



Bambisanani Partnership

Working Together, Learning Together



st.Mary's



Mnyakanya High School



Sawubona!

Report on St. Mary's visit to South Africa June 2019

With special thanks to Bettys & Taylors Group

Follow us online!



Sawubona!



Report on St. Mary's visit to South Africa June 2019

Bambisanani
Partnership

This summer saw 45 volunteers travel to one of South Africa's poorest regions to expand the work of the multi-award winning Bambisanani Partnership charity.

Students and staff from St Mary's School, Menston, The University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University developed existing programmes and introduced new ones based on using sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership in rural KwaZulu-Natal.

Over a four week period, the volunteers taught, coached and mentored hundreds of South African students in a variety of Bambisanani programmes which included sports leadership courses, cycling initiatives, sports festivals and other curriculum areas. The partnership's commitment to 'working together and learning together' proved to have a most significant positive impact on students from both countries.

The 13th annual visit by St Mary's to South Africa was led by Brad Dobson supported by Catherine Chattoe and Charlotte Wood. The St Mary's student team were Louis Adams, Tom Allan, Harmonia Ebrahim, Charlotte Falkingham, Rachel Farmer, Lydia Giedrojt, Stephen Ginty, Ciaran Hammond, Ellie Lamb, Adam Metcalfe, Lucy Moorby, Ben Patterson, Will Sammon and Isabel Wilks and they had prepared for 18 months for what would be an incredible venture and significant learning experience. These outstanding individuals were assisted by four students from Eshowe High School: Kwanele Mpanza, Sinabo Mhlongo, Aphiwe Zikhali and Nkazimulo Ndlovu. The students from Eshowe were instantly embedded as key members of the team, providing invaluable support in the way of English and Zulu language translation.

This year saw two firsts for the visit. One was the delivery of a sport for the very first time: short tennis. Four days of hard work and determination, coaching tennis, hockey and rugby, resulted in thirty Mnyakanya students prepared and eager to host and deliver the festival day to over one hundred children from Ntolwane Primary School. It was this day that saw the second of the new additions: the first ever writing festival, to accompany the outstanding annual sports and reading festivals.

Additionally, as part of the visit, St Mary's students delivered lessons to Mnyakanya students, covering a whole host of subjects from across the curriculum. This year saw a range of imaginative teaching strategies used in the delivery of the lessons. A velcro body suit was used to teach the bones of the body and an erupting volcano as part of a geography lesson was delivered by St. Mary's head boy, Tom Allan and his teaching partner, Charlotte Falkingham. The lessons were full of enthusiastic Mnyakanya learners and teachers from both countries praised the students for the exceptional quality of their work.

Annual recognition is given to South African students, celebrating exceptional leadership qualities displayed throughout the programme. 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, as part of the special celebration bringing the work at Mnyakanya High School to a close for another year.

Volunteer work at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche completed the visit to South Africa. The day centre is for orphans and vulnerable children run by the Zulufadder Children's Trust, led by Popi and her team. The students organised a range of games, singing and 'story sacks', consisting of various props to bring their exciting books to life. This was a special way to end the visit for the students, and one that will remain fondly in their memories.



The 2019 St. Mary's team on the day of departure

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

LOUIS ADAMS

The Bambisanani visit 2019 was a heart-warming experience to say the least and I have reminisced every day since our return. The teenage leaders at Mnyakanya High School were so passionate about the role they play in their school, which particularly had an influence on me through how grateful they were to be in such an important role at their school. Their respectful nature when listening to the teachers and the 17 of us as visitors because of their passion to learn and to gain knowledge from this experience was especially sentimental. This was clearly evident when we were teaching our sports and our classroom-based lessons as they were consistently interactive, enjoying the increased amount of facilities during the lessons which benefitted their learning.

Every day was filled with a limitless amount of emotion. From meeting and saying goodbye to the high school students to our day at Zulufadder (the orphanage) emotions were ever-present. The elation which arose upon the faces of the orphans when we handed out our personal gifts was inspirational, as what we thought were such little gifts meant so much to the appreciative children.

My experience in South Africa has opened my eyes to what is happening around me on a day to day basis, which will hopefully have helped me to see what is truly important in life and to be grateful for everything. I have made some long-lasting friendships and relationships through this experience and bonds I hope to last. Finally, I would like to express my pride in being chosen as one of the few to be a leader in South Africa and will be forever thankful for this as it is an experience that I will never be able to replicate again.



Louis at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche



TOM ALLAN

When reflecting upon the visit to South Africa, there are several hundreds of memories which I will never forget from visiting Mnyakanya High School for the first time and seeing pictures and videos I'd seen from the UK come to life to singing on the bus on the way to and from Mnyakanya.

