Charity Shop Funds Computer Lab Giving I.T. Access to Hundreds of South African Children

Tuesday 14 March, 2023

To mark its 10th anniversary, the SOS Africa Charity Shop in Shepton Mallet has funded an IT laboratory which will give computer access to hundreds of children attending primary school in the Western Cape, South Africa.

Each year, with the help of its generous customers and the local community, the iconic shop popularly known as 'Aladdin's Cave,' secures vital funding to provide access to education for vulnerable children across South Africa. The SOS Africa Charity was founded by Shepton Mallet student Matt Crowcombe during his gap year to South Africa in 2003. Always looking to break down barriers to learning, Matt identified a desperate need at partnering school, Grabouw High. Until the launch of this initiative, children attending the school at a primary level (ages 7-13) were completely without access to computers; consequently, by the time they begin high school, they are without basic computer skills training which is essential for their learning and development.

Thanks to funds raised by the SOS Africa Charity Shop and a collaboration of other supporters, on March 1st, 2023, the new computer lab was officially launched! The following day the new facility was already accessible to over 200 primary school children from Grades 4-7 with computer skills training now integrated into the school timetable. In the afternoons the computer lab will also be available to SOS Africa's scholarship scheme students, enabling them to carry out online research, complete school projects and participate in online training.

"Having a dedicated computer centre in the primary section of the school was a dream for us! With this centre, our students will now be able to learn basic computer skills from as early as Grade 4 (age 10) and can benefit from computer assisted learning programmes in a range of subjects including mathematics; this will completely transform their learning experience. We are so appreciative of the sponsors for making this possible."

(Herholdt Bezuidenhout - Grabouw High School Principal)

"We are so proud of the impact made by our shop over the past 10 years! It really is the definition of a team effort with staff volunteers and customers from Shepton Mallet and beyond all working together to help better the lives of children in desperate need of our help. Seeing the photos of these deserving children benefitting from our collective efforts fills us all with joy!"

(Lin Veale – Manager, SOS Africa Charity Shop, Shepton Mallet)

For more information visit www.sosafrica.com or drop into our Shepton Mallet Charity Shop (21 High Street, BA4 5AA) and chat with Lin and the team. SOS Africa will also launch its annual West Country fundraising event in just a few weeks' time. Each year the charity hosts a memorable fundraising challenge from an iconic building in the South West of England with recent venues including Glastonbury Festival Pyramid Stage and Wells Cathedral.

Media:









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