



Dear Friends,

Amazing Staff

As we come to the end of another school year we would like to pay tribute to the dedicated and caring staff who look after the needs of students. One of the strengths of the school is its programme of training the teachers to enable them to give the best learning experience to the hearing impaired students. This year a number of them graduated from UNIMAK, the University of Makeni, with their degrees in special education. It's often a struggle for these teachers to find the fees needed to complete their studies so a number of donors, including the Friends, were pleased to assist in this way.



Building Developments

New accommodation for boarders

With the help of donors connected to Sister Mary a new boarding facility for the more senior boys is being built. It will have 18 rooms, each with two beds, a small hall for study purposes and to relax and watch TV in the evenings, two guest facilities with two bedrooms, a kitchen, a parlour and a small store. This building is due to be handed over to Sister Amala by mid July.



New toilet block

Sister Amala has recently contacted us to ask for help with the refurbishment of the “day” toilets . These are 8 toilets for the use of the day students and boarders during school hours. Their location means they are increasingly liable to flooding and can become unusable particularly during the rainy season. They need to be rebuilt on higher ground. The price of materials such as cement and sand are rising steeply in Sierra Leone and Sister Amala estimates the cost to be around £10,000. If you would like to contribute to this very worthwhile project please go to <http://www.justgiving.com/friendsofstjosephsmakeni>

General news from the school

Boot camp!

Recently six students and two teachers travelled to Freetown to take part in the National Youth Exhibition and Boot Camp. It was a ten day programme and included taking part in a training course and competition run by Generation Unlimited who help young people learn employment skills. At the end, out of 15 schools, St Joseph’s came fourth. An amazing achievement!



Bags galore!

The tailoring department has created a new range of beaded bags for sale – just in time for the 10th Street Child Marathon at the beginning of this month.

The tailoring department has built up an amazing reputation for the quality of the goods it makes and it gives students the confidence to start their own businesses when they leave.



Keeping the lights on!

Good news in the otherwise depressing state of the rising energy prices in Sierra Leone. EKI www.fundacioneki.org is on its way to build on and improve the current solar panel system at the school. EKI, a Spanish Foundation that provides solar power to schools and hospitals, has already agreed to donate a solar system to the entire school and compound and has committed to servicing the equipment regularly. In discussions with the school it will agree an annual tariff.

The search goes on!

It's been a while since our last newsletter but much has been happening in the search for a new administrator. Unfortunately, for various reasons, the recent recruitment process for a programme director, carried out by Viatores Christi, an Irish NGO (www.vcvolunteers.ie and funded by Misesan Cara www.miseancara.ie) was unsuccessful. This was the second time in less than a year that such a procedure had been unsuccessful so before re-advertising, Viatores Christi decided to carry out a consultation both remotely and within the school to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the current organisational structure and management systems. The major recommendation from that consultation is that a finance and compliance manager be recruited. Moving forward the decision was made for this to be handled in Sierra Leone by Job Search SL Ltd with continuing input from Viatores Christi who would help to vet the shortlist and take part in the interviews. Hopefully we will have some positive news in our next newsletter.

Amazing Donors

If you have been inspired by the work of Sister Amala and all the staff at the school who work tirelessly to give the hearing impaired students a better future, please consider making a donation, however small, by following this link:

<http://www.justgiving.com/friendsofstjosephsmakeni>

Thank you so much to all of you who contribute to this amazing school. You are making a huge difference! And a big thank you to all of you who have taken the time to move your regular financial support to Just Giving, our new fundraising platform.

We are always looking for anyone to help out in fundraising for the school - as you know, we are a very small team of volunteers, so any support is always gratefully received! If you've any ideas for fundraising, from sponsored events to church collections or having a clear out and donating the profits (ebay and Vinted are great for this...) we'd love to hear from you, and can offer practical support for things like sponsorship forms or information about the school. Thanks so much!

With all good wishes for a safe and peaceful summer from Linda Freestone on behalf of Kate and Stephen Dixon and all the Trustees.

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Legislation was introduced in May 2018 strengthening the rights of individuals to protection of their personal data held by organisations. We have prepared a privacy statement, which has been published on our website (www.friendsofstjosephskids.org)