

Uganda Humanist Schools Trust

3rd Annual Report for 2011



Work on Girls' Dormitory at Isaac Newton School



New Computer Lab at Mustard Seed School

UHST Objectives

Object 1: To support the educational work of Humanist Schools in Uganda.

Object 2: To provide support to enable needy children to attend those schools.

The Charity supports schools providing a broad general education consistent with the Humanist principles embodied in the 2002 Amsterdam Declaration:

(<http://www.iheu.org/amsterdamdeclaration>).

Grant-making Policy

The Trust provides grants to help the Humanist schools in Uganda. We normally expect the schools we support to be charities, to be members of the Uganda Humanist Schools Association (UHSA) and to be affiliated to the Uganda Humanist Association (UHASSO). Our mission is to help the schools to provide a good educational experience for children attending them. A condition of support is that places are made available to disadvantaged children from the local community.

UHST offers funds for items that contribute to improvements in the education and welfare standards of children attending the schools. The Trust is willing to provide grants for learning materials (books, art materials, science equipment and consumables etc.), staffing costs, staff development activities and, from time to time, to improve school buildings and infrastructure or for additional buildings and such other items that meet the objects of the Trust. The Trust also gives money for scholarships to enable schools to offer places to children from families without the means to pay.

Trustees will consider applications for funds from (a) individual Humanist schools and (b) from organisations offering services on a collective basis to the schools (for example, to

pay for professional development events for teaching staff). Applicants are invited to approach the Trust on an informal basis and to seek advice before they make a firm application for funds. Where bids exceed the funds available the Trust reserves the right to provide a proportion of the funds requested or to mount an appeal for additional funds to meet a need that has been identified.

From time to time, the Trust may offer grants to schools for specific purposes determined by our Trustees. The Trust may also announce a total amount of money available for a specific purpose and invite applications from schools either individually or on a cooperative basis.

In most cases, successful grants will go through the following stages: (1) initial enquiry and outline bid, (2) full application with reasonable and realistic cost estimates from suppliers, (3) on approval of larger projects, payments will be sent as each stage is completed, (4) recipient supplies evidence of completion with a list of outcomes, including photographs, (5) a final account with receipts are submitted.

Management and Governance

A number of Humanist organisations share an interest in the schools and we were anxious at the start to reflect this in the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Uganda Humanist Schools Trust. While the Trust has a discrete identity and is responsible for its own policies on fund raising and grant making, we felt it important in our first years to bring around the table the main organisations that are helping the schools. We recognised the desire for each funder to maintain the links they have established with particular schools, while using the UHST meetings to share information on funds being raised and transferred to the schools, thus avoiding duplication. During 2011 UHST trustees were drawn from the following organisations:

- South Cheshire and North Staffordshire Humanists (SCANS)

- Rationalist Association/New Humanist (RA)
- British Humanist Association (BHA)
- Keele University School of Life Sciences
- International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU)
- North-East Humanists

The trustees meet once a year, with additional meetings as required.

During 2010 UHST was administered on a day-to-day basis by an Executive comprising, Steve Hurd and Hilary Hurd. Sue Wright acted as Chairperson. Paul Gubbins was the minutes-secretary, Chris Wright acted as legal adviser, and Dan Hurd was the financial adviser. Steve Hurd gave publicity and fundraising talks to regional groups about the Ugandan schools and the work of the Trust. Liaison with kindred organisations was conducted by Barrie Berkley (IHEU), Josh Kutchinsky (BHA), Jean Berkley (North-east Humanists) and Caspar Melville (RA)

Fundraising activities

In 2011 funds were raised in a variety of ways.

Existing supporters

The largest single source of funds during 2011 was additional donations from supporters who had contributed to the Trust in previous years. Some supporters send periodic donations by cheque. However, almost one quarter of our income during 2011 came in the form of standing order payments. In December 2011 46 supporters paid regular donations by standing order and 58 provided scholarships that way. This ongoing support is very important as it ensures a basic level of core funding for the schools.

Website



Towards the end of 2011 our website was moved onto the Wordpress platform by Andrew West, our newest trustee. This has considerably improved the appearance and functionality of the site:

www.ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org.

