SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

Tileagd School & Nursery

At the start of this academic year the state entered a partnership with Smiles for the running of the school. It has been almost 8 months since the beginning of this partnership and we are very happy to say that it is working extremely well: the transition has been smooth, largely due to being able to retain our Smiles appointed teachers and we are happy to share the responsibility of educating the children with the state. We are extremely blessed to still have the same staff in the school, including the teachers. They understand the children, they know what motivates them and they have a real passion to make a difference to the lives of these children. The director of the state school in Tileagd has also responded very well to and supports the partnership. He has visited the school several times over the past few months and is very impressed with our facility and what we are doing for the community. This of course is all very encouraging to hear. We pray now that things would continue to run smoothly and that the children would continue to work hard until the end of the semester!







The nursery, which is still completely financed and operated by Smiles, is also doing very well. The staff all do such a good job in introducing these young children to the world of education. There were lots of tears on the first day of nursery but now the children seem settled and enjoy the opportunity to be able to play and be with others their age as they learn. The children have recently spent a lot of time learning about Spring and doing craft-related activities which they really seem to have enjoyed.



New appointments

Pastor Vasile : For a long time we have been praying to appoint a pastor for Tileagd. As of March 1st, Pastor Vasile was employed to fulfil this position. He is trained theologically and also spent time as an RE teacher in several schools meaning he has good experience working with children. This will prove essential as he begins to take a more active role in working with the children as part of the after-school programme.

Gabi Petrică : Gabi worked with Smiles from 2004-2006 teaching a special needs class. Now she has returned again to work with the children from the Gypsy community who now attend the state school. Since February she has been working with the children every day in order to ensure understanding of work covered in class and to assist them with homework. She has a big heart and is extremely dedicated to helping the children achieve their potential.



After-School Programme

In the last newsletter you heard about the launch of our new after-school programme and its initial success with the children. The programme still takes place as previously described: lunch, homework, hygiene (brushing teeth/showers) and spiritual development sessions. After looking at the miracles of Jesus, the children began a series studying men and women of the Bible. They enjoyed learning about different people and hopefully it helped them to build up a better overall picture of where different people fit into the Bible! Since the employment of Pastor Vasile in Tileagd in March, he has taken over the running of the spiritual development sessions and he has a lot of new ideas and different activities for the children. They have particularly enjoyed doing Biblical crosswords and puzzles from Christian children's magazines that he supplies the children with.

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(CONTINUED)

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS



Monia Rostas (year 5) : Monia is currently repeating year 5 but recently seems to have "found her feet" so to speak, in school. In March she was selected to represent the school in a county cross-country competition in which she came 3rd out of a large number of competitors from schools based around Bihor County. She is also doing extremely well in art and seems to have a natural ability in this area. What's more, her success in these areas seems to have spurred her on to do her best in as many subjects as possible. Monia isn't the quickest of learners, but over the past month we have seen such an amazing change in attitude in her – to the extent that she jumped up and down with excitement when asked if she wanted an extra English activity to do at home! All joking aside, her new-found enthusiasm and desire to learn is remarkable and we pray that this would continue and that she would begin to see the results of her hard work.



Alexandra (Somna) Rostas (kindergarten) : Somna started kindergarten in September 2013 after her family moved from the Reservoir Community to the nearby Gypsy Community in Tileagd. At the start of the year she couldn't understand much Romanian and she didn't interact well or take part in class at all. After visiting the kindergarten last week and seeing the change in Somna from the start of the academic year we felt we had no choice but to include her in this latest update! She understandably still has difficulties understanding and communicating in Romanian but she has evidently greatly benefitted from being exposed to the Romanian language in the nursery environment. She is now a lot more talkative, a lot more playful and interacts more with some of the other children. She has adapted brilliantly to nursery life and we hope that she will continue to benefit from the education she will receive here as well as from the opportunity she has here to, in essence, be a child and to enjoy life!



Alex and Maic Rostas (year 6) : Alex and Maic have always enjoyed playing football. This year they were both selected for a football club in Oradea. They now have training twice a week in Tileagd with matches against other teams from Bihor County every other weekend. They need to learn to balance their school work with their football training but it is amazing that they have found their talent and that they have this opportunity. Isn't it incredible that two boys from a poor Gypsy community, who probably only started out playing kick-about outside their houses because they had nothing to do, have now been selected for and play for one of the best teams in Bihor County. Amazing.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much to all who support the work being done in Tileagd – whether this be prayerfully or financially. At times it can seem like we are fighting a never-ending battle, but when you take the time to look at the difference we are making to the lives of some of these children, you begin to see it is worth fighting the fight. It is wonderful to have such success stories to share but none of it would be possible without your support and so from the bottom of our hearts, every one of us in Tileagd says a massive THANK YOU for making it possible to do what we are doing.

The Smiles FOUNDATION

Tileagd Community School

Building a Brighter Future

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