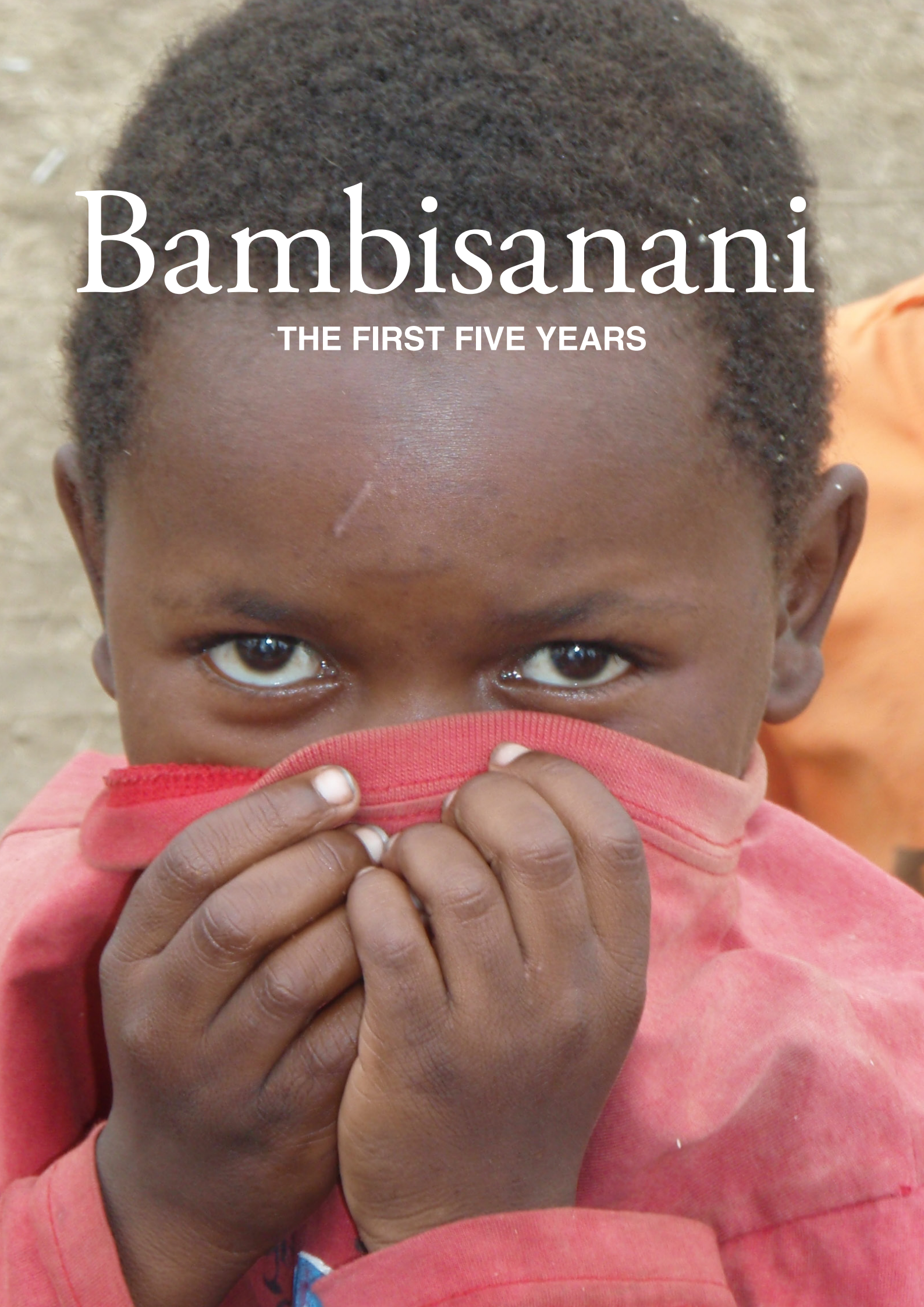


Bambisanani

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS



BAMBISANANI: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

David Geldart

This book is dedicated to all those who have contributed in any way to the Bambisanani Partnership. Large or small, all contributions have been important and accumulative; they have made a significant difference and are responsible for the amazing Bambisanani story to date.

BAMBISANANI: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

CONTENTS

Foreword: Baroness Sue Campbell CBE

Introduction

School Contexts

Vision: Daring to Dream

Background and Development: A Chronology of the first Five Years

Making a Difference: School Impact

Student Perspectives

Future Development

One Final Thought

BAMBISANANI: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

FOREWORD



Foreword

Bambisanani - Working Hand in Hand

St. Mary's School and Mnyakanya School have established and sustained a partnership that is a credit to the teachers, students and communities of both schools and is an exemplar of just what can be achieved if the belief, passion and desire in the value of PE and sport for young people is strong enough to drive development and overcome the challenges that building a relationship across two continents presents.

St. Mary's School: The Bambisanani Partnership is part of what we are as a school now. It reflects our values and constantly reminds us of the true purpose of education. It is a powerful force that has the potential to make us think and act differently.

This book narrates the story of an extraordinary journey – a terrific adventure that began through the vision of David Geldart of St. Mary's School and Lucas Dube of Mnyakanya School of what the benefits of an international school partnership could be - and has continued as new people and new projects have come on board. Everyone involved must be congratulated in reaching this five year milestone.

Mnyakanya School: The Bambisanani Partnership is an integral part of Mnyakanya School. There is a saying in Zulu culture: 'Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu' – meaning, 'we are what we are because of others'.

The book showcases just how schools can bring the Global Dimension alive for all students. At a time when all schools are being encouraged to open the minds of their students to the world around them, this book is full of ideas for schools new to international development to plan the beginning of their journey as part of an 'international school partnership'.

"My world has just got bigger. I have realised that it is my duty to be a global citizen." Libby Aspden, Sixth Form Student

The stories are inspiring and emotional but at the same time make you smile because of the difference being made to the hopes and dreams of so many young people across the world.

Maria Zakwe, grandmother of a Mnyakanya student sponsored by St. Mary's: "My life has been about hardship and struggle. I cannot thank

St. Mary's School enough for the opportunity it is giving my granddaughter, who now has a chance in life."

Thank you for sharing this journey and raising our awareness of just what is possible when two schools are so highly motivated and committed to exploring all avenues to provide simply the best educational experience for their young people.

Baroness Sue Campbell CBE
Chair, Youth Sport Trust

Introduction

The Bambisanani Partnership is a unique collaboration developed by St. Mary's Catholic High School, Menston in the UK, and Mnyakanya High School in Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa.

Bambisanani is the Zulu word for “working hand in hand” and aptly encapsulates the partnership between the two schools.

The initiative, which began in 2006, has gained both national and international acclaim.

With the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and the 2012 Olympic Games in London, the Bambisanani Partnership has used sport as a major catalyst to develop international understanding, education, health and leadership.

This book, a case study, charts the first five years of an incredible journey of two remarkable schools.

David Geldart

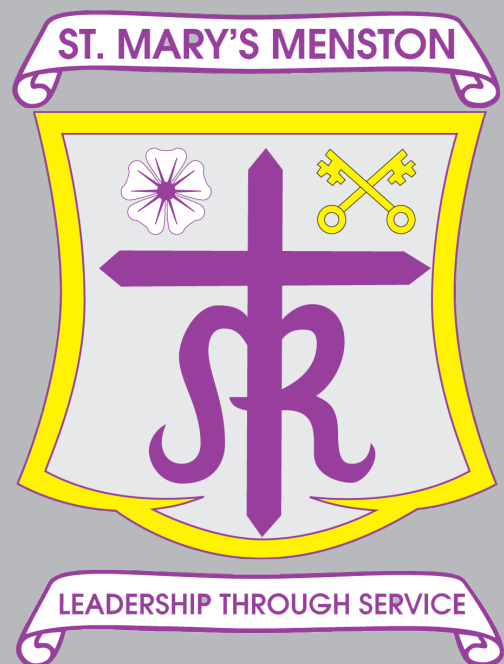
November 2011

INTRODUCTION AND SCHOOL CONTEXTS

Mnyakanya
High School



st.Mary's
Menston



School Contexts

St. Mary's, Menston is a high achieving Catholic High School serving NW Leeds and NE Bradford. St. Mary's was designated as a Sports College in 2000 and leads a School Sport Partnership of 54 schools. Despite a wide and diverse catchment area, the school has an outstanding academic and sporting reputation. St. Mary's has 1200 students with a thriving Sixth Form.

Mnyakanya High School is situated in the rural and remote Nkandla region of Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa. The school, in the heart of traditional Zululand, was opened by Nelson Mandela in 2004 and is located in one of the most deprived areas of South Africa with one in three adults infected by HIV/AIDS, 90% unemployment and an adult illiteracy rate greater than 60%. The school serves a vast area and many students walk two hours to and from school each day. The area has many AIDS orphans. Class sizes are in excess of 60 and the school has very limited resources. Mnyakanya has over 850 students.

**VISION:
DARING TO DREAM**



Vision: Daring to Dream

To develop an equitable, sustainable and effective partnership that allows our two schools to work together and learn together for the mutual benefit of both communities and beyond.

BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT: A CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIRST FIVE YEARS



Background and Development: A chronology of the first five years

October 2006: First Steps

The Bambisanani Partnership developed as a result of the British Council/Youth Sport Trust 'Dreams and Teams' initiative. In October 2006, David Geldart, Assistant Headteacher at St. Mary's visited South Africa as part of a Youth Sport Trust/British Council delegation to advise on the School Sport Mass Participation Programme which aimed to promote sport in South Africa's eighteen most deprived areas. He visited Mnyakanya School which is situated in one of the eighteen areas, and stayed in a 'converted' classroom with the Principal, Mr Lucas Dube. He was the first European to visit the school and was welcomed unreservedly by both the school and wider community. The opportunity arose to meet with key decision makers in the community including the Zulu Chief, the Mayor, Municipality Officials, School Governors and representatives from the Department of Education and the Department of Sport and Recreation. David is in no doubt about the importance of these meetings:

"Friendship and trust are paramount in Zulu culture. The meetings helped establish this and much more. Without question a bond was created which has driven our joint work. My starting point was not to say what I thought but to ask questions, listen and learn. What emerged from these meetings were the key issues which ultimately informed our joint aims and objectives. Lucas played a most significant role in making all this happen."

Whilst at the school, David provided training to the newly appointed School Sport Assistants from the area and taught students from Mnyakanya.

"The desire of students to learn is palpable; students in the UK have much to learn from Mnyakanya students who demonstrate quite unbelievable aspiration, motivation and commitment. One night, I saw a light on in a classroom and went over to investigate. I found two students in the room studying for the forthcoming matriculation exam. It transpired that the female student had walked two hours to school that day for a 7.30am start. At 2.30pm, the end of the school day, she walked home to make a family

meal before returning to school to revise. She came back into school because her friend had a text book and there was an electric light. The students were studying science and informed me that they would work through the book probably finishing about midnight. The girl then had the two hour walk home over rough tracks in the dark. The student would walk eight hours that day because she wants to be a nurse. She was in school next morning for the 7.30am start.”

It was evident to David just how much children in the local community loved sport, particularly football.

“My first experience of this was watching a group of twenty barefoot boys playing a ‘match’ on rough ground shared with cattle just opposite the school. What was remarkable was that they did not have a ball as such; instead they played with plastic bags wrapped together. Despite the poverty and deprivation, the children are so positive; every day I was greeted by the most amazing smiles. The total experience had a profound effect on me. There was no going back from this stage; it was evident then that we all had so much to learn from working together. As a Physical Educator I was drawn to two quotes from Nelson Mandela that would serve to inspire our partnership.”

“Sport has the power to unite people in a way that little else can. Sport can create hope where there was once only despair. It breaks down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all kinds of discrimination. Sport speaks to people in a language they can understand.”

Nelson Mandela

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

David returned to Leeds determined to develop the partnership and to embed it as a major aspect of St. Mary’s international work. The starting point was to ‘tell the story’ of the visit to students, teachers, support staff, parents and governors in an attempt to involve the whole school community.

“The initial reaction was ‘what can we do to help?’ This was important as clearly people recognised the vast material inequalities that exist between our two communities. Whilst the ‘what can we do?’ response is important, I tempered this with the question ‘what can we learn?’ .”

November 2006: Mnyakanya Principal visits Leeds

The British Council and Youth Sport Trust made it possible for Mr Lucas Dube, Principal of Mnyakanya School, to visit St. Mary’s. Following strategic meetings with the British Council and the Youth Sport Trust, he visited a number of schools in the St. Mary’s School Sport Partnership experiencing a wide range of classes, showing a particular interest in teaching methods and student leadership. His warmth and charm captured the hearts of the St. Mary’s community. Mutual trust and respect gave rise to a shared vision for the collaboration.

Speaking at a special school assembly in his honour, Lucas made it clear to the St. Mary’s community how important the partnership could be.

“This partnership offers the greatest hope to my community of improving the education of young people. It has the capacity to raise both aspirations and awareness. I challenge both school communities to still be working together in one hundred years time. If we achieve this, we will make such a difference to so many people’s lives.”

Lucas returned home to share his experiences and to plan for future partnership work.

December 2006: Aiming High Together

By this time the two schools were working hard on partnership ideas. As a result of extensive consultation, the following aims and objectives were agreed that would enhance learning in both schools:

Aims:

- To develop empathy, trust and respect for others through collaborative activities, celebrating cultural variety and richness

- To use sport to promote education, health, global understanding and leadership
- To embed the concept of Global Citizenship and the importance of international links within whole school development planning and pedagogy

Objectives:

- To introduce and develop sport and physical education at Mnyakanya School
- To develop leadership courses and leadership opportunities for students
- To develop training opportunities for teachers and other adults
- To explore own and each other's cultural heritage and experiences, widening knowledge and understanding and raising self- confidence and self- esteem
- To create opportunities for orphans to attend Mnyakanya School
- To establish an annual visit of staff and students to both schools
- To establish School Councils to develop a 'student voice' within the schools
- To engage in social enterprise activities to fund and support the work of the partnership
- To seek sponsorship from organisations and businesses to fund the work of the partnership
- To support Sports Assistants to deliver the School Sport Mass Participation Programme (SA)
- To explore opportunities to develop other curricular areas
- To work with external agencies and local decision makers to develop the partnership
- To raise awareness of the partnership's work through the media

December 2006: First Fundraising

The South African partnership was included in the St. Mary's annual Advent Appeal. More than £1,000 was raised to help fund orphans into Mnyakanya School. With regard to funding the orphans into school, a strict protocol was established with a range of conditions to be met to ensure transparency of the system. This was agreed between the two schools with

the British Council holding the funding until evidence of the conditions being met was confirmed.

In addition to this, Sixth Form students, Katie Moran and Emily Tindall, organised a football shirt appeal with students and staff donating football shirts to be sent to Mnyakanya. The appeal went far beyond the school with members of the wider community also donating shirts. Ex St. Mary's students from the band the Kaiser Chiefs donated their Leeds United shirts. More than 300 were sent to South Africa. This also brought about the first business support for the partnership with shipping company, Cardinal Maritime, contacting the school and offering to ship the shirts to South Africa at no charge.

Raising funds and raising awareness were now inextricably linked as far as the project was concerned. Most importantly twenty orphans began their education at Mnyakanya School in January 2007.

February 2007: Bands do it for Africa

St. Mary's is well known for its musical talent and Sixth Form students Greg Davis, Sam Prowse and Will Carder organised a "Battle of the Bands" competition to raise money for the school's work in South Africa: funding orphans into school, providing much needed equipment and bringing students together to develop leadership skills in a variety of community projects.

Five talented St. Mary's bands played in the competition:

Storm Haven (Greg Davis, Sam Prowse and Will Carder)

Good Fall (James Jackson, James Holland and Jonny Forrest)

Fear Incarnate (Elliott Ibbetson, Jamie McKinlay and Ben Jarman)

The Swing Movement (Patrick Wanzala-Ryan, Ben Walker, Kieran Borrett and Joe Gamble)

Next Station (Mark Wanzala-Ryan, Chris Wanzala-Ryan and Joe Cox)

The bands played to over 200 students and staff and after almost three hours of music the panel of judges eventually named *Good Fall* as the winners.

Organiser Greg Davis was delighted with the event. *“As a school we are really behind the work in South Africa. We have all learned so much about what life is like for young people in the Mnyakanya area. We realise how fortunate we are in so many ways and some of our bands wanted to do their bit to try and make a difference. The event raised over £250 for our work in South Africa and I would like to thank all the students and staff who supported the event.”*

March 2007: First students visit South Africa

The British Council and Youth Sport Trust invited St. Mary's to take two students to South Africa as part of the *Young Ambassadors* project. Significantly, two Sixth Form students from a partner school in Leeds were invited to extend the South African link into the School Sport Partnership led by St. Mary's.

During the stay students, Libby Aspden and Jimmy Scott attended lessons and also had the opportunity to use and develop their extensive leadership skills. This involved coaching sport, teaching other curriculum areas and assisting David in providing a full day in-service training course to eighteen Sports Assistants from the School Sport Mass Participation Programme and teachers from Mnyakanya. The day was a tremendous success with Libby and Jimmy leading many of the sessions. Following this wonderful day, where Libby and Jimmy had very impressively taught a group of thirty adults, they were approached by some Mnyakanya students who asked if they would teach them Physics and, more specifically, the topic of 'vectors'. Both Libby and Jimmy did study Physics and agreed to teach them. What happened next was completely unplanned but remarkable nevertheless. By the time they had reached the classroom, word had spread that an extra science lesson was taking place and a group of six students had increased to thirty plus. It is worth remembering that this was after school and that most students would have at least a two hour walk home. With no preparation time and only a blackboard and a piece of chalk, Libby and Jimmy captivated their enthusiastic class with a highly effective lesson. With excellent subject knowledge, the Leeds youngsters were able to transfer their generic leadership skills into this very different teaching and learning environment. What made the session even more remarkable is that only one student in the class had a calculator. In the months to follow

the St. Mary's community was keen to address the calculator and other resource issues.

