



Newsletter April 2020

At this very difficult Time

May we all be filled with compassion for those who are suffering, may all people's thoughts be with the tens of thousands of people who have contracted the coronavirus around the world. Comfort those whose loved ones have died, bring peace to those living with uncertainty after being exposed to the virus. Give patience to those who are quarantined and unable to move freely in their communities. Watch over and protect other people from catching this deadly virus. Strengthen those people who are risking their own lives to care for sick patients. Keep Safe.



We All Have to Take Great Care

EducAid Africa Visit February 2020

Two EducAid Africa trustees were able to make the visit to Kenya this year, Ian Carnell the Chairman and Jenni Kitson the treasurer. They went armed with gifts and much needed equipment to support sponsored schools and pupils. It was also time for a really good catch up with Stephen and Jonah Arome our Educaid Africa representatives in Mombasa.

Meeting Stephen & Jonah with their wives



Their first visit was to Mazeras School to meet Stephen and Safari, several donations of money and a recent fundraiser helped buy much needed revision books. Educaid Africa were able to help Safari a couple of years ago because he was about to be sent home from school because he did not have anyone to pay his fees.

Safari & Stephen



After this on to Kaloleni, a poor rural area where many are dependent on their small plots of land to produce food for their family for a year. Some of the dwellings are constructed of stone and cement but many are still made of mud on a timber frame with palm leaf roofing.

First stop was Ribe Girls School where the four sponsored students were delighted to receive revision books as well as pens, maths sets and toiletries. One of the girls told the visitors her aunt had been sponsored by Educaid Africa many years before! A previous pupil, sponsored by Lyndon School, came to visit, she has hopes to secure a place on a nursing course and may be looking for further sponsorship to achieve this.

Jenni with the Girls from Ribe School



Ribe Boys School is close by and Educaid Africa sponsor seven boys here. The school has been considerably improved since the last time trustees visited, a new teaching block, a library, IT suite and a new dormitory with bathrooms indoors. The boys were given revision books and some gifts, it was also lovely to meet Jonathan, he has the potential to do well but no way of paying his fees so he was delighted that Educaid Africa agreed to be able to give him the chance to complete his education.

The School Pastor with gifts we had brought



We currently just have one pupil at St John's School a delightful young lady, Beatrice who is doing very well in Form 4. Two weeks previously she had been visited by her sponsors while they were on holiday in Kenya.

Beatrice at St John's School



Traditionally Educaid Africa have provided medicines for St Luke's Day in October when people could receive free treatment, unfortunately this didn't happen last year. Our trustees were sad to note that the whole place is very run down and only now operating a skeleton outpatient department. The buildings need upgrading and repairing. This is such a shame because the local population need a source of medical care on their doorstep, the alternative is some distance away.

St George's School, a former missionary school was off the tarmac road and up a rutted dirt track, due to its position on a hill there should have been welcome cooling breezes but not on this day! There are six sponsored boys here and they were all grateful to receive books and gifts. One pupil, Elijah, is having to repeat a year, this rarely happens and fortunately his sponsor has agreed to support him, however this did not stop Jonah and Stephen giving him a stern taking to!

Ribe Boys with their Gifts



The trustees also visited Beatrice, a formerly sponsored student through secondary school, then nursing college. She has been nursing now for a few years and is married to a teacher - they have a two-year-old daughter. Sadly, she has been quite unwell recently but is now making progress and it is hoped she will make a full recovery.

A visit to M'Bungoni Nursery is always a highlight for Trustees! They arrived just as the children were having their daily Ugi, this is funded by Educaid Africa and is a maize porridge with extra nutritional ingredients that help children who have little food at home. Immediately put on the list of ways to help were plastic mugs, the ones being used had bites by rats out of the rims! (See below) Also, on the list a cupboard in which to keep the mugs and other items safe from the vermin.

