



May Visit **by Peter & Jean Hills**

On arrival in Kenya we lost no time in heading out to the school, full of the anticipation of finding building work on the new permanent school progressing well and, hopefully, with at least one classroom ready for painting. We were both shocked and very disappointed to find a chaotic building site and the building at a more incomplete stage of construction than we had ever imagined.

More encouragingly, the original wood and corrugated steel school buildings were in good order – clean and tidy and looking positively luxurious when compared with the concrete mess next door.

The days following were filled with activity, with paint to be priced, the building site to be inspected and the head teacher Grace, together with Sue and Georgie, doing the critical house checks for the new school intake.

The proposed appointment of a head teacher was discussed with Grace, who seemed happy with the idea - possibly a little relieved too!

Peter, Georgie, Roy and Felister spent a morning checking the expenditure accounts in Kenya and agreeing totals, while Jean compiled job descriptions for Grace, to cover both the time before and after the appointment of a new head teacher. When the new head teacher is appointed Grace will become a teacher and the Home-School Coordinator, recognising both her teaching role and her intimate knowledge of the folk in the school community, which helps us locate those children most in need of our help.

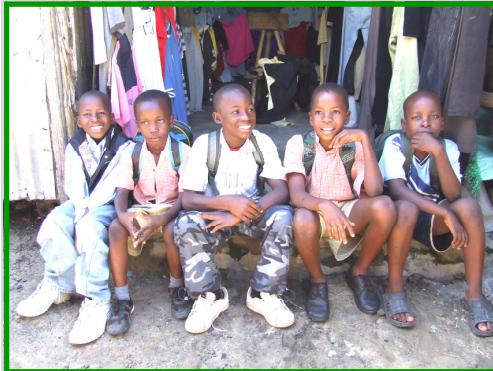
The children and teachers returned to school, after their holiday, at the start of our second week. The performance of Justin, the new teacher appointed the previous November, was assessed and it was considered that he was proving to be a worthy addition to the school. Another potential new teacher arrived – George – and, as there wasn't a classroom ready for him yet, he shared the top class with Justin. George was formally interviewed by Georgie and Jean and deemed to be very impressive. George was, therefore, appointed with a six-month probationary period.

Photographs were taken of the fresh school entrants, proudly wearing their new school uniforms in front of the CHinK school gates. The school doctor was visited in his office to discuss sex education, which may be appropriate for the older children. Arrangements were made to include meat in the children's diet on at least one day a week and Alan and Sue started painting one dry exterior wall of the new school. Jean gave advice, and a demonstration lesson, in an attempt to provide the teachers in the baby class with ideas for a more appropriate curriculum. To help the teachers turn these ideas into action, small plastic tables and stools were provided for the youngest children by Jean and Peter. Peter made two easels and some small chalkboards, Jean, Sue and Alan sanded and painted them. Peter also prepared new permanent contracts of employment for the staff. All of this is a mere sample of the activities which occupied us every day. Small wonder that most days we returned to the hotel filthy, exhausted and usually too late for a swim!

The on-going saga of the problems with the new build occupied our thoughts during all of these activities. Jackson's priority seemed to be asking for more and more money whilst ignoring his promises and deadlines, whereas our priority is to complete the construction as quickly as possible. For Georgie, Roy, and Felister, who have to deal directly with Jackson, it is a frustrating business. Despite this we did see some progress. The windows were fitted and a classroom previously seen with piles of building materials and lumps of concrete all over was, almost miraculously, cleared to leave a floor prepared for the laying of tiles. Tiles? What tiles? We were still awaiting their delivery on the day we flew home! Everything in Kenya takes so much more time and effort than it does at home. However, we have made progress and the new school will be built, enabling even more children to be helped in the future. We have the opportunity to make a huge improvement in the life chances of the children in CHinK school. A big thank you to everyone who gives of their time, their money and their contributions to our sales and fundraising activities. The work cannot progress without your support.

Thank You





November Visit

November visits tend to be very hectic here in Kenya. We arrived on a Saturday morning, November 13th, after a long and tiring flight. We rested for the remainder of the day and, on Sunday, did the planning for the next 2 weeks. It started on Monday morning at the school. What a joy to behold when we arrived, 3 finished classrooms, all nicely painted and clean, and fitted with new cupboards supplied by our friends from **Books and Bread**. Most of the day was taken up with measuring all of the children for their new school uniforms. This had to be done posthaste as we wanted them to be made and ready for the following Tuesday.

On each visit, very needy children who would like to go to school are sought out. Georgie, Chris, Grace, Beccy and Tracy carried out the house visits, checking how the children live, who they live with and the conditions in which they live. 5 deserving children were found and entered onto our candidate listing, ready to be assigned to prospective new sponsors.

Some sponsors provide extra money for their child, either on a birthday or at Christmas. This was another task, taking the children into Mtwapa market for new clothes and shoes. It was done in 4 groups of 20 children each and took 2 days to complete, 10 in an MPV and 10 walking on each trip. They changed over after shopping so that everybody had a ride in the car. Afterwards, it was so hot that all of the children and staff enjoyed a bottle of fizzy drink.

Whilst in Mtwapa, a visit was made to the Clinic to pay the doctor for all of the children's medical fees from our last visit. This took much longer than planned, discussing the children's welfare and adding the new sponsored children to his list. Juma and Charles had to have x-rays after a collision in a football match, Juma had broken a bone in his elbow.

At the end of the year we have a prize-giving day, when all of the parents come to the school and delight in the awards that the pupils have achieved over the year. We also had singing and traditional

dancing performed by all of the children. A most wonderful day was had by all. Afterwards, 64 mattresses were handed out, which means that now all CHink children have something to sleep on, instead of just the mud floor.

For the annual end of term outing it was arranged that the nursery and primary classes go to Haller Park to see some orphaned animals. Afterwards, soft drinks and biscuits were enjoyed before the return to school. Earlier in the week arrangements had been made for a football tournament between 4 charity schools, organised by a dear friend, Maureen Recine. In the first match CHink won 1-0, because it was so hot, and we went straight into the final. The CHink team were playing in bare-feet and, as the ground was so hot, the girls took off their socks for the boys to wear, so as to stop the sand from burning their feet. CHink won by 2-0, a great success, and the trophy was awarded by Charles, the Bamburi Beach Hotel manager, who also awarded prizes to all of the goal scorers.

As we have enough classrooms at the moment, the next project before the school is complete will be the toilet block. This will consist of 4 staff/visitor toilets, 3 toilets and a urinal for the boys and 4 toilets for the girls. The plans for the toilet block were drafted by Roy and the Kenyan builders were quite impressed! After obtaining some quotes, and holding a lot of meetings, we finally settled on a reasonable price. Work has already started and will be completed by the end of January 2011. The staff toilets will be Western-style flush toilets and pedestal washbasins. The children's arrangement will be Asian-style, a hole in the floor, they don't know how to use a Western-style flush toilet so this will be more practical for them.

Beccy and Tracy were newcomers to Kenya and would like to become more involved with CHink charity, you can read about their experiences, the tears and the emotions that they encountered with the poor and needy children at CHink school on our website at www.chink.org.uk

Telephone 01777 871320 or 01777 870583

E-mail chink101@btinternet.com or visit www.chink.org.uk or write to us
CHink, 4 Newcastle Street, Tuxford, NEWARK, Nottinghamshire, NG22 0LT