At the end of the one and a half hour session, the Mnyakanya students thanked Libby and Jimmy and then asked "*will you now teach us Biology?*" Libby and Jimmy did not hesitate and proceeded to teach a Biology topic for a further hour. The day had a profound effect on all concerned. The perspectives of students reinforced the enormous potential in our collaborative work.

"My world has just got bigger. I have realised that it is my duty to be a global citizen."

Libby Aspden, Sixth Form Student

"The experience in South Africa was life changing in ways that I could not have imagined. The experience has changed my outlook and perspective on life totally; I have learned so much and I am inspired to do more."

Jimmy Scott, Sixth Form Student

The visit provided further opportunities to meet with local decision makers, many of whom had visited Mnyakanya during the week to observe the partnership in action. Towards the end of the visit, ANC President Jacob Zuma (now the South African President) invited the St. Mary's team to his home to personally thank them for their efforts and to encourage further development of the partnership.

"This is an exciting initiative that brings young people together to learn from each other in a global dimension. The young people and teachers are working together with tremendous effect; this programme has my full support and deserves every success."

Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa

Whilst in South Africa the British Council invited two students from Mnyakanya and St. Mary's to participate in the *Fair Play* Sports Leadership Programme in the Johannesburg township of Soweto. The students from both schools worked together to plan and deliver a Sports Festival to primary school children from Soweto.

The students worked together as a most effective team. Sport was the medium and developing young leaders was the intended outcome. This experience gave a glimpse of just what might be achieved in the future.

April 2007: Preparations begin for first St. Mary's students to visit South Africa

Led by David Geldart and supported by fellow teachers Barbara Pounder and Richard Chattoe, nine students; Kirsty Ryan, Philip Ward, Emily Tindall, Katie Moran, Patrick Pounder, Hector Hall, Chris Spillane, Nicola Wilson and James Holland volunteered to visit South Africa in March 2008. The team of twelve worked tirelessly to raise all the necessary funding and also began to research South African history, politics and culture in preparation for the visit. In addition to this the team attended HIV/AIDS awareness sessions to gain a better understanding of the disease which has ravaged the Nkandla region of Kwa Zulu Natal.

April 2007: Momentum builds with support from Kaiser Chiefs

General fundraising events for the partnership continued and included a mammoth CD sale, charity football matches and a pop concert all organised by students; again reinforcing the role of 'leadership' in this initiative.

Ex- students Nick Hodgson, Nick 'Peanut' Baines and Simon Rix from the Kaiser Chiefs were very keen to support the fundraising efforts.

"It is a brilliant job you are doing in South Africa; it would be so much easier to ignore these things. The impact on young people in both countries is amazing and we are happy to support this fantastic work."

Nick Hodgson, Kaiser Chiefs

May 2007: St. Mary's students showcase their Zulu dance skills at International Festival

Following the first St. Mary's visit to South Africa and subsequent talks to staff and students, many Faculty areas at St. Mary's became interested in using the link as a catalyst for learning. The Performing Arts Faculty worked closely with a Zulu group (Mighty Zulu Nation) based in the UK, for several months on Zulu music, storytelling, dance and drama. So successful was this work that the Zulu group and St. Mary's students: Isabelle Ayers, Daniel Bendjelloul, Robyn Cullen, Alice Lonsdale, Nicola Lynch, Matthew McGuire, Sam McKay, Rose Watters, Jessica Jackson, Matthew Teasdale, Rachael Sutherland, Siobhan Fisher, Joe Allen, Philip Clarke-Irons, Farrah Brookfield, Ella Thackray, Reserl Kusi-Mensah, Jozef Szczygiel, Bethany Harrison, Rebecca Harrison, Rachel Firbank and Marc Hill showcased their dance work at the Leeds International Festival to great acclaim.

June 2007: What do you want? What are you called? The emergence of *Bambisanani*

The exchange visits had given both schools a clearer picture of how the partnership could develop in the future. Based on the aims and objectives already established the two schools identified six specific "development strands" for the future that would require funding. These were:

- Supporting orphans into Mnyakanya School
- Providing additional resources for Mnyakanya School
- Supporting exchange visits
- Developing ICT facilities, including internet connection at Mnyakanya
- Developing the infra-structure of Mnyakanya involving the building of flushing toilets, changing facilities, sports area and library
- Developing joint curriculum projects

The target for the above was to raise £25,000 a year for the next four years. It was recognised that school-based fundraising was never going to

be enough, so efforts began to engage the business community through a variety of meetings and presentations. At one such meeting a group of businessmen asked what the name of the project was. They were informed that it was the *Mnyakanya School, Kwa Zulu Natal, St. Mary's School, Leeds, Partnership*: not the snappiest project name it was agreed. As a result the two schools began to discuss a project name that would best symbolise what the collaboration was about. Discussions took place over several months but eventually the schools came up with 'The Bambisanani Partnership', *Bambisanani* being the Zulu word for "working hand in hand". Having agreed a name, a logo was then designed by art teacher Helen Booth and students to symbolise the nature and ambition of the partnership. This process took months but was worthwhile as it gave the two schools a real focus and unique identity. As such, the *Bambisanani Partnership* officially emerged in October 2007.

July 2007: Feast Day Mass

The theme of the annual St. Mary's Feast Day Mass was *Celebrating our International Community*. Special guests at the Mass were members of the Mighty Zulu Nation who performed a most uplifting and emotional rendition of the 'Our Father'. Funds raised from the Advent Appeal were presented to the school's four charities during the Mass with a new addition of the Bambisanani partnership. Members of the Mighty Zulu Nation received a cheque on behalf of Mnyakanya School to fund the education of orphans.

September 2007: Preparations begin for 2009 visit of students to South Africa

School Sports Co-ordinator, Barbara Pounder, together with Richard Chattoe and Amanda Twigg, began preparations for the 2009 visit. Significantly, the fourth adult was a local primary school teacher, Richard Parker, from one of St. Mary's School Sport Partnership schools. The party of four staff, together with fourteen students, embarked on a rigorous campaign to raise all the necessary funds for the visit.

Beyond fundraising, St. Mary's has devised a comprehensive programme of activities to prepare students for their visit to South Africa. All students undertook research to gain a greater understanding of South African politics, Apartheid, Zulu culture, history and geography. Students also

attended HIV/AIDS awareness and Zulu language sessions. Preparation time for a visit of St. Mary's students to South Africa is eighteen months, allowing sufficient time for the fundraising and learning required.

November 2007: With a little help from your friends

Discussions with the business community continued to develop with several companies agreeing to support the work of the Bambisanani Partnership: HSBC Bank, Lupton Fawcett Solicitors, BR Pharmaceuticals, Cardinal Maritime. Findell, Staples, William Sinclair & Sons, Nike and the Football Association all provided much needed equipment for Mnyakanya, which was shipped to South Africa at no cost by Cardinal Maritime. The Sisters of Mercy, Knights of St. Columba, Catenians, Verona Fathers, Rotary Club of Aireborough, community groups, church groups and many individuals, including Lord Patrick Carter, David Ross, Billy Hill, Frank Blake, Brian Jones, Jonathan Hind and Sarah Geldart also provided outstanding help and support. Ex-students such as Simon Rix, Nick Hodgson and Nick 'Peanut' Baines of the Kaiser Chiefs, Joe Sayers of Yorkshire CCC, Matthew Lewis, who plays *Neville Longbottom* in the Harry Potter films and professional footballers Aidan White and Tom Taiwo, have all taken an active interest in the Bambisanani Partnership.

In South Africa, Rohini Naidoo and Thora Jacobs from the British Council and Prem Vayapuri, Athma Mararaj and Ayanda Ndlovu from the Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Sport and Recreation continued their outstanding support and development of the partnership.

Also in South Africa, the tremendous support of Rajes and Logan Govender of Consolidated Travel and Eshowe businessman, Graham Chennells could not be overstated. Their advice and genuine interest in the initiative have both inspired and motivated the partnership.

At St. Mary's the growing demands and potential of the partnership required additional ideas and expertise. Vital new team members from the school's support staff became involved: Jackie Ash (administrative and Health and Safety support), Anne Tindall, (administrative support), Jayne Dennill (financial services support as well as a working and personal knowledge of Kwa Zulu Natal), Garth Dennill (Zulu language lessons), Liz Robertson (fundraising and Enterprise support), Leigh Leversha (website

and publicity), Abigail Nixon (library and research support), Mike Gosling (photography), Adam Smith (photography), Craig Harrison (Audio Visual) and Duncan Baines (ICT, design and creative support).

The commitment and dedication of this diverse and multi-talented team has become an outstanding feature of the partnership; providing essential support, new ideas, challenge and growth.

A Bambisanani Award Certificate for “*Outstanding Support of the Bambisanani Partnership*” has been developed, which is formally presented to sponsors and supporters. The Kaiser Chiefs recently visited St. Mary’s to receive their awards. Great effort is taken to keep all sponsors and supporters up- to- date with Bambisanani developments.

January 2008: Bambisanani Partnership gains Ministerial approval

Thanks to the work of Leeds City Council’s International Relations team, word of the partnership had reached the Kwa Zulu Natal Minister for Education, Mrs Ina Cronje. Mrs Cronje and a senior delegation of officials were subsequently invited to Leeds by Karen Murgatroyd from International Relations. The Minister and her delegation visited St. Mary’s in January 2008. During the visit Mrs Cronje met students preparing for the March 2008 visit and was able to speak at length about the project which she fully endorsed.

“The Bambisanani Partnership developed between St. Mary’s School and Mnyakanya School is truly outstanding. The partnership will inspire students and teachers in both countries. The focus on ‘Leadership’ is to be applauded and encouraged at every level.

The exposure of young people to each other’s cultures lets them know they are part of a bigger world in which they all have a role to play. The partnership encourages young people in both countries to take a broader view of life and to strive to be the best they can be. I have been so impressed by the commitment of St. Mary’s staff and students to develop this international link.”

Ina Cronje, Minister for Education, Kwa Zulu Natal

(2004 – 2009)

March 2008: First St. Mary's students visit South Africa

Nine St. Mary's students; Kirsty Ryan, Philip Ward, Emily Tindall, Katie Moran, Patrick Pounder, Hector Hall, Chris Spillane, Nicola Wilson and James Holland and three teachers, David Geldart, Barbara Pounder and Richard Chattoe, travelled to South Africa.

During the visit the group stayed in Eshowe which is about 1½ hours from Mnyakanya School. 5.00am starts were the norm with the group having to be at Mnyakanya for a 7.30am start to the school day. The group had the opportunity to observe lessons, teach lessons (all subjects), coach sport and provide in-service training to teachers and Sports Assistants. Sports coaching sessions after school in the six sports of the School Sport Mass Participation Programme (Football, Athletics, Rugby, Cricket, Netball and Volleyball) attracted over 300 students every day.

Education Minister, Ina Cronje kept her promise of visiting the team when they were in South Africa by joining them for a meal in Eshowe with representatives from the Department of Education.

A major feature of this visit was to develop leadership skills in students from both countries. Twenty Mnyakanya students had been selected by the school to complete the *Bambisanani Sports Leadership Course*: Nduduzo Khanyilem, Khulekani Mthembu, Msindisi Nxumalo, Sphakamiso Ndlovu, Sabelo Ntombela, Kwanda Zakwe, Mthokozisi Dlamuka, Nokubonga Zuma, Nomzamo Zuma, Mlungisi Ntuli, Zinhle Zondi, Sinqobile Shange, Xolisile Mlotshwa, Xolani Ngcobo, Christopher Bhengu, Nondumiso Sibisi, Sindisiwe Ngcobo, Professor Sikakane, Ncengeni Bhengu and Senzo Zuma. The twenty students worked with St. Mary's students and staff throughout the week. Much of the delivery of the course was by St. Mary's students. The course culminated in students from both schools working together to organise the area's first ever Multi Sports Festival. The Sports Festival was the biggest event the area had ever seen. Ten primary schools from a twenty mile radius each brought fifteen students to the full day event. The event was attended by Mr Armichand Rajbansi the Kwa Zulu Natal Sports Minister (2004- 2009), and senior officials from the Department of Sport, Department of Education and other VIPs. Mr

Rajbansi was able to witness 29 young leaders working together to deliver the Multi Sports Festival to 150 primary school children. Mr Rajbansi commented:

“The Bambisanani Partnership is truly remarkable; it is bringing people together to gain greater understanding of each other’s cultures. Sport has enormous potential for good in society and this initiative is certainly a great example of that. The Festival organised by young people for other young people is truly outstanding and sends a powerful message to the rest of South Africa.”

Prior to Mr Rajbansi addressing the VIPs, community members and Festival participants, David suggested to the Minister that there was spare land at the school that could be utilised for sport. He explained that a facility such as a *Multi Use Games Area*, which could be used by both the school and wider community, would dramatically improve sports provision in the area. Later that day the Minister announced that a Multi Use Games Area would be built at the school.

Most significantly, the twenty students who gained the Bambisanani Sports Leadership Award, have since gone on to run weekly after school sessions in all six sports for Mnyakanya students and are now in the process of organising a series of tournaments. As part of the visit, a Mnyakanya School Sports Council was established with the twenty Young Leaders taking responsibility for its development within the school.

The Bambisanani Partnership was officially launched during the visit by the British Council at an event attended by officials from the Government’s Education and Sports Departments, students, their families, school governors and the local Zulu Chief.

Head of the British Council, Mrs Rohini Naidoo said:

“The Bambisanani Partnership is an outstanding example of how two schools can work together internationally. This partnership sends an important message to all schools about the benefits of working together.”

The St. Mary’s community had also begun to sponsor twenty Aids orphans into school. Speaking at the ceremony, Maria Zakwe, grandmother of a sponsored student said:

“My life has been about hardship and struggle. I cannot thank St. Mary’s School enough for the opportunity it is giving my granddaughter, who now has a chance in life.”

The St. Mary’s team were able to bring with them much needed resources for the school, including calculators, art materials and sports equipment.

During this visit the partnership also managed to establish a new initiative linking senior citizens (normally grandmothers or great grandmothers) to the school to teach traditional Zulu craft skills to students. These traditional skills are slowly being lost, so this was a great way of both preserving them and celebrating Zulu culture. This was the first time that anyone from the wider community had worked with students in the school. The impact on both the students and senior citizens was fantastic and clearly had much wider benefits in terms of linking different generations. This ‘community support’ in the school is now a regular feature of school life. Profits from items sold go to support the aims of the Bambisanani Partnership.

Mr William Vilakazi, who was Acting Principal of Mnyakanya School at the time said:-

“This partnership has raised the aspirations of my learners and educators. We are motivated and inspired and my learners are doing better in school; more children are also attending school now. We have been amazed at the use of sport and leadership to educate learners. It works and is fantastic; it has made us think. It has been wonderful to see learners and educators from both countries working together.”

On their return to Leeds, the St. Mary’s team delivered a series of presentations in school and beyond to students, staff, school governors, parents and business sponsors and supporters. Throughout this initiative the St. Mary’s team has sought to “inform and educate” the school and wider community in a relentless campaign of engagement through a wide range of media.

May 2008: St. Mary’s Footballers play for Africa

Footballers from Year 11 and Year 12 at St. Mary’s played in a charity match in aid of the school’s work in Africa.

The game, organised by Sixth Form student Michael Brown, was a tremendous success raising £120 for the Bambisanani Partnership in South Africa and BASIK (Building a School in Kenya) a charity established by another Sixth Form student William Normington. Players from both sides donated £5 each for the privilege of playing in the match.

Match Report: The game, whilst for charity, was none the less very competitive. The Year 12 side took the lead through Matt Turner and were 2 – 0 up at half time with a Dominic Marwood goal. The Year 11 team rallied in the second half with Leeds United star Aidan White scoring a wonderful goal having beaten four defenders to convert. Indeed White was unlucky not to score a hat trick, hitting the bar and having an attempt cleared off the line. Hayden Smith equalised for the Year 11 side with a well taken goal 10 minutes from time. With the game well poised it was fittingly decided by the organiser of the game, Michael Brown, with a clinical finish inside the 6 yard box.

The game was played in a great spirit, officiated by qualified referee, fifteen year old, Bradley Taylor.

Organiser Michael Brown said *“This game has now become an annual event at St. Mary’s. There is considerable interest in the game and the result. It is great to use sport to raise awareness and funding to support our work in Africa.”*

September 2008: Preparations begin for July 2010 visit to South Africa

Led by Richard Chattoe, preparations began for the summer 2010 visit of twelve students and four staff to South Africa. Two of the adults were not be from St. Mary’s. One was a teacher from a local primary school within the St. Mary’s School Sport Partnership and the other was a business sponsor. Lisa Newton from Sacred Heart Primary School and Mick Russell, HSBC Premier Manager duly became 2010 team members engaging in all fundraising and preparatory activities. From the onset Lisa and Mick brought different skills, perspectives and experiences to the team which gave considerable added value.

October 2008: Open Day opportunities

The St. Mary's annual Open Day was attended by hundreds of people from the school and local community. Students preparing to visit South Africa, supported by Jackie Ash, Sports College Administrator, organised a mammoth CD and DVD sale with members of the school community donating unwanted items to be sold on the day. The sale also provided a valuable opportunity to educate and inform members of the community about the Bambisanani Partnership and raised almost £1000 in the process.

March 2009: St. Mary's team visit to South Africa

Following 18 months of innovative fundraising, fourteen students: Matthew Houston, Danielle Hirst, Alicia Barber, Colette Bendjelloul, Sally Bridgewater, Hannah Brumfitt, Chris Doonan, Kathrine Garnett, Declan Kelly, Daniel O'Brien, Megan O'Sullivan, Hannah Pickering, Amy Powell and Melissa Ricard and four teachers: Barbara Pounder, Richard Chattoe, Amanda Twigg and primary school teacher, Richard Parker visited Mnyakanya for a ten day stay to further develop the partnership. On this occasion the visit was led by School Sport Co-ordinator, Barbara Pounder.

