

November Newsletter

Vol 9 Issue No. 11 2023



National Tree Planting at the Rehabilitation Centre

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Dear Partners, Supporters, Family, Friends and Sisters of Mercy,

November was a very busy month. The secondary school had national examinations. These exams go on for about four weeks. Two Kenya Police Officers are deployed to each school for the month. They accompany the Headteacher as s/he collects the examination papers from the distribution centre and brings to the school. This is an effort to avoid examination fraud. For students from the informal settlements, the presence of police can cause tension, as they may have seen police beatings and killings in the slums. Some of our neighbouring schools had incidents of unruly behaviour. We were fortunate, thanks to the vigilance of the Headteacher and staff that the exams proceeded without any incident.

We are grateful to the local community, who arrived as individuals, families and representatives of various businesses to donate food, cleaning and educational materials to our various centres. It is inspiring to see parents showing their children how to be mindful of impoverished children and communities. Most of these local donors like to come on weekends as that is when they are free.

From abroad, we had Frank Cullen, who had visited after a few years and noted the improvements on the various sites and was proud to see the contribution of Paula and her group, who continued in November to improve the facilities in the Rehabilitation Centre. We also had visits of British Airways crewmembers.



We have noted that young girls who give birth very early, often have great difficulty doing well in life. We have a tutor, also a young mother, teaching a lady who gave birth in primary school and dropped out from secondary after having a second baby. We hope that she will persevere so she registers for the final secondary exams next year.

On the 19th November we attended the GAA teams games with a local team. They have fundraised to plant a million trees in Africa. This year the visit was facilitated by Self Help Africa. There was a very enjoyable reception afterwards in the Irish Embassy Residence.

I was once a member of the INTO (Irish National Teachers Organisation) as I worked as a primary school teacher in Ireland for a few years. Recently, through a former volunteer, Cora Allen, the INTO, became a donor of one of our primary schools, which have need to develop facilities for teaching of science and crafts. We hope this is just the beginning of our collaboration.

The work in our Departments continued well all through November. We are encouraged by the improvement of many children in Songa in their mobility and speech, and by the progress of the boys undergoing rehabilitation. Primary School parents are all trying to secure places in secondary for their children. The costs are prohibitive for many. We help some but are overwhelmed by the numbers. Without secondary education it is hard to get employment as a secondary certificate is a requirement for many casual jobs and nearly all formal employment.

Thank you, all of you, for empowering the work to continue.

May you enjoy the blessings of Christmas and be filled with wonder as were the shepherds and the Kings who visited Jesus.

Best wishes,

Sr Mary Killeen

Director



Social and Health Services

Social Services

As we approach the end of 2023, the Social and Health Services Department is working hard to complete all pending activities as planned. During the long holiday break, many parents struggle to provide food for their



children at home, especially those families who only eat one meal a day or sometimes go to bed hungry. The social workers have identified the neediest students and vulnerable community members.

St Catherine's Social Office Distributed Food Parcels to needy families

The distribution exercise was carried out last month, and the food package contained essential food items that could last for a week. This support was critical to families who could not afford to feed their loved ones. Over 2,100 residents were assisted through the Department in November, and 33% were comprised of food distributions of parcels.

The program for Amaranth and Malnourished Babies has been an essential initiative for those requiring nutritional supplements to ensure proper growth and health. Most clients who participate in these programs have seen a significant improvement in their health. The program is run by Sr. Barbara at the St. Catherine's Social Office. It wouldn't be possible without the generous support of donors, partners, and well-wishers who have given selflessly to help the people of Mukuru slums. A portion of the donations was directed towards aiding our children and clients, particularly those affected by the ongoing heavy rains that have caused flooding in some of the families' houses due to the lack of adequate drainage systems in the slums.

During the KCPE national examinations, Year 8 candidates at the 4 primary schools received motivational support from social workers. These social workers are stationed at the schools and are known and trusted by the pupils. If any pupils need additional help, they can go to any of the offices at the schools. Holiday mentorship sessions and psychosocial support for those seeking counselling services were also conducted in some schools. The Department is committed to helping all pupils, especially during the extended holiday break, when there are often many temptations due to parents' financial status. Safeguarding follow-ups were also conducted in cases of alleged abuse.