One of my favourite memories was our visit to uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche, which looks after orphan children. I remember sitting on the bus and pulling up to a wooden house with toys and play equipment scattered outside. When we were off the bus, we were greeted with singing by around 20 children all under 6. They were all so happy and grateful to see us. We then met Poppy the inspirational lady that looked after these children. She, like the children, was so happy to see us. Getting to read stories, play and interact with the children was one of my highlights from the entire visit. Due to the pure joyfulness that radiated from uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche, it was incredibly hard to leave. However, I couldn't leave without buying a t-shirt to help me remember the great time I'd had that day.

When visiting South Africa, we teamed up with 4 amazing students from Eshowe High School. (Sinabo, Kwanele, Aphiwe and Nkazi) They became great friends who we still talk to today over WhatsApp. They were incredibly helpful when working with the children at Mnyakanya High School. We were able to compare our cultures, traditions and school life and because they were of a similar age, we were really easily able to relate to them. To me they were the hardest goodbye, on one of our final days in South Africa we were given a tour of their school and then we had to say goodbye. After a group hug and another group picture (many were taken across the course of the visit) we left them with the intent to hopefully meet up in the future.

The visit to South Africa were the greatest 10 days of my life so far and right now I'm finding it hard to think of many other experiences that could top it. The visit allowed me to become an effective leader who was able to work with children but also inspire them to become leaders. It was so rewarding on the day of the sports festival watching our team of leaders from Mnyakanya teach tennis to the children of Ntolwane Primary School. Coming away from this experience I've made friends for life in the group of us from St. Mary's as over the course of the visit we all drew close together and I don't think I could think of 13 other people I'd rather share the experience with.



Science experiment at Mnyakanya



Tom teaching the theory behind volcanoes

HARMONIA EBRAHIM

My time on Bambisanani was one that was extremely eye opening, rewarding and enjoyable. For me the most memorable part was seeing the young leaders grow in both knowledge and as leaders through the course of the week. I myself, also grew in terms of leadership and confidence when seeing the change I could make. The week started when we met four other students from Eshowe high school, who would also be helping us teach the sports to the young leaders. From there we visited Ntolwane Primary School which was an inspiring sight to see so many young children so enthusiastic and happy to have the opportunity to learn. This enthusiasm was also seen further when arriving at Mnyakanya High School where we met the young leaders who we would be working with for the rest of our time in South Africa. From the outset it was clear that all of the young leaders were happy and excited to learn as well as appreciative of us being there to help them on their journey of becoming inspiring leaders.

Throughout the week along with working with the young people, we also had plenty of time to socialise and get to know each other. Learning about each other as well as being taught plenty of Zulu was definitely a highlight of my time there and making friends with people who are truly inspiring will be something I will always cherish from the visit. Another highlight of the partnership was the sports festival where all the young leaders taught the primary school children the sport they had been taught by the St Mary's students. Seeing the smiles on everyone's faces throughout the day was very heart warming and a great end to working with the students of Mnyakanya. The final highlight of the week for me was our visit to uMlalazi Day Centre

and Crèche where we were greeted by a group of smiling and very excited children. Seeing just how happy the children were with just our presence is an indescribable feeling that I will never forget. Seeing the work that Poppy does with and for the children at the orphanage was so inspiring and made it extremely emotional when saying goodbye. The happiness, smiles and overall gratefulness that I saw in just a few hours at the orphanage, will be something that will stay with me.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the Bambisanani Partnership and the things I saw and learnt whilst in South Africa I know will stay with me for the rest of my life.



Rugby session



With other Bambisanani Leaders



Harmonia with a new friend

CHARLOTTE FALKINGHAM

Before going on the visit, I was told that it would impact me greatly. However, it was not until we reached Mnyakanya that I realised just how true that would prove to be. It is safe to say that I'll carry the memories of Bambisanani for the rest of my life.

Upon arriving at Mnyakanya, it was apparently obvious how much the students wanted to learn from us as much as we wanted to learn from them. It did not take long for us to break the ice allowing us to form real friendships I will be forever grateful for. Throughout the visit, we were able to witness the students become amazing leaders at the sports festival in sports they were previously unfamiliar

with. I felt so enormously proud in my group in the way they taught the primary school students whilst also gaining in confidence myself.

Another thing that struck me in South Africa was the kindness of the students of Mnyakanya. The students welcomed us into their school even teaching us some Zulu! Despite English not being their first language, they had a great understanding of what we were saying to them. At the reading festival, I was fortunate enough to help students with their English as well as discussing their future plans. I saw students helping each other and taking a real interest in the books we read. I was so proud of them all.

In the future, I would love to return to Mnyakanya and am so grateful that I was able to take part in the amazing work of the Bambisanani partnership.

Furthermore, in visiting the orphanage, I could truly appreciate how fortunate I am. The work done in the orphanage is so crucial and to see this first hand was an honour. It is clear that the important work done there really impacts on the lives of the children and provides them the best possible start in life. When we got to the orphanage, we were met by the children singing which was an emotional highlight of the visit for me. Several children were very interested in my sunglasses!

