



Bambisanani Partnership

Working Together, Learning Together



st.Mary's



Mnyakanya High School



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Report on St. Mary's visit to South Africa June 2018

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Bambisanani
Partnership

The Bambisanani Partnership has gained international acclaim for its pioneering work in one of South Africa's poorest regions, using sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership. This summer has seen the multi award-winning charity take on its most ambitious volunteering project in its twelve year history. Students and staff from St. Mary's School, Menston, the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University have recently returned from South Africa where both individually and collaboratively they extended and developed the work of the partnership.

Following eighteen months of preparation, planning and fundraising, sixteen students from St. Mary's embarked on a mission to deliver a 'Leadership Through Sport' programme' to students at Mnyakanya High School situated in the remote, rural Nkandla area. This year's visit was led by Catherine Chattoe with support from Brad Dobson and Charlotte Wood.

The student team comprised of Olivia Brady, Joe Gardner, Grace Darker, Orla Turnbull, Lily Humphreys, Libby Woffenden, Charlotte Walker, Rhiannon Boardman, Nicholas Brinkworth, Sylvia Cullen, Edward Fieldhouse, Aidan Joyce, Luke Barnes, Maeve Hendron, Lucy Hings and Lily Greenhalgh.

Throughout their visit St. Mary's students were assisted by three students from Eshowe High School; Morgan Gray, Nokabongwa Mtembu and Sbhongisiwe Ntuli who supported them with the delivery of the leadership programme and provided invaluable assistance with English and Zulu language translation.

After four intense days of hockey, netball and rounders coaching, thirty Mnyakanya students were fully equipped and confident enough to organise and host a spectacular Sports and Reading Festival for over 120 children from Ntolwane Primary School. The success of the collaboration between the students from both countries was celebrated with a special presentation ceremony. South African students received leadership awards and annual awards as a way of recognising and celebrating their ability and potential as outstanding leaders.

Additionally as part of the visit the St. Mary's students delivered lessons in a wide range of curriculum areas. Enthusiastic staff and students from Mnyakanya High School experienced high quality lessons in English, Maths, Geography, Science, Music and Drama. In one lesson Mnyakanya students represented the components of the solar system and moved around the playground as a way of learning how the solar system works. Teachers from both countries praised the students for the 'exceptional high quality' of the lessons.

At a special presentation ceremony and partnership celebration, Mnyakanya students received their much deserved Leadership awards and students from Mnyakanya and Ntolwane Primary school were presented with a series of annual awards from the John Paul II Foundation for Sport and the Lawrie McCauley awards for football and creative writing.

The final part of their visit saw the St. Mary's students volunteering at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche, a centre for orphans and vulnerable children run by the Zulufadder Children's Trust. This was a magical time for St. Mary's students where they loved bringing stories to life with the use of props and toys and, for the first time, helped with the centre's gardening project by planting some vegetables.



The 2018 St. Mary's team on the day of departure



Reading at uMlalazi Day Centre and Creche

The visit had a remarkable impact on St. Mary's students:

LIBBY WOFFENDEN

The Bambisanani Partnership visit was the most incredible week, one that I will remember for the rest of my life. The infectious and positive attitudes of all of the students combined with the welcoming environment that was created for us, meant that we immediately felt at home from the outset, starting the visit off perfectly.

Each student that I was fortunate enough to work with, was so eager both to learn and to develop their leadership skills, as well as develop their knowledge of each sport. A personal highlight of the visit for me, was seeing a 13 year old boy, who started the week being very quiet, and towards the end of the week completely come out of his shell and took control in leading the primary school children. Seeing his confidence develop so much over such a short time period is something which I will never forget.

When both teaching and sitting in on St. Mary's student taught lessons at Mynakanya, it was incredible to see the enthusiasm of each student for every subject. In my geography lesson, even though the students had very little exposure to the subject, they all got involved at every opportunity. For example, some students asked me to write down what we had said to ensure they wouldn't forget it, and others took pictures of notes and maps on the board. I found this determination and dedication to learning very inspiring.

The visit to Zulufadder Orphanage will forever hold a special place in my heart. The pure joy on every child's face and the sounds of laughter and singing which spread throughout were incredible. Popi is the most remarkable and inspiring person that I have ever met. Having the opportunity to spend the day with such an amazing collection of people and children is something that I will forever be grateful for.

I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved in the Bambisanani Partnership, especially to Mrs Chattoe, Mr Dobson and Miss Wood, for letting me be a part of such an incredible team and experience. I will always remember the inspirational people that I met and they will continue inspire me in my day to day life.