During November, there was a decrease in the number of students who needed medical assistance as schools closed. Many families chose to return to their ancestral lands for the holidays since it was more affordable than living in the city. The medical social office continued to waive consultation fees for poor clients from the community who couldn't afford them. Some children are receiving palliative care in other hospitals. They must keep their appointments, and the medical social worker monitors their medication regimes closely. Medical care and coverage are becoming increasingly scarce for slum dwellers, particularly families. Parents have been encouraged to register for the National Social Health Insurance Fund to help cover their treatment costs when they fall ill. Unfortunately, all costs are rising in Kenya, making it difficult for Mukuru residents to afford them.

MPC Clinic

During November, the Clinic experienced a significant rise in patients seeking medical care, which totaled to 1,586 cases. The most common illnesses treated were related to respiratory, gastrointestinal and cardiovascular diseases. The largest group of patients belonged to the age group of 18-35 years, followed by the under 5s. The laboratory conducted an average of 30 tests per day to help with the treatment plans for the patients.

Summary Statistics for November 2023								
Categories	0-5 Years	6-12 Years	13-17 Years	18-35 Years	36-49 Years	50-64 Years	Above 64 Years	Total
Registrations	407	85	62	436	214	90	30	1324
Diseases Treated	407	85	61	432	212	90	30	1317
Clinics	196	0	1	71	1	0	0	269
Laboratory Tests	66	41	22	280	142	56	17	624







Patients at St Joseph's Waiting Bay

Laboratory technician Jerim Wandera

Deworming Project with Isaiah Museti

Access to some form of good quality healthcare is essential in controlling outbreaks. The Waiver Program can provide peace of mind to thousands of Mukuru residents. During November, 142 patients received a waiver from the Clinic. Being able to offer preventative programs like the 'de-worming' project helps ensure that children don't succumb to some nasty parasitic infections. It is a project that has been carried out for years at MPC.



Initially, the Clinic had an all-encompassing registration. Still, as Ministry of Health policies changed, clinics must register the different aspects of their operation, such as the laboratory, pharmacy, and other dimensions, which all come with expensive fees. The Clinic's administrator, Lucky Wanjiru, commenced the process to have the laboratory registration fee waived. The Kenya Medical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists Board (KMLTTB) will conduct an inspection in due course.

Lucky at KMLTTB offices.





Patients often need to be closely monitored to ensure that they are safe to go home. To provide a suitable space for this purpose, the old staff room has been repurposed into an observation area. This four-bed room functions as a sanctuary for patients who require temporary shelter, such as accident victims or dehydrated patients. It also enables detailed assessments to be conducted to determine the extent of injuries and severity of medical conditions.

Observation Room

In November, the Clinic welcomed two new staff members: Everline Oketch, a registered nurse, and Agnes Aluoch, a Community Health Promoter for TB counselling and testing. Together, their efforts have improved service delivery and patient care at the Clinic.



Everline and Agnes

The Clinic places a high priority on building the capacity of its staff. As such, they attend training sessions on incorporating the CoVid19 vaccines into routine immunization practices. During these sessions, Dr. Gichuki and other officials from KEPI focus on various aspects of the screening process, client eligibility, and documentation using both manual and electronic systems (Chanjo). Ultimately, the new Chanjo system will be fully automated in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.



This month has been very busy due to the various activities at the Centre. The boys have been fully occupied particularly now that schools are closed and the KCPE candidates anxiously await their results. There was a lot of excitement and anticipation in November for Paula Cullen and her team's arrival. The team spent three weeks at the Centre and there was a lot of action during that time.

In November, there were significant and noticeable differences at the Centre. Donations, such as sporting kits and educational resources, were received. Also, the presence of kindhearted women - Paula, Irene, Adrienne, Teresa, and Claire - had a positive impact on the boys. The boys displayed their best characteristics, which is essential for bringing about transformational change.