My advice to younger students interested in visiting South Africa, would be to get involved in as many opportunities as you can inside and outside of school and to go for it and apply. The visit was sincerely one of the best experiences of my life and will never forget them.



At uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche

RACHEL FARMER

Bambisanani was an amazing opportunity that I am proud to say I've been a part of. It taught me a lot about myself and the people I worked alongside and it gave me an opportunity to experience another culture different from my own. I met many inspirational people while out in South Africa one of which was Poppy who runs an orphanage for small children who are being raised by older siblings. The orphanage allows the older sibling a chance to have an education which in turn gives themselves a better chance of life for themselves and their family. Without the orphanage the older siblings wouldn't be able to attend school and have an education. The children at the orphanage were happy and laughing like any other child. Their circumstances seemed to have not taken any of their childhood away which I am grateful for and that is thanks to Poppy. The laughter of the children whilst watching Mr Bean given to them by a previous group is a moment that I will treasure. Their happiness touched me and it showed that a language barrier didn't matter when it came to enjoyment.

I enjoyed learning and being a part of their traditions including their traditional dances and songs which amazed me every time I saw them. I think its important to continue on traditions such as these as it is a part of who you are and I'm grateful to be able to experience them for myself.

Another moment that stood out to me on our visit was the sports festival on the Wednesday. It was a proud moment watching the Mnyakanya students teach hockey tennis and rugby to the primary school students as we saw them develop throughout the time we worked with them growing in confidence and becoming great young leaders in their community. Also, at the end of the day being able to play Netball with my friends from Eshowe High School was something I truly enjoyed as it is a sport I love to participate in but it also highlighted the team work and friendships we built up while out in South Africa.

It was an emotional time when we had to leave and say our goodbyes to the friends we made while in South Africa but the memories made and our friendships will stay with me forever.

I do believe that sport is an ultimate bridge between two different communities as it brings us together allowing us to get to know each other, learn from each other and most importantly have fun together. I am grateful I had the opportunity to inspire others through Bambisanani and I admire all the South African students I met for their commitment to learning and their determination to improve their community.



Having fun at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche

LYDIA GIEDROJT

Throughout my visit, one thing that struck me every day was the overwhelming sense of community and love shown by everyone in every single place that we visited. Whether it was the orphanage, the schools or even the house that we stayed – everyone was filled with love and good will. One of the most memorable parts for me specifically was teaching at the high school and this helped me to be able to be so grateful for the opportunities I have at home through seeing the motivation and pure joy by seeing everything we brought with us for our lessons – especially the sweets at the end! My lesson was about the organs in the body and how they worked and it was so rewarding to be able to see the impact and outcome that all the preparation had on the children.

The concentration and the need for knowledge that they had was so inspiring and it still sticks with me today and continues to influence my life in the choices that I make and in making the most of every single opportunity that I can get. The visit to the orphanage was a very emotional experience for me, but it was also amazing to see how optimistic they were and excited they were about every little activity or toy that we brought for them. The women that worked there were extremely welcoming and made us all feel as though we were at home which made it very hard for us to leave, but we left our mark with all of the toys and football shirts that we left behind for them.

Overall, it was the one of the best experiences of my life that has left me with the most amazing memories and life lessons that I will carry with me forever. The mark everyone I met had on me will be there and last forever and I hope that my impact helped them too and encouraged them in as many ways possible.



Lydia and Tom working with the Bambisanani Leaders



Lydia at the Reading Festival

STEPHEN GINTY

My time in South Africa is unquestionably the greatest experience of my life, it was an incredibly unique opportunity to witness first-hand a completely different culture which despite its deprivation was filled with amazing, loving people. The 10-day visit consisted of many once in a lifetime experiences for example the South African safari, attending a traditional coming of age party in KwaZulu-Natal, visiting uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche and teaching a lesson to a class of students in Mnyakanya high school and always being welcomed with smiles and enthusiasm everywhere we went.

The three days we spent developing leadership skills in sport with the students at Mnyakanya was something I can never forget, and it was incredible to watch them teach sports, that we had just introduced them to, to the primary school children from Ntolwane. Something that shocked me the most was the rough playing fields at Mnyakanya high school, which was rock hard and covered with litter and broken bottles yet the students continued enthusiastically (some with bare feet) to play rounders or rugby or any sport.

The second we left St Mary's on the coach to Manchester airport, I knew that the visit to South Africa would be an unforgettable experience, however I could never imagine the impact it would have on my life or the friends and memories I would make. My experience on the Bambisanani visit was unimaginably inspiring and will stay with me forever, I was fortunate to have shared this time with a great team from St Mary's and to have made some lifelong friends in the people who helped us during our time in South Africa.



