



Friends Update

Derby Diocese link special issue

November 2018

For more than four decades there has been a link between the Derbyshire Churches Partnership and the Church of North India. This includes a particular relationship developed between Derby Cathedral and St Peter's in Derby city centre and St Paul's Cathedral in the heart of Kolkata.

Over many years, the bishops of Kolkata and Derby have enjoyed mutual visits. Long-standing supporters will recall that, during his tenure as Bishop of Derby, Alastair Redfern chose CRS as the beneficiary of the Diocesan Harvest Appeal in both 2011 and 2016. Through these two appeals, parishes, schools and individuals in the Derby Diocese gave almost £45,000 which has been a great boost to CRS work.

During the past couple of years, the collaboration between Derbyshire and Kolkata has deepened and become more formalized, with Church of England schools in the Diocese of Derby partnered with diocesan schools in Kolkata, including some of CRS's education centres.

Readers of recent issues of the Friends newsletter will recall accounts of teachers from Derbyshire schools visiting Kolkata. As well as fundraising for their partner schools, they have delivered 'continuing professional development' (CPD) for teachers in Kolkata, refreshing their skills, demonstrating new teaching techniques and sharing innovative ways of learning.

The number of people wanting to travel to India has now expanded to teaching faculty and students at Derby University, some staying in Kolkata for longer 'work placements', which are a required element of their degree courses.

The most recent group trip, earlier in 2018, comprised 27 people including 4 lecturers from Derby University School of Education, 2 lecturers from the Department of Health and Social Care, 4 Health and Social Care BA students, and a range of headteachers, teachers and teaching assistants from Derbyshire schools.

This newsletter is a compilation of short pieces from some of the school teachers who went on the last visit to Kolkata.

If you use social media, please "like" our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/friendsofcrs) and follow our Twitter feed ([@crsukfriends](https://twitter.com/crsukfriends)) for the latest news.



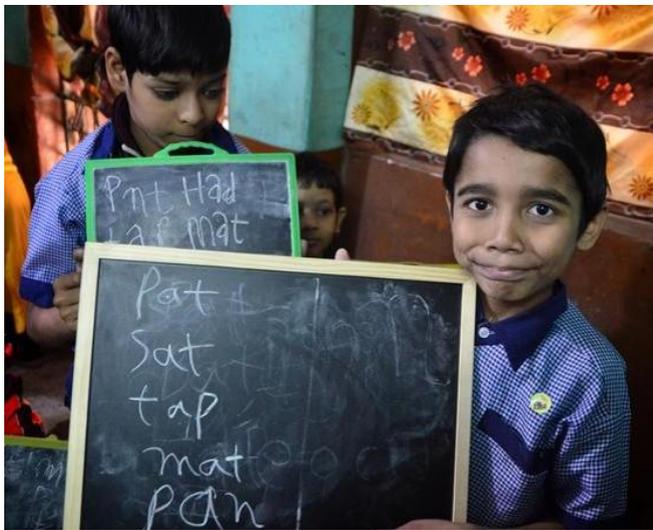
Ashgate Primary School, Derby CRS Education Centre at Topsisia, Kolkata

By Stephanie Patrick and Charlotte Donnelly, class teachers

Charlotte, and I spent three happy days with the children at Topsisia and their lovely, dedicated teacher, Rabia.

The building belongs to a sports society so each morning, Rabia brings in mats for her pupils to sit on; the single blackboard which is hung on the wall; and a cord on which dangles a few educational posters. She also screws the lightbulb into its socket. There's no furniture. To use the bathroom, the older children are regularly sent to take the younger ones to their houses. At the end of the school day, someone comes to check she has adequately cleared up.

Despite their challenging environment, the children were an absolute delight! They were initially quite shy and performed some songs and rhymes they had learnt. But as the days passed, they became more confident and eager to join in with whatever we asked them to do. We had so much fun but we (and they) were exhausted by the end of each day!



Practising simple English words

We read them stories like *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, *Brown Bear* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* which we had found dual-language texts for. Our pupils in England had recorded themselves reading these stories too.



Reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

We taught them new English nursery rhymes, we played maths games and we began teaching them – through actions and games – the first few sounds needed for learning English.

I'm not sure what time school was meant to end but children started to drift away a few at a time. When numbers dropped a little, we were able to do some more active activities like dancing games and giant Ludo. One of our favourite moments was when only ten or so children were left and we gave them the books we'd brought with us: they devoured them with such glee!

We had such fun with Rabia and her children and we can't wait to go back!

Visit <http://www.ashgate.derby.sch.uk/international-links-st-thomas-and-topsisia-kolkata-j/>
to see our photo journal from the trip

St Andrew's C of E Primary School, Stanley, Derbyshire CRS Education Centre at Dum Dum, North Kolkata

By Jacob in Year 6

The link between Stanley St Andrew's and its link school in Dum Dum in India is a strong and exciting one. From all of the wonderful fundraising activities, to all of the kind donations, everyone does anything they can to strengthen the link between these two totally different schools.

