

Update on trip to Sri Lanka

I am writing to provide you with an update on our recent trip to Sri Lanka over the half term, where I had the privilege of working with the children at the local children's home.



The Kalamusa Kadella home cares for approximately 90 children who have been sent here by Probation Services due to circumstances of being orphaned, neglected, or abused. The home was established through the vision of a dedicated local pastor, Nelum, and his wife, Premadassa, and is supported by three wonderful care mothers overseen by Naomi, who ensures the children receive the love and care they desperately need.

The experience was profoundly humbling. The photos shared depict the reality that these children face daily: they possess very few belongings, with only three changes of clothes—school uniform, everyday wear, and their "church" best. More distressingly, all of these children have endured horrific experiences prior to their arrival at the home, with the majority having faced physical and sexual abuse, often at the hands of family members. Unfortunately, there is little to no emotional support or therapy available to them.



Children's bedrooms; 8 children to a room



Washroom facilities

During my time there, the two other trustees and I worked closely with the children, conducting group and individual sessions. Our activities included engaging with them through Bible verses, as well as play and drawing therapy sessions. I am pleased to report that the children responded incredibly well, amazingly showing resilience and capacity for joy despite their pasts.

Thanks to your generous donations, we were able to provide each child with a new set of underwear and some essential toiletries. While these may not seem like the most exciting gifts, they are truly essential and were met with immense gratitude from the children. Your support has made a significant difference in their lives, and I want to extend my heartfelt thanks for your kindness.

During my visit, we devoted a significant portion of our time to working with the wonderful ladies in the local community, many of whom are regular attendees at the church. It was heart-wrenching to learn that these resilient women often face physical and emotional abuse, particularly as a consequence of their faith and commitment to attending church services. It was truly inspiring to see how, despite the challenges they encounter, these ladies continue to demonstrate strength and courage.



Despite the numerous programmes, we ensured that there was ample time for a *funday*. It was truly a joy to witness the children's laughter as they participated in *old-fashioned* party games, such as *pass the parcel*. Their enjoyment was palpable, and it reminded us all of the simple pleasures!





Finally, I ran a Sunday school session at the nearby Church on the Rock. This was a unique and enriching experience, as we connected with the children and families of the church; a congregation which often faces persecution for their beliefs. This reality deepened my appreciation for their resilience and commitment to their faith. Witnessing their courage in such challenging circumstances was both humbling and inspiring.



Thank you once again for your unwavering support. I will continue to discuss these experiences with your children, as they can provide valuable lessons about empathy and understanding in our increasingly diverse world.

If you have any questions or would like to hear more about our trip, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Sara