Libby teaching a Geography lesson at Mnyakanya High School with Orla



Libby at Zulufadder

RHIANNON BOARDMAN

Our visit to South Africa is a memory which I will always hold close to my heart, from the people that we met, the friends we made and memories we had.

Within all the experiences we had, there are three moments that I will never forget, the first being our arrival at Ntolwane Primary School on our first day. After having been met by students and teachers, a young pupil proceeded to give us a tour of their school, and as we turned a corner, a class filled with children grinning ear to ear came running to the windows of their classroom. The excitement on their faces made my day and as our visit went on it became clear how truly valued education is to the students.

The second moment is the pride we felt as we watched the Mnyakanya students deliver their sports lessons. When we arrived on the Friday at Mnyakanya we were greeted by leaders who showed their potential from the outset, but we could not predict the pride that they made us feel through not only teaching and officiating the sports but the confidence that they displayed.

The final thing that stands out so much to me is our time at Zulufadder Orphanage. I was astounded by the atmosphere, filled with happiness, singing and dancing. Popi who leads the orphanage is the most selfless person I have met, truly giving her all to the children and showed true gratefulness for our work. When the time came to leave, we were overwhelmed with emotion. The happiness that was so evident within the children combined with our grief that came with leaving, meant that there were no dry eyes. Although our time there was short, the memories will last a lifetime.



Teaching German numbers



Getting to know you games on the very first day

SYLVIA CULLEN

Our day spent at Zulufadder Orphanage was the most phenomenal experience, heart breaking and awe inspiring both at once. To see such young children, who face so many difficulties and have almost nothing smile and laugh was beyond humbling. They have nothing but are grateful for everything and we are often guilty of having everything yet finding fault in nothing and the children at zulufadder humbled me and showed me the power of love.

Popi, the lady in charge, puts her wholehearted love into God and this brings her the strength and hope to continue her work in loving and cherishing every child she works with. No one could dispute the power that her faith and love has in that setting and she has enriched the lives of hundreds of children. Love, especially in the early years, is vital for a child's development and the work of zulufadder sets the children up to thrive in a way that would not be available to them without the work of the charity. Love fills a child with a sense of belonging, importance and confidence and there is no doubting that the children at zulufadder feel all of these benefits as a result of the work of Popi and her workers.

An orphanage could quite easily be a place of sadness and mourning but Zulufadder was the opposite, the children lit up the place with joy and music and dancing, which was both beautiful and saddening due to their circumstances, and the overall atmosphere was magical. Our day was filled with smiles and tears, I was overwhelmed with the strength of the children to have faced such tragedy yet still be so cheerful and happy and their kindness and sweet nature frequently brought me to tears.

As we were saying goodbye a boy who can't have been older than three noticed I was crying and came and sat on my knee and wiped my tears away, a moment that I replay frequently. This act of compassion speaks volumes of the atmosphere that there is at zulufadder and I feel truly honoured to have been able to experience it. I want nothing more than to return for a longer period of time to help Popi in her inspirational work. Thank you Zulufadder!



Sylvia with a new friend



Sylvia making stories come alive



Learning all about lions

OLIVIA BRADY

Before visiting South Africa, I knew it was going to be a memorable experience and that I was going to gain a lot from it, but I never could have imagined the true impact it would have on me. I feel as though a completely different person returned from South Africa than the one who stepped onto the plane at Manchester airport 2 weeks earlier. The experience was unforgettable and I have made memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life. From the once in a lifetime up close encounter with wild elephants to dancing and singing with the orphans at Zulufadder there was never a moment that I wouldn't want to relive over and over.

But most importantly, it was the people that made this visit the most exciting and amazing adventure that I have had in my whole life. I was humbled by the efforts everyone made to make us feel welcome and at home but most of all it was the spirits and perseverance of the people which inspired me the most as I have never met such happy people despite having so little. The partnership that we have established between us St Marys students and the students of Mynkanya high school has opened my eyes into another culture and a world so different from our own and I am so grateful to have been able to take part in this amazing opportunity.



Geography lesson: Matching countries with flags



Olivia leading the reading fun with animal masks at Zulufadder



ORLA TURNBULL

Looking back on my time in South Africa I am filled with thousands of memories that will stay with me forever. I feel so privileged to have met so many amazing people throughout my visit from their contagious smiles to their amazing Zulu dancing. I never expected the visit to be so inspirational, the leaders at Mnyakanya especially, for me, put everything into perspective and I loved seeing their great big smiles every morning and hearing their stories about their lives so far. They all had such big aspirations for their lives and were determined to succeed, they taught me to be more like them, to not take anything for granted and to always smile.