People visit the website for general information about the Trust and to view our growing photo archive. Many supporters regularly download reports on the schools and we know, from emails received, that they appreciate their frankness. We make an effort to publicise the genuine progress that the schools are making, but also to share with supporters the challenges they face. The reports also identify the schools' immediate resource needs. New supporters download donor forms and standing orders, and PayPal donations made through the website are becoming an important source of new income from within the UK and worldwide.

Other fundraising activities

UHST trustees hold meetings, fundraising events and give talks to Humanist groups and other organisations throughout the country. These raise awareness of the work of the schools in Uganda and of the Trust and have become a major source of donations from both groups and individuals. We are grateful

to those groups who have invited us to speak to them and welcome invitations from other groups. Below is a list of the events and meetings that we contributed to during the year.

Date	Event and Group involved
15 February	Newcastle under Lyme College
10 March	Andrew West Humanist Schools photo exhibition at Conway Hall, London
14 March	Cardiff Humanists
15 April	Oxford Humanists
18 May	Cumbrian Humanists
25 May	Newcastle under Lyme College
31 August	Central London Humanists
7 October	Newcastle under Lyme College
7 November	South Cheshire & North Staffordshire Humanists

We are also grateful to the growing number of organisations and individuals who are giving large donations:

- The Rationalist Association/New Humanist transferred £5,000 for developments at the Mustard Seed School.
- The British Humanist Association helped by including a UHST fundraising leaflet in BHA News. This raised £4,537.
- Birmingham Humanists and Walsall Rotary donated £1,500 towards the cost of rain water collection tanks at Isaac Newton High School.
- A large individual donation of £10,000 was received to complete the purchase of land and school buildings for the Mustard Seed School.
- We received an individual donation of £1,000 to buy bunk beds for the girls' dormitory at Isaac Newton School.
- The staff and students at Keele University School of Life Sciences

raised £852 for science education in the Ugandan schools.

- South Cheshire and North Staffordshire Humanists (SCANS) continued to raise money and fund 12 scholarships.
- We have also received substantial donations in the range £500 to £1,200 from individual Humanist donors.

Grants made to the Ugandan Schools

Scholarships

The money we provide for scholarships brings bright, needy children into the Humanist schools and the funding provided makes a substantial contribution to the basic staffing costs of the schools. In 2011 we provided 75 scholarships allocated as follows:

School	Number of scholarships
Fair View School (formerly the Humanist Academy)	32 (continuation of scholarships from 2009)
Isaac Newton High School	21 (the school also received 17 from North East Humanists)
Mustard Seed School	22 (for students in senior 1 and 2)

UHST is supporting three schools and we are working to achieve a fair allocation of scholarships among them.

Samuel Ssebulime is a scholarship student in Senior 2. He lives with his mother, having lost his father. The decision to offer Samuel a scholarship has been well justified by his performance in school. Samuel was



the best student in his year on the basis of his marks. He plays in the school football team and is very effective in school debates.

One change this year is that, for the first time, we have supported a few A-level students.

Olivia Kisakye performed well in her O-levels and was awarded a scholarship to study for A-levels. Her chosen subjects are Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Fine Art and General Studies and her ambition is to become a surgeon. Olivia is an orphan who lives with her 74 year old grandmother, three younger sisters (aged 14, 10 and 6) and a 4-year old brother, the baby of the family. She enjoys school and would have dropped out after her O-levels if we had not found her a sponsor.



Ashraf Bukenya is in Senior 5 (the lower 6th) taking A-levels in Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and General Studies. Ashraf would also like to become a doctor.

In 2010 he gained the best O-level results in the school and also in the whole District. In Uganda subject grades are grouped into an aggregate score to give an overall grade. Ashraf gained 1st Grade overall – a standard which fewer than 8% of students in the whole of Uganda achieve.



Ashraf is a very eloquent young man and good debater. He also happens to be a good footballer and is striker in the school team.

He has 3 younger brothers - all in primary school. However, both parents have died and, since their death, he has shared a rented hut

with an older friend from the school. The older boy runs a motorbike taxi and from the proceeds feeds them both and was paying for Ashraf's schooling. Unfortunately fare income fell last term and he was not able to pay the school fees - so Ashraf was suspended from school.

One of our supporters, a retired headteacher, wrote to us to say he was looking for a bright student to support through A-level and university and he has agreed to help Asraf, who is now back in school and working hard for his A-levels.

