



Turning Leaves Uganda

Newsletter 21, May 2022

Dear friends and family,

Greetings from Mbale! I trust you are all well, and enjoyed the Easter break. Here, the rains have come and everywhere you look there is an abundance of greenery. Farmers are busy planting in their gardens and we are hoping and trusting for a successful harvest in a few months' time. As I realise is the case in the UK (and other parts of the world), living costs are shooting up (possibly due in part to the significant increase in the price of fuel and, therefore, the transportation of goods). Many people are struggling with this and it is often very difficult to know how best to help. However, as schools have now been open since the middle of January, there is plenty of work to do in the nursery schools we are committed to working with.

The second term in the school year has just opened, and we are preparing to begin working in the classrooms. Thanks to your support, we were able to hold a very successful week-long workshop with four nurseries/childcare centres last week. Thank you so much to all who contributed and made this possible. As well as continuing to work with Musoto Christian School (a community school), Overcomers Special Needs School and Loved Children's Centre (a centre for vulnerable children aged 3 years and below), we are now also working with our first government school: Nabuyonga Primary School. Until very recently, all nursery schools were privately owned (or run by NGOs), and there was no requirement for children to receive a nursery education before entering primary school. However, the government is beginning to attach nursery schools to their primary schools, and Nabuyonga Primary School has just opened a nursery school. Government schools are part of a UPE (Universal Primary Education) programme which aims to offer free education to all children in Uganda. However, often these schools are not completely free, and the parents are required to buy certain requirements (such as uniforms, stationary and even toilet paper!). We are privileged to have a government school decide to use our programmes (agreeing that they comply with the national requirements for early years education) and we are looking forward to working with them.

In our workshop last week, we provided some background knowledge that has informed how our nursery programmes have been put together, as well as guidance on how to use them. We had the following sessions: Child Development, Play, Phonics, Learning Differences, Creating an Interactive Classroom and Numbers. Out of these sessions, we had some very interesting discussions, and received positive feedback from the teachers on the knowledge they received. Musoto Christian School kindly hosted the workshop and (as our first 'seed school') were able to provide testimonies on how using the Turning Leaves Programmes has helped the children in their nursery school. At the end of the week, Teacher Annet (Baby Class, Musoto Christian School) organised her classroom as she would for a morning's lesson and activities, and explained how she runs her classroom and manages the learning of the children in her class via a whole class lesson, teacher-guided activity and free play activities. This was very helpful.

Because we have now taken on an extra school, we require some funding to print the programmes and buy the necessary resources for their implementation. If you are interested in contributing towards resourcing any of our four schools/centres, we would be most grateful. Please contact myself or Dad for more information!

This week, we are working on selecting children for our education outreach programme in Namabasa (close to where the school land is). We hope to finalise this by the end of the week, although the process is a little challenging as the parents of the children tend to be farming in the morning, and it rains heavily in the afternoon most days! An update will follow in the next newsletter.

Dad is preparing to visit Mbale, and is travelling on Saturday. I am very much looking forward to seeing him.

With love and best wishes,

Emma