A day that was really special for me, was the sports and reading festival. Our netball leader team were so amazing; they had just learnt netball a few days earlier and went from not knowing how to throw a netball to confidently officiating the game. It made us all so proud to see what they could achieve in such a little time and how talented they all were. Friends to me throughout the whole visit were 13 year old Sinalo and Phila, they helped the Ntolwane primary school children to enjoy sport and were so eager to learn netball; a game they did not know existed.

Getting to know the leaders whilst we were there was I think the most inspirational part of the visit, they loved coming to school and learning, they loved sport, dancing and laughing with us. My favourite story at Mnyakanya was when during a break the St. Mary's girls started singing and from the other side of the playground we heard some Mnyakanya girls joining us, eventually I found all of us together singing the same song and dancing and holding hands. A memory I will cherish forever.



Orla and Lucy coaching netball



LILY GREENHALGH

Every year St. Mary's sends a group of pupils to South Africa to take part in the Bambisanni Partnership scheme and every year the students come back saying that their visit has been incredible and life-changing. This year has been no different. As one of the lucky 16 students selected to travel out to KwaZulu-Natal I can honestly say that that week of my life was every bit as life-changing as I was told it would be, and so, so much more.

Our final day at Mnyakanya High School was very emotional for me. After all of our hard work teaching the 30 Mnyakanya students their sports (hockey, netball and rounders) it was amazing to see them displaying excellent leadership skills and teaching the Ntolwane primary school students a sport. They had come from shy and quiet students to students with the confidence to lead. Their transformation was incredible.

Over our four days at Mnyakanya we had all become close friends with the students and it was hard for us all to say our goodbyes. For me, my hardest goodbye of the visit was with Londiwe, a young Mnyakanya student who I had become particularly close to over the last four days and I had seen her confidence improve massively. She had come from a small girl who would easily be missed in the crowds of Mnyakanya to someone who could confidently lead young primary school students after only three days of coaching. After a long and heartfelt goodbye and promises to keep in touch, I watched her embark on her daily 5km walk home. Seeing the differences between her life and my own has only made me all the more determined to make a difference to her life in any way I could.

I would like to say a massive thank you to everyone involved in making this visit possible every year, it has been an incredible journey.



Lily at Zulufadder



With Popi at Zulufadder

LUCY HINGS

When I first heard of the visit I knew I always wanted to be on it. I was able to see Bambisanani visit from Year 7, renowned as one of the best opportunities that our school provided. Through posters and assemblies, I read and heard a snippet of the amazing work carried out as a Bambisanani ambassador, therefore I was ecstatic when I became one myself. The Bambisanani Project is far more than just a 10 day visit to South Africa and the visit doesn't start on the day you travel, it starts as soon as you are accepted onto the visit in Year 11. Over a twelve month period prior to the visit I fundraised the money which solidified how special Bambisanani would prove to be. This was only possible through the support and generosity of my family and friends who dedicated time and donations towards the 2018 visit which I am so grateful and thankful for.

It's difficult to be able to pinpoint one specific moment to be my favourite, as I think the highlight of the visit itself was the intrinsic value each day at the school brought with it. The importance of education to the students of Mnyakanya High School and the pride they take in items we would consider every day essentials depicts that studying should not be taken for granted. I will now try to replicate the positivity that was shown daily by the amazing pupils at the high school as although they had alternative lifestyles and daily struggles, their smiles never faded. It has taught me that difference in culture, language, environment and life doesn't prevent friendship, as sport enabled us to communicate and acted as a language itself.

The Zulu culture of singing and dancing would leave

anybody in total awe. Seeing how the students of Mnyakanya High School conducted themselves despite their backgrounds, coming to school each day with a thirst for knowledge and without a complaint is inspiring. I'm proud to now say that I have friends on the other side of the world that are so inspiring and talented. The attitude of the Bambisanani 2018 group was inspiring and coming together to discuss our achievements each night and preparing for the next day, united us as such a close group. The project takes an amazing amount of organising and the appreciation for Mrs Chattoe and also our wider supporters such as Graham and Logan is so important, as without them our visit would not have been the same. The experience will stay with me forever through the values I have learnt, the respect for humanity, as well as how time and kindness can affect so many people. I truly value the work of the charity as you see the remarkable presence that the 'blue polos' have shown through the immediate affection and love that is given to you as soon as you step foot on both Mnyakanya high school and Ntolwane primary school.

I have enjoyed talking to younger students in our school and making them more aware of the charity, knowing that I was once in their positions, however whatever words are spoken about the experience, the visit exceeds any expectations created. For younger students striving towards becoming a Bambisanani ambassador, the hard work for the visit starts in Year 7, proving you're the right person for the project can be done by showing what you've physically done in school and how you've conducted yourself.

