January Newsletter 2015 [www.gregsophiesangwine.org.uk](http://www.gregsophiesangwine.org.uk)

Dear Friends,

How incredible to be writing a newsletter at the beginning of yet another year! 2015 has already been incredibly fruitful and busy and we are delighted to be settled back in to Zimbabwe with plenty to keep us occupied!

**Personal Updates**

We have now been back for 4 weeks and it has been delightful to see JT settle so well into his new routines with the hot climate and busy schedule. We thank God every day for his adaptability and can’t quite believe how we got such a good baby! He is coming up to the 4 month mark and is huge! The locals say ‘you lie’ when I tell them it’s just milk and not sadza! We are blessed that he is growing and is healthy.

Greg is settling into his new role as the Primary School lead teacher and teacher of the Grade 2 class. He currently has 12 children in Grade 2 and also monitors and supports the Grade 1 class with 25 children in. He is spending long days at work with early starts and very little breaks! As with any new class, especially in a brand new school, he is working hard to iron out the creases and develop the curriculum, assessment and teaching for the new classes.

Sophie is also settling into her new role as the School Lead (Head teacher?!) and is also working early mornings, taking JT with her, this allows her to then leave school mid-morning to bring JT home for the afternoon where he can nap and rest especially as it’s so hot! The mornings are currently very productive and we are fortunate that the school office is now up and running so we have lots more space for desks and baby area without falling over ourselves. Trying to maintain standards across the school in terms of curriculum, staffing, timing, assessments and day to day running is her general role and it is slowly falling into place!

JT is well settled and beginning to fall into some routines with night time sleeping and daytime napping and is also settling down for feeds as his body adapts to the weather, Praise God! He is already showing an affection for the African Sun – it seems he got Sophie’s skin! He is the most popular kid in school with the ECD classes wanting to kiss and poke ‘Baby Jack’ all the time, and Grades 1 and 2 thinking ‘JT’ is their new best friend! We think he enjoys the attention! At 3 months he tried on his first school uniform…it wasn’t as big on him as we thought it would be!!



As a family we are blessed to be able to spend so much more time together here than in the UK as our work allows for this. We are continually seeking God as we think ahead to the future and we always appreciate prayers and words of encouragement with regards to how we move forward as a family in our Zim adventure.

**One Way School**

We’ve done it! We are incredibly proud of everyone who has worked tirelessly to ensure the opening of One Way School. The staff, children, parents and volunteers including all of your support has enabled us to open the two new Grades 1 and 2 classes as well as maintaining the ECD centre. We are 3 weeks in and it’s been tough but incredible!

We currently have capacity for 90 children across the school – according to the Ministry of Health. We have capacity for 120 – according to the Ministry for Education. So we are currently in a bit of a pickle! We are maintaining 45 children across ECD and 45 across grades 1 and 2, and are arranging meetings with both Health and Education officials to finalise our exact numbers. We hope to increase capacity to 120 across the school which would allow for 30 in each class, this would then be the staple number for every year group as we move forward.

We have employed 2 more members of staff, a new cook- Doreen, and a music teacher/support staff – Amos. Betty has moved from the kitchen into the ECD centre as she has begun a training course to get her ECD certificate in teaching. We are so excited for her to develop her education in this way and are blessed that with your support we are able to support her in her school fees. Rumbi has moved from the ECD centre to Grade 1 and is the class teacher.

We are continually seeking ways to develop the curriculum we offer and are finding in these first few weeks that there are certain elements we were not aware of, which come with costs we were not prepared for. So we are facing daily battles to ensure we can cover these costs as well as our day to day finances, however we know that once we have settled these initial challenges, we will be well set for the future years!

**Future Developments**

We intend to open one new class every year until 2020 when Grade 7 will be the final year. This year we hope to build 2 new classrooms for Grades 3 and 4, these will be a new build in the current courtyard of the Grades 1 and 2 area. After this, we hope to renovate the current church building to accommodate Grades 5-7.

We are encouraging the church, school and friends and family of the children to fundraise in order to complete these developments. The children have begun already in 2015 and held a dress up day wearing African Attire, they raised $120 and intend to hold one dress up day every month, hoping to raise over $1000! The school is also intending on holding a Fun Day for school family, church family and the local community to raise more funds.

We are hoping to hold meetings with the church leadership and the youths of the church in order to discuss ways in which they too can fundraise in order to support the developments. We need the Zimbabweans to support the project financially in this way in order to make it a sustainable long term project, there is always concern that they may become too reliant on international funding and part of our work here is to educate them in ways they can support themselves.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

We are excited that our home Church, Catford Community is intending on bringing a team to work with us here in May 2015. If you are interested in joining this team or feel that you would like to find out more about spending time with us here working on various projects, please don’t hesitate to contact us via email. We appreciate everyone’s help and support and can guarantee you are a necessary and valued volunteer!

**Prayer Points**

* Thank God for us settling well as a family into our new roles within school and as parents
* Thank God for a successful first few weeks of One Way School
* Pray for communication and support from all areas with regards to fundraising and developing the school
* Pray for communication between Prudence and the officials from the Ministries for health and education

Thank you again for your continued support and encouragement, we are blessed every day.

God Bless,

Greg, Sophie and JT xx