Story time at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche

CIARAN HAMMOND

The Bambisanani visit was the most rewarding and inspiring experience of my life and the highlight of my school career. The visit has had an amazing impact on me, and I feel I have matured as an individual due to my experiences in South Africa. I have always been very keen on being involved in the project since I joined St. Mary's in 2013, it has always been made very clear how important the visit is and Mr. Geldart inspired me in lower school by telling me his experiences from the visits.

The Zulu culture is something that amazed me, not only was it there to be seen at Shaka land, a Zulu village we visited to learn about how they live, but in everyday life with the students. It was so different to what we know here in England. I loved how happy everyone was when they broke out into song and began their brilliant dancing, which I tried my best to copy. A moment that will always stay with me is when the students at Ntolwane primary school performed traditional Zulu songs when we visited their school.

Our time teaching at Mnyakanya high school was brilliant, it felt amazing to help the students learn new sports and watch them all develop into great and confident leaders. However, it wasn't all about teaching, we all became very close with the students and I formed some great friendships and I hope what we taught them will have had a positive impact on their lives and that they can pass the skills they have acquired to others.

The visit to the orphanage was also very incredible, meeting the wonderful Poppy and seeing her beaming smile. Spending time with the orphans playing and handing our gifts out felt amazing as we got to brighten the children's day and see their faces light up. The emotions felt during that visit were mixed as I felt sad for the orphans' situations but the happiness the children showed was contagious and I don't think I stopped smiling all day.

The experience was something I will never forget, it really made me realise how lucky I am and that the little inconveniences in life don't matter. I would encourage anyone who has the opportunity to be a part of the project to grab it with both hands, I for one would love to do it all again. I treasured every minute of it, and spending time with my fellow students from St. Mary's every day has really strengthened our friendships because we all share the memories from what really was a once in a lifetime visit.



Reading at the festival



Geography lesson at Mnyakanya

ELLIE LAMB

If I was to describe the Bambisanani visit in one word, it would be eye-opening. The 10 days I spent with the team and the children have taught me more about myself than I would've ever expected. Therefore, I am forever grateful for Mrs Chattoe, Mr Dobson and Miss Wood for accepting me onto this visit of a lifetime.

It would be impossible to single out a favourite day, as each and every day was special in its own unique way. However some of my personal favourites were seeing the children from Mnyakanya High School confidently teaching tennis to the children at Ntolwane Primary School, a sport they had learnt just 2 days prior to the sport festival. Having the ability to teach the students at Mnyakanya a lesson of choice was also a highlight, as their eagerness to listen and learn from myself and Lydia was inspiring to all who witnessed it. Finally, the time we spent at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche was one of the happiest times of my life. Having the opportunity to play and read to the children who are so unfortunate yet some of the happiest children I have ever seen made me find a whole new appreciation for the life I have.

Overall, this was the best visit of my life and impossible to top. It's taught me a new outlook on life, whilst also allowing me to figure out what I want to do in the future. The friends I have made on this visit, both in South Africa and from St Mary's will last a lifetime, just like the memories.



Ellie at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche

ADAM METCALFE

Bambisanani was probably the best and most enlightening experience of my life. It was an amazing opportunity which I was very lucky to go on; I made memories which I will never forget. From when we left school Wednesday afternoon to when we got home 10 days later, I didn't stop smiling. There wasn't a single part of the visit I didn't enjoy. The region of Kwa Zulu Natal is absolutely stunning, the vast landscapes were breath taking to look at whilst we were driving to and from the high school. I also thought that watching the sun set and rise almost every day was amazing.

My favourite part of the visit was teaching a maths lesson to about 25 students in Mnyakanya High School, I found this so rewarding as I saw my hard work planning it, turn into an enjoyable lesson for the kids at the school. This was very rewarding for me as I saw how engaged the kids were and how much they actually wanted to learn.

Bambisanani was an incredible experience which I was very lucky to be a part of. Because it's such a good organisation, I hope to support it in the future and try to carry on making a difference to the people over in South Africa.



Adam at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche



Adam taking part in the Reading Festival

LUCY MOORBY

The ten days spent on the Bambisanani visit were some of the best and happiest days of my life. It was an experience I will never forget and I'll always be grateful for. From the moment we arrived we were welcomed and looked after, we couldn't of asked for better care. The time we spent at Mnyakanya high school was truly inspiring, it was clear how much the students appreciated the chance to learn and they worked extremely hard throughout the days. They made us feel so welcome and by the end we were all good friends. The sports festival was so reawakening and it was incredible to see the Mnyakanya students being brilliant leaders, we couldn't of taught them these skills without the help of the Eshowe students who were also a huge part of our experience.

For me the most memorable moment was when two girls who I'd met at the primary school, attended the sports festival and came running up to me and gave me a card and drawings, the words were so beautiful and it's a moment I'll treasure forever. I feel so privileged to have been part of this amazing partnership and worked along side such inspiring people. I'll always be grateful for the incredible memories made on this visit and it's something I'll never forget.



