



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
Celebrating 25 years

OVERVIEW OF UNITY COLLEGE
(For Prospective Parents)

Unity College is an independent special needs school which promotes the potential of learners through the provision of high quality education in order to equip each learner with knowledge and skills to become productive, integrated members of society.

Most of our learners have some learning difficulties or developmental delay, making Unity College ideal for the learner who has experienced academic difficulties in a mainstream or remedial school but is sufficiently able to access our specialised curriculum offering.

We are a School that follows a multi-faceted approach to our curriculum:

1. The recent opening of our **Early Intervention Centre** has only scratched the surface of the dire need for intervention at the earliest possible moment. This facility enables children with disabilities to be prepared for the more formal setting in the Junior Phase to which they will progress.
2. In the **Junior Phase** of the school the accent is on the acquisition of number and letter concepts as a precursor to formal reading and writing. During this time the children are intensely supported by the therapies offered at the school. Occupational therapy, Speech Therapy as well as Psychologist interventions are essential for the development of the whole child. Without the inclusion of these therapies in the child's daily programme, development is certainly delayed and a less favourable outcome achieved. These therapies are also essential in achieving the necessary social skills essential to the incorporation into society at large.
3. After progressing to the **Intermediate Phase** of the school, our student body is divided into 2 main areas of focus. The first being the Academic Vocational Stream which caters for children able to access our adapted CAPS curricular offering. The foundation laid in the Junior Phase is further built upon in formal academics as well as being prepared for the formal educational expectations of the Senior Phase. The second area of focus is the Skills for Life and Functional Academics. In this stream pupils are taught the skills for daily independent living eventually culminating in them leading a dignified and independent life. During this phase all pupils still continue to receive therapeutic support.
4. During the **Senior Phase** the acquisition of formal academic qualifications is the focus area. This is achieved through admittance to the AET series of examinations in Numeracy and Literacy under the auspices of the IEB. The students are also enrolled in a progressive computer course underwritten by Knowledge Network.

Directors | JA Dannhauser, AM Kelly, BG Lindsay
Member of ISASA (Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa)

Proud participants of





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5. Unity College offers life and work skills courses culminating in awards, certificates and diplomas. The levels and modules are benchmarked according to the QCF (Qualification and Credit Framework for England, Northern Ireland and Wales).
6. A comprehensive graded Work Experience Programme as well as continuous life and social skills mentoring by accredited counselors is also offered.

Our annual results of nationally written AET examinations, Knowledge Network examinations, plus our courses for life and work will attest to the pertinence and quality of teaching and learning at Unity College.

Our staff comprises a core of highly skilled and qualified educators who have had many years of experience within the field of specialised education. Supporting the teachers, we have a multi-disciplinary team consisting of occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, counsellors and an educational psychologist.

Catering for learners between the ages of 3 and 20 years or more, class sizes are kept small to accommodate individual needs.

An **Individual Development Plan (I.D.P.)** is formulated for each child twice a year. An I.D.P. is an in depth assessment of each learner's progress during a six month period as well as a detailed progression plan designed specifically for each learner, promoting the targeted growth of academic, social and emotional skills. The I.D.P. process also serves as a vehicle to establish communication between parents and school personnel as equal partners, to make joint, informed decisions regarding:

- the child's needs and appropriate goals
- auxiliary services and therapies needed to support the child, to achieve his/her potential.

The school has one class per year level. There are usually twelve years in total with an option for a further year of study as a college student. The Early Intervention Centre spans an initial three years.

Early Intervention Centre:

Unity College's Early Intervention Centre caters for children from the ages of 3 to 6. In this initial phase of education, we provide adapted schooling to children with a variety of disabilities. Unity's Early Intervention Centre aims to bridge children toward formal schooling through individual objectives determined for each child, thereby improving their functional prognosis, and enhancing their potential to become a functional adult, able to contribute to society.

The Early Intervention Centre, which is situated on the same premises as the College, provides therapeutic activities and independence training to children with disabilities, who are unable to follow an academic curriculum and ensure that their potential for independence in self-care, and communication are enhanced.

Our ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of life of children with disabilities, and that of their families, through various interventions, a supportive environment, caring and committed staff, in an attitude of perseverance and gratitude.