Even though the school is 4,972 miles away from our school, we all love and care about it. So far, Stanley School have set up many fundraising activities to support our link school, including a highly popular Tuck Shop, run by a handful of older students.

Recently Mrs Stanley-Wainwright and Mrs Davies, the Headteacher and a Teaching Assistant, flew out to India, and visited the children of our school in Dum Dum.

They took all of the many donations that they had been given (like pyjamas and toys), along with all of the resources that had been bought with the money raised from the fundraising.

When they arrived, the children were ecstatic to see the two teachers, due to a previous visit by Mrs Stanley-Wainwright. The children absolutely loved their gifts and couldn't wait to use them.

The school itself is very different from our school in Stanley. For starters, the building is very different. It is very small, and there are only two classrooms, which has no tables or chairs, meaning the children have to sit on the hard floor.



The children loved playing games with the parachute that we sent them

A lot of the teachers are not qualified, meaning their subjects knowledge isn't as solid as our teachers. However, despite this, the children love coming to school, and are very lucky – there are a lot of children in the surrounding area who can't pay to go to school, who have to work on the streets.

In the school, a lot of the remarkable resources that are available to us are just not there, and nor is the funding, however, our school in Stanley Village hopes to change that.

In conclusion, our school has completely changed when we heard about the children in Kolkata. Suddenly, everything that we took for granted has changed to something that we were extremely thankful for. Clearly, it has made the parents see this too. Together, we are bringing two completely different places together.

Visit <http://www.st-andrews-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk/click-here/>
to read daily blog posts and photos from the trip

Weston on Trent C of E Primary School, Weston-on-Trent, Derby St Joseph's Primary School, Barisha, Kolkata

By Charlotte Brown, class teacher, and Jackie Ford, teaching assistant

This was the second year that Weston on Trent Primary has been partnered with St Joseph's School but the first time that Jackie and I had visited Kolkata. We were both extremely excited and slightly nervous about the prospect!

At St Joseph's, we were thrown in the deep end. We taught some of the "Forest Schools" skills, reading stories about dragons and creating dragons' breath bracelets.

Anjana and her staff fully immersed themselves in the activities, making bracelets for each other to protect them from any dragons.

We also were able to teach phonics and counting with the whole school in their school hall. The staff and children could not have made us feel any more welcome than they did.



Demonstrating how to teach phonics with letter cards at the teachers' training day

It was lovely to be able to support the teachers and children in their learning with new resources that had been fundraised by our school.

We regularly updated the school blog to keep in contact with everyone back home, and the children asked us questions through the blog pages to find out more information.

I came home feeling a sense of pride and a desire to continue the close relationship with Anjana and St Joseph's School.

As a result of our visit, we feel that our pupils have gained a valuable insight into another culture and have learnt about the lives of others. The children are excited to fundraise again for much needed story books that the school requires.



A craft activity at St Joseph's

Visit <http://www.westoncofe.derbyshire.sch.uk/india/>
to see photos and short video clips from our trip and our school fundraising activities

Scargill Primary School, West Hallam, Derbyshire

CRS Education Centre at Bibibagan, Kolkata

CRS Education Centre at Mahamaya, North 24 Parganas

By Andrew Poole, Headteacher

Scargill Primary School has sent a teacher on exchange visits to India on three separate occasions within the past ten years, and we have had partnerships with two different schools during that time.

Our current link is with Awami School in Bibibagan. This small school, with one teacher called Sultana, does an amazing job in trying to give children enough of a foundation in English and Maths so that they can access the mainstream state education system.

It was a privilege to meet Sultana and the children at the school and share new teaching resources and methods.

Our trip was based in the city of Kolkata but we also spent one day visiting a rural region several hours from the city.

At Mahamaya CRS supports a project serving thirteen villages and over 5,000 people. Their vision is to construct a three-storey building that offers basic education, health care and women's empowerment activities.

The building was started some time ago, with most of the first level completed before funding ceased and building stopped.

This seemed like a perfect project for Scargill to support. To complete the building, a further £14,000 was needed. Scargill Primary School is now working in partnership with Derbyshire Diocesan Board of Education to raise this money.

So far, over £7,000 has been raised from Scargill and other donations and we hope to reach the total before the end of the year.

Over 350 years ago, John Scargill, the rector of St Wilfrid's Parish church in West Hallam, left money in his will to open a school for the poor of the parish.

Today the Scargill foundation still supports that school, which currently has 400 pupils. Over the generations, Scargill has educated thousands of children because of the vision of John Scargill.

I believe that John Scargill would be proud of today's pupils working so hard to raise funds to build a school in a land so far away that will have a really positive impact on the people of Mahamaya and the surrounding village for many generations to come.

So Scargill now has two partner schools in India. We continue to support the school at Bibibagan but are also committed to making a difference in the community of Mahamaya.

We think of all the people linked with our school throughout the wider community of West Hallam as part of our #ScargillFamily.