Lucy at the Reading festival



Working Together, Learning Together at a Biology lesson at Mnyakanya

BEN PATTERSON

Bambisanani was an eye opening experience that taught me a multitude of lessons including teamwork, leadership and communication. From visiting the primary school on the first day to playing and giving toys to the kids at the orphanage on the last day the trip was never short of emotion with laughter and tears in abundance.

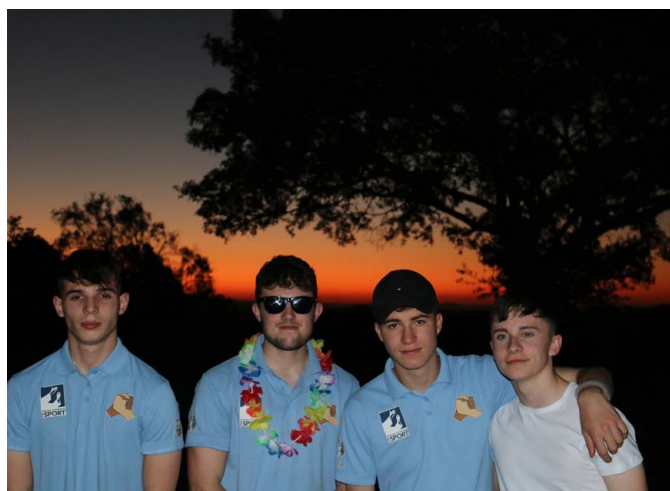
We were lucky enough to speak to a plethora of people learning about the culture, backgrounds and way of life of people from the KwaZulu-Natal region. Seeing the sunset and views everyday was a breath-taking experience that I will always treasure.

*My favourite part of the visit was going to the uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche on the final days. This was a notoriously heart wrenching moment so with our toys and a pack of tissues we set off. I will always remember vividly the laughter of the children, the sound of the whistles I brought (to everyone's disapproval) and the sound of the giddy kids on a sugar rush was a heart-warming moment and a personal highlight. We also set up a book reading at the orphanage. My book was *The Hungry, Hungry Caterpillar* and with masks and puppets the kids thoroughly enjoyed.*

I loved the experience of Bambisanani and can't recommend it enough to anyone thinking of doing it. The experience is enlightening and life changing and allows you to experience cultures you usually would not. The place we stayed was incredibly hospitable and the bright vibrant culture is extraordinary and infectious.



Learning how to communicate as a leader.



Ciaran, Louis and Adam.

WILL SAMMON

The Bambisanani Partnership, I believe, was an amazing experience which gave myself and my peers the opportunity to not only work together in order to help others, but also to meet people from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds as we collectively developed our skills in communication, teamwork and leadership. In addition to this, it gave us the chance to see parts of the world we had never dreamed of seeing; the outstanding landscapes and breath-taking views of the Kwazulu Natal region which were part of our classroom for the ten days.

My favourite part of the visit was the Sports Festival, hosted by Mnyakanya High School at the end of the school week. After spending 3 days teaching tag rugby to the high school students, it was extremely enjoyable to watch them then pass on these skills to the younger ones; watching them develop their character, leadership and other crucial life skills was rewarding for me.

The whole experience was a chance of a lifetime which I found myself incredibly lucky to be a part of. I loved contributing to both the lives of those we met and the community as a whole whilst being part of the Partnership much larger than just our group of fifteen.

The whole experienced developed me as a person and really changed my perception on the world, and I sincerely hope that Bambisanani continues to change the lives of others for years to come.



Reading "The Hungry Caterpillar" together at uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche



Will at the Sports Festival

ISABEL WILKS

Before going on the visit to South Africa, I knew it was going to be a once in a lifetime experience that I would never ever forget. What I didn't realise is just how much this experience would impact me. I have made so many memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life. Not for one second did I imagine that this opportunity would be as inspirational as it turned out to be. To pick one moment that was the best is impossible, I couldn't choose just one. The whole week was an amazing adventure and without each special moment the experience wouldn't have been the same.

But one of the particular moments that stood out for me was at the sports festival we had on the Wednesday. I will never forget the moment I was stood with Lucy and we were watching the Mnyakanya leaders teach hockey to the Ntolwane primary children, we were both so proud of all the leaders. Less than a week ago they didn't know how to play hockey and now they all had the confidence to teach and officiate the game. They have all developed into brilliant leaders that I know will go on to do amazing things in the future. I am incredibly proud of all the Mnyakanya leaders and also the other St. Mary's students for all their hard work and effort that made my week the best it could possibly have been.