Rats have Nibbled this Cup

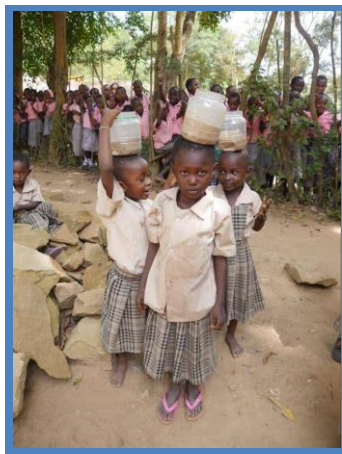


Children drinking Ugi



The children were also practising for some local fun races where even small children run races carrying jars of sand on their heads. This is part of a tradition which prepares them for collecting water on their heads in large containers when they are older, often for long distances.

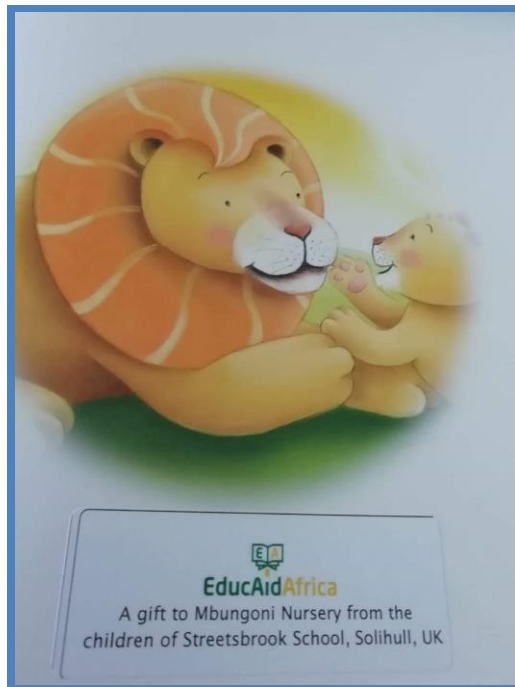
Could You Do This?



The children then entertained the visitors with action songs in English which is how they begin to learn the language. Ian reciprocated by performing his famous call and response story "The Lion Hunt". Before leaving Ian and Jenni gave the children knitted teddies each in a bag and some knitted puppets. The teachers were not familiar with the word teddy, they use the word Toto which we believe is the Swahili for doll. You can see from the photographs how delighted the children were!



Books were also donated to the nursery thank you Streetsbrook School Solihull!



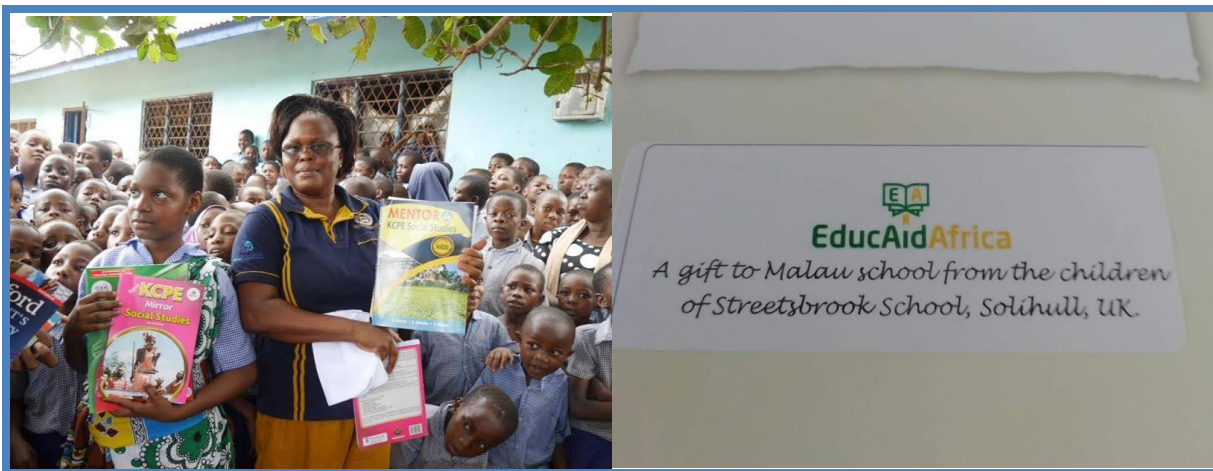
Malau Primary School in Bondora has long been supported by Educaid Africa. This started out as a small nursery but through hard work by local people and some fundraising by St Margaret's Church Olton in Solihull, they have built new classrooms and the school has grown into a good-sized primary school. The journey was a bumpy one with Jenny and Ian even offering to get out of the car and walk!

