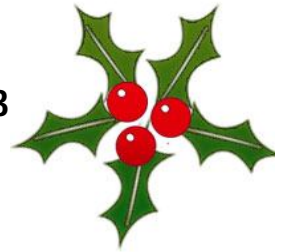


Dear Friends of St. Anthony's Nursery School, Malawi

Dec 2013



As 2013 draws to a close I am pleased to say that all is well at the nursery school – it has been a busy year with a few big projects under our belts but we have managed to overcome all the challenges... from road building to ringworm!

We carried out some structural changes at the school with a huge outside wall being built to keep the little ones safe and away from the new main road that has been built close to the nursery. We also had to rebuild the toilet block (partly due to the path of the new road). Building work took place over the summer months when the school was closed – I have included a couple of photos overleaf of the new wall and toilet block.

One of the biggest pressures we faced this year was the increasing cost of living in Malawi and the struggle for the staff to get by on their salaries. My head teacher Noel led a mini strike for a few days in protest to their wages (sadly Noel is becoming quite money orientated), so I listened to their concerns and as a result I have doubled all of the staff wages (their biggest increase to date). I need to keep ensuring they are being paid in line with the rising cost of commodities. They also received a couple of bonuses earlier in the year to buy maize and more recently they have received an extra month's salary to buy their fertiliser ready for planting their crops. All the staff remain reasonably fit and well.

Mosquito nets were bought for all the new children joining the nursery in September and we are currently waiting for polo shirts to come into stock for all the children to have either a blue or green shirt for school. We have decided to provide a shirt for each child as we had an outbreak of ringworm at the school and there was the suggestion from parents that sharing the little aprons could be part of the problem. I provided funds for 30 children to be treated for ringworm at the local clinic and fingers crossed we can avoid this happening again. I hope to receive a photo of the children in their new uniforms in the new year, I am sure they will look very smart (and very sweet!)

Closer to home I have spent most of the year at home with my gorgeous boy Sebastian who is growing in character and cheekiness! He turned one in October and I returned to my role at Save the Children 3 days a week. As Sebastian is still little I haven't been to the school this year but I am lucky that two friends (Margaret and Becky) visited the nursery earlier in the year so I heard first-hand how things were which was a big help and great to see their photos (included overleaf). It also gave me greater insight into a couple of staff issues at the school – which I am keeping a close eye on. Overall though they found the school to be doing well and I am grateful to them both for being my eyes and ears.



As I write this newsletter the school is finishing for the Christmas holidays (school closes on the 12th) and Martha and Ghreycioum (two of the teachers) are going on a teacher training course for 5 days to gain further knowledge in child development and child stimulation. Noel is also preparing for the Christmas lunch which they are holding on Saturday 21st December.

Thank you for your continuous support and donations over the last year – at times it has been a busy year juggling family life and the school but I know how lucky Sebastian is to have the start in life he has here in the UK and that drives me to do even more for the children in Malawi. Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a great start to 2014,

Gina x



St. Anthony's Nursery School www.thenurserymalawi.co.uk
Gina Saunders, 30 Gillian Avenue, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU12 4HT
(07775)904888 gina_anne_rose@hotmail.com

Please send any donations by cheque payable to 'The Nursery School'. Thank you!

Photos from 2013

Flowers growing outside the school



A warm welcome from the local children



The new toilet block



The new outside wall



And the stars of the show.... 😊

