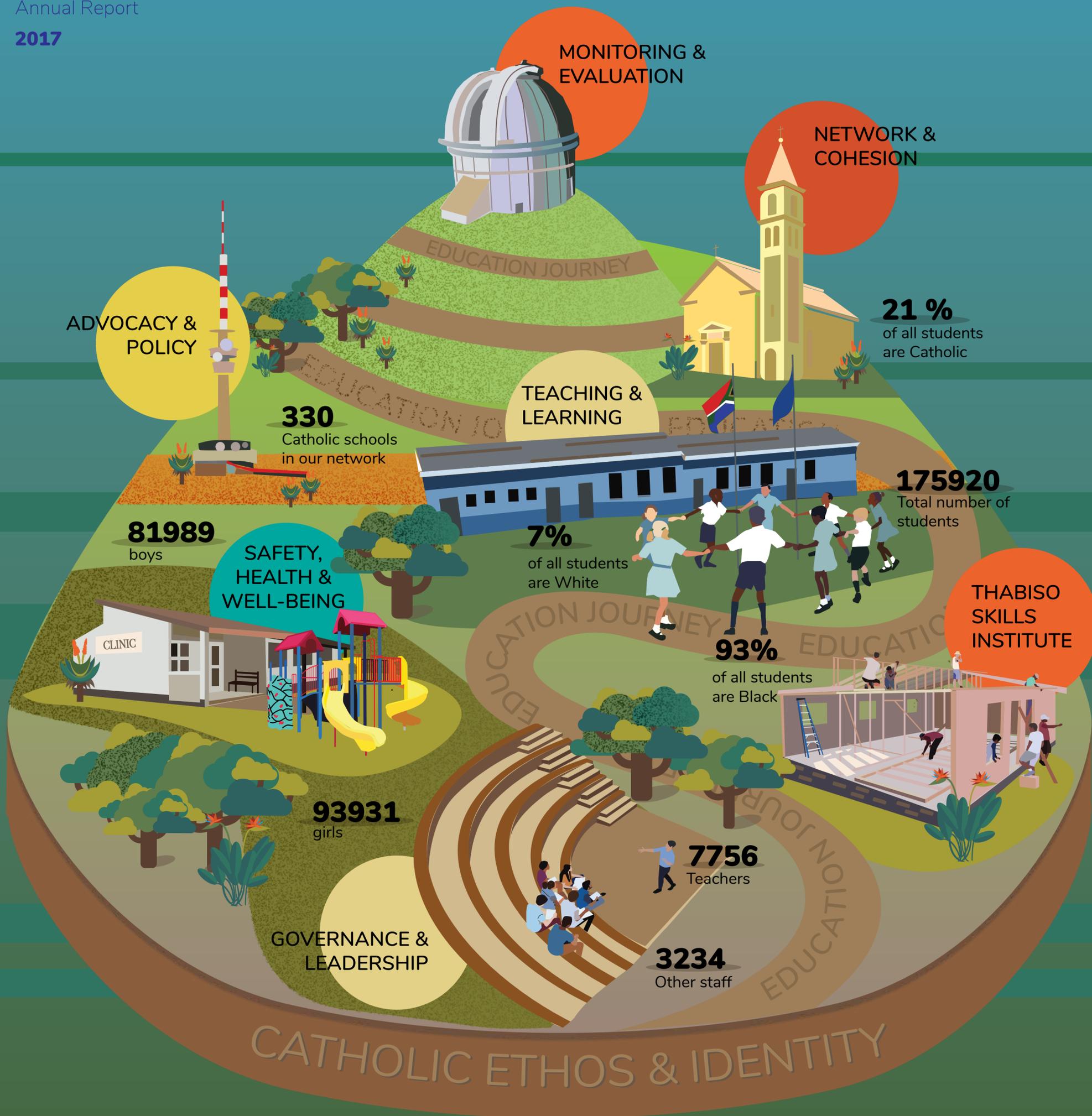
Another significant event in 2017 was the review of the Lesotho Lead Teachers programme which was carried out by CIE staff in partnership with the funder. This programme shows that when teachers assist in the development of other teachers, great learning and change can be achieved.

A highlight of every year is the national gathering of personnel from the ten offices which serve Catholic schools in South Africa. Two days were dedicated to Religious Education formation and planning and one to the new, revised Child Safeguarding Policy.