Another heart-warming experience I had was when we visited uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche. As soon as we stepped off the bus and the gates opened all the children came running out with the biggest smiles I have ever seen on their faces. I will never forget that moment we got off the bus, it is definitely a day that I will cherish and I'm so glad we were able to brighten the children's day and make it that little bit better.

I can safely say I have made some of the best memories with the most amazing people. I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to experience this once in a lifetime journey into discovering other cultures to help me grow and develop as a person.

Bambisanani is an experience I will never ever forget and I will be forever thankful for the journey I have been on. I will cherish every single moment I spent with staff, students and the children from Mnyakanya, Ntolwane and uMlalazi Day Centre and Crèche for a lifetime. I already miss the experience and wish I could do it all over again.



Isabel during a Biology lesson at Mnyakanya



Discovering how to become a good leader.



At Mnyakanya High School

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

We learnt a lot of things from our UK friends. I wish to thank all the teams from St Mary's and the Leeds universities. We learnt many sports games like hockey, rounders, rugby and tennis; we also learnt how to ride and fix the bikes. This was all a wonderful experience because we are now able to help anyone who has a problem with his or her bike even in the community.

Melokuhle Mdlalose

I am so excited about what we learnt from the UK students this year. I am very proud that I can now play different types of sports that I have previously only seen on a television. I can now also fix bikes for myself and for my friends. I really appreciate all the UK teams have done for us.

Asanda Gabela



Bambisanani Leaders



Rugby session



At the Reading Festival

We miss all the students from Leeds so much! They taught us many leadership skills such as communicating, active listening and how to train others in different aspects of life. We learnt the skills and rules of using the bikes. Everything was amazing!

Philasande Buthelezi

Our visitors from St Mary's and the two Leeds universities were so kind, funny and patient with us. We were like brothers and sisters when we were together. We learnt so much from their discipline and about the importance of listening to others. The young leaders were so great. I never thought that one day I would be able to ride and fix the bike, but today I'm proud that I have all those skills. I wish to thank the Bambisanani Partnership for changing my life.

Magwaza Sakhile

UMLALAZI DAY CENTRE AND CRECHE (FORMERLY ZULUFADDER ORPHANAGE)

The final day was spent at uMlalazi Day Centre and Creche. uMlalazi Day Centre is a charitable organisation that promotes education and self-reliance among young people from rural communities in South Africa. It works to provide support to orphans with a day crèche 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 works hard at giving back a childhood that these children deserve.

The St. Mary's students had prepared story sacks. Animal masks, teddies, sparkly party hats and whistles brought the stories to life. Everyone loved hearing The Hungry Caterpillar story. St. Mary's helped with the centres' gardening project by helping to plant and water lettuces in their vegetable plot.

Adam Metcalfe and Ben Patterson wrote a blog post for this special day:

When we arrived at the day centre for orphaned children, we were greeted by all of the children running up to the fence waving and singing to us. Emotions began to run high at this point, as everyone had been anticipating this moment all week. The gates opened. Smiling faces ran towards us and immediately hugged us. When we were able to get into the main play area, everyone sat down and enjoyed a viewing of Mr. Bean on Holiday. It was nice to see last year's donation from the charity of DVDs, DVD Player and TV are coming in handy on 'cold' days like today. It wasn't long before we were outside, singing and dancing to nursery rhymes. The children laughed the whole time, which was so lovely to see; one in particular wouldn't let go of me (Adam) throughout the whole time. We followed singing with some reading in small groups. They certainly enjoyed the props that accompanied the stories, particularly the caterpillar masks that I had brought (Ben).

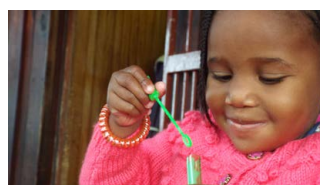
As we spent time with them, we gave a number of presents that we had brought for the children. This included balloons, bouncy balls and their deafening favourite, the whistles. As they enjoyed their new toys, we got the chance to play with them and leave them with memories that they, as well as us, will never forget; it was emotional saying goodbye to everyone, particularly Popi, the manager of the centre who is one of the vital parts of the organisation. She truly does an incredible job.



Lucy at Mlalazi Day Centre and Crèche



Popi



Popi with her children

TEACHER REFLECTIONS

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

Catherine Chattoe

To have been part of the 2019 visit to South Africa as part of The Bambisanani team was an absolute privilege. I feel extremely fortunate that I was able to revisit KwaZulu and continue the good work of the partnership. The visit itself was an enlightening experience that allowed me to work with some truly inspirational people. I learnt and gained so much from my time in South Africa.

I was honoured to watch the St. Mary's students deliver a leadership programme to thirty South African high school students. Their confidence and professionalism had me watching with awe and admiration, they truly are a group of special young people who were keen and able to support and help other young people. The friendships that were forged in South Africa were strong and heart-warming to witness and only came about as a result of the emotional intelligence and compassion of the St. Mary's students and staff.

