

SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP WITH BANDAWE PRIMARY SCHOOL



For some years now both Alloway and Doonfoot Primary Schools have had a partnership with Bandawe Primary School, Malawi. Over the years letters have been exchanged between the very different learning environments by pupils and staff. There has been much fundraising done, and Bandawe have benefitted in many ways, eg electricity was installed in all of the classrooms, rocket stoves were bought for the school cooks to provide a nseema meal for the children, classroom resources and playground toys were sent, money for food and the setting up of a chicken project has been sent out, desks and chairs were bought and built for every child, the creation of the Doonfoot and Alloway Library, toilets have been built and classrooms have all been painted, etc.

These improvements have made significant differences to the pupils at Bandawe. This year the pass rate for exams was the best in the Nkhata Bay Education region, with a magnificent 98% of children passing their yearend exams.

The schools here in our Parish are “Rights Respecting Schools” and work very hard to teach their pupils about the Rights of the child, but also the responsibilities which come along with these rights. Our children appreciate all that they have and are understanding how blessed they are to enjoy so much from God’s world.

To further develop the understanding and adoption of Rights within our schools, we have been looking recently at changing the relationship we enjoy with Bandawe, and so a more curriculum based focus has been introduced.

Week commencing 14th November to link with Unicef “Outright” Day, all three schools are taking part in a “Rights Respecting Schools Week”, although in Bandawe they are calling it “Scotland Week”!

Each year group have a theme and within the week they will do six lessons based on this theme in their partner country. So Doonfoot and Alloway will be learning about homes, toys, water, food and farming, education, gender inequality, global poverty and global partnerships (pupils from the nursery to P7); in their partner classes in Bandawe the children there will be looking at these themes, but in Scotland. Work from each year group at all schools will be posted to their partners to compare and contrast, as follow up. The week will be run every year so that the children learn about a different topic as they move through the school. We also intend to send termly newsletters between the partner year groups.

On the last day of the week, November 18th, the schools here are having a “No Uniform Day”, wearing the colours of the Malawian flag to celebrate “Malawi Day”. In the afternoon pupils and staff from the “Rights Respecting Schools” Committees will be running a Fayre for other pupils in the schools to come and play Malawian themed games and to raise money for Bandawe. After school the Parent Council’s will be hosting a coffee afternoon for the school and community to visit. The proceeds from all of this will be discussed with the Head Teacher, Staff and Pupils at Bandawe, to see what is urgently required at this time.

Communication has been improved with the use of “WhatsApp”, and pupils and staff are able to share photos and videos, as well as sending good luck messages and encouragement throughout the school year.

I am also delighted that we will welcome pupils from both Alloway and Doonfoot to our own Church Christmas Fayre on December 3rd, in Alloway Parish Church Halls, as we aim to raise money for the refugee crisis. The pupils will be running their games to help raise funds with us.

Whilst the writing and resourcing of the lessons for this week has taken some time to pull together, I am more than confident the pupils will all benefit hugely from this learning, and that the ownership and responsibility for this partnership flourishing, is firmly embedded within the hearts of staff and pupils at all three schools.

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