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We provide an educational environment that does not penalise a child for having a disability and teaches special skills to help the child cope. These skills should also help the child overcome some of the limitations imposed on learning and the normal everyday activities experienced by neuro-typical children.

The centre aims to create alternative ways for the child to learn and perform through the use of special materials, adaptive equipment, and teaching techniques and to teach the child pertinent developmental skills that should be acquired.

We further aim to help the child acquire adaptive skills leading to greater independence and competence so that he/she can function within the College and achieve a sense of self-mastery and a positive self-image. Collaboration between professionals of all disciplines associated with early intervention of children and active parental involvement programmes will be encouraged and provided by Unity College.

Junior Phase

The key focus is on perceptual skills, mathematics and language for CAPS purposes and skills for life and learning. There is a strong emphasis on empowering every child to acquire sound communication skills, both verbal and written. Within this phase, children progress on to the follow up class once specific skills are reached ensuring emotional and academic stability of progress. Class size varies from six to twelve learners.

In the “**Skills for Learning**” class, emphasis is placed on TEACCH tasks where the focus is on school readiness and teaching each child to initiate and complete a task independently. This class serves as a springboard to the Junior Phase which focuses on the foundations of developing skills of independence.

Intermediate Phase

There are two streams available within the intermediate phase:

- **A Life and Workskills stream** that delivers an innovative curriculum in a manner that caters for those learners who require additional time to acquire Language and Mathematical skills and the skills for independence as well as pre-vocational skills. Emphasis is placed on TEACCH tasks to prepare learners for Work Experience in the Senior Phase.
- **A Vocational / Academic stream.** In these classes, learners follow an adapted CAPS type curriculum wherein most of the regular subjects are covered.

The teachers offer a differentiated approach thus catering for each child’s ability. There are five classes in this phase. Class size is usually ten to twelve learners.

Senior Phase

The Senior Phase aims to equip learners for life and work after school / college. The phase spans three to five years depending on each learner’s maturity and ability to cope with independent or assisted living as well as the responsibilities of appropriate employment. The culminating year for the phase focuses on preparing learners for work.



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The following courses are offered:

- **Literacy and numeracy** (Functional, Bridging or IEB accredited AET levels).
- All literacy and numeracy / mathematical literacy classes run concurrently ensuring that each student is able to work at his / her level and pace.
- **Computer literacy** levels accredited through Knowledge Network.
- **Educare** - a three year Crèche Assistant Course accredited through the Professional Child Care College.
- **Life and work skills courses**
 - These courses run on three levels progressing from predominantly life skills, to a blend of life and work skills, to skills for work in a final College-like year. On each level learners accumulate credits towards Awards, Certificates and Diplomas in succession.
 - Lessons have both knowledge and practical based components and are presented in a variety of ways for maximum transfer of information and skills. There are clear learning outcomes with assessment criteria that must be achieved, assessed and verified before credits are awarded.
- **Work Experience Programme:**

All senior learners participate in our weekly **Work Experience Programme** as part of our Senior Phase curriculum. Learners start with an introductory work skills development programme and move onto more independent work experience in the open labour market when ready. Work Experience provides learners with opportunities to practise the skills covered in class, to develop work profiles and to gain a practical sense of reality in terms of the goals and expectations of the job market.

Learners who need a lot of support within the school programme can be accommodated in the **Life Orientation Class**. The provision of a home teacher and classroom ensures security and structure, and lessons are presented at a pace accessible to each learner. Learners access all the above mentioned courses according to their ability.



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JAMIT: This innovative new offering from Unity College offers adults who have completed their schooling in a similar school to enrol and further their formal and employment enhancing qualifications.

The core of the offering consists of enrolling in the Adult Education and Training programme, concentrating on Numeracy and Literacy. The courses are offered from Level 1 through to Level 4. Students will be assessed by the Independent Examinations Board and certification is issued by them.

Students can choose to attend the AET lessons only or they can choose to follow our “Enhancing Employability” bouquet of modules on an ad hoc basis.

Qualifications under this offering are in accordance with European Standards Qualifications Framework.

Grasp the opportunity to further develop yourself and increase your employability potential.