I couldn't recommend the visit more, but I find it difficult to summarise, however I know it is undoubtedly my greatest achievement.



Lucy group reading with Primary school pupils



Lucy's persuasive writing lesson

LUKE BARNES

I was privileged enough to be part of the Bambisanani team 2018 and I can tell you truthfully that it was one of the best experiences of my life.

To travel thousands of miles away from home to a rural area in the Nkandla region and to work with a school that is so less fortunate than us was the most eye-opening and enriching experience I have ever had. To work with Mnyakanya High School was a real privilege and to see how far their students progressed to becoming sports leaders after delivering a sports session to the children of Ntolwane Primary School was such an amazing achievement. It showed us just how much we were able to achieve through our sports and literacy teaching programme in such a short period of time. I made so many friends along the way and it will be an experience that I will never forget.

Zulufadder Orphanage was one of the main highlights of the visit. Seeing so many children excited to greet us as we arrived in our mini bus was so heart-warming and it made everyone's day. (There were a lot of tears and hugs!) The leader of the orphanage Popi welcomed us with open arms and her reaction when we gave her a DVD player and a TV was such a lovely thing to see as you could tell how grateful she was just to receive anything. Sugar Hill Manor was a great place to stay as they looked after us so well, providing delicious meals for us and making sure we had a clean room each day.

Overall, I couldn't have asked for better people to have gone with to South Africa as we all bonded so well, which added to the already fantastic visit. To go to a game reserve in South Africa and to see animals such as lions, rhinos and elephants in their natural habitats was a wonderful experience. Our friend from the visit Logan could not have been any more helpful when taking us around the game reserve and throughout our whole visit. One of our days out involved going through a forest in South Africa which was exciting, scenic and had fabulous views.

To conclude, my visit to South Africa 2018 was one of the most fantastic and moving experiences of my life and I am so grateful and happy that I was able to go. I encourage others to go because I can ensure you that this visit will change your view of life as a whole and your experience there will be amazing. I hope to return to South Africa in the near future as I feel there is more to discover and more to be done.



Matching countries and their flags



Luke at Zulufadder

NICHOLAS BRINKWORTH

The Bambisanani visit was hands down the best experience of my life. Even before the visit I had such high expectations, the reality was so much better than I could have ever imagined. It was such a great opportunity for me to make new friends and memories, but most importantly to help the children in Mnkanya High School become young sports leaders of their own. Seeing the children we had been working with for the past week stand up and deliver a sports session to the primary school pupils was the proudest and most rewarding moment of the entire visit. They all came so far in developing their skills of communication and leadership, and overcoming any shyness they initially had, which was so impressive after only a few days of being taught by us.

Overall, however, my favourite day was visiting the Zulufadder Orphanage. Probably the most emotional memory I have is leaving the orphanage and seeing all the children stood at the fence waving at us. None of us wanted to leave at all, that was how much of an impact that it had on us. To see how grateful all the kids were for small items like toothbrushes and football shirts, which we just take for granted was absolutely astounding. It was just completely astonishing to see how people can live so differently and has definitely changed my outlook on life.

I am so happy and grateful that I got the chance to go on the Bambisanani visit, it was amazing and has given me memories that I will hold with me forever.



Nicholas at the Reading Festival



Nicholas working with the Mnyakanya leaders

EDWARD FIELDHOUSE

My visit to Africa was both an exciting and emotional journey, we met so many amazing people and it is something that I will remember forever.

After a very long journey there we were met by Graham and Tracy who welcomed us into Sugar Hill Manor. On our first day we visited the primary and high school, this allowed us to see how the education system worked in South Africa-it's very different to ours. The children showed us round and then they gave us a true South African welcome which included native dancing and singing in their native language of Zulu.

One of the highlights of my visit was when we had the opportunity to visit the game reserve, where we were lucky enough to see 4 of the big 5, this is something I never imagined that I would see. Being that close to such large animals was breath taking especially when we were in the middle of a herd of elephants crossing the road.

After having the weekend to climatize and get used to this beautiful country we went to the high school and started our leadership programme. We taught the children different sports which included hockey, netball and rounders, then gave them the knowledge to be able to teach these sports to the primary school children at the end of the week. The sport that I taught was hockey and this started off being very difficult as none of the children had ever heard of this sport, but they soon picked it up and really enjoyed it.