During the visit the St. Mary's team coached sport at Mnyakanya and taught a range of other curriculum areas including Maths, English, Science, Art, Dance and Music. The team also provided in-service training to teachers and sports coaches in the area. During the week the St. Mary's students mentored twenty Mnyakanya students to achieve the Bambisanani Leadership Award: Zandile Mthethwa, Amanda Bhengu, Ayanda Gcaba, Mandisa Mthethwa, Thokozile Mbambo, Nothando Ndlovu, Deneo Zuma, Msawenkosi Khanyile, Sbonelo Magwaza, Thembelani Gazu, Andile Nala, Mbali Ndlovu, Nontobeko Ngubane, Sphehlise Gazu, Kholeka Magwaza, Melokwakhe Nzuzza, Ozias Shezi, Siyabonga Nzuzza, Thabiso Magwaza and Khumbuzile Mzimela. Students from both schools worked together throughout the week to plan and deliver the school's first ever Sports Day.

Students were also able to further develop *Bambisanani Enterprises*. *Bambisanani Enterprises* is an enterprise project led by students from both schools. The initiative aims to develop entrepreneurial, business and commercial skills. The initiative is also developing and promoting traditional

Zulu craft skills. Items made in the school and in the local community are sold in South Africa and in the UK with all profits going back to support the aims of the partnership.

An important aspect of the Bambisanani Partnership is the funding of orphans into school. As a result of fundraising by the St. Mary's community the number of orphans supported was increased from twenty to forty in 2009. To celebrate the sponsorship, a special ceremony took place during the week that involved the students being officially welcomed into school. The moving ceremony was attended by students and staff from both schools, grandparents of sponsored children, school governors, the local Zulu Chief, representatives from the Department of Education and Department of Sport and Recreation and the British Council.

Clearly the 2009 visit moved the partnership on considerably. Barbara Pounder, who led the visit, said:

"It has been my privilege to bring so many people together; people who now share memories that will live with them forever. Our partnership is about building capacity and leaving a lasting legacy. It has been overwhelming to see what progress has been made in the school since our last visit. The young leaders we trained last year have effectively run a school extra-curricular sports programme for the last twelve months with tremendous effect. The engagement in the Bambisanani Enterprises activities by students and the wider community is wonderful and is gathering momentum."

April 2009: National Award for Bambisanani Partnership

Returning from South Africa, the fourteen St. Mary's students were amazed to hear that they were to receive the inaugural Certificate of Excellence Award from the UK charity, the Diana Award. The Award recognises outstanding community based work by young people.

Esther Rantzen CBE, presented the Diana Award for Excellence to St. Mary's students Matthew Houston and Danielle Hirst who represented fellow students Alicia Barber, Colette Bendjelloul, Sally Bridgewater, Hannah Brumfitt, Chris Doonan, Kathrine Garnett, Declan Kelly, Daniel O'Brien, Megan O'Sullivan, Hannah Pickering, Amy Powell and Melissa Ricard at a prestigious event in London.

Esther Rantzen said:

“These young people are an inspiration. They demonstrate the outstanding difference that young people can make to our society. They exemplify the values of the Diana Certificate of Excellence Award, which will stay with them forever. The Bambisanani work is truly remarkable; it is making a difference worth making.”

Speaking at the event Robin Gibb CBE added:

“The St. Mary’s students represent a growing community of young people who will act as a force for good to build a society in which we would all like to live. They genuinely want to make a difference and the huge impact of their work in South Africa challenges existing stereotypes of young people by showing that they have the power to be positive role models.”

June 2009: South African students and teachers visit St. Mary’s

A group of four teachers; William Vilakazi, Mazet Langa, PK Zondi and Zwe Mbambo and ten students; Chris Bhengu, Muthoko Dlamuka, Anna Mbambo, Nduh Khanyile, Siphakamiso Thamsanqa Ndlovu, Precious Nxumalo, Nondumiso Sibisi, Zamah Zuma, Sho Zuma and Wonder Zakwe, from Mnyakanya School visited Leeds. This was the first time that a group of students and teachers from the rural Nkandla region of Kwa Zulu Natal had visited the UK. The Bambisanani Partnership always intended to create genuine ‘two way’ exchanges of students and staff but the visit to the UK was not without tremendous financial, bureaucratic and logistical challenges. However, following much hard work for a year, the visit did indeed happen and was a tremendous success.

The South African party received a fantastic welcome in Leeds, being special guests at both a Leeds Rhinos fixture and a Yorkshire County Cricket Club fixture. The visit also coincided with the Leeds International Youth Festival and the inaugural St. Mary’s International Week, where the normal timetable was suspended and students worked on a variety of ‘Global Dimension’ themes.

At the International Youth Festival, the South African students, together with St. Mary’s students, had the opportunity to work with students from China, USA, Poland, Sweden and the Czech Republic in a range of cultural, sporting and academic activities organised by Karen Murgatroyd

from the International Relations team. The hosting costs of the South African team and other international students were covered by Leeds City Council.

The students from Mnyakanya School launched the St. Mary's International Week at an Olympic style Sports Day for the entire St. Mary's community at the John Charles Centre for Sport in Leeds. During the week at St. Mary's, Mnyakanya students and staff participated in International Week activities and had the opportunity to improve and develop their sporting and leadership skills. The students also had the opportunity to engage in a range of creative opportunities in Art and Music, contributing to the International Week mosaic mural and composing a Bambisanani anthem. Students from both schools produced a *Speak Zulu* DVD and South African teacher, PK Zondi, produced a wonderfully detailed hand written booklet entitled '*A beginners guide to speaking Zulu*' which she presented to St. Mary's at the end of the week.

The African students were also introduced to computing skills by St. Mary's students. At a special Bambisanani Reception, the group had the opportunity to meet with business sponsors and supporters from the wider community. The group also visited other local schools that support the Bambisanani Partnership.

Throughout the visit the Mnyakanya students and teachers were outstanding ambassadors for Kwa Zulu Natal and indeed for South Africa.

William Vilakazi, Acting Principal at Mnyakanya School said:

"We have overcome many barriers to be in the UK and it is wonderful. Both students and staff are inspired and my community is inspired. We have been overwhelmed by the welcome we have received. Every day of the visit we learned so much and have grown so much. Three years ago it was said that such a visit would be impossible, but working with David and St. Mary's School in the Bambisanani Partnership we have done it and can do it again. The St. Mary's International Week is truly amazing, as is the school's genuine commitment to developing global citizens for the future. This visit has had an amazing impact on my teachers, my students and myself. We will all take back so many positive ideas and thoughts. It is difficult to express in words the importance of this partnership and the impact it is having."

July 2009: Bambisanani Partnership represented at International Conference

Such has been the success of the Bambisanani Partnership that David Geldart was invited to Kenya by the British Council to contribute to a 'Connecting Classrooms' conference to share ideas with representatives from twelve African nations and local Education Authorities from the UK. At the conference David praised the commitment of the British Council to developing international links between schools and the potential benefits that this could bring to young people. He elaborated on the importance of developing sustainable partnerships and what the Bambisanani Partnership had achieved and not achieved in difficult circumstances. He also suggested to the British Council that their investment in this important aspect of education could be more focused, remarking "*with limited resources available the British Council investment in international school links needs to look closely at successful partnerships and share what works. We need to invest in people and schools that are committed to the difficult business of developing meaningful and sustainable international links. We need to invest where there is every chance of success.*" He praised the *Connecting Classrooms* initiative, particularly the idea of schools supporting each other in local networks.

The *Connecting Classroom* initiative is intended to further develop UK/Africa links with schools and Local Authorities working strategically in support networks. The St. Mary's team agreed to support the development of this work in other Leeds schools and staff from Mnyakanya agreed to support other schools in Nkandla. The Leeds schools have subsequently established links with schools in Ghana and South Africa. Teachers from Ghana and South Africa have since visited Leeds to establish a joint development plan. Both St. Mary's and Mnyakanya have taken lead roles in developing their *Connecting Classrooms* network. The special relationship between St. Mary's and Mnyakanya, the Bambisanani Partnership, is now a significant aspect and driver of the *Connecting Classrooms* initiative involving schools from all three countries working collaboratively.

At the Conference David offered clear advice for any school wishing to develop a meaningful and sustainable international partnership.

“Visit the country, experience the issues, see the potential and listen to all those involved, especially local decision makers. Do not be judgmental. Try and see the world through their eyes. Learn as much about the culture as you possibly can before you visit. Visit with an open mind, make friends and develop trust. Do not make your first visit armed with a plan other than this.

To make this work, you will need someone who will be prepared to ‘live and breathe’ the initiative. They then need to be supported by a committed team. The initiative is not sustainable unless it becomes a whole school initiative. However, it should not be imposed on Departments or Faculties; much work is required to ensure genuine “buy in”.

The wider school community needs to be engaged: support staff, Governors and parents. The local community needs to be engaged, particularly local businesses.

The work is time consuming and numerous barriers can make it frustrating. However, such a link has the potential to change how many of your students and staff see the world and their future role in it. Just in case you had forgotten, this kind of partnership will remind you why you became a teacher.”

September 2009: St. Mary’s and Mnyakanya students meet in Wales

The outstanding leadership skills of students from St. Mary’s and Mnyakanya were further recognised when Nduh Khanyile, Bethany Harrison and Rebecca Harrison were invited to attend the UK Schools Games in Cardiff as volunteers. Nduh’s considerable leadership potential was ‘discovered’ whilst being mentored on the Bambisanani Leadership Award course by St. Mary’s students in March 2008. Rebecca said, *“It was unbelievable to see Nduh again at this international event where students from around the world were responsible for making sure the whole thing was a success. Everyone got on really well and did a great job. Sport is great for bringing people together.”* Nduh added, *“In the last two years I have become a Bambisanani Leader and visited the UK twice; I have been honoured by these opportunities. I was nervous about travelling to Wales on my own so it was fantastic to meet my friends from St. Mary’s there. I was so proud to represent South Africa and the Bambisanani Partnership at the UK School Games.”*

October 2009: St. Mary's gain International School Award

The BBC's George Alagiah presented St. Mary's with the Department of Education/British Council's *International School Award* at a ceremony in London. The award is highlighted in the Department of Education's international strategy as 'a major prize for excellence in this field'. The school was awarded the honour in recognition of the highly innovative international and community schemes it has pioneered and for incorporating Global Citizenship as a key aspect of learning in the school.

Both staff and pupils have developed diverse links with schools and youth projects all over the world including South Africa, Australia, Kenya, Ghana, China, India, Peru, France, Germany, Belgium, USA, Ireland, Italy and Poland. Exchange visits, International Study weeks, joint learning projects, video conferencing and more traditional methods of correspondence have encouraged collaborative working and enabled St. Mary's students to gain a greater awareness and understanding of other cultures and global issues.

"Receiving this award is a great honour, but this is only the start of our ambitions" said the school's International Coordinator Catriona Simms, "Young people love to learn from each other. Through all our initiatives we aspire to help our students become true global citizens and appreciate the variety of cultures and customs from all over the world. Our work in South Africa, the Bambisanani Partnership, has helped drive Global Citizenship and innovation at St. Mary's and is a significant factor in us gaining this prestigious award."

January 2010: More than one hundred and fifty students apply to go to South Africa

Over one hundred and fifty students applied for fourteen places to visit South Africa in July 2011 causing David Geldart to remark, *"The partnership has captured the imagination of our students like nothing else. Because of travel, accommodation and safety constraints we are restricted in the numbers we can take; it is devastating that not everyone can go. We need to do more to fulfil the tremendous desire of students to support our work in South Africa. I would like to develop a Bambisanani Award scheme and other learning opportunities that everyone can participate in. We need*

to explore gap year and other volunteering opportunities beyond school. All the students that apply to go to South Africa want to make a difference in the world; they are remarkable and inspiring young people.”

February 2010: Connecting Classrooms

Following earlier work in Kenya and subsequent correspondence between teachers and advisors in Leeds, South Africa and Ghana, the *Connecting Classrooms* initiative began in earnest.

St. Mary's supported two other Leeds schools to develop links: Beechwood Primary School and Corpus Christi High School. Working with Jenny Hill from Education Leeds, these schools, together with three schools from South Africa and Ghana, wrote a joint development plan that would literally connect classrooms in all the schools. Sport was again a key catalyst for this work.

The first part of the development was to invite teachers and advisors from both South Africa and Ghana to spend time in each of the Leeds schools. Tony Moodley, Musa Xulu and Ntombi Zwane from South Africa and Paul Appiah, Frederick Kwadwo Asare and Mary Baaretin from Ghana had a wonderful time visiting St. Mary's, sharing experiences with both staff and pupils. Geography teacher Ged Hooley said, *“It was fascinating to have teachers who had experienced Apartheid speak to students; we were captivated by the stories we heard. It was a wonderful learning experience.”*

Bob Sugden, Head of Humanities said, *“We already have a wonderful partnership with Mnyakanya School in South Africa which we will extend through this initiative and I am excited at the prospect of developing a new link with Sefwi Wiawso Senior High School in Ghana.”*

As well as visiting lessons and talking to teachers, the African guests also had the opportunity to watch the school production of 'Jesus Christ Superstar'.

Tony Moodley, Education Advisor from South Africa said, *“St. Mary's has pioneered some outstanding work in South Africa and we are all keen to learn from that experience. We have had a wonderful time at St. Mary's*

and it is clear that there are tremendous benefits in this project for all schools involved.”

Learning from the early St. Mary's and Mnyakanya 'identity crisis', teachers from the three countries involved agreed that the new collaboration should have its own name and unique identity. Following much discussion the group agreed to refer to their partnership as the *Noboa Project*, 'Noboa' is a Ghanaian word meaning '*weeding and helping*', where traditionally farmers cooperated and shared good practice for the benefit of all.

March 2010: Bambisanani goes Classical

A feature of fundraising for the Bambisanani Partnership has been student led events. Sporting and musical events, together with a range of sales have raised both awareness and much needed funding. Such events were instrumental in the development of the student led business: Bambisanani Enterprises.

Led by former student Sally Bridgewater, St. Mary's staged its first ever classical music concert in aid of the Bambisanani Partnership. Around fifty performers and volunteers worked hard for weeks to make the concert happen and it was a resounding success.

The evening opened with a sensitive rendition of 'Stranger on the Shore' played by Ashley Francis-Roy on clarinet and ended two hours later with an exhilarating performance of Monti's 'Czardas' played by violinists, Oliver Wales, Sarah Daramy-Williams and Sally Bridgewater. Other highlights of the night were Duncan Fraser's storming 'Prelude in C sharp minor' by Rachmaninov, fourteen year old Sarah Daramay-William's breathtaking 'Meditation' by Massenet and 'Adiemus' by Karl Jenkins performed by four of St. Mary's most talented singers: Mary-Kate Cawley, Rachel Addison-Child, Annie Layfield and Tom McNulty accompanied by Duncan Fraser on piano. There were also other outstanding performances from Caitlin Fraser, Francesca Bridgewater, David Bridgewater, Gregory Weir and Ian McTeer.

Sally Bridgewater, the organiser of the event, knows that the partnership is about far more than providing material things for Mnyakanya. As a former pupil of St. Mary's she had the chance to go on one of the annual visits to South Africa in 2009. *"While we were out there the St. Mary's students were able to mentor small groups of South African students to help them*

become young leaders in their community and together we organised the school's first ever sports day. It was fantastic to gradually become friends and see the students develop their confidence, but I am sure that we learnt more than they did. Despite the difficulties they face in achieving their ambitions, all the students always seem to be enjoying life and their optimistic attitude is inspirational. Without the leadership skills the partnership has taught me I would never have dreamt of organising such a big event."

David Geldart was full of praise for Sally and the other students responsible for organising the concert.

"A major aim of the Bambisanani Partnership is to develop young leaders both at St. Mary's and in our partner school in South Africa. This concert was completely organised by students. Sally Bridgewater has demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities in creating this wonderful concert. More than thirty other students assisted Sally in the organisation and also demonstrated excellent leadership skills. All too often young people get a bad press and this does not reflect what I think is the more accurate picture of young people who are concerned about others and are prepared to make a difference."

June 2010: International Week: World Cup crazy

The World Cup in South Africa proved to be a wonderful catalyst for learning in both schools. At St. Mary's the normal timetable was collapsed for the annual International Week with all subject areas using the World Cup as a stimulus for the teaching of lessons. The week, coordinated by Catriona Simms, was a tremendous success as highlighted by a student who said *"It was great, all our lessons had something to do with the World Cup. We still had all our normal subjects like Maths, English, RE, Technology and Science, but we did it in a way that was related to South Africa, Football or the World Cup. In PE we had our own World Cup competition where we represented the qualifying countries; it was good because we learned more about those teams and we played for a replica of the World Cup that two weeks later would be played for by students at Mnyakanya in their own World Cup competition. Learning was interesting and fun."*

International Week involved more than six hundred students and staff at St. Mary's in discussions and debates relating to possible rule changes that

could improve the World Cup competition. Fifteen recommendations were subsequently forwarded to FIFA Headquarters.

The young entrepreneurs of Bambisanani Enterprises took full advantage of the World Cup by organising a range of events and activities including the screening of matches at school and, with the wonders of digital technology, they 'transported' St. Mary's students and staff to South Africa to be pictured at a World Cup venue with the World Cup!

During International Week, and mindful that not all children in South Africa go to school, students joined the '*1 Goal - Send my Friend to School*' campaign to help raise awareness of the plight of millions of children worldwide who are denied a basic education. International Co-ordinator, Catriona Simms mobilised students to organise a petition which was delivered to 10 Downing Street by Sixth Form Student Manager, Patrick Kirkham and Year 8 students Joseph Copsey, Eliza Palumbo, Imogen Geoghegan and Kai Coultas. The efforts of St. Mary's students were acknowledged by the Prime Minister who subsequently wrote a letter of support to the school. Patrick said "*The United Nations Millennium Goals cited the right of all children to at least a basic education. Education should not be an act of charity but an entitlement. We know from our work in South Africa how important this is. Our petition included the names of all students at St. Mary's. It was a great opportunity to be able to deliver this to 10 Downing Street to remind politicians of their responsibility and how much of an issue this is to young people.*"

Following International Week and with World Cup fever still in the air, three separate St. Mary's visits to South Africa took place in the summer (UK) of 2010.

