



**COGS**  
UNITED IN CARE & LEARNING

## Summer Newsletter 2019

Here at COGS HQ, we are wondering where this year is going..... It seems incredible that we are already halfway through, Wimbledon is over, the UK School Summer holidays are already upon us and August is just around the corner! Although our gardens aren't necessarily appreciating it, everyone at COGS is enjoying this glorious sunshine and that includes the Children of the village of Jabang. Rainy season is just around the corner for them but temperatures are currently mid 30's and as you can see, it's always ice cream weather!



This young man and his friends are really enjoying their ice cream treat!



Over the last few months there has been a lot happening at the school. COGS staff, together with two teachers from Jabang Lower Basic School attended a one day First Aid training. The training was delivered by Lainey on behalf of First Aid for Gambia. The team learnt many new skills including CPR, the recovery position, how to manage bleeding, burns, breaks and sprains. Having basic lifesaving/first aid skills is so important as none of us know when a medical emergency may take place. This training is only possible due to the donations and support from you.

When asked about the day, Raymond Jabang, Teacher said, "I learnt a lot today and I am appreciative to everyone in the UK for their help and support. Thank you."





*This* is a picture of a typical Gambian Taxi used by the locals in the Gambia. Often you will see them full with lots of people not necessarily knowing each other but all typically travelling in a same direction, sometime you will even see animals being transported! But as you can see that was not the case during our recent trip. One of the highlights was that we were very fortunate to be able to deliver urgent supplies and your kind donations to much needed communities and villages. As you can see, all spare space was used! It is always a highlight of any trip, to be able to distribute your amazing donations to families within different communities and to see and hear the appreciation shown by each single person. Can you spot a smiling face receiving your donation?



*SIMON* and his team together with a representation of children from each class were invited to attend the Independence Day celebrations in March. The children were very excited to attend as it meant they were travelling up country in a minibus which is a real treat as many of the children never get to see other parts of Gambia until they are older. Upon arrival the cooks began to prepare and cook the lunch whilst the children enjoyed singing and participating in



the marchpast. The COGS banner was carried with pride and Simon said, "Everyone had a lovely time and it was a good experience for the children.... 'I'm proud COGS Nursery attended as it's an important part of our history and heritage.' Thanks to all sponsors and supporters of COGS"



**Whilst** in Gambia, Pa and I had the great opportunity of joining in the community Independence celebrations when we visited each compound (house) to celebrate with the children's families. The children were dressed in their traditional costumes and for their lunch, they had the typical food from their tribe. A great tradition for the girls is to have sweets tied in their hair braids as well as having sashes made of biscuits - which you can see in this picture. I have to say they were very restrained and didn't eat any of the sweets or biscuits until lunchtime. I tried on numerous occasions to persuade them otherwise, but they were having none of it!

**It's** always such a delight to join the classes and sit with the children during the school morning. I was able to join in the fun and frolics of singing action rhymes with Nursery 1, who thought it was very funny that I knew the words to 'Peter Hammer'. But instead of singing about Peter, we were singing the Gambian version - 'Lamin Hammers'



I also played 'mummies and daddies'...This took me back to when I was doing my degree and my dissertation. At the time, my research focussed on 'is Imaginative Play beneficial in the Nursery Classroom.' I wrote 15,000 words on this, when in fact I could have answered it in just one word.... **YES**. Even 20 years later, I would still say the answer is yes!

On my next visit to the nursery in December, I will have the pleasure of training not only COGS staff, but staff from other local Nursery and Lower Basic schools on Classroom Management & Differentiation and Safeguarding. This will also incorporate 'Makaton' which for anyone who doesn't know is a worldwide recognised communication tool which enables individuals to communicate who may otherwise struggle for a range of reasons.

This will allow our parents, pupils and teachers to effectively communicate with each other no matter what life challenges they face.

## How else you can help...

There are many ways to support COGS. Registering with easy fundraising is one way.



All you need to do is to register with [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk) and select COGS as your chosen charity. Each time you want to

make a purchase from a retailer, and there are over 3,600 to choose from, and each will give COGS a % of your total purchase. There is NO additional cost to you for using this facility, but the benefits to COGS are significant. Retailers include Amazon, John Lewis, Boots, Argos, eBay, and Gap to name just a few.

Every term we make sure the children have resources that we take for granted every day. These include pens, pencils, paper, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap & face flannel



Have you considered adding one of the above items to your next week's shop and donating to COGS? This enables us to keep the children's hygiene bags replenished when needed and together with restocking their pencil cases.

Remember!! All donations and money raised go direct to COGS. This allows us to continually sustain the project and keep 87 children on our register and employ 10 staff.

Don't forget you can keep up to date with regular updates by visiting, COGS website, Facebook Page, Twitter and Instagram. Why not invite your friends, family and neighbours to follow COGS on Social Media... We love sharing our stories and keeping our sponsors and supporters up to date with all the developments at COGS Nursery school and the community of Jabang.

Love **Nina** x