Whilst we were in the school we all grouped up and taught a lesson to the children. I was in a group with Joe and Luke and we taught a biology lesson about the heart. We were very impressed about how much they already knew on this topic and they were all intrigued to learn more. On our last day at the school we held a sport and reading festival with the high school students for the primary school children. This entailed the sport leaders from the high school teaching the primary school children the three different sports we taught them throughout the week. They did very well at this and it really showed how the leaders have improved and gained many skills from our lessons. Then we had the reading part of the festival where each of us had a group of children who we read books to.

On our last full day we visited the Zulufadder where we were given a very warm welcome by Popi and the children. We entertained the children by reading them books and giving them props so they could enjoy the books even more. Before we left for the airport Logan was kind enough to have us for a meal at his house and he then took us on a tour around Durban and he showed us the big contrast between the very poor parts and the very rich parts of Durban. Sadly then we had to come back to England, but we have brought back so many good memories and skills that we will keep for ever and for anyone who is thinking about going on this visit I would massively recommend it.



With Grace and Popi at Zulufadder



Edward enjoyed the warm and entertaining day at Zulufadder

LILY HUMPHREYS

It sounds cliché to say but my time in South Africa really was life-changing and I will never be able to do it justice in words. From our arrival to our departure, there was not a moment I would have changed. To finally experience what we have heard about for so many years in school was so special and very humbling.

Our work at Mnyakanya High School was such an amazing learning experience, not only for the students over there but for us as well. Every single Mnyakanya leader was a credit to themselves and they excelled when it came to teaching at our Sports Festival for the children from Ntolwane Primary School. Seeing the students relay all they had learnt over the past few days was so rewarding and I felt so proud of them (Libby and I did shed a tear or two watching our rounders' leaders!). However, for me, the greatest moment of my time at Mnyakanya was when Charlotte, Sylvia and I taught a Musical Theatre class. Every student was so eager to learn and put everything into the time we had, which made our job so much more enjoyable! It was refreshing to see young people so enthusiastic about learning, and walking round other St Mary's students' lessons, from German to Persuasive Writing to Maths, every classroom was the same, smiling students keen to learn. They made us feel so welcome at the school, students and teachers alike, and we couldn't be more appreciative. Over the week, we became good friends with many of the pupils and they are friendships that I will always treasure and to leave them at the end of the visit was difficult.

I can't begin to explain how incredible our visit to the Zulufadder Orphanage was. To say it was emotional would be an understatement but it filled me with such joy. They were the happiest children I've ever met and they welcomed us with open arms, literally! One moment that will always stick with me is the reaction of Popi, the leader of the orphanage, when we left. It was a very emotional goodbye. She hugged me tightly and all she said was "thank you". I could see on her face the huge amount of gratitude she had purely just for us coming. Not only the day at the orphanage but the entire visit gave me a view to another side of life that has made me see my life completely differently. Out there, despite their circumstances, they appreciate every little thing.

I believe that the visit has changed me as a person. I have grown and seen another side to life which I am so lucky to have had the opportunity to have experienced. Spending time together with the same group of nineteen people all day every day, we all became extremely close, and the friendships within our St Mary's group that materialised over that week became a rock for me and my time out there wouldn't have been the same if any one of them was missing. Every single person brought their own contribution to the visit and I'll never be able to thank them enough.

Every moment of my time in South Africa was one that I will treasure forever, and certainly will never be able to forget. I owe so much to this charity, and from first-hand experience, I know that the work they do will continue to make a difference in so many people's lives. The Bambisanani Partnership will forever hold a special place in my heart.



Planting lettuce seedlings together



The Mnyakanya leaders enjoying a German lesson

JOE GARDNER

When I arrived in South Africa after a sixteen hour plane journey I could not have imagined the experience I was going to have. The whole visit was great and changed my outlook on life and seeing how the people in KwaZulu-Natal live has made me more appreciative of the things we have here at home. I could never forget the people there and the friendships made during my time in Africa. There were many highlights during the time I spent there such as visiting the Zulufadder Orphanage where upon arrival, we were greeted by about thirty singing children and a race to embrace us as we stepped off the minibus. The excitement shown in their faces throughout the morning we spent with them is an image that I will not forget.

Although visiting the orphanage was an amazing experience, the time we spent at Mnyakanya High School was for me the best part of the visit, seeing students go from shy, quiet individuals to, by the last day being able to teach a sport to 30+ children from the local primary school with confidence was great to watch and very satisfying as it showed the hard work put in by the students and teachers. We also presented lessons to different classes in the school and the enthusiasm shown by the students during my Biology lesson was something that a teacher in St. Mary's would envy. Overall, this visit to South Africa was an amazing one and I would recommend it to any of the St. Mary's students lower in the school.