July 2010: St. Mary's visit to South Africa

Richard Chattoe led a team of four adults; Lucy Watson from St. Mary's, Lisa Newton from Sacred Heart Primary School and Mick Russell, Premier Manager, HSBC Bank and twelve students; Rebecca Harrison, Alex Jewell, Tom Loughlin, Lorna O'Sullivan, Lisa Melvin, Isabelle Scott, Kate Shelly, Sam Thomas, Alex Threapleton, Phoebe Tyrie, Chris Whiteley and Kim Wu. The group taught a variety of lessons, many of which were World Cup related, at Mnyakanya and Ntolwane Primary School. As well as coaching sport, the St. Mary's students mentored twenty Mnyakanya students in Sports Leadership: Sphesihle Shezi, Sibongeleni Majola, Mzwanele Nzuza, Mbuyiseni Ndlovu, Nompumelelo Nzuza, Lamlile Shezi, Ntombikhona

Mthethwa, Themrani Mbanjwa, Sizwe Zuma, Themrani Gebani, Wendy Dludla, Amanda Bhengu, Zandile Mthethwa, Mholi Hlabisa, Ncengeni Bhengu, Londiwe Ntuli, Mandisa Mthethwa, Philisiwe Ndaba, Khethokwakhe Bhengu and Manqoba Nzuzwa. At the end of the week, students from both schools organised a community football and netball tournament involving over three hundred children. The football event enjoyed a particularly high profile with the enthusiasm and success of the South African World Cup still resonating in the country and local community. The students were simply buzzing with excitement for an opportunity to raise the replica World Cup trophy and to play with a replica World Cup match ball just as their fellow students at St. Mary's had done only weeks earlier.

Mandela Day: High Commissioner opens Library at Mnyakanya

One of the aims of the Bambisanani Partnership over the last year was to develop a library facility at Mnyakanya. With support from the British Council, the library was officially opened during Richard's visit on Mandela Day by the British High Commissioner to South Africa, Dr Nicola Brewer, who travelled all the way from Johannesburg especially for the occasion with a number of VIPs including David Cordingley, Director of the British Council in South Africa. The timing was perfect, as a key focus of Mandela Day this year was to get people to volunteer to buy books and read to children in rural areas. Assisted by St. Mary's students, Dr Brewer led an amazing literature activity with VIPs and members of the wider community reading and discussing books with learners from Mnyakanya.

It is hoped that the library will not only provide a much needed resource for learners at the school, but also provide a platform for the development of Bambisanani 'Literacy Leaders'. Literacy Leaders will be students from Mnyakanya who will support weaker readers within the school and local primary school. It is also the intention that the Literacy Leaders will eventually work with non-reading adults in the community.

At the opening ceremony the High Commissioner praised the work of the Bambisanani Partnership:

"The Bambisanani Partnership is a flagship in terms of international co-operation between schools. The focus on developing young leaders in an increasing number of areas is empowering to all concerned. This

partnership is proving to be a genuine catalyst for change. This partnership demonstrates that young people who have passion, commitment and desire can make huge and sustainable change. This partnership is making one of the most significant differences I have seen and I am inspired.”

David Cordingley also praised the work of the partnership:

“I am extremely impressed with the work of the Bambisanani Partnership; it has clearly made a significant impact on both South African and British students. The St. Mary’s student leaders have empowered the Mnyakanya students in leadership and to take on leadership roles. The Bambisanani Partnership is inspirational and something that other schools should aspire to develop.”

Via the Eshowe Rotary Club an application has been made to access additional books for the library from the Oprah Winfrey Foundations *Books for Africa* initiative. A similar application has also been made to the *Books Abroad* initiative. The Rotary Club of Aireborough has also agreed to supply dictionaries for the library.

Whilst staying in Eshowe, the group visited Eshowe High School. The school is a very well resourced and highly successful school, similar to St. Mary’s in many ways. The contrast with Mnyakanya School could not be greater in material terms but an interesting link was established which it is hoped will be of benefit to all three schools in the future. As with a visit to Durban, on the way to Eshowe, it was interesting and important for students and teachers to experience that not all of South Africa is poor, far from it. Such contrasts proved to be a tremendous catalyst for discussion and debate amongst students.

During the 2010 visit, Richard and the group also provided in-service training to teachers and Community Sports Coaches. Having three years experience of visiting and working in South Africa, Richard also undertook a review of the School Sport Mass Participation Programme for the Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Sport and Recreation.

A new element of the project in 2010 involved working with Ntolwane Primary School, close to Mnyakanya. One particular day involved Lisa Newton, primary teacher from Sacred Heart Primary School, Ilkley and four students leading some Grade 2, 3 and 4 classes.

“I taught a lesson to sixty two students at Ntolwane Primary School called ‘My typical day’. Prior to going to South Africa I had got my Year Six children to write about their typical day in England. I shared these with the South African children and then got them to tell me and write about their typical day. This opened my eyes up even further and it was great to have some insight into what happens beyond the school gates. For example; one girl wrote about having to get up at five o’clock in the morning and go and collect water from the river, come back and use this water to wash and then clean the house. She made breakfast for her brothers and sisters, ironed her uniform and polished her shoes before setting off on a three mile journey to school. The St. Mary’s students were fantastic in their leadership work; they were so mature, responsible and effective.

The experience of visiting and working in South Africa has been the most incredible thing that I have ever done. It has proved to be a wonderful catalyst for learning in my own school since my return. I want to do more of this incredible work.”

Richard praised the work of students from both countries during the visit:

“I witnessed students develop their ability to plan, organise, manage and lead a number of activities to a very high standard. This required patience, tolerance and reflection. This was even more amazing due to the barriers of language, culture and experiences between the students. As a teacher, to witness this work in action, resulting in life changing skills, greater confidence, communication and empathy was remarkable. Armed with new found leadership skills the group of leaders from both countries jointly organised a large sporting event for their peers. The event was a huge success and great evidence that the students had remarkable ability, creativity and leadership qualities.

I was also struck by the way that the school learners, staff and community welcomed us with such positivity and warmth. Despite being a community that had been subjected to the evils and intolerance of apartheid they opened their arms and made us feel at home. Their sense of energy and motivation for development and support was simply breathtaking. This was a community who embraced us as their partners. During my time in South Africa it has been clear that resources and significant support is limited. However, the people and in particular the learners are so motivated to

learn. It is clear that education is key if we are to break the cycle of rural deprivation and poverty that their families have endured for years.

I recall the moment that grandparents who had lost their own sons and daughters, cried with joy upon their grandchildren receiving the uniforms and access to education that the partnership provided. One grandmother danced and sang in celebration and praise; in this one moment I realised what a difference we could all make.

As a teacher I have taken great heart from the progress, development and personal growth made by both the St. Mary's and Mnyakanya High School students. The students from St. Mary's, many with little exposure to a world outside England and indeed West Yorkshire, in some cases developed beyond all recognition and have become more confident, self-aware, tolerant and respectful people as a direct result of their time in South Africa. The Mnyakanya High School 'learners', initially quiet and shy, have developed enormous courage, confidence and the skills of inspirational young leaders.

I have witnessed a number of inspirational moments in my sixteen years as a teacher, but my time in South Africa and the development I observed will be difficult to emulate. My time in South Africa has proved to be hugely rewarding, emotional and a truly inspirational experience; one that has opened my mind and thoughts as a teacher, husband, parent and individual."

HSBC Manager, Mick Russell, who made a significant and unique contribution on the visit, had no doubts of the benefits to young people:

"I was proud and privileged to accompany a party of twelve students from St. Mary's, to South Africa to visit Mnyakanya High School. I have been involved with the Bambisanani project for many years through my work as a Premier Bank Manager with HSBC Bank. Whilst the experience was very hard work, the students had developed new skills in that they were now effective in teaching leadership both as individuals and as a team. These are very transferable skills that can be carried forward into their future lives and careers. Not only that, it was a great joy to see the South African students growing in confidence, culminating in them passing on their new-found skills to their fellow students in school. I have been so inspired by what I have seen and remain totally committed to this remarkable and life

changing initiative. The students from St. Mary's are a credit, not only to themselves and the school, but also to the international community.”

The twelve students involved in the visit were subsequently nominated for the national Princess Diana Award for Excellence.

Laurie's Legacy

A heartwarming development in the 2010 visit was the introduction of the 'Laurie's Legacy' project. Aware of the principles of the Bambisanani Partnership, Patrick and Gillian McCauley; a couple who had recently lost their son Laurie, contacted St. Mary's to provide annual sponsorship for a Bambisanani learning project at Mnyakanya in memory of their son. Lawrence Michael Fergus McCauley (Laurie) had died only weeks before. The project is in memory of their son who loved life, and who was passionate about literature and football. Patrick and Gillian also donated Laurie's amazing collection of football shirts from around the world that he had acquired throughout his life.

“We are donating these shirts in memory of our son, Laurie who died tragically on 19 June 2010, at the age of thirty one. Over the years he had built up a splendid collection of football shirts. Whenever we went on holiday it was always with clear instructions from Laurie which shirt to bring back. As well as European shirts, there are no fewer than thirteen Celtic shirts. Laurie was a staunch Celtic fan who never missed their televised matches and loved to make the occasional trip to Glasgow to cheer them on at Celtic Park. There are also five Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) shirts. Laurie was partly of Irish decent and always supported the Republic of Ireland football team.

Laurie was a kind and caring man with a keen sense of social justice. He would be pleased to know that his beloved collection of football shirts would be put to good use to benefit others. We would like to donate annual prizes for a competition in Laurie's memory; we would like it to be called 'Laurie's Legacy'. We invite the children to write a text inspired by one of the shirts. This would encourage them to engage in a little research. The text could concern the team, the town/city in which they play, the country, football in general in that country, a famous player or players from the team. Another competition could be for football performance – we suggest for 'the most improved player'. One year Laurie won such an award.

We hope your players enjoy wearing Laurie's shirts and gain pleasure from playing the game he loved."

Laurie's treasured football and Gaelic football shirts now serve as a wonderful catalyst for an international learning project at Mnyakanya. The project has been warmly embraced by the Mnyakanya community. A plaque is to be mounted at the school in memory of Laurie that will serve as a focus for excellence and endeavour. *Laurie McCauley Awards* will be presented annually at Mnyakanya. Patrick and Gillian have also funded books for the new school library. Laurie studied English Literature at University and once wrote this short text entitled the '*Book of Life*':

*Turn the page
and the knowledge
will blind you.*

*Close the book
and embrace the darkness
of ignorance.*

July 2010: Teachers go to South Africa

In January 2010 St. Mary's applied for funding from the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (Teachers' International Professional Development) to support a staff visit to South Africa. By May the funding had been approved for four members of staff: Gerry Sayers, Claire Andrews, Amanda Twigg and Hannah Davies, to go and work at Mnyakanya High School during their summer holidays.

The aim of the visit was:

'To develop the work of the Bambisanani Partnership between St. Mary's and Mnyakanya as a whole school initiative in line with the school development plan'.

Having already established a solid partnership with Mnyakanya High School, it was planned that the visit would enable the teachers to further develop the links and allow them to focus on staff development through the following objectives:

- To develop several aspects of education, including: a global dimension to learning, enterprise education, leadership, volunteering and community cohesion.
- To develop the *Bambisanani Award*. The award to operate at three levels - bronze, silver and gold, incorporating a global dimension to learning, enterprise education, leadership, volunteering and community cohesion, with all students in both schools eventually having access to the award.
- To establish closer links with staff and students from both schools.

Following three months of planning and preparation Amanda (Group Leader), Gerry, Claire and Hannah travelled to Eshowe for a ten day stay.

During the visit the St. Mary's staff had an exceptionally fulfilling and rewarding experience, working with the students at Mnyakanya High School and Ntolwane Primary School.

"It was both humbling and eye-opening to witness the pupils' joyful spirit and appreciation of learning."

Gerry Sayers

During their time at Mnyakanya the staff were able to observe general school life and lessons, enabling them to collect data and information to use on their return. They also taught lessons in Physical Education, Geography, Drama and English. Amanda, Gerry, Claire and Hannah had a range of fascinating and challenging experiences, including cows on the field during PE and goats walking into a Geography lesson!

The team worked with a 'focus group' of twelve students and two members of Mnyakanya staff to develop a *Bambisanani Award* system for their school. The focus group was extremely motivated by the idea and came up with a range of suggestions for the new award. Significantly, the teachers and students from Mnyakanya will now continue to work together to develop and initiate the award in their own school.

"We had a life changing experience leaving us with the desire to do so much more to enable students at Mnyakanya to access education at all levels. This is an amazing programme which we will work hard to roll out as a whole school initiative."

Amanda Twigg

The St. Mary's staff were warmly welcomed by the staff and pupils at Ntolwane Primary School. On visiting the first classroom of five year olds all forty of the pupils stood up with smiling faces and in unison said: "GOOD MORNING EDUCATORS".

Meeting the Headteacher, Deputy and students at Ntolwane gave the St. Mary's team further insight into how the feeder school could possibly be incorporated into the work of the partnership in the future.

Throughout the visit the four staff were also thrilled to be able to meet more local people and experience traditional Zulu culture in the areas surrounding Mnyakanya High School. They visited a local village that made clay pots and were invited into a 'rondavel' (traditional round, grass topped dwelling) where they were taught how to grind millie meal and make straw mats as well as visiting a schoolgirl's home and meeting her family.

"Even after seeing all the pictures and meeting some of the staff from Mnyakanya High School when they visited St. Mary's, I really didn't know what it would be like. But I needn't have been nervous at all. It's hard to talk without it sounding like a cliché, but I have never experienced anything like it in my life. The students were an absolute joy to work with. Our small focus group was incredibly excited and enthusiastic the whole time. I would simply urge anyone to go and see it all for themselves!"

Hannah Davies

The visit was a tremendous success as the teachers were able to further enhance relationships with the staff and students at Mnyakanya and Ntolwane, the Eshowe Rotary Club and local people in the area, as well as initiate a new project across both partnership schools. The four members of staff returned to Leeds to begin work on the new *Bambisanani Award*.

August 2010: Sally's Amazing Adventure

Sally Bridgewater is a most remarkable young woman. As a student at St. Mary's she visited Mnyakanya with the school in 2009 and vowed to return at the earliest opportunity. Sally created this opportunity by having a 'gap year' before going on to take her place at Cambridge University. During her gap year she raised funds for her visit to South Africa and funds to support the partnership. Filled with a passion to make a difference in South Africa, Sally reinforced the strong Bambisanani focus of developing Leadership

Skills in her own inimitable way. During her gap year she wrote her own training programme for a four week course for learners from Mnyakanya School to become 'Learning Leaders'.

"I have had a passion for learning how to learn ever since reading Tony Buzan's 'Mind Set' series during my GCSE's. Buzan provides answers to the fundamental questions which schools often forget to ask; how does my brain work and how can I use it best? Once students are equipped with some basic learning tools, they can apply them to any area of knowledge.

Using Buzan's books, I designed a course to develop and enhance the learners' natural memory, note-taking and study skills. In the final week we would focus more on leadership skills and how to teach others how to use their brains. I knew I was being very ambitious and idealistic, but I didn't expect just how much I would have to adapt my plans."

Sally set off for South Africa in August 2010 but after only three days at Mnyakanya, there was a national Public Servants strike which involved teachers in all schools. Faced with a potential disaster following a year of preparations, Sally's own leadership skills were utilised to the full due to the circumstances. All schools were closed but Sally was determined to teach her 'Learning Leadership Course' to any learners who were prepared to listen. Sally found a venue to deliver her course; a tiny Lutheran Church that she described as a 'haven'.

"In some ways the strike made things harder, but also better. For example, the school authorities were unable to help me to enforce attendance, so while one day I would teach eight learners, another day only three would come. But at least I could be certain that the ones who did turn up were truly dedicated. During what was potentially an extended holiday, they walked for four hours a day just to hear what I had to say. Their commitment to learning is an inspiration and a privilege to experience.

Twenty five learners and members of the wider community participated in the course: Nompumelelo Cele, Sabelo Dlamini, Mthokozisi Dlamuka, Ignatia Dladla, Nokulunga Gcaba, Anele Hlongwane, Nduh Khanyile, Philani Khuzwayo, Msawenkosi Kwanyile, Mbali Magwaza, Phumzile Magwaza, Ndumiso Maphumulo, Alex Mzobe, Andile Nala, Nokwanda Nala, Jabulile Ndawonde, Sanele Ndwandwe, Neliswa Ntuli, Nkululeko

Nzuza, Nosipho Shange, Lamlile Shezi, Sphosethu Sthole, Kwanda Zakwe, Thobile Nsibande and Sabelo Ntombela.

Despite everything, we got all the way through my planned course. I am tremendously grateful for how hard my team worked to assimilate all the strange new concepts I threw at them, which were very far removed from the traditional educational methods used in South Africa. The strike ended three days before the end of my visit, which in a way was an even bigger challenge than the strike itself had been. The teachers were desperately trying to work out how to cover all the missed work before exams started in November – most of them had not even met me yet and didn't know why I wanted to take their learners from their precious lesson time to work on a mysterious 'Learning Leadership' project. Yet even amidst the chaos, we managed to create and perform a 'showcase', which we gave on the last day to the two youngest Grades. We provided entertainment (I tried out my new Zulu-dancing skills), and I presented each Learning Leader with a T shirt, letter and gift. But my proudest moment came during the drama, when we had our chance to explain to the other Mnyakanya learners what the Learning Leaders were all about. Watching my students speak up loudly and confidently before the crowd, articulating and explaining foreign concepts better than I ever had – there isn't a word to describe how good that felt."