Ian and Jenni met the new Headteacher and also Joyce who was previously sponsored by Educaid Africa and is now a nursery teacher at the school and seems to be very much part of the running of the school. The children gathered outside together for a presentation of poems and dancing. Unfortunately, the school doesn't have a place in the shade for the whole school to meet but it was a lovely occasion.



Ian also did another presentation! He led the children in The Mighty Mighty Malau chant and also The Lion Hunt, both of which were well received and the Head girl gave a speech of thanks. Ian and Jenni presented the school with books and footballs. The children went home for lunch which gave time to chat to staff and look around the school. They are in need of a new toilet block due to the increase in numbers of pupils, also as they are introducing a feeding programme which would be like our school dinner system. It started as a trial for two forms and, to avoid wasted time, they have a shorter lunchtime. They want to roll this out for more children but now need parents on board and more facilities for cooking. It was noticed that the fencing we provided is in great need of repair, there are always needs.

The staff were delighted with sets of new books, thank you again Streetsbrook School, Solihull. Several people had provided or made it possible to supply pencils, pens and crayons, these were being shared among the classes. As always, the footballs were well received however when Ian and Jenni visited the nursery class it was clear they too need balls, theirs were made from string and rags. The school is very resourceful with limited means but hopefully Educaid Africa can find a way to provide for some of the most pressing needs.



The following day Ian and Jenni travelled up the coastline to Kibarani School for the Deaf to visit Frederick, he started secondary education late because initially he was kept at home by his family because he had a difficult time at mainstream primary school. He has a profound loss for which it was decided not to give him hearing aids, instead he is taught sign language as his main form of communication.

Frederick was a bit shy, Jenni endeavoured to communicate with him in British Sign Language but discovered that many Kenyan signs are different so his teacher acted as an interpreter. Although he is thirteen, he will stay at primary level for two more years before a formal assessment for secondary school. He appeared happy, settled and is making progress.



The school was also pleased to receive recycled hearing aids which are, in the main, used for members of the local community and children who have a mild hearing loss.

Jenni and Ian's last appointment of the week was to meet with current and past students. Jonah had booked a room at the local Wesley church for the meeting. The students arrived in ones and twos depending on their travel arrangements, some were local and some travelled a great distance. One of our previously sponsored students, Felix who now works in Naivasha for the water company there, had travelled overnight by bus to the meeting. In all fifteen young people at different stages of work or study visited. Some of these older ones who are in employment are now taking on a leadership role and have formed their own committee led by Felix to formulate how they can support others.

They are contacting as many as possible of our sponsored students from the last thirty years to join a WhatsApp group to engender a feeling of family and mutual support, contact details were shared. Felix addressed them telling his own story and encouraging the importance of communication. Three other young people shared their stories, new connections were made and it was a positive start to what we hope will be a new phase.

Ian thanked Jonah and Steven, we are indebted to them for all they do at a local level to ensure the money raised in the UK is correctly used in supporting our students and projects in Kenya.

It was a very busy, tiring but rewarding week for Jenni and Ian who had travelled, at their own expense, to gain an insight into the lives of the young people Educaid Africa support and the other trustees are very appreciative of all the valuable information they gained.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this very worthy cause, if you are keen to learn more, donate or be sent our regular newsletter please contact us.

Registered Charity No: 1087844
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