Joe at the Reading Festival



Making friends at Zulufadder

CHARLOTTE WALKER

From the instant I heard about Bambisinani in Year 7, I knew it was a visit that I would love to have the opportunity to go on. I was not wrong. I feel very fortunate to have had this experience. When you hear people use the old cliché “it was life changing”, it is no exaggeration.

The day I truly felt how fortunate we are in the UK was the Tuesday at Mnyakanya. We had finished up the morning with teaching sports, which we had introduced them to on the Monday. I felt that they were really getting the hang of everything. They were bright children and seemed to excel at sports. After having a chatty lunch we moved onto the second round of lessons.

I taught musical theatre with two other girls, Lily and Sylvia. We taught them an easy song which we then developed into a complex set of different musical parts. They accompanied this with movements. We also finished the session off with some fun and games like splat, which they seemed to thoroughly enjoy.

The part of the visit that really hit home was when I assisted Nic and Aidan in their maths class. Unlike the other classes, we were teaching children that we had not met before. We had to work with a small group of eighteen year olds. Nic and Aidan had planned to teach some algebra to these young adults and it became very clear that they were struggling with the concept of expanding brackets. I spent the majority of the hour teaching some of the girls how to expand brackets. I will never forget this moment. I was touched and inspired by how grateful the Mnyakanya students were for our time, attention and teaching. They were so thankful for anything that we shared with them, from a sheet with German numbers on, to a smile and a few words of encouragement. The most remarkable thing about these children at the high school, primary school and at the Zulufadder Orphanage, was that they were so happy despite their challenging circumstances.

If I was to name one fundamental thing that going to South Africa and participating in the Bambisanani Partnership has taught me, it's that you should not take anything for granted. Be that a first class education, good health care, a roof over my head or food on the table. I am extremely grateful for this experience and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the team for making this a truly memorable visit and I believe it can only make me a better person.



On the sports field



Learning together at Mnyakanya High School

MAEVE HENDRON

I will never forget the excitement we all felt on our journey to South Africa, not quite knowing what to expect but nevertheless realising what we were about to see, and experience would be life changing. Arriving at Ntolwane Primary School, opened our eyes to the conditions and poverty that these young children live in. We were given a tour of the school, brought into lessons and shown some of the work that they had been doing at the time. The classrooms were filled to capacity with enthusiastic pupils, excited to greet their visitors and eager to please. The sound of the 3-4-year olds chanting head, shoulders, knees and toes will stay with me forever, the nursery rhyme reminding me of those children who may have had very little and yet still entertained with big smiles on their face.

I loved everything about the visit, but if I had to choose a favourite day it would be the last day at Mnyakanya: the sports and reading festivals. Watching the Bambisanani Leaders use the skills we had taught them over the past number of days evoked a true sense of pride. Regardless of the pouring rain everyone who took part enjoyed themselves and came away from the festivals feeling as if they had achieved something, whether that was learning a new sport or knowing that you have helped someone succeed in something new. The experience of Bambisanani was truly unique and has helped me to appreciate the opportunities that I have and how I can use my own talents to help others.



Maeve at Zulufadder

The students from Mnyakanya reflected on the work of the Bambisanani Partnership. Their comments highlight the positive impact it had on them.

When I remember those days, I wish I can turn back the days. I was very happy when we were working with the St. Mary's students. Now I know more about people from the UK. I learnt different sports and how to ride a bicycle. It was my first time to eat together with people from another country. They were so friendly. We did Zulu dancing together and learnt many things from them. Even now I wish to join young leaders again next time.

Madlala Sanele

I was so excited to play together with the students from overseas. I felt very happy because it was my first time I learnt how to play netball and rounders. I also learnt how to strike a ball. I learnt how to catch a ball and how to be in my position. We started by exercising and warming up before we play. The team from Leeds were very patient with us, they were very kind. This made their lessons to be interesting. I learnt many new games with them. I miss them so much.

Khanyile Kwanele



Bambisanani Leaders



Learning Hockey - a new sport that's never been seen before at Mnyakanya



At the Reading Festival

I remember the weeks of June 2018. It was a most joyful week of my life when we were visited by students from the UK. They taught us different sports. I loved playing netball, hockey, rounders and riding a bike. They became our friends. They were all very friendly. They brought gifts for us. I was given some stationary and a leaders t-shirt. I was very sad when they were leaving. They gave us awards. I miss those days, I wish I could bring them back.

Makhoba Nqobile

I was so happy to meet St. Mary's and Leeds students. I felt like I am a star in my school.

I was so happy when they teach me how to ride a bicycle because I didn't know how to use it. I also learnt how to fix them. We learnt many games like netball, rounders etc. We also learnt that is important to exercise before we play.