Being part of the festivals was a really special moment for me. A day where young people from two countries came together to take part in sporting activities, improve their reading and writing skills, develop in confidence and as a leader and all whilst enjoying themselves and making new friends was priceless. That day has fantastic memories for me that will stay with me for a very long time. The commitment and diligence of the teachers and staff from both countries have also reinvigorated my enthusiasm for my job as a teacher and as the co-ordinator of The Bambisanani Partnership. It is a project that I am deeply passionate about. I now look forward to exploring new and exciting possibilities for further collaboration between the St. Mary's community and the people of KwaZulu Natal.

I must finish my reflection with a mention to my colleagues on the visit. Brad Dobson and Charlotte Wood are two inspiring individuals whose commitment and dedication to the charity is outstanding. They are exceptional individuals who embody the spirit of the partnership in every way. Thank you.



Charlotte Wood

It's never easy to put an experience into words. It is very difficult to describe the special moments shared between the students of St. Mary's and the students of Mnyakanya. These moments were so special, they will last forever. I know the students from both countries will cherish every single one.

My reflection is going to take a slightly different look on the visit and I dedicate this reflection to the hard work of the Bambisanani team. The students excelled whilst in South Africa but this wouldn't have been possible without the commitment and devotion of the Bambisanani team. The team devoted its time to developing strong leaders in South Africa and provided opportunities that will empower the students and build confidence that they will be able to use in the future to enhance their learning and improve their progress. Those leaders were and still are a credit to the partnership, the confidence and determination that they demonstrated, delivering a sports festival in three days was outstanding! Facilitating primary students to write postcards back to schools in the UK, astounding! They were a prime example of what the partnership stands for "working hand in hand". As I reflect on my two visits to South Africa with the Bambisanani partnership I realise that the team that you work with makes a massive difference. Not only is it the students that make the visit but it's also the team. Everyone involved in the work of the partnership have passed on their own knowledge as leaders and as a result created many more outstanding leaders that showed resilience and maturity whilst working at Mnyakanya. They are both a credit to St. Mary's and the Bambisanani Partnership and it's been an honour to work alongside them. I am passionate about the partnership and am delighted to be able to continue the work of the partnership as I lead the group who will be working in South Africa in June.

Pk Zondi

It is difficult to think of the suitable words to explain how beneficial the programme that was brought by UK students to our school was. Our learners lives really changed and will never be like before. They learnt so much about leadership skills in different sports and about riding and fixing bikes. Our learners have gained confidence in leading their peers in different school activities. They have become very helpful in the community when it comes to fixing of bikes. We are so proud of the skills they achieved in the Bambisanani Partnership programme. We as Mnyakanya High school really appreciate the contribution of the UK teams to our school and to our country.

AWARDS CEREMONY

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 Laurie M^cCauley awards for football and writing.

The first two awards were presented in memory of Laurie M^cCauley, a keen young sportsman from the St Mary's community. The Laurie M^cCauley Award for Most Improved footballer was presented to Sphamandla Zuma. The Laurie M^cCauley Award for Creative Writing was presented to Mxolisi Makhoba.

The Sibonelo Magwaza Outstanding Leader Award was presented to Mzukisi Mqadi. This same award will also be presented to a St. Mary's student, who will be announced in December 2019 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 Bandile Ntanzi.

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

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: True Spirit Award was presented to Nokwanda Ngema.

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: Helping Others Achieve their Potential was presented to Valentia Mkhwanazi.

NTOLWANE PRIMARY SCHOOL JP2F4S AWARDS

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

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

The John Paul II Foundation for Sport: Ntolwane Sports Leader of the Year Award was presented to Noluthando Magwaza.



The Laurie M^cCauley Award for Creative Writing



The Laurie M^cCauley Award for Most Improved Footballer



Sports Festival tennis action



Working Together, Learning Together

Rachel Farmer, St. Mary's pupil ended the awards ceremony with a poem she had written.

The True Leadership Treasure

*I went in search to be a leader,
Searching high and low above the meter,*

*I spoke with authority that I remember,
All would follow, all but one member,*

*"Why should I trust you?" the one did ask,
"What have you done to achieve the task?"*

*I thought long and hard of what I did wrong,
Then I rolled up my sleeves and worked right along,*

*Shoulder to shoulder we got things done,
We worked side by side, all were one,*

*A mate of mine stumbled, I stooped to assist,
My hand he did grab, a smile did persist,*

*One was lost, didn't know what to do,
I showed him how, the ropes, something new*

*I praised them one and all for their work,
All were unique, but I encouraged each quirk,*

*When the task was done, one did shout
"You're a great leader!" they all turned about,*

*"Without you there to support our plight,
Lost would we be with no end in sight",*

*I learned that day that I lead best,
When I get off my butt and help the rest,*

*To lead by example is the true treasure,
The secret of leadership, in one simple measure.*