This month's heavy and continuous rains required the boys to play a significant role in cleaning and beautifying the Centre by planting many flowers. The social department facilitated the preparatory reintegration meetings for the 11 boys who had successfully completed their rehabilitation program and their parents.

At this time of the year, there is a lot of movement at the Centre, with boys being reintegrated with families or preparing to go to boarding school for those who have managed to obtain sponsorship. Five young boys have received accelerated learning and will join kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3 at St. Catherine Primary School since they have caught up with other students.



The boys received new uniforms from St David's School in Greystone thanks for Paula Cullen's group.



Irene and Teresa on the Fit out duties.

The Rehabilitation Centre had enrolled 17 boys to take the KCPE national examinations, of which 2 scored B and C+. It's not easy for these boys to adjust from street life to the structured routines of the Centre, but a handful of them have managed it well. The exam results have given the boys valuable feedback on areas of improvement as they prepare for either secondary school or vocational training. The carpentry class has been busy preparing for the upcoming NITA examinations in December, working on various projects around the Centre, such as renovating the storage room and the music and prayer room.



Year 1 students will transit to St Catherine's

Adrienne Burke and Vera Smith have consistently supported the carpentry program at the Centre. As part of the Cullen Team, they have sponsored the program with new tools, equipment, and safety gear for the boys





Charles, Frank and Paula examine the repairs to be done

The carpentry class renovating the music room by putting ceiling frames

Over the years, the vocational training classes have significantly improved thanks to the hard work and dedication of carpentry instructor Charles Ndirangu. Charles has displayed exceptional diligence and commitment to maintaining high standards for his students and the Centre's maintenance program.

The rugby team has received new sports tracksuits, boots, and equipment for their upcoming tournaments. However, as we all know, injuries are common in sports, and first aid kits are necessary. We thank Catherine Nolan for donating these essential items to the Centre. Recently, the rugby team participated in the "Plant the Planet Games" at Strathmore University. It was an excellent opportunity for them to meet and interact with the Irish players. The boys were thrilled to meet the Irish players and the Kenya football team, AFC Leopards.



MIRC Rugby Team at the tournament



Paula presents the MIRC rugby coach the donations from Catherine Nolan and St David's School, Bray and Leinster Rugby Team.

Paula and Coach Denishe









U12s Rugby Team

U16s Rugby Team

Teresa U12s Team Sligo Rovers



During their visit, Paula Cullen and her team of extraordinary women completed several projects. One of the major projects was renovating and painting the music room/prayer room. Teresa Heeran and her network of friends sponsored the renovations. The old building was made of timber and mabati (iron sheets), which made it uncomfortable and stuffy to sit inside. The renovations aimed to make the boys more comfortable while practicing music and conducting their evening prayers. Prayers are a regular routine for the boys, which helps them live more harmoniously with each other. The benches were given a facelift, the internal walls were replaced, and a new ceiling and roof were applied. At the project's conclusion, Teresa was thanked by the boys, and they shared a 'clef' cake at the official opening ceremony of the music room.

Teresa and Swaleh

There was more! Irene Plunkett and Deirdre Connolly have generously donated various musical instruments to the Centre. These instruments include guitars, flutes, tin whistles, and music books, allowing the music band players to learn and practice. The boys are learning to play various instruments, such as the piano, violin, guitars, tin whistles, and flutes. The music teacher, Swaleh, conducts the lessons in the evenings. The house parents, Steve Okoth and Tobia Omodingi, also teach the boys hymns for their weekend liturgies.



Band members receive instruments from Irene and Deirdre.



Tobias teaches the boys music theory and practice.



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The Centre had been growing its own vegetables for some time, and recently, a new club called "Aflatoun" was formed with 15 members and a patron. The club is a program by Cheshire Disability that teaches children about saving culture. The club's objective is to develop their agricultural skills and become self-sufficient by growing vegetables for sale, which some of the proceeds will be distributed among them when they leave the Centre. The members are responsible for preparing the soil, planting the seeds, and harvesting the vegetables. Due to the persistent rains in November, the members grew plenty of flowers and reseeded grass patches where water had previously been logged. They also planted kale, spinach, carrots, cabbages, saga, kunde, and mange. Paula and her friends taught the members a new and 'easy-to-manage' method of growing vegetables inside old, unused lockers and even provided the seeds for the project.