Therapy:

The aim of the Therapy Department at Unity College is to actively develop the full potential of each learner by developing and / or enhancing functionality, independence and socially appropriate behavior. In addition, all therapies aim to build on the learner’s strengths and teach compensatory strategies to overcome areas of difficulty.

The therapists engage a multi-disciplinary approach and work as a team with each other and the teachers to actively develop the learner holistically. Parents are considered as part of this dedicated team and open communication is encouraged.

Services are rendered on an individual, small group and / or class basis depending on the needs of the learner. Therapeutic support has an integrated approach into the classroom, to ensure skills developed in therapy are transferred into other environments.

Enrolment:

Should you wish to consider Unity College as an option for your child, an appointment needs to be set up with the School Head. Parent and child are invited to attend an initial interview. All learners wanting to enroll at the college are required to bring with them a full psycho-educational assessment, a speech and language and an occupational therapy assessment depending on the age of the applicant. These assessments help staff identify the level at which your child is working. Learners may then be invited for a two week trial period at the school to ascertain whether Unity College is the most suitable placement. The school has a waiting list, which governs placement into classes.

Trial Process:

Within this two week period, we assess whether the learner is a suitable candidate for our school. If, after the trial period, our findings are that the child is not suitable, recommendations regarding an alternative placement will be made.

We not only observe the child on an individual level but also his / her interactions within the classroom with peers and staff members. During the course of your child’s trial, you child will, in addition to his / her teacher/s, be seen by professionals who form the multi-disciplinary team. At the end of your child’s trial, the team involved meet to discuss their findings. Once the child’s profile is presented in total, a decision is made concerning placement. The trial feedback is then presented to the parents and, if appropriate, a place is offered at Unity College.



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Unity Bus Service:

Unity offers three bus routes at present with the following pick-up / drop-off points (in bold):

- **Parktown Bus Route:**
Temple Emanuel (Oxford Road); **Rosebank Union Church** (Cnr. William Nicol and Sandton Drive) and **Loch Road** (off Cumberland Road, Bryanston).
- **Midrand Bus Route:**
Christ Church School (Cnr 9th Road and 11th Rd), **Urban Life (Botshabelo)** (Main Rd).
- **Honeydew Bus Route:**
NHC Healthcare Centre (Cnr Dolfyn St & Christiaan De Wet Rd) and **North Point Church** (Cnr. Bellairs Dr & Malibongwe Dr).

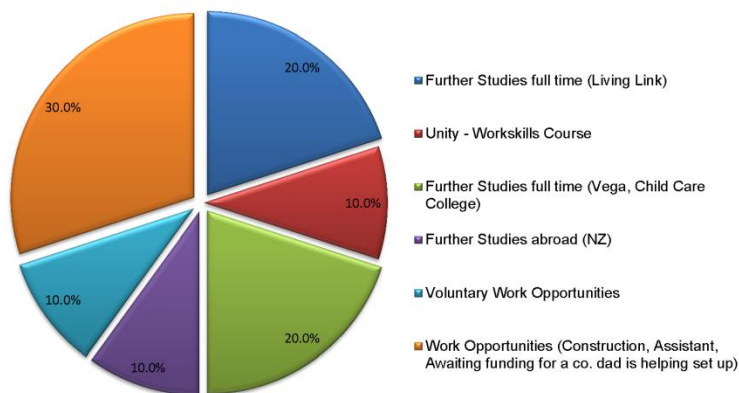
Further details are available from the school secretary and on our website.

Senior Leavers:

We are proud to share the following graph with you. The graph indicates the progression paths of senior leavers on completion of their studies at Unity College. Please refer to our website for details of previous years.

2015 SENIOR LEAVERS STATS

Further Studies full time (Living Link)	2
Unity - Workskills Course	1
Further Studies full time (Vega, Child Care College)	2
Further Studies abroad (NZ)	1
Voluntary Work Opportunities	1
Work Opportunities (Construction, Assistant, Awaiting funding for a co. dad is helping set up)	3



Further information:

Please visit our home website www.unity-college.org.za to find out more about us. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any additional information.

My documents/Learners/Enrolment/Overview /Last updated 25/08/2016