



Kisima News

May 2022

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DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS

We start with the encouraging news of the KCSE results. The recent Form Fours took their exams from 14th March to 1st April, about four months later than they would have done if it were not for the COVID disruption and the subsequent restructuring of the school calendar. Our thirty six candidates and their teachers worked hard to cover the syllabus in reduced time, and this is reflected in the results:

Overall grade Number of students

A-	6
B+	7
B	9
B-	9
C+	3
C	2

With the university entry grade at C+, thirty four of the students will get a university place (nationally, only 17.5% of students achieved this), while the other two have good grades for diploma level courses at college. The students filled in their university applications before they left school, though there will be opportunities to revise their choices, and they are likely to begin their courses from August.

Our link with EARTH University in Costa Rica continues and a good number of the students also applied for their scholarship programme in Agricultural Science and Natural Resource Management. Three of them, plus two from previous classes, were successful in the initial application followed by online aptitude tests, and now we are waiting to hear how they fared in the interview stage that was recently held in Nairobi.



Posing with the Kisima flag as a commemoration of their time here

As these students move on to new things, it is of course time for others to begin their secondary school life with us. On 29th April our forty new Form Ones joined us, having been recommended to us by their primary schools on the basis of their academic ability and their family's needy circumstances. The Form Threes had the job of welcoming and guiding the newcomers and their parents and guardians, and then the Form Twos were paired with a new student to help them settle in. Many of them are still without a sponsor and we would love to hear from you if you are able to support a student in this way. Please email Lesley Jones on office@teft.org.uk



Form Ones hard at work in class

The fast pace of learning continues, with the three terms of this academic year squeezed into seven months (two months per term, with holidays of about ten days only). There is a second national exam this year, so by the beginning of December, Forms One, Two and Three will have finished their year's learning and Form Four will be taking their KCSE. There are still extra lessons in the mornings and some evenings, but as of this term, clubs and societies - such as the Journalism Club, the Music and Drama Club, the Young Farmers and the Red Cross - have been reinstated and will give a welcome change of activity. Sport has continued throughout, with games three or four times a week and occasional friendly matches with another school. A highlight last term was a football match between the students and the staff (teachers, cooks and others). The staff made a rocky start but then somehow managed to come back from 1-4 to 5-4! The students are of course hoping for a rematch so they can try and win next time.



Students and staff on the football field

As the Form Fours concentrate on their final year of study, those who were prefects have been released from their duties. New prefects from Forms Two and Three have been selected, from school captain and deputy, to those responsible for the dining hall, the dormitories, the school grounds, the library and more.



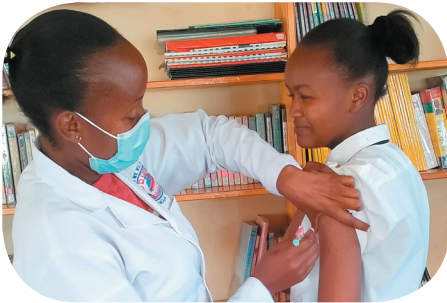
One of the new prefects being sworn in

A major development on the school site is our new borehole, which has been made possible thanks to an incredibly generous donation from Kenny and Patricia Ives, who have supported Kisima for many years. A hydrogeological survey revealed that water would be found at a depth of 250m, and drilling began while all the students were at home for the holiday. The process took much longer than expected due to a fuel crisis in the country, which meant that drilling had to be stopped repeatedly while hours were spent queuing at the fuel station. But now the borehole has been finished, a pump has been installed, the water has been checked and many of our tanks have been filled. Up to now we have relied on rainfall, supplemented by a small and erratic supply of piped water, and it is wonderful to know that water shortage problems are a thing of the past.



The borehole being drilled

We are happy to report that the COVID numbers in Kenya have been very low since the middle of February, and the last restrictions, such as mask wearing and limits on public gatherings, have been lifted. Vaccination rates across the country are lower than the government was hoping for - only about 16% of the population are fully vaccinated - but at Kisima, the story is different. Medical staff came to the school in February, and nearly all the students who were eligible (those aged fifteen years and above) opted to have the vaccine. Those who were in Forms One to Three were to have their second dose while at home, while the Form Fours had theirs at school immediately after their final exam.



The improvement in the COVID situation means that after a long period with few visitors, things have started to change. In January, Daniel and Salandi Westergren from Sweden visited with their three children. Daniel has been involved with Kisima since before the school opened and he shared something of that history with the students. He also spoke about the time they had just spent visiting Salandi's family in Northern Kenya, and about former Kisima students there who are now working as engineers, government officials, teachers and health professionals and who are having a positive impact on their families and communities.

Daniel's father Ebbe has also been a regular visitor to Kisima over the years and recently we welcomed him and three other members of Two Sisters' Chapel in Kalmar - Anna, Jenny and Jakob - for a brief stay. On Friday afternoon they attended some lessons, and on Saturday morning there was a gathering for the whole school. The students shared songs, dances, poems, and Bible readings, while the visitors sang and showed a video of their church's Easter week celebrations. After that, many of the students took the chance to chat to the visitors - finding out interesting differences between Sweden and Kenya in matters of politics, education, parenting, housework and more!



Later this month we look forward to many of our alumni visiting, which will be a chance for them to catch up with each other and to give advice and encouragement to the current students. Then at the end of June, Catherine, James and Sarah will be making a trip to the UK - their first since August 2019.

OTHER NEWS

• At the end of last year we said farewell to one of our longest-serving teachers, Caroline, who moved on to another school. We are glad that Lucas has now joined our staff team, teaching Christian Religious Education and Kiswahili.

• Another teacher, Beatrice, was blessed with a baby girl, and her maternity leave last term was covered by a former student! Simon studied here from 2012 to 2015 and recently graduated as an English teacher, and it was great to have him back with us for that time.



Simon now facing the desks he used to sit in!

• Last year's Form Four Agriculture students harvested a good crop of carrots from their assessed project and it will soon be time for the next group to find out what they are required to grow. They will be greatly helped by the reliable supply of water from the borehole, as there has been a long dry spell here. Recently we have had a few rain showers but not the weeks of rain that are expected at this time of year.



One of the student's carrots

• The weather situation is far worse in Northern Kenya, which is experiencing a severe drought. This is leading to death of many livestock, hunger for the people and an increase in inter-community conflict.

• Political activity in Kenya is at its peak, as the general election is scheduled for 9th August. There are concerns that, as in previous years, there may be election-related violence, and we pray that this will not be the case.

PRAYER POINTS

Thank God for...

- The excellent KCSE results
- The arrival of our new Form One students
- The resumption of clubs and other activities in school
- Our new borehole
- The improvement in the COVID situation in Kenya
- The friends who have visited us and all that they shared with the students
- All our staff, including those who have recently joined us

Please pray for...

- Our former students to be able to go on and study their chosen courses
- The Form Ones to settle in well, work hard and benefit from their time here
- Enough sponsors to be found for the new class
- Everyone to cope with the fast pace of learning
- COVID to remain under control in Kenya
- Kenya to receive enough rain and to experience a peaceful election, with good leaders elected