The Aflatoun members cultivate the patch to plant vegetables for the Centre.



In November, the boys participated in an exciting Art program. They created numerous bracelets for an order from Paula's Team. The donors were impressed by the boys' artistic abilities, and they also made more Christmas cards and drew pictures to express their happiness and gratitude. At Frank's farewell party as a going away present, five boys made a bracelet with his name on it, while another boy created Kenyan bracelets for every member of Team Paula.









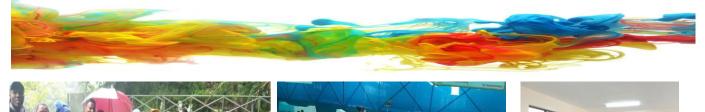
Art Class: The boys participate in drawing, colouring and bracelet making with members of Paula's team.

Frank's souvenir gift



Paula Cullen's team took the boys on an excursion to Mamba Village to see the crocodiles and enjoy a boat trip on the lake. Unfortunately, the village has been neglected and looks vastly different from two years ago. The boy's enthusiasm did not dim with the very wet weather. They went to Stedmark Park and Recreation Centre and played for hours in the heated swimming pool. After all that excitement the boys were served pizza, chapati and sodas at the Centre to sustain their energy levels.

Boat Trip at Mamba Village









Mamba Village

Stedmark Park Swimming Pool

Pizza, Sodas and Chapatis

The Irish Ambassador, Caitríona Ingoldsby, her husband Colm Healy and their two sons, Colman and Ultan, visited the Centre, where they met with Paula Cullen and her Team. Paula's Team have been associated with the Centre for over a decade and are responsible for various projects sponsored by their Irish supporters. During the visit, the Ambassador toured the Centre and observed the other projects undertaken by Paula's Team. As a token of appreciation, the boys made bracelets for the Ambassador and her family. Adrienne Burke, Clare Chambers, Irene Plunkett, Teresa Heeran, and Sr. Mary Killeen were also present.



Ambassador Ingoldsby and her family at Rehab Centre with Paula, Adrienne, Sr Mary, Irene and Teresa



Teresa Heeran with Ambassador Catriona Ingoldsby together with her two sons Colman and Ultan

In November, the Centre received visitors from British Airways crewmembers named Aidan, Kayleigh, Aimee and Marie McGree. They donated several items to develop the boys residing in the Centre. Special treats were handed out to celebrate the KCPE results. The Centre is grateful to the many local and international visitors and donors who remember the boys often. These well-wishers have contributed fresh food provisions, meat, sporting equipment, educational resources, clothes, shoes, treat nights, biscuits, chocolates, and fruit. Thank you to Team Pankaj, Paula Cullen's Team, Consolata Missionaries,

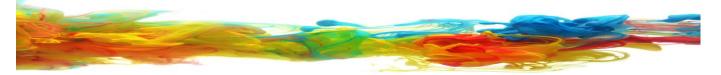


Corner Bakers, Stephen Ngana, Mr. Suleiman, and Sr. Barbara for their generous donations in the current month.

Consolata Missionaries' seminarians' donations

Team Pankaj





The boys participated in the National Tree Planting Day by adding 50 more trees at the Centre site.







Tree Planting at the Rehabilitation Centre with Team Cullen

Before leaving for another year Paula Cullen's Team distributed pre-Christmas gifts to all the boys. Some of them will leave the Centre at the end of the year while another cohort will begin in late January. In the meantime, ensuring that every moment counted whilst in Nairobi, Paula and her Team kept a close eye on the other projects like the music room.



Gifts for the Boys



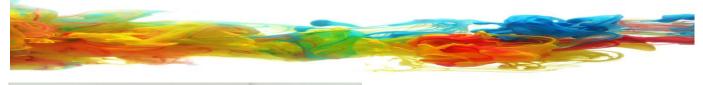
Preparing and painting the ceiling boards for the Music Room



Music Room



Teresa, boys and Adrienne after completing the music room





In early 2023, Paula Cullen and her team successfully completed their last big project called "Calary Hall". A storyboard was erected to showcase the project's various stages and donors' generosity, which now proudly hangs in Calary Hall, MPC Rehabilitation Centre, Nairobi.

