



# BROMSGROVE SCHOOL

## WINTERFOLD

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It was wonderful to be heading back to South Africa again after a five-year gap due to Covid. We were able to reconnect with old friends as well as make new ones on our travels across this amazing country. In a tour that was full of highlights, it is difficult pick just a few but there were some standout moments.

Our visit to Ncemaneni was incredibly special and we received the warmest of welcomes from the Headmaster, Mr Armstrong Mthembu, the teachers and the pupils. The singing as we walked through the gates was an emotional moment for many of us. In his speech, Mr Mthembu thanked the Winterfold community for their fundraising efforts towards the Library and IT building which we opened that day. He also told everyone about the incredible, educational transformation that has happened at Ncemaneni since 2007. At that time, pupil's education finished at Grade 7 when the pupils are 11 years of age.



Since then, Winterfold has raised £135,000 to fund the construction of a Classroom Block, a Science Laboratory and most recently, a Library and I.T building. Mr Mthembu told the audience that 22 pupils from Ncemaneni have now graduated from university and that there are a further 16 currently at university! Academic results attracted the attention of the Department for Education, who having seen the transformation of the school, funded the building of boys' and girls' toilets. We were also honoured to have been visited by a representative of the Zulu leaders to express their gratitude for what the partnership has brought to the Ncemaneni community. We also enjoyed netball and football matches that brought the learners from both schools together in a common love of sport. It was very special to see the children talking, laughing, playing sport, and sharing lunch together throughout the day.



The rugby and netball matches in Cape Town and Durban were well-matched and played in a brilliant spirit. The matches with Siyabulela in the Langa Township will live long in the memory, especially the singing on our walk back through the township to the school. Whilst in Cape Town we also visited the Nelson Mandela Museum on Robben Island, Seal Island in Hout Bay, Table Mountain and also had the most wonderful evening with the Folkes family in Clifton Bay where we had a braai along with some traditional singing, dancing, and face painting. The Winterfold pupils and teachers were very grateful for such kind hospitality.





The touring party had some incredible animal sightings at both Bonamanzi, where we were staying, and at Hluhluwe game reserve. Close encounters included rhinos, elephants, giraffes, Cape buffalos, hippos, crocodiles and even a leopard cub during a night drive! It was an absolute privilege to see these beautiful animals in their natural environment.



The atmosphere both on tour and at matches was terrific with the 52 supporters that joined the players on tour. They embraced the nature of “being on tour” and were excellent company and support during what was a very busy schedule!

The players were an absolute credit to Winterfold and their families. Their behaviour was exemplary at all times, and they were polite, respectful, engaged, interested and an absolute pleasure for the teachers to look after during the tour. I know that they will have learnt so much from the experience and that it will take time to process so many contrasting experiences but right now they can be very proud of their contribution to South Africa 2024.



Heartfelt thanks go to Miss Whitcombe, Mrs Miles, Mr Dieppe and Mr Mitchell for their support on tour. Their sense of humour, teamwork and stamina was appreciated by everyone and made the experience a very special one for the pupils. We are already looking ahead to 2026 and offering this amazing experience to pupils currently in Year 5 and 6!

*James Brinkley*  
Head of Boys' PE & Games