A further highlight of 2017 was increased advocacy with decision makers around both schools and skills centres. CIE has continued to improve its Monitoring and Evaluation capacity which has assisted us to reflect on, and change, our practices.

During 2017 CIE staff carried out over 980 unique school and centre visits which necessitated them travelling thousands of kilometres across South Africa and Lesotho.

Annual Report  
2017





## CATHOLIC ETHOS & IDENTITY



Central to CIE's work is the promotion and development of the Catholic identity of schools and skills centres. The dignity of every human person is the basis for all Catholic education and in these times becomes ever more important.

- Life skills development for young people at skills centres, not only gives them tools to manage their lives, but also assists them to explore their values and how these can assist them to identify a vision for their futures.
- Religious and Values Education in schools is central to the Catholic ethos but given the complexities of the curriculum and the amount of time schools are expected to give to this, Religious Education is often marginalised.
- Interesting research took place during 2017 with a survey carried out among 2025 Gr 7-12 learners in 10 schools to hear how they experience Religious Education. Results of the survey will form the basis of a paper which will be shared widely.
- Christian meditation continued to be promoted in schools and workshops on the Core curriculum were held in all regions.

## GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Since 2010 CIE's regional managers have given individual support to principals as they fulfil their key role enabling schools to offer quality education and maintain their distinctive Catholic character.

- Personal support for school leadership
- Leading Restorative Justice seminar
- Support for principals forums
- Principals Upfront seminars
- Formation of owner's representatives on School Governing Bodies
- Governing Body formation

## SAFETY, HEALTH & WELL-BEING



The Building Peaceful Catholic Schools programme aims to make schools places of justice and peace through the use of Restorative Justice practices which move the school from punitive to restorative discipline. The programme, in its 5th year, consists of three seminars per year, school based support and an annual theme. 'Affirming Identity, Challenging Racism' was the 2017 theme and two posters were distributed to schools. Bringing about personal change is slow as the climate survey, carried out with over 4000 Grade 6 & 7 learners, for the second year attests. Corporal punishment still exists in schools and an interesting finding of the survey is that where teachers are respectful and caring, children treat each other better. The programme also has a peer mediation/education component for learners in nine high schools. This has proved popular with learners taking the lead.

- CIE staff continue to monitor the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy and to assist schools with procedures.

Health Screening has proved one of the most rewarding projects that CIE has undertaken.

For the past six years, CIE, in partnership with the Wits School of Nursing, has carried out health screening in schools around Kokstad and in the Sundays River Valley. During 2017 the CIE team together with professional nurses ensured that 976 learners were screened with 151 referrals. This work would be less effective without local champions – Mercy Sisters Breda and Martha in the Sundays River Valley and Mam' Momoti in the Kokstad area work tirelessly to ensure that learners keep their appointments with specialists and far-off healthcare facilities, often beyond the scope of the screening itself.

- In partnership with the DBE, who supplied the deworming medication, CIE managed to deworm 8777 children in low fee independent schools.

Further significant aspects of CIE work which directly affect children are the Education Access Programme and Children's groups. The Education Access Programme supports over one thousand vulnerable children in low-fee independent schools, enabling them to stay in schools and be provided with essentials; as well as supporting the schools to support children.

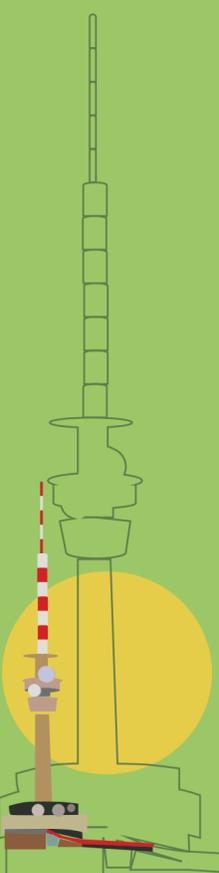


Children's groups were established in some of the schools which are part of the project in the Sundays River Valley. Here children discuss together how they themselves can make a difference in their own school by identifying projects and carrying these out. Projects ranged from cleaning the school toilets to reading with foundation phase learners.

