



# School toilets a stinking disgrace

Toilets in daily use at Juluka Ndoda Primary School in Mpophomeni. **PHOTO: KERUSHUN PILLAY**

**KERUSHUN PILLAY**

FIX our school toilets.

This is the plea from staff at two schools in Mpophomeni who say they are suffering with broken and unhygienic pit toilets, and that the facilities need to be demolished and rebuilt from scratch.

Juluka Ndoda Primary School and Mconjwana High School, both in the KwaDulela area of Mpophomeni, have for years been subjected to toilet facilities which are in an appalling state, and some pupils are even taking to urinating outside rather than using the toilets.

They are both top-performing schools and are popular with the local community and the wider Mpophomeni area. Mconjwana last year produced one of the top matriculants, Amahle Ndlovu who scored seven distinctions.

According to norms and standards of

the Department of Basic Education, pit toilets are permitted in schools with no regular running water, as in the case of both these schools.

But staff at both schools said their toilet facilities were no longer fit for use, and claimed the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works (DPW) — which is responsible for the school buildings — had conducted oversight visits and deemed the facilities unfit.

One set of toilet cubicles at Mconjwana has no working lights inside, with some cubicles having no doors. Pupils have to walk on a muddy path to get

there.

“Some of the boys wee on the outside of the toilet because they can’t see inside,” one staffer said, adding that the school has only 16 toilets for about 1 300 pupils. “We have no instrument to suck out the excrement from the toilets, so it piles up inside the toilets.”

Staff added that a septic tank which collects waste from the staff toilet has been blocked for some time and is starting to leak.

“This is the top school in the area and parents want their children to come here, but it is terrible that our children have

to suffer through this,” the staff member said.

Juluka Ndoda Primary, which takes children from Grade R to seven, is having similar problems.

When *The Witness* visited the school yesterday, it found that many toilets had no doors, pools of water and litter collected inside the toilets and there were flies buzzing around most cubicles.

Staff said pupils were even seen to be using an old set of pit toilets which could be dangerous since they were badly damaged. “We have 744 small children and we have to make do with this. Worst of

all, doors are missing on girls’ toilets,” one staffer said.

Sphesihle Zondi, a PR councillor in the area who had previously attended Juluka Ndoda Primary, said both schools were not getting the support they needed to fix the toilets.

“I have even heard from people who live next to the school that the smell is very bad. This is terrible and also a health hazard. There is no dignity for these children.”

The KZN DPW spokesperson Mbulelo Baloyi said the department had compiled a report on the situation at the schools and had submitted it to the KZN Department of Education, and will await their instructions before making repairs.

*The Witness* could not get comment from the KZN Department of Education by the time of going to print yesterday. • [kerushun.pillay@witness.co.za](mailto:kerushun.pillay@witness.co.za)