Thirty one Mnyakanya students also received the Bambisanani Leadership Award after successfully completing the course. These were:

Bonginkosi Magwaza
Melokuhle Mdalose
Nongiebo Shange
Ntukozo Mkhwanali
Bhengu Thandolusha
Sikhakhane Amahle
Sithole Philangethemba
Buthlezi Philasande
Buthlezi Nolwazi
Xaba Thubelihle
Dludla Fanelesibonge
Biyela Nokuzola
Magwaza Norma
Ngubane Zuzile
Lushaba Ayanda
Makhoba Nqobile
Sithole Londiwe
Zulu Nhlakanipho
Rhagama Lindokuhle
Mpanza Samkelo

Andile Zitha
Anele Glazu
Sakhile Magwaza
Bhengu Busisiwe
Zuma Fezeka
Msomi Xolo
Nzuza Nzuzo
Gabela Asanda
Sibiya Nomvelo
Mkhize Amahle
Khumalo Sifundo

FINAL WORD

Founder and Chair of the Bambisanani Partnership charity David Geldart said:

"The students and their teachers and lecturers have made a real difference to so many people's lives through their selfless volunteering in South Africa this summer. In doing so, they have learned and grown so much. Creating 'two-way learning' is a fundamental element of what we are about. The commitment of St. Mary's School, the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University to the partnership and indeed global learning is simply phenomenal. Our supporters and sponsors, both here in the UK and in South Africa have enabled us to make a real difference in the world and deserve great credit and our sincere thanks. Based on 'working together and learning together' we have ambitious plans for the year ahead and are looking forward to expanding our programmes."

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

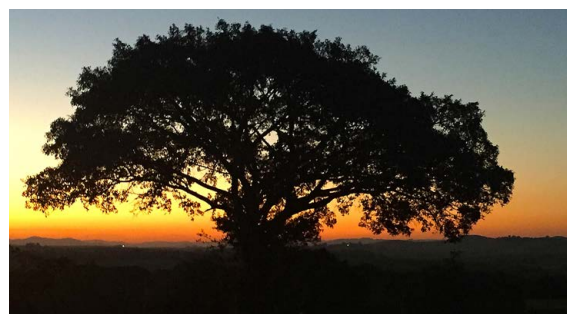
This year an exceptional amount of hard work has gone into ensuring the partnership is achieving what it set out to do. Supporters, friends and colleagues of The Bambisanani Partnership, in both countries have collaborated to make sure the dreams of the partnership become a reality.

I have witnessed forty five 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.

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.



SPECIAL REPORT:

TRANSFORMING LEARNING AT MNYAKANYA HIGH SCHOOL

Students at a school in one of South Africa's most deprived rural areas have access to the internet for the first time thanks to three years of international collaboration.

The Bambisanani Partnership which was started 13 years ago by St. Mary's School, Menston, and Mnyakanya High School in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, has worked with the Rotary Club of Aireborough and Eshowe Rotary Club in South Africa to secure funding of £30,000 to create the computer based classroom at Mnyakanya High School.

Aireborough Rotary Club committed £10,000 towards the project and after a rigorous process of grant applications, further funding was approved by Rotary International.

The purpose built classroom which will transform education at the remote rural school finally opened this month. It has full internet connectivity for 20 modern computers with associated software and additional hardware, including projector and screen. The grant money will also fund significant training for teaching staff together with technical support and connectivity fees for the next five years.

A delighted Catherine Chattoe, Bambisanani co-ordinator at St. Mary's, said: *"This is a great achievement for The Bambisanani Partnership, Aireborough Rotary Club and Eshowe Rotary Club. Providing 20 computers and access to the internet will make such a difference to the students and teachers at Mnyakanya High School.*

"The teachers will be able to use the facility to improve their teaching and students will be able to use the computers to aid their learning and access valuable information that may impact on their futures."

The Secretary of the Rotary Club of Aireborough, Graham Davies, added: *"We are pleased to have been able to facilitate the funding of this project which we know will have a massive positive impact on the lives of both the students and the teaching staff at the school.*

"In conjunction with the Bambisanani Partnership, we look forward to seeing how they have all progressed."

The Media Centre is known as 'Mary's Room' with respect to St. Mary's School and to Mary Jowett, who left a legacy to Aireborough Rotary Club which helped to fund the project.

The Rotary District Governor in KwaZulu-Natal Jaco Stander visited the school to officially open the new facility. Ronnie Ngeleka, Principal at Mnyakanya, said: *"We thank everybody concerned for the new Media Centre which will help transform our school for both learners and educators.*

"We have already applied to the Department of Education to introduce Computer Application Technology as a subject across all grades to ensure that our learners are well equipped to face the real world and play their part in it."





bambisananipartnership.org



Follow us online!



The Bambisanani Partnership
Registered Charity Number: 1163461