



REPORT

Since we last wrote...

- ❖ We've made a major grant to Erasmus School, Melbourne, to help its ambitious refurbishment project.
- ❖ To help HPV School, Nepal, rebuild after the devastating earthquake, we've made a second grant.
- ❖ We are now in the fourth year of our grant to Little Stars School in Varanasi, India – having safely navigated the school's change of bank! See thank-you, below.
- ❖ Three alumnae of St James, London are volunteering in the Prep School and Nursery, supported by ERT. A fourth intern is helping the Senior Girls School with drama lessons.
- ❖ We are collaborating with education expert Professor Pat Preedy to deliver on-line parenting courses.
- ❖ We are giving a monthly grant to St James Johannesburg to help it through tough times.
- ❖ We continue to receive generous donations and legacies to help make all these things happen. Including a spectacular legacy that has paid for our grant to Erasmus School.

Thank you!



Little Stars School, Varanasi, says thank you

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The lifeline of a good education

The riots in South Africa six months ago are still fresh in our minds. During the riots Jessica Renison, who fund-raises in the UK for St James Durban, sent her donors a much-needed story of hope. With apologies to those who will already have seen it, here is part of what she wrote.

“When I last spoke to headmistress Lisa Welthagen, the riots in the city were at their worst. The school had broken up for the holidays a week or so earlier and everyone was barricaded in their homes. Fires were erupting throughout the city. All shops, including food stores, pharmacies and doctors’ surgeries were closed or had been abandoned to looters. Today St James re-opened for a new term, all students and teachers present and correct, ready to carry on as normal. Despite some parents having lost jobs, and more expected to do so. I asked Lisa what I could share with St James’ supporters around the world, and she told me about Shaun.

Shaun Gasa joined St James in 2015, the year the UK fundraising team visited the school. At the time we interviewed various parents, and Shaun’s father’s response stood out for its heartfelt honesty. He said:

‘I would like my son to be a respectable, intelligent human being. I would like him to be the best he can be. In my own education I was not equipped in areas that mattered. St James is giving my son the opportunity to excel by giving him a strong foundation. My hopes are that he will become a productive member of society and will feel wanted.’

Six years, on Shaun has been offered academic scholarships to two of Durban’s best High Schools.”



Shaun (pictured here with his parents) says of his time at St James:

‘I value most my teachers and the life lessons they have taught me because that is what has nurtured me and given me the confidence to be who I am today.’

To donate to St James Durban, send a cheque made out to ‘ERT/St James Durban’ to the ERT’s address, left. Or donate via PayPal, stating that the donation is for St James Durban.

The Education Renaissance Trust promotes schools and supports teachers around the world who provide a spiritually-based education. This ERT newsletter REPORT is published twice a year, to keep friends and supporters in touch with our work. If you no longer wish to receive it, please contact the editor, Hugh Venables.



Close attention at Erasmus School

ERT's Lucca Conference will be back in 2022!

We hope to run a full conference for teachers in Italy in July 2022. This one will include the bi-annual get-together of all the St James family head-teachers.

If you want to book a place contact Kim Brown at kim@ert.org.uk.

St James Johannesburg

John Curle has been appointed Executive Head at St James, replacing Bev Counihan who has left. Dilip Kala remains as Academic Head.

After a tough year for all schools in South Africa, John has a lot on his plate, ensuring good numbers of children enrol at the start of the academic year in January.

St James has reduced its fees to align better with nearby independent schools, and so far the numbers are encouraging. We wish John and his colleagues every success.

'A Winning Attitude'

Dr Pat Preedy is a most distinguished educationalist. She has been a regular at our international conference for teachers at Lucca, and she has lectured on Plato and education. We feel we have got to know her well.

Now Pat and a colleague have devised an online parenting course, drawing on years of educational practice and research. It's designed for Early Years teachers to enable them to run courses for the parents at their schools.

A Winning Attitude's four sessions cover Responsibility, Character Building, Discipline, and Fun, Engagement and Play. See <http://awinningattitude.com>

The ERT will pay the course fees for teachers from our family of schools. We'll also be making a grant to the organisers so that they can offer the course to 50 teachers from schools which can't otherwise afford it.

Building Back Better at Erasmus School

Erasmus School has been delivering the 'St James' education to the children of Melbourne since 1996. The education has been good; the accommodation less so. The roof leaks, the building is too hot in summer too cold in winter. And there's inadequate access for disabled children.

So the Board drew up a plan for refurbishment. Some classrooms will be enlarged and improved, allowing for two-form entry for the first time. The building will be entirely re-roofed, providing a beautiful shady canopy and terrace to the main façade. A lift will be installed. And the playground will be dramatically upgraded.

As the Principal Thierry Clarisse writes in his letter to ERT: 'With an environment radiating quality and beauty, wellbeing benefits will be available for both children and staff.'

The project is costing around £1.3m. The State of Victoria is making a substantial grant towards the project. The school has sold some land. It also has prudently paid off most of its debt, allowing the balance of the cost to be covered by a bank loan. Erasmus is confident that the increase in enrolments resulting from the refurbishment will allow the loan to be paid off quickly.

We were impressed with the project and have awarded Erasmus a grant of £100,000.



Wait till you see our new playground

THANKS FOR READING! CAN YOU HELP US OUT?

Many readers now support our worldwide work through regular standing orders. Some sponsor bursaries for children at St James Johannesburg or help with the development of St James Durban. Others donate to the wider work of the ERT. The Chancellor kindly increases every donation from a UK taxpayer by 25%, via Gift Aid.

Contact us (see overleaf for details) and we'll send you a Gift Aid form. One-off donations, large or small, are equally welcome, cheques or cash! Or you can donate by bank transfer to our account at HSBC: The Education Renaissance Trust, sort code 40 11 58; account no. 90125105.

You can also support us via **PayPal**. There's a button on the ERT website – go to the How You Can Help page and then to Becoming a Donor (or click <http://www.education-renaissance-trust.org.uk/help2.htm> if you're online.)