Calary Church is a small Church of Ireland parish in the mountains of Co. Wicklow. It became involved with Sr Mary and MPC over 20 years ago as a result of a visit by Lucy, the daughter of one of the parishioners, John Medlycott. Lucy claimed

that she had seen more Christianity at work in Mukuru than at Calary. Under the leadership of Reverend Bennett and Reverend Stiles the parish rose to the challenge and have been supporting MPC and particularly the Rehabilitation Centre through fundraising events. Over the years Sr Mary would visit the parish on her holidays and share with the parishioners over many morning teas and concerts how the funds raised helped the people of Mukuru. Sr Mary experienced John Medleycott as a truly inspirational man who had a deep love for the marginalized with an extraordinary energy to reach out to others in need.

Calary Church along with a small Irish volunteer group led by Paula Cullen including Irene Plunkett (Dublin), Catherine Nolan, Vera Smith (Carlow), Adrienne Burke, Clare Chambers (Wicklow) and Teresa Heeran (Sligo) with their families, friends and supporters have been involved with supporting MPC for more than 12 years. The sign board serves as a reminder to the boys of the tremendous support many people in Ireland have given and their gratitude towards them.

Accompanying the storyboard are tree photographs: Calary Church, St Brigid's Cross and Sr Mary with Mr John Medlycott.





A number of boy's parents attended the Parent meeting in November. Long time support and parishioner of Calary Church, Clare Chambers spent the time chatting with the boys and their parents.



Awards ceremony

Inside the carpentry workshop

Before Frank Cullen returned to Ireland, a ceremony was held at the Centre. At the event, awards were presented to the top performers in recognition of their hard work, good efforts, and positive attitudes throughout the year. The Centre took the opportunity to acknowledge and reward the contributions of its employees.

Sponsorship Office

We were happy to welcome Paula Cullen, Adrienne Burke, Clare Chambers, Teresa Heeran, and Irene Plunket. They have been sponsoring 27 boys from Mary Immaculate Rehabilitation Centre. They spent time at the

Sponsorship Office during their visit and received the latest reports on all the boys. The group kindly brought donations of clothes, books, and learning materials. These will be shared with the students. All the sponsored students' academic reports have been uploaded onto the database for sponsors to view. The school reports demonstrate the positive impact of sponsorship on the students' learning. They show that their academic performance improves when students can focus on their schooling rather than on how their parents can afford to send them to school.



Clare, Stellah, Adrienne, Irene, Teresa and Paula

One of the individuals who benefited from the sponsorship program was admitted to the Recovery Trails Centre in Nyahururu for rehabilitation due to alcohol and drug abuse. His name is Martin and he is often subjected to discriminatory taunts from the community due to his dwarfism. In the past month, a visit was arranged to assess his progress and current condition.

Further follow-ups occurred with the ex-convicts' program. As mentioned previously, some have been supported through small business start-ups. Sadly, one of the former prisoners suffered a stroke and had to close her salon due to paralysis. The program has supported Michelle Mwende with food packages and medical assistance. It's good to see that she is starting to show improvement. Another person in the program has become a mother of a new baby girl.



Michelle Mwende recovers from stroke



Margaret Wangui starts her second hand clothes business



Jacinta Mbaika stands proudly outside her newly renovated food kiosk.



The KCPE results have been released after some initial concerns were raised by schools to the Ministry of Education. Among the top 3 sponsored pupils, 2 were from the Rehabilitation Centre. Larmeck Odour scored 314, Samuel Wainaina scored 294, and Lovitance Vihasi scored 297. These are terrific results for them. For students who scored under 240, a social worker will follow up with them to determine options for vocational training.

