

Holy Trinity Church – 7th February 2016

Zac

One of the things that makes a Wonderful World is when people help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

In 2013 one of the Cookham Rise teaching staff went on a trip to Uganda, volunteering with a charity called Empower a Child. During Mrs Peters's stay she visited a school for impoverished children in the heart of Kampala.

Ella-Grace

The school was called New Brainstorm and was run by an inspirational headmaster called Nikolas John Kintu - or Mr Nikolas as we like to call him.

He had started the school by teaching 8 orphaned children in his spare time. Their mothers had died from AIDS, they were alone and no financial support or hope of ever receiving an education.

Zac

Word got around Kampala that there was a man who was teaching children for free. Slowly but surely more children arrived at Mr Kintu's door and soon he had to look for a place to teach them.

Ella-Grace

One of his pupils had an uncle who owned a piece of land which he offered to lend to Mr Kintu. The land had some ram shackled huts and a small stone building that could provide spaces for classrooms. Over the coming years, more and more children arrived and there are now around 90 orphans or impoverished children at the school.

Zac

Mr Kintu knew that if he charged fees the majority of the children would not be able to come to school. So he asked parents to pay what they could or nothing at all and he spent time selling vegetables from his garden to earn money to keep the school running.

Ella-Grace

He found a few other teachers who were willing to teach for free or in their spare time to help him. Unfortunately, they do not stay for very long as they leave to get paid jobs. So the school continues to service the poor in its community but it is incredibly challenging to keep it going. Mr Kintu's dream is to create a school that will educate children for generations to come and one that might attract sponsors to ensure that the children can get the education they deserve.

Zac

When Mrs Peters returned to school she set up a pen pal scheme between the pupils at Cookham Rise and those at New Brainstorm. We began to write to each other to learn about each other's cultures and lives. We started to make real friends as they are not so different from us. They love football and playing and singing... Just like us!

Ella-Grace

One day Mrs Peters received an email from Mr. Kintu. He was very sad because the local authorities had inspected the school and said that the buildings and sanitation were not safe for children and that he would have to rebuild the school or close it. He did not know what to do.

When Mrs Peters told us what had happened we were really upset. But we had a thought...

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Could we do something to help our friends and save their school? We decided to start a charity initiative to raise money to build a new New Brainstorm.

Zac

As a child I can only imagine what it would have been like to NOT have a school to go to everyday! NO teachers, NO classrooms, NO books and NO opportunity to learn. I take this privilege for granted everyday.

Ella-Grace

It's only if you put yourself in the shoes of Justine, my pen pal at Brainstorm, that her situation becomes real. Saving this school could change Justine and her friends' lives forever.

We have the power to make a real difference, and if enough people get involved and if enough people care, we could quite possibly change their destiny. I would want someone to care about me if I were in their situation.

Zac

So far Cookham Rise children, alone, have raised \$9,600 - enough money to buy land - 2 acres - or 2 arches as Mr Nicholas likes to call them (SMILE)

Ella-Grace

We have held sponsored silences - which our parents have loved (SMILE). Grandparents have baked numerous amounts of cakes for the children to sell, and unbelievably, we managed to sell them and not eat them! (SMILE)

Zac

Year 6 organised a Mini-Market raising a staggering 550 by selling on their old PlayStation games, DVD's, CDs, books etc. Key Stage 1 ran a sweetie stall. We have set up various stalls at the school fetes - which not only have the parents/careers donated so generously to but our wonderful governors have so kindly matched our funds when possible.

Ella-Grace

We really are committed to saving our friends' school and are constantly thinking up new fundraising ideas. We now have Empower a Child, a registered UK charity supporting us so that we can maximise our fundraising through gift aid. It would be wonderful if the whole of Cookham could help us to achieve our goal and...

Zac & Ella-Grace

SAVE NEW BRAINSTORM SCHOOL!

Thank you for listening... (BIG SMILE)

