



Dear Friends

You may recall from our last newsletter that two of our trustees were visiting the school in February to see how the ebola crisis has affected it and to update all our supporters on the projects we have funded in the past. Here is their report:

The school is up and running again after the problems caused by Ebola. None of the staff or children appears to have contracted the disease although at the beginning of term there are always some children or staff who don't return for unknown reasons. However most families have been affected and we heard a number of accounts where several extended family members have died. One young girl from the school was with her father, an ambulance driver, when he became unwell. Because of the instructions she had been given at the school she managed to keep everyone away from him. He later died and she may well have saved her family from getting the virus.

We inspected all the projects we have funded:



At the **farm** we saw all the new planting such as pineapples, oranges, yams, mangoes and papayas. The eggs are now being supplied to two supermarkets in Makeni every day. Another



NGO was so impressed with the chicken project that the organisation paid for the capacity to be doubled so there is another hen house.



The new **classrooms** we helped to fund are used every day.



The **out of hours resource centre** is also well used both during the day and during the evenings and weekends.



The **medical room** is up and running and is a valuable resource to look after the health of the children. The school nurse Kadiatu proudly showed us round.

Sister Mary's assistant Mercy has now come to the end of her contract. Sister has a new assistant called Hannah who is being funded by another NGO to work primarily at the university UNIMAK but is helping with work at the school. She is a Sierra Leonean and is very competent and efficient.

The **containers** have been converted on the site. One is being used as a canteen and is very successful. It is busy with breakfasts and lunches. Four of the oldest girls run it themselves and buy in all the ingredients from the market. Sister Antoinette keeps a check on them but they seem to manage very well on their own. The other container is used as a shop for the tailors who make a selection of clothes and bags. While we were staying there we met someone from Trocaire, an Irish NGO, who has been impressed by this project and hopes to build on it to increase the business skills of the carpenters, tailors, farmers and caterers, helping them to move into independence.



We had long discussions with Sister Mary about the next projects we should be funding. There are a number of areas in the school that need refurbishment and or/redevelopment. This includes new washing facilities and latrines. We are currently arranging to have plans drawn up and costed and once those are complete we are hoping to support the first phase of this project. Donations to support the school and Sister Mary's work can be made through the Virgin Money Giving page: [www.virginmoneygiving.com\charities\FriendsofStJosephs](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/FriendsofStJosephs)

If any of you would like to contribute an article that we can publish in a future edition of this newsletter we would love to hear from you. Please email us on forthehearingimpaired@gmail.com We try and publish a newsletter every six to eight weeks but without any paid staff that intention doesn't always translate into reality! In between issues you can follow us on Facebook: (<http://www.facebook.com/stjoskids>) and Twitter: (www.twitter.com/Frnds_StJosKids) for all the up to date news.

All good wishes from Linda Freestone (Chair) and all the trustees

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