

Tyume Valley Schools News



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August in Tyume Valley

See us on YouTube!

August is winter in South Africa and this year it was exceptionally cold. Eight people from UK visited Tyume and got a taste of winter. Gillian Gape and two teachers from Settle Church of England Primary School visited their partner school Kwezana. Wendy Fox, Stephanie Gallier and Liz Hanks ran activities at Hobbiton and Nic Suggit made a flying visit to get a picture of what we do. Margaret Kiloh came out to meet the English language trainers and do an assessment of the learners' progress.

Hobbiton August Camp

Forty children arrived on Monday morning to enjoy a programme of English, maths and

outdoor activities. Children worked on producing a brochure advertising Hobbiton as an outdoor centre and having fun with numbers – Magic Squares and various shapes. The first group of children went off to do abseiling, but by lunch time the sky darkened and snow started falling.

Despite the weather – water running down the walls of our classroom and the “working wall” of posters sliding off regularly – a good time was had by all. The children really appreciated the food and the fun and games run by the Hobbiton staff in the Lions Hall.

Apiwe said, “I like the way they are teaching us. I like the delicious food.”

The children provided an amazing evening of singing and dancing and comic sketches. Their talent is extraordinary.





Narnia or Hobbiton? The children thought it was Wonderland.

When we finally agreed that we'd have to leave early because the weather was so bad the children did not want to go. The snow had turned to torrential rain and there were worries about getting back across roads and streams that had turned to rivers.

Teachers Viola Guzana and Cynthia Sijako wrote: "I enjoyed the training and wish that our teachers would be well equipped like the TVS teachers, which would uplift the children's standard of work and reduce the failure rate" and "I wish the training was done yearly and started with lower classes to get the basics of pronunciation and vocabulary building."

English Language Teaching

The pilot of the Starting English course began at a study camp at Hobbiton last year and has now been through its first phase. Twenty four children were tested at the beginning and end of the course, which was run by local teachers, who have been trained by South African consultants Viv England and Brian Walter.

The post-course testing of learners showed a marked improvement in performance. The overall average attainment increased from 40% to 59% and in all the questions apart from story telling the post course average was over 80%. The biggest improvement was in Sound Production (the ability to speak clearly and confidently) where the average score rose from under 1% to 90%! As a result the current group will progress to a Continuing English course in 2013 and a new group will begin.

IT Training

We now have a full time IT trainer in Tyume Valley, who spends the mornings teaching in the schools for which we have provided IT labs, and the afternoon teaching adults in our own resource centre in Dyamala. Since January she has worked with six schools, with over seventy pupils, and we have paid a second trainer to work in two further schools. Eighteen adults have attended the afternoon community class. We have been able to accredit these classes through the South African technical training agency and five students will take the necessary tests in November.

We have also recently found a technician who has been repairing and upgrading the computers in our schools, but many of the machines are close to the end of their useful life and a key priority for 2013 is to use our new IT grant to purchase new lap-tops, at least for our own resource centre. Our trainer Vuvu is enthusiastic and the children are keen to learn, so the lessons are helping to introduce the youngsters to IT and assisting with their English and Maths. TVS is currently paying for Vuvu to learn to drive so that she can more easily get to and from the local schools.



Stephanie with a group of children at Mabandla Primary School

School partnerships

There are two longstanding partnerships which have been facilitated by TVS.

The Head of Ntulikazi says: "They are lifting us to be in a higher level. This partnership is giving us skills in how to teach English, how to cope



Vuvu with Winnie, with whom we stayed in Dyamala.

with the learners. You take them to Hobbiton and do mountain climbing and do story telling. Learners are learning to be fluent. (The children are learning that) white people are just people who can do things for other people. In the past white people were scared and we were scared to communicate with them. This partnership is enabling us to work together. ”

The partnership between Kwezana School and Settle has been going on for several years. Sarah Entwistle writes about her experience this year.

“The school was very welcoming and I was also able to explore some of Kwezana village with a group of children so that they could tell our children about how they lived. Kwezana Primary has three classes of roughly twenty children. I mostly worked with the older children, whose lessons involved a lot of listening and repeating. I wanted to try and encourage the children to participate in their lessons more by asking questions about what they were learning and experiencing some practical activities. We had a lot of fun using post-its to find square corners in the classroom, discovering where our two countries were on maps and blow-up globes and making colourful pom-poms which were

supposed to brighten up the classroom but ended up sewn into hats, fastened in the girls’ hair, tied onto wrists and in one case as a colourful patch for a hole in a boy’s trousers. We also managed to set up a blog so that children from both schools can communicate with each other.

It is a huge change from our primary school with all its resources and technology. I couldn’t even use the chalk boards in the classrooms as they were too pitted and old, but the children made up for the lack of resources with their willingness to learn and , after a bit of encouragement, enthusiasm in asking questions and trying out new ways of learning.

At the end of the visit I mentioned one boy, who had really impressed me with how keen he had been, to the school Principal. Imagine my surprise when the next minute she had me on the phone to his mother and then his father trying to explain who I was and what a good student their son was. I hope he got out of some of his chores that evening.

I would love to visit Kwezana again to try out all the activities I didn’t have time for and to take a large tin of blackboard paint. Although I am not sure I will ever get the taste for samp and beans! “

Her colleague Richard, a computer technician, was a very useful member of the team and was able to service the school computers and set up a blog.



Gillian, Sarah and Richard relax at “Away with the Fairies”, the Backpackers hostel in Hogsback.

Fund Raising Activities

Dial-a-Flight's charitable arm, Make My Day Better, is supporting our IT provision over three years with a total grant of £27.2K and the Mark Torkington Trust has donated £4.5K for a music project.

Pinmar, a Mallorca based marine company, makes a regular donation from its charitable golf tournament.

Five runners, mainly from the Portsmouth area, will have run in the Great South Run this October. It's a great atmosphere and raised us nearly £1K last year.

The Hogs Back for Hogsback Walk took place in April and we managed to dodge the showers.

Recently sixteen, mainly middle aged, men recaptured their youth in a fun sports day in Crawley, competing in badminton, five –a-side football, handball, volleyball and bowls; great fun and they raised over £400 for TVS.

On a less energetic note, tea and home made cakes were consumed in Sutton in aid of Tyume Valley Schools.

We also raised nearly £5K through the Big Give Christmas challenge. If you plan to make a donation this Christmas, please ask a committee member to do this for you. That would be a huge help towards meeting our ambitious target of £8K worth of donations in December 2012.

The Big Give deducts costs of 4% from donations, so in future we will be using MyDonate, a BT enterprise which absorbs the administrative costs, for donations other than through the Christmas challenge. This change will be made on the TVS web-site in the near future. Thank you for all your generous support over the past year.

Please consider buying TVS Christmas cards this year. The following are available:



Proteas (photo) – plain or Season's Greetings
£3 for 6 cards

Selection of Thames black and white drawings –
plain - £2.50 for 10 cards

Boathouse on the Thames black and white
drawing – Season's Greetings - £2.50 for 10 cards



Robin (painting) – Season's Greetings
£3 for 10 cards

Snowy garden (painting – Season's Greetings
£3 for 10 cards

Post and packing extra. Please contact
susancrichards@yahoo.co.uk for details.

Thank you to Carshalton High School for Girls for printing this edition of Tyume Valley Schools Newsletter.