

South Moor Greenland Community Infant School and Greenland Junior School,  
Stanley, Co Durham  
linked with  
Lyamungo Sinde Primary School, Tanzania

“Just Like You” health project - examining aspects of the teaching of health education

Some reflections on a visit to our link school

### Background information

Lyamungo Sinde Primary School in Tanzania is situated on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro located near the town of Moshi. It was established in 1960 with an additional block of classrooms being built in 1971. It accommodates 210 children ranging from the nursery stage to Standard 7 - 5 years of age to 14 year olds. The Headteacher and her staff of seven female teachers have the responsibility of educating all of the children.



The school link was established in September 2004 with the support of Development Direct, which is a charity based organisation located in the North East of England.

In 2006 the link was strengthened when three members of staff from the UK infant school, working on a reciprocal health education project, visited their colleagues' school in Tanzania. This link was further strengthened when Greenland Junior School colleagues joined the project after their Tanzanian partnership link was prematurely terminated. Together with the infant school team, they visited the Tanzanian partner school in May 2007.

The purpose of this visit was to strengthen the school links by evaluating the health-hygiene topic work, by providing and sharing lesson ideas, modelling school-based made resources and materials and to discuss future topic and lesson ideas.

### Initial impressions and experience by an Infant School Teacher

Looking at the focus of emotional intelligence was far more difficult than I had envisaged. It is necessary to consider the cultural context of the school and to some extent the schools physical location. The main overriding factor appeared to be that the whole population valued education and the people who teach at the establishments. The children appeared to feel privileged that they could attend school and they showed this by working hard and behaving extremely well.

I was surprised to learn that children as young as three are taken by older siblings to the nursery school which may involve a two hour journey on foot!

## Initial impressions and experience by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant 1

During our time in school we were given the opportunity to teach the children some songs and circle games. We also used the resources we had made relating to our topic of dental health with the children in the classroom. The behaviour of the children was excellent, particularly during unsupervised times. The children were always polite and respectful and it was evident that they were very keen to learn. The main obstacle facing the teachers was lack of resources. Basic equipment such as pencils, text and exercise books were not readily available. This with the large class sizes meant that there was little opportunity for interactive teaching.



My visit to Lyamungo Sinde has been the highlight of my career so far. The experience has been a very positive one. Not only have my own personal learning objectives been met but also I have developed a greater understanding of the importance of developing children's understanding of different cultures. I have had the opportunity through first hand accounts, photographs and artefacts to teach the children the real day to day life of the children and teachers in our partner school. As a result the children now have a deeper understanding of the differences and similarities between their lives and the lives of children in Tanzania and a greater respect for all cultural differences.

## Initial impressions and experience by a Junior School Teacher (1)

The classrooms were what we had expected, containing standard double desks, a blackboard and very few posters on the walls. The children took turns cleaning the mud off the classroom floors with buckets and cloths. Later in the visit we provided them with mops and buckets, which hopefully would make this much easier.

We were given the opportunity to watch formal lessons. The teachers were strict but friendly and the children very keen to listen and participate in lessons which were essentially chalk and talk. The teachers were very keen to look at the photographs and letters we had brought from England, also the resources we had brought to share. We were given opportunities to share these with the staff and small groups of children. I was impressed by the way the children shared without staff intervention. We taught groups of children simple English rhymes and songs which contained actions, then we asked them to teach us a selection of Tanzanian songs which were videoed to bring home.

## Initial impressions and experience by a Junior School Teacher (2)

Something that became fairly evident quite quickly during my time in Tanzania was the fact that there appeared to be no special needs children. I asked a staff member if there were any children with special needs in the school. The answer was no. Children that didn't make the grade at the end of the year were required to repeat again; any child that had a physical or mental impairment was kept at home. The school was really inaccessible for children with physical impairments and there was no money or resources to help children with mental disabilities. In Tanzania there appears to be limited provision for those with disabilities.

In terms of behaviour I noticed a vast difference between that of my own children and the Tanzanian children. The behaviour in the classroom and in the school was excellent. The teaching staff never had to raise their voices and the children knew what was expected of them. Perhaps the only time they did become slightly boisterous was when we delivered a lesson and asked them to work in groups, this I felt, was something that they were not used to. Despite the lack of facilities the children wanted to learn and wanted to be in school. The children understand why it is important to get a good education – they seemed to appreciate all that was given to them, never taking this for granted. This I found quite humbling.

## Initial impressions and experience by a Teaching Assistant (2)

Our joint project was about healthy teeth so we prepared worksheets and games about how we keep our teeth healthy in the UK.

The children were very interested in the work our children had sent and were keen to read the instructions on how we keep our teeth healthy. They wrote down their suggestions and then, with the help of the Tanzanian teachers, we translated their ideas to show our children on our return.

Everyone took great pride in their school, some children swept the classrooms at the end of the lessons and others helped to wash up the cooking pots after lunch. Small groups of children would often take us into their classrooms in between lessons to show us examples of their work.

Together with the head teacher, we had agreed that it would be nice to take just one or two items of the playground equipment out each day and spend some time showing the children how to use it. The children had a wonderful time playing with us and, to show their gratitude, started bringing us fruit, vegetables and eggs from their own gardens. We were all really overwhelmed by their generosity.

On our return to school, we have been able to show photographs to our children and this has led to some good discussions. We are planning several activities in school to keep the partnership in the minds of both staff and children.



## Initial impressions and experience by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant 1

I was impressed by the genuine friendliness we received from the staff and the pupils of the school. The excellent behaviour, and respect shown from the children was a joy to experience. Even when games and songs were being taught and there was great excitement, respect for adults, teachers and other children were not forgotten.

During our daily visits to the school, either working in the classroom, or generally mixing with the children, the atmosphere was calm and relaxed. Everyone knew what was expected of each other and acted appropriately. At no time did I hear a teacher or child raise their voice to be heard. This has got to be one of the main differences I noticed, between the two schools, along with the eagerness of Tanzanian children to come to school prepared and willing to learn.

Our visit was just before the end of their school term, and the older children were being given extra lessons to prepare them for their exams. Just how well the children do in these exams determines their acceptance for secondary education, (for which they have to pay). I likened these extra classes to our "booster" classes given to our year 6 children to help with their SATS, although their entry to comprehensive education is not dependant upon their results. These extra classes have proved beneficial to the Tanzanian children and their school, as they have a high pass rate, of which the headteacher was exceptionally proud.

### Appendix: General advice for others visiting

- Establish when examination timetables are and plan to visit outside of these periods.
- Be prepared to be flexible with the planned itinerary.
- Promote small group interaction rather than whole class teaching.
- To get more information and see photos, visit our school website  
*[www.greenlandprimary.durham.sch.uk](http://www.greenlandprimary.durham.sch.uk)*