But that family has now grown and extends across thousands of miles. Despite the distance, the children and families of Bibibagan and Mahamaya will continue to be a big part of our ever-increasing #ScargillFamily.

A video in two parts about Mahamaya to launch our fundraising campaign

https://twitter.com/scargill_school/status/964774746134106112

https://twitter.com/scargill_school/status/964774864086282240

Stanton in Peak C of E Primary School, Derbyshire Rowsley C of E Primary School, Matlock, Derbyshire Bhawanpur School and Scott Lane School, Kolkata

By Caroline Poole, Executive Head Teacher

Before I left for India, for my first visit, I knew very little about where I was going or even about what I was going to do!

I was nervous on my first day – how would I communicate with children who didn't speak my language? But within minutes I realised that children are children all over the world.

The wonderful Jayasree Mukherjee and her band of teachers made me so welcome and I was overwhelmed by the love they showed to the children in their care.

By the end of the first hour in the school I was teaching phonics, singing songs and reading stories!



Girls enjoying bananas at break time

I wrote a daily blog for my pupils and sent regular tweets so they had an idea of what I was doing. I was amazed by their interest in the lives of these other children they had never met. They had so many questions! I told them about the day-to-day lives of some of the children I got to know.

I left India with a very real sense of the wonderful work that CRS does for the poorest children in Kolkata. I felt that my contribution had been a 'drop in the ocean' but understood that the relationship between the schools was important and one that I wanted to maintain.

The children in both of my schools are determined to help these schools financially. At Stanton in Peak, the children have organised various sales and we held a 'sleep out' for India in July, literally sleeping under the stars to raise funds. At Rowsley, the children have set up a charity committee with the express purpose of raising funds for the schools.

But more than the fundraising, my children have learnt about the lives of others, children who have such different life experiences but who are, at the end of the day, exactly the same as them.

I returned even more determined that my pupils will look beyond their own needs, and the needs of their own communities and express the love, charity and generosity that we teach as a part of a church school family.

Visit <http://www.rowsleyprimary.co.uk/india-2018/>
to see the daily messages and photos sent back to school

The link at the bottom of this page <http://derby.anglican.org/education/schools/kolkata-school-links/>
has a video featuring Bhwanpur School and Scott Lane School

St Werburgh's School, Spondon, Derby CRS Education Centre at Sukantanagar, Kolkata

By Ann Alton, headteacher, and Suzanne Dent, class teacher

Due to generous financial support by the members of St Werburgh's Church, it was possible for me to return to Sukantanagar school with another member of my staff team, Mrs Dent.

We were part of a larger team that delivered two days of teacher training. Many teachers in India do not receive ongoing training.

This year, the focus was to demonstrate ways to teach reading in English by using phonics and to introduce new approaches for teaching mathematics.



At one of the training sessions for teachers

The teachers really enjoyed the experience and their evaluations showed just how much they learned.

We spent also three days at our partner school, Sukantanagar, demonstrating the training and encouraging teachers and pupils to practise the skills learned.

Before leaving, we had amassed multiple resources to take to India. For example, our foundation stage pupils collected counting sets. To have these resources was so helpful because the Indian children had previously learned to count by rote.



Pupils at St Werburgh's show off the counting sets they prepared for children in Kolkata

It gave our pupils back home a real sense of pride in knowing that they had been instrumental in changing and improving the lives of others.

We look forward to making the link even stronger in the coming years.

Visit <http://www.stwerburghs.co.uk/shutanagar-school-calcutta/>
to read the messages and photos sent back school every day during the trip

Loscoe C of E Primary and Nursery School, Derbyshire CRS Education Centre at Basanti Devi Colony, Kolkata

By Alexia Wyer, class teacher, with Chloe Anstice and Jen Marshall, students from Derby University

The school run by CRS in Basanti Devi Colony is attended by over 90 pupils. It has 5 small classrooms with a connecting corridor. There is also a good size outside area for play.

During my first day, I was lucky enough to partake in the Hindu celebration celebrating the goddess of education, Saraswati.

During the second day, I was able to do some whole school teaching where we shared songs with actions. We used some of the resources donated to school to teach about different body parts.

We also read the story *Money Puzzle* and played hopscotch filled in with sums, times tables and phonic activities.

After the CPD day, I was asked to deliver two maths lessons, one for the younger children and one for the older children, as well as maths songs.



With the pupils and teachers at BD Colony

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at B D Colony School and am looking forward to visiting again next January.

Visit our school link page <http://www.loscoe.derbyshire.sch.uk/link-to-b-d-colony-indian-school/>
and the trip blog <http://mrswyer.simplesite.com/>

The next visit as part of the Derby-Kolkata link is planned for January 2019. It will include 30 school teachers, head teachers, university lecturers and students. In addition, 14 Health and Social Care students from the university are planning to go there for their placements, also in January 2019.

**Thank you for your ongoing support for the work of CRS.
Every donation, however large or small, makes a difference
to the lives of poor and marginalized people
in the slums of Kolkata and villages of West Bengal.**