## ADVOCACY & POLICY

As highlighted earlier CIE's engagement with policy and advocacy strengthened during 2017. The following are key relationships and aspects of this work:

- Relationships with national Department of Basic Education include
  - Director General
  - Department of Enrichment Services
  - Planning, information and assessments
  - Teacher Development and Curriculum Committee
- Department of Higher Education and Training – Community Education and Training
- Liaised with various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) on behalf of skills centres and schools
- Served as chair of the National Alliance of Independent Schools Associations
- National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT)
- South African Council of Educators (SACE)
- Umalusi
- UNICEF & UNESCO
- A member of eNGOs and directly in partnership with other NGOs such as BRIDGE, JET Educational Services and Nali Bali
- Part of the task team which revised Child Safeguarding Policy for South African Catholic schools
- CIE offered comment on draft policies and legislation and produced Policy Briefs for schools, skills centres and owners.
- Associate member of the SA National Forum for Community Colleges



## THABISO SKILLS INSTITUTE

The Thabiso Skills Institute supports 26 Skills centres which grew out of the Adult Education Centres which now form part of the third stratum of Post School Education and Training called community education.

- Assist Skills centres to obtain accreditation for skills courses
- Assist with new skills projects at selected centres: computers and baking
- Governance support
- Financial development and channelling of funds
- Leadership development for centre leaders
  - Seminars
  - Personal support
- Workplace Based Learning (WBL) pilot
  - Establish contacts with industry and associate bodies
  - Design guidelines for companies and skills centres
  - Train centre staff to mentor learners in WBL
- Advocate re Community Colleges



## TEACHING & LEARNING



The recently released findings from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) showed that 78% of South African grade 4 learners were not able to read for meaning. This again highlighted the importance of assisting schools with literacy.

- Foundation Phase Literacy through developing school leadership to lead the learning
- Enabling Heads of Department to carry out developmental lesson observations
- Lesotho Lead Teachers programme

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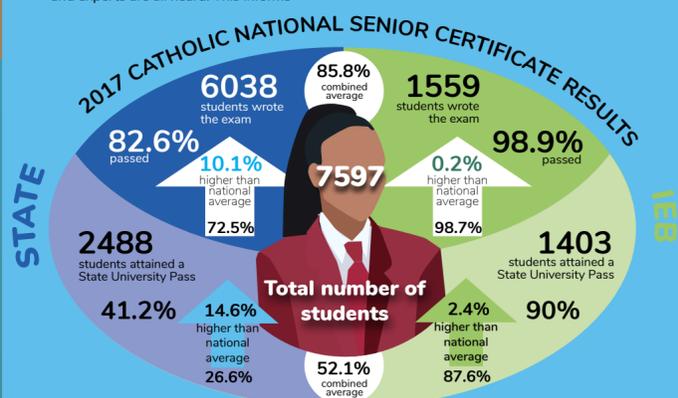
## MONITORING & EVALUATION

With the expansion of our work and the need to monitor the results of this work more closely we have strengthened how we monitor and evaluate the work that we do in order to:

- report to the CBE and our funders,
- to share what we are seeing and learning within and across our networks and
- to keep track of emerging trends and to advocate for changes based on those trends.

The processes in place for gathering qualitative data are largely participatory, and the voices of learners, teachers, leaders, practitioners and experts are all heard. This informs

our understanding of the impact that our work is having. During 2017 we improved the manner in which we gather, analyse, synthesise and report on the data. This enabled us to see emerging trends in our work. We developed an online electronic monitoring system, strengthened our quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis methods, and ran large-scale surveys. We have used data as a touchstone in our mitigation of many challenges – whether in school climate, in advocacy to government or in applications for further funding for meaningful interventions. As one of our Regional Managers put it, 'it's much harder to argue with the numbers'.



## NETWORK COHESION



CIE's role in bringing about cohesion in the Catholic education network involves:

- Being the secretariat to the Catholic Board of Education
- Reporting to the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference - Department for Christian Formation, Liturgy and Culture
- Supporting Principals Forums
- Supporting regional Catholic Boards of Education in the Central Region (Free State, Southern Northern Cape & Alival North), Northern Eastern Cape, Limpopo/Mpumalanga, and support for owners in the Northern Cape and North West
- Organising the annual meeting of all regional Catholic education offices
- Producing the Catholic Education magazine and newsletters for schools, skills centres and owners of schools
- Supporting individual schools, skill centres and owners
- Representing Southern African countries at council meetings of the International Catholic Education Office (OEIC)
- CIE serves other parts of the Catholic network when requested and if possible.
- The Brennikmeijer Memorial Lecture presented by Dr Mark Potterton.