Sponsored Pupils 2023 KCPE results

No.	Pupil	Primary School	KCPE 2023 MARKS		
1	Larmeck Odour	St Catherine	314		
2	Samuel Wainaina	St Catherine	294		
3	George Malenya	St Catherine	207		
4	Brian Magomeri	St Catherine	199		
5	Caleb Wasike	St Catherine	185		
6	Christiano Okanga	St Catherine	165		
7	Sebastian Omondi	St Catherine	157		
8	Lovitance Vihasi	St Catherine	297		
9	Moses Kavita	St Catherine	198		
10	Daisy Kemunto	St Catherine	200		
11	Peter Kyeni	St Catherine	216		
12	Susan Akasungu	St Catherine	223		
13	Tabitha Kendi	St Catherine	259		
14	Leon Awondo	St Catherine	259		
15	Galgalo Roba	St Catherine	204		
16	Mary Mutheu	Grand Mark	262		



Songa Mbele na Masomo Children's Centre

The 104 children have been making good progress in their daily activities and therapy sessions. They thoroughly enjoy the Centre. The children who struggled previously are now achieving their milestones inside and outside the classroom. In the Day Care and Unit One there is a large emphasis on developing prime areas through a high-quality play curriculum and provision on children's needs and interests. The resources at the Centre provide greater scope for achievement at a conducive ability level. Some of the activities include language enhancement, social, motor play, art, sensory and environmental.



About five years ago 'Baby Griffen Matete' was introduced to you. Donors responded well to her situation with flaky skin, webbed digits, underdeveloped skull and mild Downs Syndrome. Griffen's journey is very much on the improve and she is doing well academically and her skin is not flaking off very much and her physical appearance has improved. Adrienne caught up with Griffen recently. Another visitor, Marie McGree from Western Australia enjoyed her time immensely with the children at Songa. Over the last 7 years Marie has organised many suitcases of resources to MPC children.

Adrienne and Griffen

Learning with digital devices is proving to be a big hit with the children. The games are making learning fun and engaging when it comes to multiplication, geometry, time, measurement, and sight words with animated buddies, number recognition, addition,

subtraction ad counting and money were the main subjects taught in

Unit 3.



Marie McGree with the some Songa children

During November, the Centre provided over 573 speech, occupational, and physiotherapy sessions to children, with most of them receiving multiple sessions. The more sessions a child can attend, the greater the improvements they can make in different areas. The children enjoy these sessions as they can see their progress in movement, language, social interaction, stability, and expressions of joy.

Ongoing staff training is crucial for the well-being of children. In November, the social office organized ten training sessions for staff and parents on various topics such as disability awareness (focusing on cerebral palsy), career mentorship, multi-annual program planning, capacity building of parents through NHIF, risks associated with drug and substance abuse, sexual and reproductive health, adolescent participation in HIV programming, prevention of unplanned pregnancies, and raising awareness among adolescents, families, and communities about existing SGBV responsive services.



Parents on NHIF training



Adolescent Session



 ${\it Mentorship-Child\ Protection}$

The Centre is never short of visitors and November saw quite a few from different organizations. The international visitors were Aimee Kakov, Carol Tempest, Charlotte Tippett, Kaylieigh Morgan, Marie McGree, Ian Wagon and Aidan Reynans all crewmembers of British Airways; Marta Falgiera and Marina Fernandez from Spain; Ambassador Caitriona Ingoldsby and her family; Frank and Paula Cullen, Irene Plunkett, Adrienne Burke, Claire Chambers, Teresa Heeran all from Ireland and Austrian Nicole Niederreiter. The local visitors to the Centre were many and the children experiences lots of laughter and cheers from the well-wishers and supporters.



Wheelchair swing donated by Ireland's Ambassador

The Centre received donations of fresh food, meat, hygiene and sanitation items, clothes, shoes, a swing, and a trampoline. The wheelchair swing and was donated by Ambassador Ingoldsby and her family, and the trampoline was donated by Anchna Raja bringing tremendous excitement to the children.

Colman checks out that the wheelchair swing is working well.



Colman and Eugene Omette

The Centre's staff conducted home visits to ensure that parents were following through with their exercise programs. This also enabled social workers to identify children with potential disabilities who could benefit from the Centre's services and make appropriate medical referrals. Nine children required medical check-ups in November, and four hospital visits were made.