In her final days with her 'Learning Leaders', Sally got them to formulate and articulate their vision for the future:

We, the Learning Leaders, wish to see a future at Mnyakanya High School where:

- all learners **enjoy** learning
- all learners **respect** each other, their education and their brain's limitless potential
- all learners have **confidence** in their ability to learn
- there is a **positive learning environment** in which learners are encouraged to ask questions and contribute their ideas
- the development of **learning and leadership** skills is an integrated part of the school curriculum
- all learners **pass their exams**

Sally was described by Assistant Principal of Mnyakanya, William Vilakazi, as “.....*the most incredible young lady I have ever met. Her vision, determination and sheer bravery has to be seen to be believed. My learners, educators and I have found her to be an inspiration. We are all better people for knowing her. The world needs people like Sally.*”

Most significantly, working with local businessmen and Bambisanani supporter Graham Chennells, Sally has established a programme that can be followed by other gap year students who wish to work at Mnyakanya and indeed other projects in the Eshowe/Nkandla area. Graham has agreed to arrange accommodation and transport during such visits.

Before leaving South Africa for the UK, Sally also found time to travel to Soweto in Johannesburg to teach music!

David Geldart, like William, was immensely proud of Sally:

“As a teacher, it is has been my great privilege to work with some truly remarkable students over the years. In all that time, I have never met anyone quite like Sally. When she joined the St. Mary’s Sixth Form three years ago, she was a shy student who lacked confidence in her own ability. The South African experience helped shine a light on her remarkable talents and she has grown rapidly since that time. Sally is not just a leader, she is a pioneer, a truly amazing person, who has gained the highest respect from students and teachers alike in both countries. Her humility and humanity cause many to reflect on their own lives. At the age of nineteen, she has achieved more than some people will achieve in a lifetime.”

In September 2010, Sally was nominated for the Young Person of the Year Award in the UK.

To learn more about Sally’s story see *Sally’s Amazing Adventure* produced by Bambisanani Publishing.

October 2010: Jewell donates rare signed football shirts from Manchester United and Celtic

Ex professional footballer, now football manager, Paul Jewell generously donated two prize possessions from his Testimonial Year to raise money

for the Bambisanani Partnership. Paul, whose daughter Alex visited South Africa as a member of the St. Mary's Sixth Form in July 2010, donated football shirts from Manchester United and Celtic signed by all the players in the 1998-99 season. The Manchester United signed shirt is from their most successful season ever when they won the European Cup, FA Cup and the Premier League title. The Celtic shirt represents the famous Henrik Larsson era. The shirts were professionally framed for auction by *Art Works* in Otley, at no charge, in order to support the work of the partnership.

November 2010: Death of Sbonelo

November saw the death of Mnyakanya student Sbonelo Magwaza after a short illness. Sbonelo was an outstanding young man who had successfully completed the Bambisanani Leadership course with St. Mary's students. During the summer 2010 visit Sbonelo led an amazing and emotional FIFA World Cup 'Waka Waka' group dance event in the School Hall. Both communities were devastated by the news of his death and in consultation with Sbonelo's family have agreed to introduce the *Sbonelo Magwaza Award for Outstanding Leadership* in both schools to be presented annually. The memory of Sbonelo will live on inspiring and motivating others for generations to come.

December 2010: Diana Award for St. Mary's students dedicated to Sbonelo

The students who visited South Africa in the previous July: Rebecca Harrison, Alex Jewell, Tom Loughlin, Lorna O'Sullivan, Lisa Melvin, Isabelle Scott, Kate Shelly, Sam Thomas, Alex Threapleton, Phoebe Tyrie, Chris Whiteley and Kim Wu received the prestigious Princess Diana Certificate of Excellence for their "*remarkable and inspiring work in Kwa Zulu Natal*".

Maggie Turner, Chief Executive of the Diana Award said:

"The Certificate of Excellence acknowledges groups of young people in the UK who deserve to be publicly recognised for the outstanding contributions they make to their communities. The recipients will motivate and inspire everyone with their stories about their unique contributions to society. The Bambisanani Partnership epitomises the new Diana Award for Excellence with the young people involved going the "extra mile" to make a difference for others."

Speaking on behalf of the group Sam Thomas said, *“It is a great honour to receive this award and we would like to dedicate it to our friend, and outstanding young leader, Sbonelo Magwaza from Mnyakanya who died recently.”*

December 2010: Bambisanani Enterprises branch out

This was a busy time for Bambisanani Enterprises. For the previous six months the group consisting of Alice Duggan, Charlotte Armitage, Callum Ronan, Kavindu Appuhamy, Olivia Metcalfe, Mairenn Collins, Ed Knox, Ben Allan and Adam Vorley had worked on two specific ideas. Firstly, to design a multipurpose greetings card that by definition could be used for any occasion from Christmas to Birthdays and Anniversaries. The students, with support from Liz Robertson, had the cards commercially produced.

Secondly, the group developed the idea of Bambisanani Gifts where you buy a present for someone but the actual present goes to support education at Mnyakanya. Recipients get a special Bambisanani Card telling them that a gift has been bought for them and that the gift is helping make a difference for a child at Mnyakanya. More than thirty gift possibilities were made available at different prices ranging from £5 (pencil case and pens for a student) to £1000 (supporting a student into Higher Education). Examples of other gifts include football (£10), library book (£15) and sponsoring an orphan into school for a year (£50). As with Bambisanani Cards the idea is that the gifts could be bought for different occasions throughout the year. Bambisanani Enterprises board members launched the two new products to the whole St. Mary’s staff before presenting to students groups. Acting Headteacher Catherine McMahon said:

“Bambisanani Enterprises is just wonderful; the students are learning so many valuable skills in the process.”

December 2010: Christmas Messages between schools

Over the past few years the two schools have developed the tradition of forwarding a Christmas message to each other. The messages are indicative of the closeness and warmth of the Partnership:

Christmas message to the Mnyakanya School Community from St. Mary's

As I write this message to my friends at Mnyakanya the temperature is below freezing here in the UK. St. Mary's School has had to close today because of exceptionally high levels of snow. So I think of my friends in South Africa and feel warm.

Christmas is a time for us all to reflect on our lives and our contribution to others. I am reminded at this time of a wonderful quote from the American Civil Rights Leader, Martin Luther King:

Life's most important question is: What are you doing for others?

Sadly, there are many aspects of life that have become more selfish over the years. The Bambisanani Partnership is about two communities working together and learning from each other. This spirit of mutual respect and support continues to grow as our work develops. It is hard to believe that it is almost five years since my first visit to Mnyakanya. I remember how warmly I was welcomed by the Mnyakanya and wider community. I made friends on that visit that are friends today and will be friends forever. The amazing educators and learners from Mnyakanya are never far from my thoughts. I am so proud of what the Bambisanani Partnership has achieved - we have achieved it together. Both communities have learned so much from each other. All the students in my school have the utmost respect for you. They have learned so much from your determination and commitment to learning. They have learned so much from you particularly how you look after people in the community, especially the young, old and the vulnerable. You are inspiring my learners and my educators.

How pleased I was to hear that the Library and Sports Area opened this year. I hope both are being well used, developing healthy bodies and healthy minds. I am delighted that you continue to develop amazing young leaders. I am proud of the fact that young leaders from St. Mary's and Mnyakanya work together so effectively. This is the spirit of Bambisanani - working together hand in hand. The World Cup competition you organised this year sounded amazing. I loved the photographs of you with the 'World Cup'.

Thank you so much for looking after my educators and learners that visited you this year. They all returned home more thoughtful and better people for the experience. They talk about you all the time. Thank you for doing so much for us. You possibly do not realise how much your kindness and friendship means to us.

You will be aware that a young man called Laurie McCauley, from the St. Mary's wider community, died this year aged 31. You may also be aware that Laurie's parents have donated his much loved collection of football shirts from around the world to serve as a source of learning for Mnyakanya learners. His parents have heard so much about Mnyakanya School and would like Laurie to be remembered in such a positive way. His parents are going to donate an annual prize for the best piece of research and writing based on the wonderful collection of international football shirts. They would like this to be known as Laurie's Legacy. They would like to donate another prize for the most improved footballer as Laurie once won such an award and was so proud of it. Again this would form part of Laurie's Legacy - Laurie's name living on to inspire learners in the Mnyakanya community. I hope that you will respect the wishes of Laurie's parents and embrace Laurie's Legacy. His parents would also like to donate some books for the library. Laurie loved literature and studied it at University.

I was deeply saddened to hear of the death of Sbonelo Magwaza. My community felt your pain and we said special prayers for Sbonelo at St. Mary's. My educators and learners worked with Sbonelo on the Bambisanani Leadership Programme and were devastated by the news. He was a wonderful young man who will be sadly missed. I believe that his name should live on at Mnyakanya and that he should continue to inspire young leaders for generations to come. To that end we have consulted with Sbonelo's family and would like to create an annual award for outstanding leadership in his name - The Sbonelo Magwaza Award for Outstanding Leadership.

With Laurie and Sbonelo we are united in grief. We will not forget them and their legacy will be to inspire others.

Speaking of the visit, it is my intention to lead the party of St. Mary's educators and learners to Mnyakanya in 2011. It will be three years since my last visit and I have missed you all. I am looking forward to it very much.

I look forward to joint learning projects taking place with learners from both schools over the next year.

So at this Christmas time the St. Mary's community and I are thinking of you. We pray that God will watch over you and look after you.

Continue to seek opportunities to do things for others.

May God bless you all at this holy time.

David

Christmas message to the St. Mary's School Community from Mnyakanya

Christmas season means a time to care, love, share and enjoy with best friends. It is a great time to remember all the happy memories that have gone by. We have been sharing all our good, bad and ugly feelings since we met over the past five years.

Bambisanani Partnership has opened many closed doors and opportunities for two schools. Our school community have benefited in many ways through our partnership.

Our learners can now compete in different sports codes on a new multi-use sports area and access information in the new library and in our new computer hub. Orphans are like any other learners with mother and father because of the school uniform you provide annually for them. All I have mentioned is through the Bambisanani Partnership. Our partnership has a tremendous impact in Mnyakanya's community.

I won't forget the little individual gifts you gave us. We know very well that they are minor to you but great to us. We truly appreciate them and thank you once again for that; they make a huge difference in our lives.

Your staff members and students who visited us the past five years have demonstrated commitment, passion and professionalism in all aspects of life. During the hot weather of South Africa they displayed talent and all qualities of a good leader; you are all stars to me, keep up the good work.

We also thank you the way you welcomed and treated us during our first Bambisanani trip to UK in 2009. If you were not on our side we wouldn't have visited you. It was enjoyable, successful and we experienced many things. Although it was challenging to us we learned so much from you.

We have also been through difficult times with you this year but remember that "unity is the power". You demonstrated it. The death of Sbonelo Magwaza touched both schools but sometimes we need to accept things as they are. We thank you for the condolences and we heard of the special prayers you said at St. Mary's for him. Some of you who visited us this year will remember him well leading the group dancing "FIFA World Cup Waka Waka dance" in our school hall.

We were also saddened to hear of the death of Laurie McCauley from your community, his loss again touched us in Mnyakanya, even if we didn't meet with him but his work is known to us. We would like to thank the McCauley's for donating his much loved collection of football shirts from around the world and we will use them as incentives of learning in our school. We also appreciate the annual prizes and books they are going to donate in order for Laurie to be remembered in a positive way. I can assure the McCauley's that we will respect their wishes and embrace Laurie's legacy. May Laurie and Sbonelo's souls rest in peace.

It was also wonderful to be visited by Sally Bridgewater this year, she taught us new learning techniques which helped our learners a lot during the final examination to use their brains effectively. It was unbelievable and amazing to see a brave and energetic young lady who continued with her work while we were on public servants strike. She really inspired many of our learners. I am not forgetting your female educators, who also visited Mnyakanya. They taught us to be self- confident, to be strong and to be positive in life.

Your strength, patience, love, support and especially your time has made us better people.

We are looking forward to seeing David, your staff and your students in 2011.

So at this Christmas time, may you succeed in every step of your way. I hope that we are able to recreate happy memories in years to come.

Viva Bambisanani, long live Bambisanani Partnership.

Have a happy Christmas and happy New Year. May God bless you all.

William

January 2011: Students prepare for 2012

Places for the July 2012 visit to South Africa were massively oversubscribed by students. The standard of application was extremely high and the following students were offered places: Hannah Armitage, George Barber, Ruth Bevan, Joseph Doonan, Marek Haluszczak, Ryan Houston, Natalie Meachin, Beth Pounder, Holly Charles, Maisie Sammon, Declan Smith, Liam Ward, Cait Hanstock and Emma Williams. The students immediately began their fundraising and education programme in preparation for the 2012 visit which will take place just before the start of the Olympic Games.

February 2011: William Vilakazi elected Chair of Nkandla Connecting Classrooms initiative

Following the sad death of Dumisani Zunga, Principal of Magqama High School, William Vilakazi was elected as Chair and Cluster Co-ordinator of the Nkandla Connecting Classrooms initiative. Nkandla has six schools involved in the initiative: Mnyakanya High, Magqama High, Emthungweni High, Ntolwane Primary, Halambu Primary and Khomo Primary.

Dumisani had played a crucial role in developing the Connecting Classrooms initiative at the British Council Conference in Kenya in July 2009 with David Geldart, Jenny Hill, Paul Appiah and Tony Moodley. In the first year of the Connecting Classrooms project, Dumisani had made an outstanding start in engaging schools in his local community as well as developing international links with schools in Leeds and Ghana.

February 2011: Guiseley Gig

Thirteen year old Bambisanani Enterprises Board member, Mairenn Collins, organised a concert in aid of the partnership. Mairenn demonstrated tremendous leadership and maturity by booking recording artist, singer song writer, Emily Maguire to perform at the event. With support from her father Tim, Mairenn organised and coordinated every aspect of the event; artist, venue, publicity and marketing. The evening was a tremendous success with over one hundred people enjoying Emily's performance.

Mairenn was delighted with the evening which raised almost £400 for the partnership, *"Emily is my favourite artist, she has a beautiful voice and writes thought provoking music. It was wonderful that Emily and her bassist, Christian Dunham, were prepared to play for us. I learned so much from organising the event and I was so pleased that everyone enjoyed it."*

David Geldart had nothing but praise for Mairenn, *"I cannot quite believe a thirteen year old student could organise such an event; there was so much to do and so many factors to consider. Mairenn is a remarkable student. The future of Bambisanani is assured with such talented and enterprising young people willing to make a difference."*

February 2011: Bambisanani at 'Achieving the Impossible' Conference

David Geldart and William Vilakazi were invited to give a joint presentation of the work of the Bambisanani Partnership at the prestigious Youth Sport Trust Sports College Conference. The title of the conference was 'Achieving the Impossible'. Lisa McHendry of the Youth Sport Trust said *"The presentation was inspirational and gave delegates a wonderful insight into the outstanding Bambisanani Partnership which is having a significant impact on learners and educators in both countries. Both schools have achieved what many thought was impossible."*

For William this was his first ever International conference. William said, *"It was an honour to represent my country at this important event. It was great*

to tell our story to people from around the world and to have such a warm and enthusiastic response.”

For David the event was particularly significant: *“The fact that we were asked to do a joint presentation was really important to the partnership. The Youth Sport Trust was instrumental in starting our partnership and has provided tremendous support. They worked so hard to ensure that William could be at the conference. Five years on from those first steps who would have thought that we would be sharing our work on such an important stage. I am delighted that people are interested in what we do, in how we do it and why we do it. The conference has given us the opportunity to reflect on the past and also to consider where we go in the future.”*

March 2011: Partner schools go to South Africa

Inspired by the Bambisanani Partnership, teachers from two Leeds schools, Sarah Lanforth from Beechwood Primary and Sue Keating from Corpus Christi College, together with two teachers from Ghana visited South Africa as part of the Connecting Classrooms initiative; the *Noboa Project*. During the visit they spent time at Mnyakanya School and saw firsthand the impact of the Bambisanani Partnership. Sarah and Sue also visited the other five schools in the Nkandla Connecting Classrooms cluster to gain an understanding of the schools, their contexts and to discuss joint learning projects with teachers.

“It was amazing! It was an exhilarating and hectic schedule with six school visits and the planning meeting plus a wonderful visit to the Zuma homestead to meet with the first lady of South Africa.

Everyone was amazingly friendly, especially the children, and I don't think I have ever felt so welcomed and been made to feel so special. We were treated to displays of singing (incredible voices with no musical accompaniment), Zulu dancing, school tours and lesson observations.

An aspect of the visit that I had not expected was the stories of the teachers. We met teachers that were hugely dedicated, who only saw their own families in the holidays or possibly at weekends.

The Noboa project, as we refer to it, linking schools in Leeds, Ghana and South Africa, has been able to build on the success of the Bambisanani Partnership. It was fantastic to have representatives from three different countries sitting round a table together discussing best practice ideas for teaching and learning. Through our increasing communication and collaborative planning the project is becoming more firmly embedded in the curriculum of the schools involved, transforming the teaching of Geography and other aspects of the curriculum into something more real, relevant, motivating and exciting.

This project has had a tremendous impact in my own school giving a real context to our work on South Africa, Ghana and the once difficult concept of global citizenship. It has given my students something real and exciting to discuss with their families and has opened up a world that was previously much more closed. In the past Seacroft was the extent of our pupils' understanding of community: with each year of this project the impact for our own pupils is enhanced and the effect of this will only be fully realised in years to come.

It was a real privilege to visit South Africa and I am inspired to extend the project.”

Sarah Lanforth

“The visit was a very humbling experience. I was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of both learners and educators, even in the face of the most difficult obstacles. Learners who so value their education, that they walk miles each day to get to school and then work diligently, sometimes until the early evening, are truly an inspiration. The educators we met were keen to share their lessons with us and to listen to feedback from partner colleagues following lesson observations. The visit was an incredible opportunity to share in the culture and aspirations of our partner schools. I thank our partner schools in Nkandla for their incredible hospitality.”