These three examples from the 75 scholarship students we supported in 2011 demonstrate the life changing potential of our scholarship scheme. As Humanists we believe very firmly that every child matters and, while there are many children needing help in countries like Uganda, it is worth the effort to make a difference wherever we can. The Humanist schools are transforming the life chances of about 400 children in rural Uganda at any one time. As these children progress into the adult world their influence will multiply and they, in turn, will affect the lives of others.

Learning Resources

During 2011 UHST allocated £2,400 to the accounts of the schools in a Kampala bookshop.



New library at Mustard Seed School

Priority this year was given

to books for Senior 3 students, which completes provision of basic textbooks for all four of the O-level



A science lesson at the Mustard Seed School

years in the Mustard Seed and Isaac Newton High Schools.

A further £4,700 was allocated to providing materials and facilities for science education. This was partly funded by staff and students from Keele University School of Life Sciences.

Computer facilities

During 2011 we provided the Mustard Seed School with a grant to refurbish a building so that it could be used as a computer lab. We asked the NGO UConnect to install a central server, 9 workstations and a laser printer together with the large array of educational software that had proved its worth at the Isaac Newton School.

The new set up worked well but mains power at Mustard Seed is so intermittent that cuts were threatening the integrity of the computer network. It became necessary, therefore, to also set up a power backup system. This raised the total cost of the installation to £3,800.

The new facilities (shown on the cover of this report) have enabled the school to introduce Computer Studies as an O-level option and to use computers as a resource in teaching all other subjects. It has provided a valuable resource for students to use in out-of-class time and especially by the growing number of students who board at the school.

Infrastructure improvements

During 2011 UHST has raised funds for substantial infrastructure improvements in the schools.

Isaac Newton High School

In 2010 the school received substantial grants from the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) to enable the construction of a large science lab.

Unfortunately the lab had not been able to be used for science due to the absence of secure storage for science materials. We were concerned about this as UHST, together with Keele University School of Life Sciences, had been helping Peter Kisirinya to develop the science ethos of the school by providing suitable learning



resources. However, hitherto these had to be stored in the school library – the only secure building in the school. To enable the materials to be brought into the science lab we sent £700 to install secure doors and windows and furnish the prep room, which adjoined the science lab. The school can now store equipment and chemicals securely in the science lab. This has allowed the school to introduce practical work in the teaching of the three sciences.

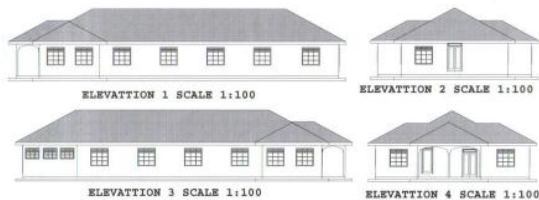
Investment in a dormitory for girl boarders has been our largest infrastructure project to date at the Isaac Newton School. Peter identified the need for boarding some time ago and particularly for girl students. Many families in Uganda prefer their children to stay in boarding to avoid long journeys each day to school (commonly up to 5 miles each way on foot). As boarders they are also well fed, get medical care when they need it and have better facilities for study in the evenings and at weekends. Orphan girls in particular are protected from sexual harassment by boarding in a well-managed school.

Peter initially responded to strong pressure from the girls themselves, and their families, by allowing small numbers to bed down on the floor of a classroom – supervised by Peter's sister, who slept with them to ensure they were safe.



However, as there were no mosquito nets and inadequate water, washing and toilet facilities, the school inspector advised that this practice must stop.

At this point, early in 2011, we were approached by a family living in the UK who offered to provide money from a bequest for a purpose-built dormitory at the school. Plans were drawn up by an architect and the dormitory with wash rooms and additional latrines was built during 2011 at a cost of £21,500.



In order to alleviate the water problems two 5000 litre tanks were installed to collect rain water from the roof. The money for this was the result of collaboration between Walsall Rotary and Birmingham Humanists.



Lighting in the building is from 4 solar panels provided by Ultra-Tech. These power 10 energy-saving lights and a single socket in the matron's room, which is used for a small TV for use by the girls in the evening and at weekends.



The picture above shows the opening of the new dormitory with the families of the first intake of 48 girls.