At the Centre, parents of children who attend often volunteer to support it by helping with cleaning, gardening, and cooking tasks. This is an excellent way for the Centre to engage parents in providing the best possible care for their children.

Universities and colleges provide community work placements, allowing for one-on-one interaction that helps in developing skills for children. The Centre celebrated the International Day of Persons Living with Disabilities with great enthusiasm.







Disability Day celebration at Songa Mbele



The last KCPE results in Kenya for 803 candidates from 4 MPC schools were released in November. The candidates had taken the exams earlier that month, and the results were published quickly, making it one of the quickest KCPE exams to be marked and released. The early release of results gave parents enough time to prepare for Form One placements. The government has announced that candidates who could not take the exams will have a chance to sit for a special exam in January 2024 to ensure they are included in joining secondary school. Nationally, 1,415,315 pupils took the exams, increasing slightly from last year.

KCPE Candidate Enrolments for 2023						
Primary School	Class 8					
	Boys	Girls	Total			
St. Bakhita	83	71	156			
St. Catherine	94	92	186			
St. Elizabeth	109	128	237			
Sancta Maria Kayaaba	101	123	224			
Total	393	409	803			

KCPE 2023 Results for MPC Primary Schools							
Primary School	399- 350	349- 300	299- 250	249- 200	199- 150	149- 100	Total
St. Bakhita	3	23	37	48	32	13	156
St. Catherine	14	36	51	48	30	7	186
St. Elizabeth	13	54	49	66	34	21	237
Sancta Maria Kayaba	6	31	45	69	55	16	224
TOTAL	36	144	182	231	151	57	803

There were more candidates in 2022 from MPC primary schools than in 2023. The results for 2023 are slightly down on the previous year which could be explained by the tumultuous environmental factors the children face each day. Overall, 45% of the candidates scored 250 + marks and 55% of the candidates scored below 250 marks.

Hatua Kenya is a charitable trust in the United Kingdom that supports bright and needy students in slum

areas. For the past 13 years, Hatua has worked with MPC's four primary schools and provided scholarships

to over 500 pupils for national schools. Hatua partnered with the Mastercard Foundation to reach more deserving students and recently held a ceremony at St. Elizabeth Primary School. Past pupils, including Brenda Nelima, received a Hatua scholarship in 2017, attended the event. Brenda completed her university degree and is currently a high school teacher at St. John Secondary School in Kangemi.







Past pupil Brenda Nelima

St Elizabeth's Junior Secondary Students



Sancta Maria Kayaaba Pupils sponsored by Hatua



The Hatua Kenya Foundation CEO, Mr Hassan addresses the gathering of new partners for sponsorships.

While the pupils are on holidays many of them will suffer from malnutrition. The feeding program will continue during the long break with the support of Team Panjak on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, as it's the only source of food for many children.

In preparation for 2024 academic year the Government distributed the Competency Based Curriculum textbooks for all Year 8 subjects that will help teachers prepare for the first weeks of the new year which will be a return to a normal calendar year.



Holiday Feeding Program

Cheshire Disability has for a number of years collaborated with MPC to present a variety of learning activities for children. The Aflatoun club aims to teach children how to save on such things like electricity, water,



papers, money, personal effects among others. Club members need to engage in an income generating activity in the schools. To support the income generating project, Cheshire supported St. Bakhita Primary School club members with 12 chickens for breeding. The club has 19 members and there are plans to grow the club on need basis.

Aflatoun Chicken Project

The Kenyan Government has given permission to all school Headteachers to plant 16 trees. In addition, they can plant 4 trees for each enrolled child to prevent deforestation and address global warming. The institutions are to provide the seedlings. This month, the National Tree Planting Day has been designated as a whole school activity. Local authorities around the schools will closely monitor the activity and report to environmental officials.