Sue Keating

March 2011: Student ambassadors meet to plan work between schools

Two students from each of the six schools involved in the Leeds/Bradford Connecting Classrooms cluster: St. Mary's, Corpus Christi College,

Challenge High, Beechwood Primary, St. Nicholas Primary and St. Mary's Primary came together to discuss ideas for joint learning projects with partner schools in South Africa and Ghana. The event was hosted by Sarah Lanforth at Beechwood Primary School who had just returned from a visit to South Africa.

Building on the previous year's focus of *'Uniting through Sport'* the student ambassadors discussed ideas based on promoting *'Health'* through active lifestyles and diet. The students propose to share playground and local games, dances, recipes and food diaries.

The students demonstrated tremendous enthusiasm for devising the learning projects and their leadership roles. At the same time similar meetings were taking place in both Ghana and South Africa, again with students taking a lead role in proposing projects to improve children's health across all three countries; these ideas forming the basis of collaborative learning projects for the Noboa Project in the year ahead.

March 2011: Kwa Zulu Natal Education Minister visits St. Mary's.

Senzo Mchunu, Minister for Education for Kwa Zulu Natal visited St. Mary's whilst on a fact-finding tour to Leeds, organised by the Leeds City Council International Relations team. At the school the Minister met board members of *Bambisanani Enterprises* and students preparing to visit South Africa as well as attending a range of lessons where he was clearly impressed with what he saw.

"I had heard so much about St. Mary's and the Bambisanani Partnership before my visit. What is evident is that St. Mary's 'walks the walk as well as talking the talk'. There are so many aspects of teaching and learning from St. Mary's that I intend to explore further. Sport is a key feature in the life of this highly successful school. Developing young leaders through all aspects of school life is fascinating as is the genuine commitment to global learning. The Bambisanani Partnership is simply magnificent, it is much more than an international school link; it is achieving real global learning in both schools and is inspiring others in the process.

St. Mary's is a wonderful place of learning. The enthusiasm of the educators is mirrored by the learners. My visit has been a most positive

experience and I look forward to remaining in contact with the school and indeed to meeting St. Mary's educators and learners in South Africa."

Senzo Mchunu, Minister for Education, Kwa Zulu Natal

March 2011: Sir Trevor Brooking receives Bambisanani Award

Sir Trevor Brooking, FA Director of Football, has been a long term supporter of the Bambisanani Partnership. Whilst on a visit to St. Mary's to formally open a new football facility the former West Ham and England star was presented with the Bambisanani Award Certificate by Year 8 student and Bambisanani Enterprises board member Mairenn Collins.

Sir Trevor said, "St. Mary's is an outstanding Sports College which is using sport in a variety of ways to realise wider educational aims and improve the quality of people's lives. The school's work in South Africa is an exceptional example of this. I am delighted to support this remarkable initiative."

Whilst at St. Mary's Sir Trevor donated two signed replica shirts from his FA Cup wins in 1975 and 1980 to raise funds for the Bambisanani Partnership.

April 2011: Return to South Africa

Following an invitation from the Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Education, David Geldart returned to South Africa to evaluate the work of the partnership and initiate further developments. During his time in South Africa, David held review and development meetings with all stake holders associated with Mnyakanya School including: local Zulu Chiefs, Governors, Senior Management, Department of Education Advisor and students. Meetings also took place with local primary schools from the Connecting Classrooms partnership.

The Zulu community went to great lengths to welcome David back following a three year absence. They praised the work of the partnership and St. Mary's commitment to the project. Community members referred to the physical, psychological and emotional impact of the partnership and all

agreed that the partnership was making a remarkable difference and that everyone concerned should strive to reach the next level.

It was agreed that developing young leaders should remain a key focus of the partnership. The importance of developing literacy skills with reference to reading and writing in English was discussed at length and it was agreed to develop further the idea of *Literacy Leaders* who could support the teaching of English at both Mnyakanya and local primary schools. It is important to note that whilst English is a second language for Zulu children their examinations in all subjects are eventually taken in English. The importance of developing good English skills early in Zululand schools had been a point well made to David by his colleagues Sarah Lanforth, Lisa Newton and Hannah Davies following their visits to South Africa.

The importance of developing significant joint learning projects at St. Mary's and Mnyakanya was accepted as a key element of the partnership going forward. Discussions took place about a possible joint art and writing project based on the theme of the *Power of Sport*. It was agreed to launch and support competitions in both schools with the best work to be included in a book to be produced just before the start of the 2012 Olympic Games. In a subsequent meeting, Eshowe Rotary Club agreed to support the competitions at Mnyakanya with funding for materials and expertise.

During his visit David was able to see first-hand new facilities at Mnyakanya that had been inspired by the partnership including the Multi Use Games Area, Computer Lab and Bambisanani Library. In the library students spoke of their joy of being able to access books for general interest and study. When asked about what type of additional books they would like to see in the library, students were very clear and remarkably consistent in their responses. Three key areas of interest emerged in the following order of priority. Firstly, books about the rest of the world, particularly the UK, Yorkshire and Leeds. Secondly, books to support all areas of academic study particularly Science, Maths, English and Business Studies. Thirdly, books on sport, particularly football, netball and the Olympic Games.

David also visited Eshowe High School to explore the possibility of this well resourced school becoming involved in the partnership. At a meeting with Principal, Andre van Schakayk and his Deputy, Hedimarie Bentley, David explained the aims of the Bambisanani Partnership and the benefits that St. Mary's had gained from working with Mnyakanya. David offered Andre four

places for his students on the St. Mary's Leadership course in July at Mnyakanya. During the same visit Andre invited St. Mary's students to attend lessons at Eshowe and meet with members of his student Rotary group. Andre also invited Mnyakanya to the annual Eshowe School football tournament. An important link was established with Eshowe High School which has tremendous potential for the future.

Whilst in Eshowe, David visited Umfolozi College, a vocational skills centre, offering courses in bricklaying, carpentry, garment making, plumbing, agriculture and computing. The college also provides accommodation and 90% of people that complete the three month courses manage to find employment. Graham Chennells, who was instrumental in establishing the college, outlined possible ways that Mnyakanya students could access the courses. Graham subsequently invited William Vilakazi, from Mnyakanya to the college to make him aware of possibilities and also agreed to continue discussions with David with regard to potential Bambisanani bursaries.

In another possible development for the Bambisanani Partnership, Graham introduced David to Silvia Hellesvik and Nick Phillips of the Norwegian based charity Zulufadder. Zulufadder supports and cares for HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children by providing schools, orphanages, homes, daycare, food, clothing and educational resources. David was invited to an amazing orphanage and daycare centre and discussed a range of possible links between the work of Zulufadder and the Bambisanani Partnership, particularly leadership and volunteering opportunities.

In further meetings with Graham Chennells, David discussed the possibility of developing bespoke volunteering opportunities in Zululand for adults associated with the St. Mary's community. Graham agreed to coordinate all arrangements in South Africa including transport, accommodation, meals and the particular volunteering experiences required on a non-profit basis. The intention is that programmes will be flexible and unique to the requirements of the individuals or groups involved. David and Graham agreed to pursue this exciting extension to the partnership by creating volunteering opportunities for adults who may wish to make a difference in South Africa.

As his time in South Africa came to an end David reflected on the progress made. *"For all the right reasons I have not been to South Africa for the past three years in order to give my colleagues the opportunity. I probably left it too long between visits and recognise that real development meetings*

cannot easily be achieved when you are responsible for a group of students. The visit has reinforced the vital nature of meeting face to face and developing personal relationships in this type of partnership. All this takes time, particularly in Zulu culture where trust, understanding, respect and friendship must come before agendas, targets, outcomes and performance indicators. How refreshing this is once you start to see the world through African and not European eyes. The developments agreed this week could not have been achieved by phone or by email, they have taken considerable 'African time' but this has been time well spent. Our project will move on significantly because of this visit. The advent of new joint learning projects with Mnyakanya, developing Literacy Leaders, linking with Ntolwane Primary School, creating volunteering opportunities for adults, engaging with Eshowe High School, Umfolozi College and Zulufadder all offer added dimensions to our work, many of which will be included in our July visit."

The importance of the visit was acknowledged and appreciated by all associated with the partnership.

"I am continually amazed by David's passion and personal commitment to this project. This passion, as seen on this visit, will certainly infuse the necessary spark required to take such demanding and important work forward. It is the kind of passion that can inspire and galvanise others into supporting and developing the partnerships forged. The additional links established on the visit offer tremendous promise."

Tony Moodley, Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Education

May 2011: European partner schools show interest in Bambisanani Partnership

For many years St. Mary's has been involved with the British Council's *Comenius* project aimed at developing knowledge and understanding of European culture, language and diversity. The initiative promotes the development of life skills, active citizenship and lifelong learning. St. Mary's is engaged in collaborative learning projects with schools from Spain, Poland, Ireland, Sicily, Belgium and Germany.

In recent years, visiting schools to St. Mary's have been given the opportunity to learn about the Bambisanani Partnership. This session has

proved extremely popular with European schools and a presentation is now always requested. Many of the schools have asked how they can support the partnership.

The Comenius group of schools meet regularly and at one such meeting, teachers from Sicily suggested to European colleagues that at their next meeting St. Mary's could give a presentation about the work of the Bambisanani Partnership. This was agreed and a St. Mary's team was invited to speak at the next Comenius conference, held in Belfast.

Supported by the St. Mary's Comenius representative Alison Mastin, teacher Barbara Pounder and student Sam Thomas, who had both visited South Africa in July 2010, gave an outstanding presentation highlighting what life is like for one of South Africa's poorest communities and the impact of the Bambisanani Partnership at both St. Mary's and Mnyakanya. Barbara and Sam stressed the learning opportunities for all concerned in such a partnership.

Delegates were full of praise for the achievements of the partnership and it was agreed to explore possibilities of the Comenius partnership collectively supporting and engaging with the Bambisanani Partnership in the future.

July 2011: St. Mary's team makes great strides in South Africa

This visit of four staff and fourteen students was led by David Geldart supported by Lucy Watson from St. Mary's, Peter Latham from Prince Henry's School, Otley and Mick Russell, HSBC Premier Manager. The students were: George Brabin, Georgina Byrne, Jamie Carter, Jessica Connolly, Eleanor English, Torquil Hall, Freya Kew, Ciara Hanstock, Harry Minchella, Robert Neesam, Brogan O'Connor, Gemma Pennock, Patrick Smith and Alessandra Valle-Metaxes.

A key aspect of this year's visit was to develop a relationship with the well resourced and highly successful Eshowe High School situated approximately an hour away from Mnyakanya. To that end, four students from Eshowe were invited to join the Bambisanani Leadership programme for the week with St. Mary's and Mnyakanya students. Chesslyne Lucas, Hilary Walker, Wendy Mchunu and Nkosikhona Mthebu joined the team and added a very positive, new dimension to the project.

During the visit the St. Mary's students, supported by the Eshowe students, mentored twenty Mnyakanya students on the Bambisanani Leadership Course. An aspect of the course was for students from all three schools to jointly organise and deliver a Multi-Skill Sports Festival and a Literacy Festival for four local primary schools.

The mentoring programme was a tremendous success, as were both festivals. Students from St. Mary's, Eshowe and Mnyakanya taught reading and sports skills to over sixty children from Ntolwane, Halambu, Khomo and Kwamanqondo Primary Schools at a festival on the final day of the visit.

Ntolwane teacher Moses Xulu hailed the work of the St. Mary's, Eshowe and Mnyakanya students, *"What we have witnessed today in the Literacy and Sports Festivals is almost beyond words. The primary school learners have been inspired, as have their educators, by the young leaders. It is difficult to express the importance of being able to speak and read English and the young leaders have been so effective; the use of sport to reinforce language development is fantastic. If I had not seen the events of today I would not have believed it. It was wonderful to see the St. Mary's, Eshowe and Mnyakanya students working so well together; they are a powerful team, so mature, confident and effective. This initiative is amazing."*

The intention is that the young leaders from Mnyakanya will continue to work with Ntolwane and the other primary schools to support the teaching of both reading and sports skills. The extensive sports and reading materials provided by the St. Mary's community and sponsors for the festivals were left with the primary schools. It is hoped that the leaders from Mnyakanya will ultimately support adults in the community who would like to learn to read.

The development and progress of the Mnyakanya students during the leadership course was outstanding. Bambisanani Leadership Awards were duly presented to the following students at a special ceremony by their student mentors from St. Mary's and Eshowe: Celumusa Mhlongo, Ngiphile Buthelezi, Sihle Nzuzza, Nomfundo Nzuzza, Nothando Khanyile, Nokulunga Sikhakhane, Sakhiseni Ndlovu, Samkelisiwe Mabaso, Nomalanga Zuma, Nokuphila Mpanza, Ntombifuthi Thusi, Nokukhanya Buthelezi, Kwanele Mahlashama, Mfundo Magwaza, Snenhlanhla Khanyile, Sifiso Gcaba, Nombuyiselo Nzuzza, Lungile Mthethwa, Simphiwe Ndlovu and Snethemba Mkhize.

Speaking on behalf of the Mnyakanya student leaders, Nokulunga Sikhakhane said, *“We are so proud to be Bambisanani Leaders. We have learned many things about leadership and we now have the confidence and motivation to do more in our community. We have loved working with the St. Mary’s and Eshowe students and learning from each other.”*

The impact of the experience on the Eshowe students was also interesting and most significant. *“This week has been a real eye-opener for me. I was not aware of Mnyakanya School before this and the rural area where it is situated. I have learned so much about my own country and the day to day challenges that some people face. I am so proud of what we all achieved together at the festivals. It has been a fantastic opportunity for all of us.”*
Wendy Mchunu

“This week has been the best week of my life. I have learned so much about leadership, mentoring and the importance of teaching literacy in rural communities. I have also learned how important sport can be in bringing people together. I have made some wonderful friends and I have been inspired. My outlook on life has been changed by all of this.”
Chesslyne Lucas

Whilst at Mnyakanya, St Mary’s students also taught a range of subjects and activities to students including: Chemistry, Biology, Maths, Economics, Psychology, English, Dance, Football and Cricket. In one after school session more than two hundred Mnyakanya students (25% of the school population!) stayed behind for extra lessons provided by St. Mary’s students. This is even more remarkable as many of the Mnyakanya students walk more than two hours to and from school each day.

The St. Mary’s team brought with them much needed equipment for Mnyakanya School including books for the Bambisanani Library opened a year ago, calculators, stationery and resources for art, science, sport and health education. St. Mary’s supports forty individual orphans at Mnyakanya and these students were provided with the uniforms and equipment they need for the year ahead.

William Vilakazi from Mnyakanya said, *“The Bambisanani Partnership continues to inspire with the young leaders making a most remarkable impression. The joint learning projects that we are developing in art and creative writing using sport are fantastic and are raising the aspirations of young people from both communities. The Library opened last year is an amazing resource for my learners and educators. The Library will support*

the development of 'Literacy Leaders' which has been introduced on this visit. The young leaders developed through this programme continue to make a significant impact at Mnyakanya and increasingly in the wider community. The orphans supported by St. Mary's are all thriving and taking full advantage of the opportunity that they have been given."

In a new venture for St. Mary's, the team also developed the relationship with the Norwegian based charity 'Zulufadder' at one of its orphanages a few miles from the town of Eshowe. Zulufadder is a small organisation that supports and cares for AIDS orphans and vulnerable children throughout Kwa Zulu Natal. The St. Mary's team brought a range of equipment for the orphans and spent time singing, dancing and playing sport with the children as well as serving meals. They also met Zulufadder staff and volunteers including the incomparable Popi, a Zulu lady who has devoted her life to working with orphans. She is the Playschool Manager and personifies devotion, dedication and enthusiasm. Popi had a profound effect on the St. Mary's team causing them all to reflect on and discuss her significance as a genuine role model and inspiration compared to the so called celebrity role models that many people admire in the UK.

The group also had the opportunity to meet two other inspirational people: Nick Phillips, Managing Director of the Zulufadder Children's Trust, and Silvia Hellesvik who had moved from her native Norway to become Zulufadder's Project Manager. Nick praised the work of the Bambisanani Partnership and welcomed a link with Zulufadder. *"The pioneering work that the Bambisanani Partnership is doing developing young leaders in South Africa should not be underestimated. You are making a bigger difference than you think. The fruits of your labours may continue to emerge for years, which is the nature of developing a leader. You are making a massive impact. You are a tremendous advert for young people. You have caused me to think how Zulufadder might develop young leaders in the future. Zulufadder will always welcome you to South Africa and we look forward to working with you in the future."*

The visit to South Africa clearly had a tremendous impact on the St. Mary's students:

"They say that you should never judge a person until you have walked a mile in their shoes. My time in South Africa has taught me that this is true. I now have a greater understanding and empathy." Gemma Pennock

“This trip was an amazing experience for me. It taught me so much about myself, friendship and the world. The only way we can overcome problems facing the modern world is through creating relationships, like we have done, through partnerships like ours. This is the only way we can make a difference and really change the world.” Ciara Hanstock

“I now fully understand why the Bambisanani Partnership is so important. This visit has been the most rewarding time of my life. It is a spectacular country and the people are so genuine. It has been such an amazing time; my eyes have truly been opened.” Patrick Smith

“Visiting South Africa has been the best experience of my life.” Eleanor English

“This adventure has changed my aims and goals in life. It has made me realise the change one person can make in influencing someone’s life. It has given me a totally different outlook on world issues.” Freya Kew

“My horizons have been broadened. I leave Kwa Zulu Natal with a sense of achievement, knowing that I have gone some way to making a difference. I cannot imagine the full effects of the work we have done because much of what we have done is about giving people skills for the future. For this reason I will definitely go back.” Robert Neesam

“This amazing week has taught me that anyone and everyone can make a difference in the world if they really want to.” Torquil Hall

“The people I met throughout this incredible journey have altered my perspective on life. In our culture we take far too much for granted, constantly wanting more and never appreciating necessities. Those I encountered on this visit were grateful for everything they had. Even though many suffered unimaginable hardships, they managed to lead their lives with the largest smiles on their faces, a quality which I deeply admire and will never forget.” Georgina Byrne

“The visit to South Africa has been the best experience of my life; I have learned an unbelievable amount about South African culture, history and politics. I have learned so much about the importance of leadership and about myself. It has widened my perspective on life. It has given me a greater appreciation of many things especially good health, education and opportunities we simply take for granted.” Brogan O’Connor

“There is one word and one word only that can describe this experience and that is ‘UNBELIEVABLE’. No matter how it is described to you there is no way you can comprehend just how amazing it is unless you do it yourself.” Alessandra Valle-Metaxas

“The experience has been amazing: it has really made me think about the world and about life.” George Brabin

In recent years St. Mary’s has invited colleagues from partner schools to join them in South Africa. Peter Latham joined the team for the 2011 visit which had a profound effect on him.