Mustard Seed School

At the end of 2010 we provided funds to enable the Mustard Seed School to buy some buildings that they had been renting. This gave the school security and enabled them to escape on-going rental payments. However, it also created an opportunity to refurbish all the buildings on the Mustard Seed site, many of which had not been properly finished with plaster, concrete floors and windows and doors. Moses had taken a loan to build a science lab, which the school inspector had insisted was essential if the school was to be officially registered. We agreed to repay this loan in instalments and made the first

repayment. We also provided funds for the lab to be completed with surface finishes, windows, doors and furniture (benches and stools).

The science lab is now fully operational and has transformed science teaching in the school by allowing students to conduct controlled experiments. In this picture a boy and a girl are using a mouth pipette to measure out a liquid as part of an experiment using qualitative analysis of a chemical reaction.



A rather poor quality building which had been used for storage was refurbished to provide rooms for the school Director, Headteacher, Directors of Studies and a staff prep room. This improvement in staff facilities has made it easier for teachers to prepare lessons and mark students' work on the school site and it has boosted staff morale.



The old temporary administration room was converted into a secure room to house the computer network.

Completing these improvements to the fabric of the buildings at Mustard Seed School, creating a functional science lab and strengthening the staffing to 8 fully qualified graduate teachers has allowed the school to gain full government recognition as a "registered school". This is very important to

local families when they are looking for a school for their children and had a positive effect on recruitment for 2012.

In an earlier report on the school during 2011 we set out Moses Kanya's ambition for the school to be accepted as an examination centre.



Making this possible was easier said than done as the main hall of the school, which was needed for examinations, was split up using temporary partitions to create the schools' four classrooms. The closure of a nearby Moslem primary school created an opportunity which would clear the way to become an examination centre. After some months of negotiation a price of £22,000 was agreed for the site. An appeal raised £12,000 between May and July and then stalled until a generous donor stepped in to provide the final £10,000. As the primary school site came with 5 additional classrooms, latrines and a netball court it provided the rooms needed to free the hall to be used for examinations. The picture shows morning roll call on the new site.

Uganda National Examinations Board inspected the site and set a number of additional conditions including refurbishing the hall (see picture) with plastered wall and concrete flooring, glazing windows to prevent exams from being disrupted by adverse weather, building a secure perimeter fence to prevent cheating by the passing of notes to and from exam candidates.



These conditions have now been met and national examinations will be held in the school for the

first time in 2012. This should relieve the stress on exam candidates who, until now, have had to sit their exams in a school 25 kilometres away, where they have had to find additional fees to pay for boarding throughout the period of the examinations.

Additional Grants

We have been concerned for some time about the poor pay and conditions of teachers in the schools. This threatens standards in the schools due to the relatively low standard of recruits, high staff turnover and the difficulty of securing commitment and effort by staff on behalf of the students. Typical pay is 25p to 33p per lesson plus assistance with travel costs and, in some cases, help with accommodation. However, even at these low pay levels the schools are managing to find teachers and they would be struggling to pay more. As a charity we took a number of steps to improve conditions for staff during 2011 in Isaac Newton and Mustard Seed Schools. In December all staff (teachers and ancillary) were given a one-month pay bonus in recognition of their dedication and we gave a commitment to repeat this during 2012 for those teachers who stayed in the school for the whole year. This has met with strong approval.

In addition we described above the improvement in staff working conditions following the provision, at Mustard Seed School, of offices for senior staff and a junior-staff prep room with a TV so they can keep abreast of the news.

Eastern Uganda was hit by a serious drought in the early part of 2011. This led to crop failure and food price inflation. Fortunately, thanks to the generosity of two individual donors we were able to provide each school with a hardship/contingency fund of £250. This allowed both schools to maintain school food provision through the year.

The drought was particularly bad around the Mustard Seed School, where there was some

starvation as food crops failed and cash crop income fell to nothing. Half of the children were withdrawn from school due to poverty and also the need for additional help on the land. It meant that, later in the year, the students approaching O-level examinations could not afford the exam entry fees. In the circumstances we were able to step in to pay fees to ensure that all students were entered.

Finally, we provided money for taxi fares to enable the schools to transport books and science equipment from the Kampala suppliers.

Outcomes

Both Mustard Seed and Isaac Newton High Schools made remarkable progress during 2011 despite the setback of natural disaster in the form of severe drought which raised food prices for both schools but took away the livelihood of many families close to the Mustard Seed School.