As each year comes to a close, there are typically changes in staff positions. This year, the two Headteachers at Sancta Maria Kayaaba and St Bakhita Primary School retired, leaving vacancies in those positions. One of the deputies at Sancta Maria has been promoted to Headteacher. Unfortunately, St Bakhita is still awaiting the appointment of a new Headteacher. It is crucial that the new appointment be made quickly since the new academic year begins on January 3, 2024.

St. Elizabeth Primary School is currently experiencing a great deal of sadness due to the loss of one of their junior school students. The boy, Dennis Njihia along with his brother and two other friends, were playing near a river when they were all swept away by the strong currents caused by heavy rains. The younger brother was the first to be carried downstream, and when his older brother noticed he was in trouble, he attempted to rescue him. Unfortunately, both brothers drowned in the river.



Dennis Njihia (RIP)





National Tree Planting Day

St Michael's Secondary School

St. Michael's Secondary School participated in the Young Scientist of Kenya Challenge, funded by the Irish Embassy. They presented a total of six projects, out of which two projects, a solar car and biofiltration of greywater, were selected for the National exhibition online. These two projects will be recognized under the People's Choice award. The National exhibitions will occur in early December, and people are requested to vote for their favourite projects. The participants of the competition were awarded T-shirts, medals, and certificates.



Science Challenge Gifts

A two-day youth empowerment seminar was recently held at Songa Mbele na Masomo for students from Form One to Form Three. The seminar was facilitated by Sheila Kekaya, who has expertise in this field. The seminar aimed to equip the students with appropriate information on various topics that would enable them to make better decisions in life amid the many vices that exist in the community. The topics discussed ranged



from adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights, HIV and Aids prevention to the dangers of drugs and substance abuse. The seminar also included a Q&A session, where students could raise matters concerning their interpersonal relations with peers and parents. Based on the number of comments and questions submitted, it is evident that the students appreciated the program and requested more in 2024.

Youth Empowerment Seminar

The National Examinations (KCSE) were held in November for 97 candidates at St Michael's. Unfortunately for some students they arrived late for a few exams due to the heavy rains but later the social workers managed to resolve the problem for the students and allay their anxiety.



KCSE officials for the exams.

According to the mock exams, it is predicted that only 12 out of 97 candidates will be able to secure admission into the university. Out of these 12, 9 are girls and 3 are boys. The results of the exams will be declared in at least 4 weeks from now. Regarding performance, the two subjects that stood out were Computer Science and History and Government.

Our Lady of Mercy Vocational Training Centre

While the Front Office Management students prepared for their national examinations the Centre held a 3-day extensive training from the Awards Training Ltd on entrepreneurship. The training included business ideas, market research and planning, legalities, sales planning and financial management.





Group discussion with the award training trainers.







Front Office Class Graduation cake

The Centre expresses gratitude to well-wishers who provide donations that enhance students' learning through practical application. The courses in Hairdressing and Beauty, Dressmaking, Catering, and Welding have benefited explicitly from these donations. Additionally, the students are prepared for industrial attachments and appropriately fitted with clothes and shoes.









Wood and metals

Hairdressing and Beauty

Dressmaking







Expectant students receiving baby clothes

Students receiving clothes donations

Advent and Christmas Greetings



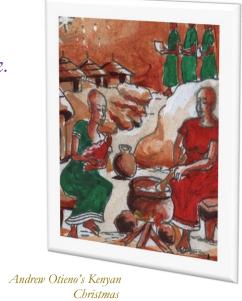
Advent is a four-week season in the Church's liturgical year and is known as the Season of Waiting. It is often overlooked due to the busyness of the end of the year. It centres on the Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace of God's promises; Jesus' final coming, and the remembrance of his arrival into our world over 2,000 years ago. Advent is about the future, and we wait with joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

May our hearts *prepare* Him room, our lives *reflect* His presence, and our homes *radiate* His Love, Joy and Peace.

A very blessed *Christmas* to you and your family this season.

Sr Mary Killeen

Director



All MPC Departments will be closed from 22^{nd} December 2023 and reopen on 3^{rd} January 2024

Except for the Rehabilitation Centre.

Mukuru Promotion Centre

Empowerment Step By Step
Sponsored by Sisters of Mercy
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