

# Ignition encourages a love of reading – one library at a time

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“Literacy is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for even the most basic employment,” says Samantha Botha, head of group marketing for Ignition Group (Ignition). “With eight out of every 10 children unable to read properly, South Africa’s reading crisis is a reality for many of our young people and creates a stumbling block before they even get off the starting line. This situation was the impetus for Ignition Group to take action.”



Celebrations and smiles all round at the launch of Sogidi Primary School's new book corners and library

In 2022, Ignition, together with The Learn Project, partnered on their first Book Corners and School Library Project at Eskhululiwe Primary School in eNanda. Windy Heights Primary School in Malukazi in Umlazi followed in 2023 where 19 book corners were installed, one for every class in the foundation phase of the school. Last week, Sogidi Primary School in Ozwathini in the Ndwedwe local municipality, became the third school to receive book corners and a new library.

The Valentine’s Day event, hosted by the principal Mrs Sithole, and attended by Ignition team members Vicky Koekemoer, chief human resource officer, and Sam Botha, head of marketing, as well as a slew of senior Education Department representatives from the Ilembe District, saw the school’s resources receive a significant boost with the donation of 1,723 books. These included the installation of a foundation phase book corner of 300 books (five book corners with 60 books per book corner), and a library book donation of 1,423 titles (Fiction and Non Fiction books, early readers, display books, dictionaries, reference books and teacher reference books).



L to R Nokuthula Sibisi, learners Sisabusiwa Mhlungu and Luthando Makhoba, Samantha Groom of Ignition, and Ros Toerien of The Learn Project



Okuhle Gurrede, Sisabusiwa Mhlungu, Thabitha Ngema, and standing, Asanda Buthelezi

Addressing the audience, Vicky Koekemoer from Ignition said: “Reading can enrich you, empower you and enable your success; but it’s so much more than that. Reading gives us a place to escape to. It allows us to travel all around the world, to make new friends, to live in a different time and place. A place where you can dream and a place that will inspire you with hope and possibility for your future.”

She continued: “Ndwedwe is a very special place for me because one of my colleagues comes from here. I hope that in the future many more people from Ndwedwe and from this school will build their careers with us at Ignition.”

A variety of educational games, puzzles and literacy charts and resources were also bequeathed to Sogidi Primary. In addition, 12 library monitors have been trained and 10 teachers sponsored to attend a Learn teacher training course on the use of the library, encouraging them to make the most of the valuable resource in their school. A teacher librarian has also been trained using The Learn Project librarianship course.



Sphile Mzobe and Asemahle Ndlovu, Ignition Learn Project at Sogidi Primary School

To encourage a culture and love for reading, each book corner is equipped with a comfortable carpet to sit on, cushions, an alphabet chart, literacy chart and book corner rules chart, as well as a bookshelf. All the books are covered in plastic, accessioned and catalogued according to grade, colour coded with stickers, to assist with the organised placement of the reading matter on the shelves and entered into a register for accountability purposes.

“At The Learn Project we aim to inspire hope, instil change, and impact lives through the power of books and literacy,” Ros Toerien, The Learn Project founder says. “We believe that a reading nation is a leading nation, and that readers make leaders and leaders build nations. It is up to us to equip future generations.”

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