



The McCabe Educational Trust Newsletter



October 2015

News from Al Shurooq

For more than thirty years, the McCabe Educational Trust has been creating partnerships with inspiring people we have met on pilgrimage.

The last five years in particular have been remarkable, with more than one million pounds distributed to the people and projects we support.

A main beneficiary is the Al Shurooq school for the visually disabled in Bethlehem. Our directors have just visited the school and this is their report.

A big **THANK YOU** from all of the recipients to the supporters of the McCabe Educational Trust.



Iain Paton and Stuart Lynch visit Bethlehem's Al Shurooq Blind school

Dear all

We are delighted to report that Al Shurooq is now operating at full capacity. There are 27 children boarding, plus a further 11 day pupils. 4 former pupils are attending university while still accommodated at Al Shurooq. For this great turnaround, we have to thank the new principal, Ruba Makarker, who is doing a tremendous job.

Child Sponsorship

One change we have agreed to is to end the personal child sponsorship scheme introduced after our 2014 sponsored walk as, administratively, the school was unable to cope. We will, however, continue our policy of sending a

comprehensive donation each quarter to cover general costs, including of course the children. Ruba prefers this system to one where individual donations have to be reconciled to individual children.



Many MET supporters send us monthly donations for Al Shurooq. We hope you will continue. Our supporters contributions, with Gift Aid added, will be sent each quarter, giving the school a substantial and regular guaranteed source of income - and some peace of mind.



Eye tests

MET has used its local contacts to initiate a partnership between Al Shurooq and Jerusalem's St John Ophthalmic Hospital. The hospital has agreed to send a team annually to Bethlehem to check the eyesight of all the pupils. We are very grateful.

Resource Room

A project MET is working on with the school is to equip a 'resource room' with materials to enhance the experience of the partially sighted. We have agreed an extra grant of £18,000 for this purpose.

Other recent developments have been the creation of a new classroom to cope with the greater numbers, while the kindergarten area has been imaginatively extended to provide a secure outdoor play area where the children have the opportunity to look after a variety of pets and domestic animals.

Future Plans

Plans are now in hand to complete a building in the grounds and create an Adult Education Centre which will allow the school to expand and cater for those less young. Funds permitting, this new project will incorporate a cash generating element in the form of shops and dormitory accommodation.

In another development, children are now encouraged to go home at weekends so that they maintain a degree of family life.

Our visit was a great encouragement to both us and the school. We found the staff very forward looking and feeling positive about the future. We are pleased to report a project in good health and going forwards strongly.

Iain and Stuart
MET Directors

The McCabe Educational Trust

Jeel al Amal Boys Home

Iain and Stuart also visited our flagship project in Bethany



There are currently 250 children attending primary school at Jeel al Amal. Of these, over 70 are resident in the children's home, and they are the focus of our fundraising.

We are still the only funding body which has a regular commitment to the school, for which they are so grateful.

Work is now well underway in a complete refurbishment of the kitchen, dining area and laundry room made possible by an additional grant of £22,000 from our Trust.

We saw the results of our annual summer school in the form of some very attractive new murals adorning the corridor walls. Our team of volunteers is now eagerly anticipated each summer and this initiative of Andy Webster continues to be a great success.

A Vision for the Future

Najwa, the director, is full of ideas to improve Jeel - funds permitting. A dream is to purchase adjacent land and expand the facility. With more space, she would create a play and activity area with a pool and child friendly educational and play equipment.

The budget for this pipe dream is £250,000.

Like Najwa, we believe in thinking big and we are presenting this vision. If it is God's will, at the right time, He will provide.

A constant worry at Jeel is that so much of their income is unpredictable, but despite this and the ever changing political climate, Najwa continues to do a sterling job.

I am passing on her grateful thanks to all of our regular Jeel supporters. Without your contributions, life at Jeel would be so much more difficult.

A special **thank you** to McCabe pilgrims who helped us raise **£5,075** during September making a total of **£174,993** raised so far this year.

For more information about our work, do have a look at the Trust pages on the McCabe website.



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