



TOOLBOX FOR EARLY LEARNING

By **SAMMY MORETSI**

EVERYONE talks about soft skills, which will see people change jobs at least seven times during their work lives according to the World Economic Forum.

Do you know what that means?

Almost all skills needed in the world of work will be different in the next five years.

Is it possible to have these skills when private education is so expensive and public education is still trying to figure out how to make the syllabus relevant.

According to the CEO of private school network Spark schools, Stacey Brewer, there are new private schools providing private school quality education at a price comparable to many government schools.

Spark Schools educate more than 10 500 pupils in 21 schools across Gauteng.

Stacey said skills provided in these schools will help them cope with job demands.

She said ironically, technology drives the need for greater soft skills

in the workplace.

“Automation and artificial intelligence are taking over many of the jobs that needed traditional hard skills, which increasingly makes soft skills the key differentiator.”

Stacey said it was important to teach major skills, including communication, self-control, teamwork and problem-solving.

These skills enable young people to adapt to life-long learning processes.

The schools use a social-emotional learning curriculum to teach its foundation phase pupils to manage their emotions and strengthen relationships through a programme called TOOLBOX, by Dovetail Learning.

The 12 tools in the TOOLBOX become valuable personal skills and strategies for self-awareness, self-management, and relationship-building, which, in turn, foster responsible decision-making.

Because the techniques are simple and the language is shared, children are able to adopt the tools and master them in a quicker and entertaining manner.