“I was unsure what to expect and approached the venture with an open mind and heart. I was amazed at what a diverse and beautiful country South Africa is and how open and friendly our hosts and the people of the Zulu nation are. Massive problems exist, especially in the remote areas and it was pleasing to see the infrastructure moving forward in some of these areas. The partnership has moved a long way since its inception in 2006; the pupils of St. Mary’s were quite incredible. Their compassion, friendliness, patience and vision left me agog. The friends they made, the relationships with the South African students and their team work was nothing less than outstanding. They were great ambassadors for their school and country. The lasting impression that I will have is that I think we brought some happiness to the children we worked with and they were so joyful, relaxed and happy in our presence. The orphanage in particular was an incredible experience; so many beautiful, loving and undemanding children who were so pleased to see us. I conclude by saying a huge thank you to St. Mary’s for giving me this opportunity. It was an unbelievable experience and an absolute pleasure to be part of the team. I hope the partnership continues to go from strength to strength.”

David Geldart was delighted with the visit, *“We had a fantastic team and I cannot praise them all enough for what they achieved. My colleagues Lucy, Mick and Peter made the most wonderful and unique contributions and the students responded in ways that continually give me so much faith in young people. We took on a range of new challenges that have really moved the project on. The work on developing literacy was incredibly successful. We have developed links with a range of additional organisations and individuals who we can work with for mutual benefit. This visit also helped establish a range of joint learning projects which both schools will be engaged in over the next year. The possibility of creating adult volunteering*

opportunities in South Africa has also moved a step closer. Without question the partnership has moved on this year, which has created even more opportunities for the future.”

On returning to the UK the fourteen students involved in the visit were nominated for the national Princess Diana Champion Volunteers Award.

August 2011: Mnyakanya play in first football tournament

As a result of the developing relationship between Eshowe High School, Mnyakanya and St. Mary's, Eshowe significantly invited Mnyakanya to play in the annual 7 a side football tournament based at the school. Mnyakanya entered their U16 boys team which included Ngcobo Zakhele, Cebo Bhengu, Nkululeko Khanyile, Jali Bongumusa, Scelo Zungu, Mbesuma Ngcobo Sbongiseni Ndlovu, Ndlovu Mbuyiseni, Zenzele Sithole and Ndlovu Sboniso.

Playing in a kit donated by Bradford City FC, Mnyakanya were unbeaten in the group stage of the competition:

Mnyakanya High v Flexton High 2-1
Eshowe High v Mnyakanya High 0-1
John Ross High v Mnyakanya High 2-3
Mnyakanya High v Richards Bay High 5-0

In the semi-finals Mnyakanya beat Empangeni 2-0 to reach the final. In the final, a physically exhausted Mnyakanya team was beaten by Isandlwana 4-1. It was a remarkable achievement for Mnyakanya to reach the final and this was widely recognised and appreciated by opponents and spectators alike. Indeed it was three Mnyakanya players who were named as the players of the tournament: Bongumusa Jali, Nkululeko Khanyile and Cebo Bhengu.

William Vilakazi was delighted with the team *“They were fully prepared and excited as it was their first time to participate in such a competition, more over to compete with learners of different race on a real pitch. They were committed and as serious as if they play in the World Cup. They told me that they wanted to show their talent in order to be invited again to the competition. We were very proud of our boys' performance, it was amazing. They were really motivated by the exposure of competing with other races at such a high profile event. We thank Eshowe High School so much for*

this wonderful opportunity and hope that we can return next year with more teams.”

The coach of the Mnyakanya team is the school’s Security Guard, Bernard Magwaza who said, “I am so proud of the team; they proved that they have talent. We have gained many ideas from St. Mary’s about football which we tried to put into practice. We trained hard for this competition and played well. We made many friends at the tournament. We gained the respect of our opponents and the spectators. We have grown in confidence; we now know that we can compete at this very high level. The team looked fantastic in the kit donated from Bradford City and I also looked professional in my tracksuit from Manchester United. This has been a great experience and a wonderful opportunity.”

September 2011: Young People of the Year Award for Sally

Ex St. Mary’s student Sally Bridgewater was honoured by gaining second place in the national Young People of the Year Awards at a prestigious ceremony at Peterborough Cathedral. Now studying music at Cambridge University, Sally was described as ‘inspirational’ with her outstanding work in South Africa, India and the UK being highlighted as an exceptional example to others. Also see ‘Sally’s Amazing Adventure’, page?

Interviewed at the event, Sally said, “I’m very pleased and very surprised to gain an award, especially after seeing all the young people who have been nominated. There are some amazing stories. I just wish it did not have to be a competition. Everyone deserved to win.

My journey began a few years ago when Mr Geldart gave an assembly about Mnyakanya School in South Africa. The photos he showed and the stories he told spoke of an amazing place full of hopeful people, but also of harsh poverty. After over a year of raising money I went to South Africa with a team of fourteen sixth-formers. The Bambisanani Partnership left an imprint on each of us – we certainly learnt more than we taught. I knew that somehow I had to go back.

I planned my gap year around helping others through sharing my two main passions: music, and creative ways of learning. I worked in a local classical

music shop to earn enough money to travel to India for two months, and back to South Africa for six weeks. In India I worked for a well-established charity called The Association of People with Disability. Back in the UK I pressed ahead to organise my friends and family to perform in a charity classical music concert to raise money for the Bambisanani Partnership. We used St. Mary's main hall and a team of at least thirty pupil volunteers helped to make the evening a huge success. As I took a bow with my violin I felt this was the best way I had ever used my music.

I had been surprised by how enthusiastically people in India had responded to my learning techniques, so for my return to Mnyakanya High School I decided to prepare and teach my own 'Learning Leadership' course. The aim was to give a small group of students not only the skills necessary to study more effectively, but to teach these skills to others. It proved more challenging than I expected with one of the biggest obstacles being the national strike - all the schools across South Africa were closed for most of the time I was there. But thanks to my friend Jabu, I continued to teach in a tiny church. By the end of the month I watched proudly as my dedicated students presented these new ideas to the rest of the re-opened school.

Whilst in South Africa I also spent time at the Melodi Music Trust in Soweto where I observed how the lives of township teenagers are being changed by learning to play orchestral wind instruments to an astonishingly high level. Without this focus and support many of them would automatically slip into their surrounding social norms, including drugs and violence. The project inspired me to learn to conduct and to continue to build on my music and leadership skills; if I can set up a similar project either in the UK or abroad after I've finished my degree, how many more people could I help?"

As well as continuing to support the Bambisanani Partnership in South Africa, Sally is a volunteer for a Cambridge University student support service and also volunteers with Cambridge Music Education Outreach Service with local youngsters.

David Geldart said, *“She is an inspiration to others and an outstanding role model. I am delighted that her exceptional talents and achievements have been recognised in the Young People of the Year Awards.”*

Sally received a £400 prize as part of her award, half of which she donated to the Bambisanani Partnership.

September 2011: Bambisanani Power of Sport Competition launched

In a major joint learning project between St. Mary’s and Mnyakanya all students at both schools were invited to enter Art and Writing competitions based on the theme of the ‘Power of Sport’. All entries are due by April 2012 with special awards to be presented for the most outstanding work for different age groups in both schools. A book will also be produced to commemorate the competition and celebrate students’ work and the partnership. The competitions are excellent examples of how different curriculum areas can use sport and global awareness to enhance teaching and learning. At St. Mary’s the competition forms part of the *Headteacher’s Challenge* to all curriculum areas to use the Olympic Games to inspire students.

Head of Art and coordinator of the Art Competition Sarah Simpson said, *“The power of sport has always been celebrated through art. This competition will provide St. Mary’s and Mnyakanya students with the exciting opportunity of working together to celebrate what the power of sport means to them through producing a fantastic, inspiring and varied collection of artwork in the run up to the 2012 Olympic Games.”*

English teacher, Nessa Whitehurst, coordinator of the Writing Competition added, *“With the Power of Sport project we encourage students to reflect on the life-changing potential of sport: as a career goal, as an expressive outlet, as a national ambassador and quite often for developing countries as a real opportunity for creating options in their lives where before there were limitations.”*

It is fitting then that we set students the challenge of harnessing such a complex concept into the art of writing; the best work being an expression

of the passion, the energy and the heartache that surrounds sport. Formats for these pieces include personal accounts, formal match reports, profiles of sporting heroes, poetry, newspaper style articles and fictional pieces. The potential is vast.

We anticipate that the end result will be a competition that will not be seen as an in-house task; but instead an international collaboration that will go some way to building in our wonderful young people a sense of awareness, a sense of concern and overall a sense of the responsibility to challenge current world inequality.”

October 2011: Bambisanani Award launched

Following considerable discussion with students and teachers at St. Mary's and Mnyakanya the Bambisanani Award was launched. The award will ultimately be available to all students in both schools at three levels: Bronze/Ithusi, Silver/Isiliva and Gold/Igolde. To gain the awards students have to successfully complete independent learning projects on Leadership, Global Citizenship, Enterprise, Volunteering and Community Engagement.

Students have been very positive about the award and indeed have played a significant role in developing it.

“It was a great experience and privilege to be involved in the development of the Bambisanani Award. Some of my ideas have been taken on board like using the Zulu names for Bronze, Silver and Gold and using a wide variety of ways to assess the learning of individual students.” Callum Ronan

“I have really enjoyed working towards the Bambisanani Award. It has motivated me to learn different things in different ways. I have learned so much about the culture of South Africa. For my project I have researched South African food and cooking. It is great that the award is open to everyone.” Myles Hanlon

Hannah Davies, Bambisanani Award coordinator said *“I think the award is a great chance for students who want to open their minds and do something different, something creative and inspiring out of the classroom.*

So far, the students involved have impressed me with their resourcefulness and independence. They look at things with fresh eyes."

October 2011: Bambisanani Partnership selected for Global Advocate Exhibition

The Leeds Development Education Centre is an educational charity that works in partnership with international development agencies and organisations to raise awareness of sustainable global development issues amongst young people and adults in the UK. The charity, which has an outstanding reputation for developing educational resources, has invited the Bambisanani Partnership to be of part its Global Advocate Exhibition, showcasing inspirational stories of ordinary people who are advocating a more just world. The active learning exhibition will tour schools and also be available on DVD.

"It has been inspiring to hear about a school partnership not based on charity, but on equality, respect and sustainability. There is clearly a deep desire to learn from each other and walk forward together."

Hannah Dalrymple, Awareness for Fairness Coordinator, Leeds Development Education Centre

David Geldart said *"It is an honour to be involved in such an important exhibition and education programme. Part of what we want to do now is to get more schools involved in genuine global learning projects that are sustainable, equitable and effective."*

November 2011: International Diana Award for Bambisanani Partnership

Fourteen students from St. Mary's who visited South Africa in July became the first in the UK to receive the new International Diana Award for their outstanding work developing the Bambisanani Partnership. Students Brogan O'Connor and Torquil Hall travelled to London with teacher Lucy Thornton (nee Watson) and Mick Russell from HSBC to receive the prestigious award on behalf of the rest of the group: George Brabin, Georgina Byrne, Jamie Carter, Jessica Connolly, Eleanor English, Freya

Kew, Ciara Hanstock, Harry Minchella, Robert Neesam, Gemma Pennock, Patrick Smith and Alessandra Valle-Metaxes.

At the British Council Awards Ceremony, held at the HSBC headquarters in Canary Wharf, Maggie Turner, Chief Executive, of the Diana Award said, *“This new award, supported by the HSBC Global Education Programme, will allow us to celebrate the incredible work of young people globally and recognise those that act as a force for good. The Bambisanani Partnership is an outstanding project and the young people from St. Mary’s are exceptional role models: highly motivated, selfless and prepared to make a difference in the most difficult of circumstances. Their work in South Africa is inspirational and perfectly reflects the values of the International Diana Award.”*

Speaking on behalf of the students Brogan added, *“It is an honour to receive this amazing award on behalf of the rest of the team. Teamwork is fundamental to our success in South Africa and we hope that this award encourages teams of students from other schools to work together on global projects. We look forward to hearing about young people from around the world being recognised by this special award.”*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: SCHOOL IMPACT



Making a difference: School Impact

Five years on from the initial visit to South Africa, the Bambisanani Partnership is now firmly embedded in the work of both schools.

The impact of the partnership has gained national and international acclaim. It was both significant and symbolic that half a decade from the start of the partnership, David Geldart and William Vilakazi were invited to speak at the prestigious Youth Sport Trust, Sports College 'Achieving the Impossible' Conference.

At St. Mary's the wide engagement of students and staff has led directly and indirectly to significant whole school change. Ofsted inspectors have been fulsome in their praise of the Bambisanani Partnership with respect to its contribution to developing Leadership, Community Cohesion, Enterprise, Volunteering and the Global Dimension. It is significant that the 'Bambisanani Partnership' features strongly in the school's Development Plan which is indicative of its whole school status.

"The Bambisanani Partnership is a true partnership. It is a genuine reciprocal arrangement with St. Mary's gaining a great deal from the relationship. I am new to St. Mary's, but have been struck by the passion for the project with young people giving their best with their lives changed forever. A phrase we use with our students is 'leadership through service', the partnership does just this. At St. Mary's, we provide an education rooted in Christian values. The partnership enables us to live these values in a way other partnerships do not offer. I believe that we are just at the start of the relationship that will continue to develop links which will last for many years."

Robert Pritchard, Headteacher

"The Bambisanani Partnership is a truly outstanding example of a symbiotic International School collaboration. Issues such as Global Citizenship, Interdependence, Human Rights, Social Justice and Diversity are brought to the fore and have the ability to shift long-held values, attitudes and perceptions. If only more schools could develop partnerships of this calibre, the world would become a much more tolerant place."

Catherine McMahon, Senior Deputy Headteacher

"The Bambisanani Partnership is part of what we are as a school now. It reflects our values and constantly reminds us of the true purpose of education. It is a powerful force that has the potential to make us think and act differently."

David Geldart

The influence and impact of the Bambisanani Partnership led to the review and development of several whole school initiatives at St. Mary's.

The extensive review has resulted in a new whole school Global Dimension Policy. The new policy, entitled *"Many Cultures, One Community"*, sets out a co-ordinated approach to all aspects of International/Global dimension work, outlining the roles and responsibilities of all Faculty and Pastoral areas. Again, inspired by the Bambisanani Partnership, part of the new policy includes a commitment to plan an annual 'International Week' with the normal timetable suspended.

This outstanding commitment to International/Global Dimension work has subsequently resulted in St. Mary's gaining the International Schools Award.

The Bambisanani Partnership has also inspired a whole school approach to developing young leaders in all Faculty areas, which includes some outstanding work by students in teaching, mentoring and coaching roles. Outstanding leadership of young people is recognised and celebrated in Awards Ceremonies for all year groups. This emphasis on developing young leaders at St. Mary's has also led to a new motto for the school – *Leadership through Service*.

Significantly, all Faculty areas at St. Mary's have utilised the Bambisanani Partnership to enhance teaching and learning in particular subjects and to promote Global Citizenship.

The Bambisanani Partnership has taken Enterprise Education to a new level at St. Mary's. The student-led business, Bambisanani Enterprises, has been highly successful in both raising awareness of the partnership and funding. Student volunteers have raised significant funding through a range of activities including whole school events. Board members have been successful at importing Zulu crafts and selling them at a variety of venues. More recently they have developed new aspects of the business including Bambisanani Gifts and Bambisanani Cards. The board members, significantly from different year groups, have been mentored by a number of Bambisanani Business supporters including Andrew Smithurst, Managing Director of Cardinal Maritime who said:

"The board members of Bambisanani Enterprises and other volunteers are gaining real life experiences of the business world. They are involved in key aspects of business and are clearly learning important transferable skills in the process. They are serious about what they do and have real purpose. They are very impressive young people who are making a difference."

The work of Bambisanani Enterprises has also been praised by the Yorkshire Young Peoples Enterprise Forum who featured the work of St. Mary's and Mnyakanya students in their annual review as an *"outstanding example of young enterprise."*

Such is the success of the Bambisanani Partnership that in July 2009 St. Mary's was invited to Kenya by the British Council to contribute to a Connecting Classrooms conference to share ideas with representatives from twelve African nations and Local Education Authorities from the UK. The work is intended to further develop UK/Africa links with schools and local authorities/districts working strategically in a support network. The St. Mary's team is supporting five other Leeds/Bradford schools (Corpus Christi College, Challenge High, Beechwood Primary, St. Nicholas Primary and St. Mary's Primary) to develop partnerships in South Africa and Ghana. This collaboration has been named the *Noboa Project* by the schools involved. Teachers from Beechwood Primary and Corpus Christi College have subsequently visited South Africa.

