



KAKUNYU SCHOOL

united for the good of the children

Newsletter September 2013

www.kakunyuchildren.org

Welcome to the latest newsletter from Kakunyū School for Nursery Children and Children with Special Educational Needs. Our pupils have just returned to school for the last term of the academic year (the year finishes in early December) and the school is buzzing with activity!

Since our last newsletter the school has been growing – we now have nearly 80 children of which 35 are boarders. We have been so grateful to those who have visited, offered their talents and generally supported and encouraged us. Michelle Shalinsky and Alex Bourbeau who are Douglas College students from Vancouver, Canada have done all three things! They came to Uganda for ten weeks to complete the practiums for their programs Therapeutic Recreation and Classroom Community Support.



Michelle writes:

“We feel so lucky to have spent this time at Kakunyū School. It is such an open, fun and

inclusive environment that accepts all children of diverse abilities. We both have been so impressed with how supportive all the children are for one another, and it has been incredible getting to know all of the students.

Mary Kabiito is such an inspiration to us both, as Kakunyū School is a direct result of her dedication and strength. It is going to be so heart breaking to say good bye to all of the children, staff, and Mary, but this has truly been an experience of a lifetime that we will never forget!”

We were pleased to be able to start construction of the new latrine and bathroom block in early Summer. This wonderful construction will transform the lives of all the boarders, providing 8 separate cubicle long-drop loos and 6 cubicles that offer privacy to wash. We hope to complete the construction shortly.



A small group from UK visited Kakunyū in September, and we were really pleased to see the progress that had been made since our last visit.

Although water provision remains a major challenge, we were able to make headway by visiting a local borehole site and we are awaiting estimates to see the likely costs of such a project. A visit to the Masaka Rotary Club allowed us to meet with others who are keen to solve the problem of water provision at a Kakunyu and to discuss how best to move forward. We hope to have firm news in the next newsletter.

The visiting group included Jo Withers, who is a GP in Wendover with a special interest in eyes. Her expertise seemed too good to be true especially as Pat had, following an earlier trip, had an idea about giving away spectacles. As the idea grew, we started to collect and classify second hand specs and were so grateful to be given 50 pairs of adjustable spectacles made by a company in Oxford (www.eyejusters.co.uk), as well as 72 pairs of reading glasses by Somari from Chiltern Opticians in Great Missenden.

Hard to believe that we ended up carrying out a full-blown eye clinic for the local community, working at Kakunyu with the ophthalmic team from the Government Hospital in Masaka. We saw 168 people in one day and gave away 160 pairs of specs – not one pair was left.... Here is one very happy client.



The team was also able to deliver clothes for the children, sheets for the beds and materials for the school including games equipment and art materials. Thank you so much to everyone who sent things – everything was greatly appreciated.

We painted with the children and also spent a happy afternoon teaching boarders, teachers and local teenagers how to tie-dye. We were grateful to

have T shirts donated by a Young Enterprise group from Wycombe Abbey School and the results were truly stunning as they dried amongst the banana trees.



Jo writes:

"It was so wonderful to see the school and its surroundings, and particularly to meet the staff and children, after only having heard about it and imagined how it might be. The reality is stunning - the school building stands in its well cared for grounds, up on a hill, with a view across the valley. The atmosphere at Kakunyu is calm, but full of energy. Even though I was only there for a few days, by the end of my visit I felt as though I had known people for far longer".

The School Director, Mary Kabiito says

"Thanks to all partners who have joined Kakunyu school in the work of uplifting standards of the formerly abandoned children.

Special thanks go to UK friends and Davis and Shirliff Company for enabling us to constructing appropriate latrines and bathroom, Padr Pio Insurance Brokers for their regular support, students of Adler university and students of Douglas College for all their input plus all other players. Each contribution is bringing a positive change in our students".

If you would like to know more about Kakunyu School, just contact Jan Lowe (01494 890675) (jan@kakunyuchildren.org) if you are in UK or, if you are in Uganda, Mary Kabiito (0701 489834) (mkabiito071@gmail.com). Or visit our web-site (www.kakunyuchildren.org) for more information, pictures and videos – and the full story about "Eye Tuesday".