I loved the team very much, their kindness and their patience. They kept us happy all the time.

I wish they come back again.

Zondi Happy

UMLALAZI DAY CENTRE AND CRECHE (FORMERLY ZULUFADDER ORPHANAGE)

The final day was spent at uMlalazi Day Centre and Creche. uMlalazi Day Centre is a registered charity that works to provide support to orphans with a day creche and support through primary school and onto further education. Their work is vital, especially in the Kwa-Zulu Natal region with the highest rate of HIV and AIDS in the world. This centre gives the children a chance at a fulfilling and educative life allowing them to take back their childhood. The St. Mary's students had prepared story sacks. Witches capes, animal masks, fluffy dogs, sparkly party hats and water guns brought the stories to life. St. Mary's helped with the centres' gardening project by helping to plant and water lettuces in their vegetable plot.

Olivia Brady, Lily Greenhalgh and Charlotte Walker wrote a blog post for this special day:

A highly emotional part of our visit – Zulufadder Orphanage. As we were driving up towards the gates, we saw around 40 tiny children running up to us smiling, waving and singing. They were accompanied by the wonderful Popi, their teacher, and her assistant. As we stepped off the bus we were met with open arms and lots and lots of cuddles from very excited children. We started off our time here with singing and dancing in a big circle including the Hokey Cokey, which we introduced to the children. We split the children into small groups to share our story sacks. Popi invited us to plant a seedling of lettuce in the garden – this proved to be a harder task than thought due to the many children clinging to us. We shared gifts and donations from the St. Mary's community. The sheer joy on the children's faces had to be the best part of our day, certainly the best way to end our visit as a whole. We left with many, many tears in our eyes, heavy hearts and many a child smuggled under our hoodies. The children sang us off with 'it isn't sad to say goodbye' and there was not a dry eye on the bus as it slowly pulled away.



Enjoying the special day



Hula hoop fun



Reading "The Jolly Witch" together



Popi with her children

TEACHER REFLECTIONS

For the teachers too, the visit had a profound effect.

Brad Dobson

Having supported The Bambisanani Partnership for a number of years in school, I was honoured to be a part of the 2018 visit, with Mrs Chattoe, Miss Wood and sixteen of our amazing students. The reflections, journals, blogs and photographs couldn't prepare me for the actual feeling of bearing witness to the growth of not only the South African leaders, but also the growth of our very own leaders from St. Mary's. Seeing the pride manifest itself in a whole host of ways within our students, watching the Mnyakanya High School leaders that they had worked with and supported over a number of days deliver an outstanding sports and reading festival despite individual challenges, was overwhelming.

I genuinely believe that the Bambisanani Partnership has a truly positive impact on every single person involved, regardless of whether it is their first or their twelfth year involved with the project – I saw that myself. The whole Bambisanani team were an absolute joy to work with in every aspect of the South African journey. It was inspiring to see the determination, comradery and support on display, day after day, and not forgetting the smiles - a smile goes a very long way.

My additional thanks to PK Zondi, Logan Govender, Rajes Govender, Mahesh Naidoo, Graham Chennells, Tracey and Ronnie for supporting us along the way. I look forward to having the opportunity to return to South Africa and continue to see this fascinating project grow.



Sports Festival action

Charlotte Wood



When asked by Mrs Chattoe if I would like to be part of the Bambisanani project I jumped at the chance. Words at times can't describe the emotions of the visit, it truly was inspirational, the students embodied the spirit of the partnership with dignity and respect throughout the whole week. They grew in confidence delivering high quality coaching sessions to the students of Mnyakanya High School in hockey, rounders and netball culminating in a festival at the end of the week with the local primary school. As a hockey player, it was truly inspiring to see students who had never even heard of the word hockey or even seen a hockey stick deliver a session to twenty excitable children and pass on the enthusiasm for the sport. If that wasn't enough, our students demonstrated further the values and purpose of the partnership by delivering well planned curriculum lessons, ranging from biology to music and maths to geography, the preparation and resources our children had made were outstanding and whilst watching the lessons I had a sense of pride for what they had achieved. A true highlight for me was seeing the students shine at the Zulufadder day centre. Not only had they prepared coaching sessions in different sports and curriculum lessons, our students had created story sacks for the children of Zulufadder, watching the young children, many of which were orphans, become mesmerised by the stories that were being brought to life by the creativity of our students, reduced me to tears.

This visit for me was truly life changing, you never think that an experience can do such a thing, but it made me realise not to take things for granted. I got a sense of fulfilment when I saw our students develop from teenagers to mature adults, a reason for becoming a teacher and finally seeing how a strong positive partnership can have such high level impact on all involved.

