

# Helping children enjoy a bright start

By **NWABISA  
MSUTWANA-STEMELA**

Bright Start, a new education support programme based in Hout Bay, will assist 12 under-privileged children start at good schools this year.

The programme was launched in July last year and is run by founder member Sally Whitford with Libby Moore and Sharon Scudamore, who both have experience in running NGOs.

Whitford said their donors were "like minded" individuals and corporates, both locals and overseas people.

"Initial sponsors have come

from friends and local businesses who understand the value of the programme. We wanted to provide this opportunity to other under-privileged children from the local communities.

"Bright Start is unique in that we place individually selected children in fee-paying schools and provide the additional support and guidance beyond the classroom to ensure the children fulfil their potential."

Whitford said this year would see each sponsor allocated a specific child and receive progress reviews, school reports, school photos,

letters from the family and a piece of artwork from the child.

She said one of the children to be sent to school was Sinalo Mbuleni, 9, from Khayelitsha.

Sinalo stays with the Whitfords during the week and goes home at weekends to stay with his parents, Thembi and Nosisa Sinalo, who used to work for them.

"We sent him to a local nursery school with our son, Jake, where he was first exposed to English. After six months, Sinalo was fluent and we were able to secure a place at Valley Pre-primary School in Hout Bay."

He has since progressed to the "neighbouring feeder" school, Kronendal Primary School, where he has completed Grade 2.

Sinalo has recently been offered a place at the International School in Hout Bay, where he will be continuing his education from the start of school this week.

"I believe the cultural difference can be bridged and all races can socialise, learn and play together, and all having the same opportunities and home support," said Whitford.

"There is no reason why they wouldn't all progress at the same speed."