

NEWSLETTER 2023



COGS
UNITED IN CARE & LEARNING

I would like to begin this newsletter with an apology for the lateness of it being completed and circulated to you all. Some of you will know, and others will not, that sadly my Mum, Sarah passed away recently. Not only was she Mum, but she was also a very keen supporter of COGS. She has been there from the onset, helping at fundraising events, as well as being a keen and avid supporter of all that COGS do and stand for. I'm sure you can appreciate; it has been a difficult time for myself and my family, which unfortunately led to the delay on the production of this newsletter.

Now, where has 2023 gone? It seems like only yesterday that I was writing with an update on the School Year 2022. I am pleased to report it has been another busy year for the School Calendar and a big "thank you" goes out to all of our staff in Jabang, who make this happen. Earlier in the Year, we saw the Children and Staff attend with other local Nursery Schools, Independence Day Celebrations. Independence Day is a very big celebration in the Gambia and the Children marched as a School and participated in a number of activities throughout the day.



The Children were also fortunate enough to have their own celebration back at School, where they paraded around the local village and compound in their traditional dress and at the end of their parade, they went back to School and enjoyed their 'tribal traditional food' which had been prepared by the children's family.

As we know, Technology is important in this day and age, so much so, we can't really live without it. So, as a Charity, we were keen to equip our Children with the opportunity to gain experience and develop their own computer skills. And with your generous support and ongoing donations, earlier in the year, we were able to purchase three computers for the school, one for each of our classrooms. This wouldn't have been possible without you, so thank you!



We are very fortunate to have Raymond who teaches in Nursery 2, he is also trained in computer studies, development, and software, therefore he and Simon have taken responsibility for teaching the Children across School. The feedback so far is, the Children are all very excited with the addition to their classrooms and are looking forward to starting their lessons again when School returns in January.

Unfortunately, due to a range of circumstances, we have a number of Trustees who have reluctantly made the hard decision to step down from their Trustee roles at the next COGS AGM in 2024.



Therefore, COGS are looking for new Trustees to enable us to continue the work we do. If you are interested in finding out more about this role and how you can help and become a Trustee, please contact admin@cogsgambia.org

As you know, we have a resolute team of Staff, who manage and ensure the day to day running of the Nursery continues. Simon, our Headteacher, not only leads the team but is also responsible for the day-to-day teaching of the Children in Nursery 3.

These Children are the ones who graduate every summer, to a range of Lower Basic Schools within the area. Simon supported by his team, have prepared the Children, enabling them to complete their end of year tests. The Education System in The Gambia is quite different to here in the UK. For example, if a pupil does not achieve what is expected at the end of

their time in a relevant year group, they are required to repeat that year. Once they have done this, they then progress onto the next class or educational setting.



In July 2023, we held our Graduation Ceremony for the 17 Children who passed their tests and graduated to the Lower Basic schools. The Children, Staff, Parents, and Community were all invited and enjoyed the Graduation celebration as the Children entertained everyone.



Simon was the Master of Ceremony, supported by Members of Jabang Community and our Cook prepared snacks and drinks for the Children and for all who attended. Graduation is the highlight of the School year and shows how hard the Staff and Children have worked and their achievements during this time.

As one group of Children leave, the next group of Children start at COGS Nursery. This year was no exception, with 20 Children being registered in Nursery 1 and a total of 53 Children attending the nursery school.

Thank you for your continued support and Best Wishes from the Board of Trustees, COGS Staff, Pupils and Jabang Community for a Happy and Safe 2024 Happy New Year.