St. Mary's staff have spoken about the Bambisanani Partnership at a variety of national conferences on behalf of the Youth Sport Trust, British Council and the HSBC Education Trust. The work of the partnership has been used in national case studies by the Youth Sport Trust, *Get Set*

London 2012 and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games.

A significant strength of the Bambisanani Partnership is that the wider communities of both schools have been engaged. In Leeds the wider community has been made aware of the aims of the Bambisanani Partnership and just how much both school communities have to learn from each other. A most significant bond has been created with a range of businesses, organisations, charities, community groups and a small army of committed individuals who are now actively involved in supporting the Bambisanani Partnership. Many of these supporters are regular visitors to St. Mary's and are increasingly involved with students in the wider work of the school.

“Engagement with the wider world is an essential part of any outward looking and progressive school. Our Bambisanani supporters have added a new dimension to the life of the school, they give us another perspective – this has been a tremendous development. Students and staff meet other adults in school who are not teachers – it has broken down barriers and had a very positive impact on all concerned.”

David Geldart

At Mnyakanya School, the engagement of the wider community was essential for the initiative to even begin; such is the nature of Zulu culture. David's initial visit enabled him to meet all the local decision makers. This process ensured genuine 'ownership' of this project which has helped sustain its growth.

William Vilakazi, the Assistant Principal at Mnyakanya, has played a vital part in the development of the Bambisanani Partnership. William believes that the impact of the partnership has been most significant.

“The impact of the partnership with St. Mary's has been unbelievable. Despite considerable communication problems and other difficulties we have managed to develop and sustain the wonderful Bambisanani Partnership. Materially we have gained so much as a direct result of the partnership: Multi Use Games Area, Library and much needed resources for teaching and learning. Educators and learners from Mnyakanya have had the opportunity of a lifetime to visit the UK. Many people here said that the visit would be impossible but David said we could do it. Together we proved it could be done. The visit to the UK was an eye-opener to me; I

was able to realise who I am and understand that there is nothing that can exist alone or in isolation. We need each other in this world to survive; as we say in the partnership: 'interdependence is better than independence or dependence'. This is the spirit of Bambisanani that drives our work.

We have enjoyed the wonderful visits from educators and learners from St. Mary's. We have seen the wonderful power of sport to bring people together and have much wider benefits. We have realised how sport can be used to promote discipline, health, leadership, international understanding and general education. We have learned how developing young leaders can have such a positive effect on the individuals involved, their peers and the school. We have seen how peer mentoring and peer teaching can be used with amazing results.

Above all we have made friends. We have shared problems and ideas and in doing so we have developed mutual respect. We have broken down historic barriers and pointed the way to a more positive and cooperative future.

The learners are no longer thinking of the Nkandla area only; in their speech and writing they now mention St. Mary's, Leeds, the UK and Europe. The world is bigger now for my learners and they recognise that they are part of it; they have grown in awareness and confidence.

The support from St. Mary's is allowing many orphans to go to school. The opportunity of an education is the greatest gift; these children now have a chance in life.

Mnyakanya serves a largely uneducated rural community. The people have often become involved in faction fights and other unproductive activities but are now starting to realise the importance of school and an education. Many of the young people are now involved in sporting activities in the evenings and at weekends. Enrolment at Mnyakanya has increased from 650 learners in 2006 to 850 in 2011 as a direct result of the partnership. Many community members have realised that the school is not only a place of learning but also a place of care and support. This has occurred because of the Bambisanani Partnership and the St. Mary's approach to really caring for learners and engaging with the wider community.

Our community is extremely poor and there is much ignorance. Our facilities are still very basic and our resources are limited. We know that there is much to do in terms of raising educational standards, but we are

getting there, there is a desire to improve and we must take responsibility: scars will become stars one day.

It is difficult to put into words the impact of the Bambisanani Partnership. Some of the impact is physical and very practical; some of the impact is psychological, influencing attitudes, understanding, confidence, motivation and aspiration. The Bambisanani Partnership is an integral part of Mnyakanya School now as I know it is an integral part of St. Mary's School. There is a saying in Zulu culture: 'Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu' – meaning, 'we are what we are because of others'.

So much has been achieved by the Bambisanani Partnership; long live Bambisanani!"

William Vilakazi

"A heartily felt appreciation for your effort in cementing the Bambisanani Partnership between our schools, Mnyakanya in Nkandla and St. Mary's in Leeds. Despite our past historical and cultural differences as people, and our past and present prejudices, a seed of hope in an equal partnership between our two communities has been sown. The Bambisanani Partnership is the beginning of great things to come. Bambisanani shall in time break down human artificial barriers that have kept us apart. The partnership shall close down gaps between us, that is, the North and South, Africa and Europe, the UK and RSA, the Zulu and the Briton, the Christians, Muslims and those of traditional African religion, the industrialised and the under-developed, the urban and the rural, all of us together again as a human race.

We, the citizens of the two worlds, Leeds and Nkandla have a common humanity and destiny as children of the global village.

Long live Bambisanani, long live!"

Robert Skhosana, Department of Education, Kwa Zulu Natal

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES



Student Perspectives

Whilst not easily measured the perspectives of students provide a rich and valuable insight into the significance and importance of the Bambisanani Partnership. Students from both countries talk about the experience as being “life changing”. When asked “how?” they articulate how their priorities and values have changed and how their perspective of the world is now much wider. Students talk not only about another country, culture and way of life but significantly about how much they have learned about themselves.

Quotes from students from St. Mary’s School:

“My world has just got bigger. I realise it is my duty to be a global citizen.”

“What used to be important to me is no longer important. I now have a new set of priorities in life.”

“The visit to South Africa was the best time of my life. I learned so much about Zulu culture, I learned so much about myself.”

“The people I met have changed my life forever. I have met amazing people who have taught me so much.”

“How can my life ever be the same again? I have been given the most wonderful opportunity and I have a responsibility now to continue to make a difference in my life.”

“We have so much to learn from the attitude and dedication of Mnyakanya students. They have so little materially but have so much more than us in terms of determination and desire to learn. We have no excuse at St. Mary’s for not achieving our goals.”

“What I have experienced on this visit is the greatest achievement in my life.”

“On this visit I learned that we have not got all the answers to life’s problems in the UK.”

“Much of our life in the UK has become obsessed with materialism and ‘celebrity’. We have lost touch with things that really matter. My visit to South Africa has given me a much more meaningful perspective on life.”

“Bambisanani is about what we can do and achieve together. I have learned so much from this. The visit has made me less selfish.”

“This experience has proved to me how working together can achieve incredible results.”

“Wouldn’t it be fantastic if we could take the best of life in Leeds and the best of life in Nkandla in a new kind of world for the future?”

“People talk about things being “life changing” and it has become a cliché, but our work in South Africa has really changed my life forever.”

“For me, this was not just a trip to Africa, it was a journey through life an amazing, inspiring experience I will never forget the place or the people and their heart-warming smiles.”

“Words cannot describe how this trip changed my life. I hope to work in South Africa in the future I want to make a difference.”

“The Bambisanani Partnership is amazing The visit has been inspirational, I have learned so much about life.”

“It has been wonderful to have Mnyakanya students here in Leeds. We have learned so much about the Bambisanani Partnership and it is wonderful to meet students from our partner school in real life.”

“It has been so cool to have real African students at St. Mary’s. I know that there are differences in our cultures and life experiences but as young people we have so much in common. We have hopes and fears and many of them are the same. I have to stay in touch now with the new friends I have made.”

“Bambisanani Enterprises is an exciting venture. I have learned so much about different aspects of business and about working in a team. It is really good working with students from different year groups.”

I am proud to be a Board Member of Bambisanani Enterprises; I know that I am helping to make a difference.”

“Bambisanani Enterprises is in the real world, we are in business – it is not easy. Lots of big companies in the UK like British Airways and the Royal Bank of Scotland made a loss last year but we made a profit in a difficult economic climate.”

“Assemblies about the Bambisanani Partnership are always interesting and thought provoking; they make me think. I go from feeling guilty to feeling inspired to do good things in my life.”

Quotes from students from Mnyakanya High School:

“The Bambisanani Partnership is the best thing that has happened in my life.”

“We have made friends and we will be friends forever.”

“The Bambisanani Leadership course taught me that I am a Leader.”

“This partnership gives us hope.”

“Never did I believe that anyone from the UK would visit Nkandla I did not think you knew we existed.”

“We have worked together people of different colours, countries, religions and cultures we have proved it can be done.”

“The Bambisanani Partnership has given me the opportunity to continue my education. I have no parents and live alone. I want to be a Doctor to help my community. I will work hard.”

“It is great having educators and learners from St. Mary’s come to visit us, it is always exciting - we feel so special.”

“Thanks to you guys I have all I need now to be a successful learner – uniform, pens, books – everything.”

“We are different but we are the same.”

“We appreciate all that St. Mary’s School has done for us but hope that you have also learned some things from us.”

“I am inspired to be a good leader for my community.”

“I have learned so much on my visit to the UK. A dream has come true. I learned that working together with other people in a positive way will lead to further success.”

“I have learned so much from the visit. When I return home I will teach other learners how to respect each other. I will tell them that together we can make a positive change.”

“On my wonderful visit to Leeds I have learned so much from other people. I wish to change my world, community and school.”

“At St. Mary’s School I learned that it is good to ask questions.”

“At St. Mary’s the learners were humble and polite towards us. They welcomed us like they had known us for years. I found this inspirational.”

“Before I came to the UK I did not really believe that there were so many different cultures in the world.”

“I am proud to be a member of Bambisanani Enterprises, South African branch. I have learned so many things that will help me be a businessman one day.”

“My view of the world has changed. I can now see what a difference it makes when you love and respect different people.”

“I am the first young person from my part of South Africa ever to visit the UK. Bambisanani is a miracle from God. Every day I learned so many things. Above all I have learned to believe that everything is possible if we can work together.”

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT



Future Development

The first five years of the Bambisanani Partnership have been a tremendous success, making a significant impact in both schools and their wider communities. Two schools from very different parts of the world have worked and learned together as equal partners. The partnership has made a difference to those involved and is inspiring others to get involved. Both schools have enjoyed achieving what many said could not be done. Despite international praise and various awards those involved in the partnership are clearly focused on the future.

“There are still tremendous barriers and frustrations associated with our work but the potential benefits are phenomenal. Our challenge is to engage more young people, to develop more young leaders and global citizens of the future: young people that respect others and are prepared to make a difference themselves.”

David Geldart

“We are looking forward not back. We know that we must not become dependent on St. Mary’s. The Bambisanani Partnership is giving us the confidence to take on new challenges. We are not merely recipients in this process, we are equal partners and we have a responsibility to play our part. It is essential that both schools contribute to the partnership; we both have much to gain in doing so; both communities have already gained so much. The joint learning projects that we have planned are really exciting.”

William Vilakazi

Clear aims and development strands have been established for the partnership. Significantly both schools have partnership aims and objectives written into their school development plans. A key focus will therefore be to successfully deliver these plans. Fundraising is ongoing by both schools to support specific development strands. The aim is to raise £25,000 per annum in order to:

- Support orphans into Mnyakanya School
- Develop joint curriculum projects
- Develop ICT facilities including internet connection at Mnyakanya
- Develop further Leadership Programmes
- Provide additional resources for Mnyakanya School

- Support exchange visits
- Develop the infra-structure of Mnyakanya including the building of flushing toilets and changing facilities

The Bambisanani Partnership needs to raise significant amounts of money to fund particular development strands from specific fundraising events, enterprise activities and from donations from individuals, community groups and companies. Key partners in South Africa to achieve the above will be the Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Education, Department of Sport and Recreation, local Municipality, local and national charities and the British Council.

David has a clear view on fundraising and charitable giving.

“Yes, our work requires funding but our work is not about charity; it is more important than that. It is about two schools working together and learning together. My view on charitable giving is always that ‘it is better to give a rod than a fish’. Indeed, a guiding principle of the Bambisanani Partnership is about building capacity and creating a legacy in both communities. Our focus on the education of young people and developing young leaders of the future is a good example of this. Increasingly the Bambisanani Partnership will not fully fund any development but rather seek to ‘lever’ a proportion of the required funding from other parties in South Africa, thus creating additionality and local ownership. If we funded 100% of all our projects it would ultimately be self-defeating, patronising and encourage dependency. We want all our investments to make a difference long term.”

In the UK the partnership has developed an excellent relationship with a range of business partners, organisations, community groups and individuals who provide financial support. Supporters will increasingly be given further opportunities to engage in partnership and whole school activities.

Bambisanani Enterprises will continue to engage students from both countries in developing business and enterprise skills. A connection has been made with the Rotary Club in Eshowe which has agreed to mentor students in this project. Students from St. Mary’s will be mentored by Business Sponsors and already plan to extend and diversify Bambisanani Enterprise activities.

It is the intention that annual visits will continue take place to South Africa by St. Mary’s students and teachers with the funding required raised by

those involved. The highly successful visit of teachers and students from Mnyakanya School to the UK is perhaps not feasible every year, so a biennial visit is being planned, with St. Mary's agreeing to raise a proportion of the funding required. However, a teacher only visit to the UK is being planned on an annual basis, again with St. Mary's assisting with the funding. Both schools aim to involve a range of teachers in exchange visits.

Developing young leaders will remain a key element of the partnership's work. Leaders will continue to be trained by St. Mary's students and students from both schools will plan and deliver annual community Sports and Literacy Festivals in Nkandla. Greater emphasis will be placed on Sports Leaders continuing to provide sports opportunities for Mnyakanya students and the wider community throughout the year. Further opportunities will be explored for Mnyakanya students to support sports and literacy programmes at Ntolwane Primary School.

Following the sad death of Mnyakanya student Sbonelo Magwaza, annual awards will be presented in his name for Outstanding Sports Leadership at both Mnyakanya School and St. Mary's. Sbonelo was an outstanding young man who gained the Bambisanani Leadership Award only months before his death. Sbonelo's memory will live on in both communities, inspiring and rewarding outstanding leadership in sport.

Awards will also be presented annually in memory of Laurie McCauley from the St. Mary's wider community who died tragically in 2010. *Laurie's Legacy* will encourage and inspire Mnyakanya students with awards for both literature and sport.

Other aspects of leadership will also be introduced. Sally Bridgewater intends to train St. Mary's students and teachers to deliver her outstanding Learning Leaders Award. Capitalising on the new library facility at Mnyakanya and, based on the *Reads United* scheme so effectively used at St. Mary's, it is also intended to further develop *Literacy Leaders* at Mnyakanya. Once trained, these Mnyakanya students will support weaker students in their own school and students at Ntolwane Primary School, as well as adults in the wider Mnyakanya community. At St. Mary's, Sixth Form students are planning to develop reading materials to be used in South Africa.

Communication remains a major problem between the schools. Work is ongoing with the Kwa Zulu Natal Department of Education to install an internet connection within the next year.

Both schools are currently developing the *Bambisanani Award Scheme* which will be available to every student. The Awards will operate at three levels (Bronze/Ithusi, Silver/Isliwa and Gold/Igolide) and engage students in a range of activities including: Leadership, Global Citizenship, Enterprise, Volunteering, Community Engagement and individual learning projects.

St. Mary's and Mnyakanya are now part of the British Council Connecting Classrooms initiative and will continue to take a lead role in supporting other schools in Leeds and Nkandla to develop links and engage in joint learning with other schools in Leeds, Nkandla and Ghana; the *Noboa Project*. St. Mary's currently supports five other schools in the Leeds/Bradford area and in the coming year a further three schools will be added. Efforts will continue to link Mnyakanya with Eshowe High School in Kwa Zulu Natal where further partnership working will be developed. St. Mary's will support Beechwood Primary School in Leeds in developing a specific link with Ntolwane Primary School.

A significant joint learning project has recently begun between St. Mary's and Mnyakanya which will use the 2012 Olympics as a catalyst for learning. Based on the theme *'The Power of Sport'* the project will involve students producing art work and creative writing with a view to compiling a book including the best examples of both. The book will be produced just prior to the commencement of the Olympic Games. It is also the intention to exhibit the work in both countries. The books and all art work will eventually be sold to support the partnership.

Work has already begun to include the Bambisanani Partnership in a Global Advocate Exhibition. Organised by the Leeds Development Education Centre, the exhibition will tour schools later this year providing students with a range of thought provoking active learning opportunities aimed at raising awareness of sustainable global development.

The important link established with Eshowe Rotary Club will be maintained and developed, as will the relationship with the remarkable Zulufadder charity. Both links offer enormous potential to all concerned and will add further dimensions to the partnership.

Work is ongoing with the Rotary Clubs of Aireborough and Eshowe with a view to delivering a joint Rotary International project at Mnyakanya as part of the Bambisanani Partnership.

Volunteering opportunities in South Africa for adults from the wider St. Mary's community will be established within the next year. Graham Chennells of Eshowe Rotary Club has agreed to arrange bespoke programmes for individuals or groups. This exciting venture will provide a myriad of opportunities for adults to experience volunteering in South Africa and support the work of the Bambisanani Partnership.

Working with Eshowe Rotary Club it is also intended to establish Bambisanani Bursaries within the next year for two students from Mnyakanya to attend the Umfolozi College in Eshowe to pursue a vocational course in bricklaying, carpentry, garment making, plumbing, agriculture or computing. The bursary will cover tuition and accommodation costs for the three month course. 90% of Umfolozi students gain employment on successful completion of their chosen course.

All of the developments outlined above are indicative of the continued commitment of St. Mary's and Mnyakanya to work together and learn together in an equal, sustainable and effective partnership. Despite many barriers and obstacles the Bambisanani Partnership is determined to push on with relentless creativity, purpose and energy.

"We have achieved so much in a relatively short time but together we are committed and motivated to doing more. The Bambisanani Partnership can positively influence young people in both countries for generations to come."

William Vilakazi

"A good start has been made but there is much more to do; it will only be achieved by working hand in hand."

David Geldart

ONE FINAL THOUGHT



One final thought:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people working together can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead, Anthropologist

Long live Bambisanani, long live!