AWARDS CEREMONY

A lively and emotional awards ceremony completed the work of The 2018 Bambisanani team. Several students were recognised for their achievements.

The first two awards were presented in memory of Laurie McCauley, a keen young sportsman from the St Mary's community.

The Laurie McCauley Award for Most Improved footballer was presented to Ngubane Nkululeko.

The Laurie McCauley Award for Creative Writing was presented to Mdlalose Asanda.

The Sibonelo Magwaza Outstanding Leader Award was presented to Tshoba Sinalo. This same award will also be presented to a St. Mary's student, who will be announced in December 2018 at the Sixth Form Celebration of Achievement Evening.

JP2F4S AWARDS

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport (JP2F4S) Awards were presented at the ceremony. The foundation was set up to promote value driven sport. Monsignor Vladimir Feltzmann, Chief Executive of the John Paul II Foundation for Sport, said *'Good values and sport are a winning combination and together they can create special opportunities for those that follow.'* The foundation and the Partnership promotes both of these. These awards were issued to students from Mnyakanya High School and Ntolwane Primary School.

MNYAKANYA HIGH SCHOOL JP2F4S AWARDS

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: Mnyakanya Sportswoman of the Year Award was presented to Ntanzi Bandile.

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: Mnyakanya Sportsman of the Year Award was presented to Ndlovu Thokozani.

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: True Spirit Award was presented to Magwaza Mbusiswa.

NTOLWANE PRIMARY SCHOOL JP2F4S AWARDS

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: Ntolwane Sportswoman of the Year Award was presented to Londeka Khanyile.

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: Ntolwane Sportsman of the Year Award was presented to Lungisani Mkhwanazi.

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: True Spirit Award was presented to Aphiwe Mabaso.



Special awards were presented to four Mnyakanya leaders who had demonstrated something a little more during the leadership programme. Zakwe Khanyisisani, Mhlongo Philasande, Ntanzu Bandile and Makhoba Nqobile all received a gift donated from our friend of The Bambisanani Partnership; professional footballer Tyler Denton.

Edith Sibiya a teacher at Mnyakanya High School ended the awards ceremony with a poem she had written.

Endless Love

This is love which is unbelievable; this is an endless love between us.

This is an endless love between St. Mary's and Mnyakanya.

No one can take this away from us.

Given opportunity to be taken of.

No one can snatch what you have given to us St. Mary's.

Eshowe High School, Mnyakanya High School and St. Mary's we are the best trinity.

Who can give away so much love?

Who can steal it from us?

What a day.

What a celebration.

Nations are together, prophesy from the Bible.

It is happening here amongst us today.

What a day.

What a great love with peace.

Love is in the air when you are around us.

Endless love to handle with care.

Endless love to embrace us.

Twenty-three Mnyakanya students also received the Bambisanani Leadership Award after successfully completing the course. These were:

- Zethembe Xulu
- Nhlakanipho Zulu
- Ayanda Mazibuko



- Nzuzoh Nzunza
- Siphokazi Mbambo
- Amahle Mnomya
- Bandile Ntanzu
- Asibonge Khumalo
- Sanele Madlala
- Philile Nsele
- Nqobile Makhoba
- Sinalo Tshoba
- Ayanda Lushaba
- Andiswa Zulu
- Londiwe Sithole
- Nhloso Mzolo
- Simfumene Qwabe
- Langelihle Mthonti
- Sifundo Khumalo
- Kwanele Khanyile
- Wandile Khumalo
- Pamela Mbambo
- Londiwe Khanyile

FINAL WORD

David Geldart, Founder and Chairman of The Bambisanani Partnership always challenges the team to 'stand on the shoulders of those that have gone before and take the partnership to a new level'. The 2018 Bambisanani team certainly achieved this.

This really is a special year for The Bambisanani Partnership. I have witnessed forty students from St. Mary's Menston, the University of Leeds, and Leeds Trinity work with over five hundred Zulu youngsters. They provided new opportunities, improved leadership skills and developed confidence and self-belief. I have seen their work change attitudes and aspirations. They have undoubtedly helped shape people's lives in a positive way. The students from these three institutions were outstanding ambassadors of The Bambisanani Partnership. They are kind hearted individuals. I am so proud of their work. Thank you.

All the staff involved. You are all inspirational. You are providing opportunities for young people that are truly life changing experiences. Thank you.

My sincere thanks to everyone who continues to support The Bambisanani Partnership.

Special thanks must go to all our supporters for their outstanding contribution to this project.

Mrs C Chattoe, Bambisanani Co-ordinator at St. Mary's.



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