

Shelley is in Zimbabwe!



Matthew Rusike Children's Home

So what is MRCH? Well it is much more than its name suggests!

In this newsletter I will tell you about the services we have in Epworth Mission,

- 145 Residential care places for children 0-18 years in family homes
- Staff housing
- A poultry project supporting 30 families
- A piggery project training boys
- A tailoring project training 15 women from the community per six months
- A gardening project supporting 30 families
- A secondary school study group for 240 children
- A daily psycho-social support group for 55 children unable to afford school
- Outreach support for orphans or vulnerable children in Epworth
- A health clinic and community health visits supporting 120 families per month.
- A Library and a basic computer suite
- Counselling, pastoral and mentoring services
- An Early Childhood Development Centre for 54 children aged 3-6 years

All of these support both the community and resident children and families, and are working towards being self-sustaining projects. The project employs 32 permanent staff and 9 short term staff. In future newsletters I shall tell you about the other national projects.



Differences with my home in Harare compared to Sheffield.....

- Inconsistent water supply
- Inconsistent electricity supply
- Sunshine
- Lizards and huge spiders
- Early morning devotions with all staff
- Wake by 6, bed by 9
- Sweeping and sweeping!
- Hand washing
- Using a bucket instead of a shower
- Everybody goes to church on Sunday
- Resourcefulness of Zimbabweans
- Most people are Shona speakers
- No internet!
- Everybody knows everybody- houses are always open for visitors
- Talking to and greeting one another are very important!
- Things can take time!

Similarities with Harare and Sheffield.....

- People are very friendly
- Shops have lots of things available in them
- I have a dog!
- Comfortable house
- Fantastic job!
- Nandos, Fast food Restaurants, Ice cream parlours
- Mobile phones
- Traffic
- Great music
- Children are children.....



So what have I been doing?

- Building relationships with staff and children at MRCH.
- Hosting and meeting guests at MRCH from UK, Australia and USA.
- Preparing to make changes to the Early Childhood Development Classroom, including sorting and cleaning resources, identifying resources that are required, creating areas of learning in the classroom and sharing ideas with staff.
- Having daily Shona lessons with my teacher Gladys who is the Secondary Study Group Head- homework and tests every day!
- Learning the Zimbabwean way of doing things, especially household chores!



Meet Baboon!

Baboon is the new member of my Zimbabwean family! He was a gift from the National Director of MRCH, Astonishment Mapurisa. Baboon(who was named by Astonishment's children because of similarities with his namesake) is currently learning how to live a cross-cultural lifestyle- he is definitely an African dog, enjoying his freedom during the daytime and scavenging around the grounds. But in the evening he is now indoors and learning that night-time is for sleeping! He is adorable and has already become a well-known character on campus; life with a dog is now complete!



My Visitors!

My current house guests are Rebecca (a student from the UK, on placement until October) and Carol and Don (Chair of UK-based Friends of Matthew Rusike). I was also visited by Jill Baker the British President of the Methodist Women's movement who gave me lots of advice about life in a new culture.

Prayer requests

To continue to settle into my placement and to make productive working relationships

To be able source suitable resources for the ECD centre

To quickly grasp some basic Shona to enable communication with the children and staff

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