According to Peter Kisirinya *"The year 2011 has seen great improvements at Isaac Newton High School in both structural materials and academic progress... Our Senior 4 O-level results showed great improvements in all subjects, especially science. Two students gained first grades (a level attained by scarcely 8% of students in Uganda), 12 gained second grades, 4 third grades and 4 fourth grades. No one failed their Exams.*

Our school team reached the final of the post primary football competitions at the District.

Our first Senior 6 A-level results were also pleasing, with 60% of our students scoring at least 2 principal passes, the minimum requirement for university entry."

At the Mustard Seed it is a similar picture. According to Moses Kanya, *"The purchase of text books, science lab equipment and computers packed with educational software enabled us to shine in the Uganda National Examinations in 2011. Our students attained 3*

first grade passes, 16 second grades and 5 third grades. There were no fourth grade passes and no failures. The first grade students were school orphans. hailing from Karamoja, the most deprived region in the whole of Uganda. All three have been enrolled in senior five so they can take their A-levels. Their education has been funded entirely by the school from general income."

Uganda Humanist Schools Trust

People and contacts

The UHST (UK) is a charity which raises funds to support education in Humanist schools in Uganda.

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Board of Trustees in 2010

Susan Wright, B.A., LL.M., DipCE (Chairperson and South Cheshire and North Staffordshire Humanists)

Steve Hurd B.Sc., M.A.(Econ), FRSS, FRSA (Chief Executive)

Professor Hilary Hurd , B.Sc., Ph.D., FRES, FRSTMH, MIBiol (Scholarships Executive)

Dr. Anne Loweth, B.Sc., FIBMS, FHEA (Keele University School of Life Sciences)

Chris Wright, B.A., LL.M., PGCE (Legal Adviser)

Paul Gubbins, B.A.(Hons), M.A., M.A.,M.Ed.,Ph.D. (Minutes Secretary and SCANS Humanists)

Barrie Berkley, M.A.(Oxon) (International Humanist and Ethical Union)

Jean Berkley, B.A.(Hons) (North-East Humanists)

Caspar Melville, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (Rationalist Association; New Humanist)

Josh Kutchinsky (British Humanist Association)

Dan Hurd, B.Soc.Sci., ACA., MABRP (Financial Adviser)

Grants allocated by UHST: January to December 2011

Isaac Newton High School

17 scholarships term 1	£680
Hardship fund	£240
Architect's fee for girls' dormitory	£275
Completion of prep room/science lab	£700
Books for Senior 3	£1,200
Science equipment & chemicals	£1,000
21 scholarships term 2	£840
2 x 5000 litre water tanks	£1,500
21 scholarships term 3	£840
24 double Bunk Beds for girls' dorm	£2,100
Staff end of year bonus pay	£720
Solar power system for girls' dorm	£1,936
TOTAL from UHST Account for Isaac Newton High School =	£12,031
Girls' Dormitory (External bequest paid directly by UHST supporters)	£21,500
Total Raised for Isaac Newton High School (Including bequest) =	£33,531

Fair View Senior Secondary School (formerly the Humanist Academy)

Scholarships advance payment	£300
Balance of 32 scholarships term 1	£980
32 scholarships term 2	£1,280
32 scholarships term 3	£1,280
TOTAL from UHST Account =	£3,840

Mustard Seed School

Computer room & admin block refurbishment	£1,800
24 scholarships	£960
Hardship fund	£240
Computer network & printer	£1,890
Books for Senior 3	£1,200
Science equipment & chemicals	£1,000
22 scholarships term 2	£880
O Level registration fees	£540
Transport of books & science materials	£160
Purchase of primary school site	£22,000
22 scholarships term 3	£880
Reserve power system for computers	£1,128
Science lab loan repayment	£2,000
Staff end of year bonus pay	£600
School hall refurbishment	£4,500
Fencing school site	£900
Solicitor's fee for land titles	£180
Refurbishment of new school site	£1,520
26 scholarships for term 1 1012	£1,040
TOTAL from UHST Account for Mustard Seed School =	£43,418
TOTAL from UHST Account for Schools =	£ 59,289
TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED FOR SCHOOLS (including bequest) =	£80,789