UK charity Child of Hope to build secondary school for slum children in Uganda

Thursday 14 November, 2019

UK charity Child of Hope has started construction on its own secondary school in eastern Uganda that will open in time for the new school year in February 2020.

As with Child of Hope's first school, a nursery and primary school in the nearby Namatala slum, it will provide totally free education for the poorest slum children.

At the same time, the charity also provides a welfare programme that includes social workers who work with pupils' families, medical support and even start-up businesses for mums.

As well as targeting the very poorest children, Child of Hope ensures that girl children are not excluded.

The Dorset-based charity delivers services through its sister NGO in Uganda, Child of Hope Outreach Uganda.

The single-floor building project will cost around £110,000 and has been entirely funded by grant-making organisations, churches, companies and individuals. It will eventually take around 170 students.

UK director Phil Dowding said the decision to build their own secondary school had been a difficult one.

"Operating a secondary school that, to start with, will only be fed by a single primary school, is going to be expensive at first. But we took the decision to allow our pupils to complete their education at the same high standard we have reached in our nursery and primary school.

"That high standard is demonstrated in our results in the Ugandan Primary Leavers Examination, where we are in the country's top six per cent.

"But since our older children left our school and moved up to local secondary schools, there have been concerns about a marked deterioration in their learning and behaviour, despite our efforts to continue to support them.

"Strikes and teacher absences in Ugandan state secondary schools are also having a serious negative impact on pupils' learning and opportunity to achieve a better future life.

"Our own secondary school will allow us to provide a consistently high level of education and social support."

While its former primary pupils attend local secondary schools, Child of Hope has continued to support them with the cost of fees, uniforms and scholastic materials and a midday meal.

They also receive home visits and medical treatment as needed, plus full care for those who are homeless in foster families.

The charity also provides them with 2-week programmes in the holidays to support development of personal and social skills, as well as study skills in specialist revision classes.

Child of Hope offers opportunities to corporates keen to develop their social responsibilities impact.

Ends.

Picture: *Construction at Child of Hope's new secondary school in Namabasa, near Mbale in eastern Uganda*

Press release by Phil Dowding, Child of Hope UK director

Tel: (01202) 697201

Media:



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Company Contact:

Child of Hope

T. 01202697201
E. phil.dowding@childofhopeuganda.org
W. https://www.childofhopeuganda.org

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