



## Uganda Humanist Schools Trust

# Update on the Isaac Newton High School, Masaka

23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2011

### School building programme progresses

Since the last report in November, there has been substantial progress with building work at the Isaac Newton High School.

A new **four-classroom block**, funded by IHEU, has been completed, furnished with desks and chairs and it is being used by classes. There was a slight overrun on the costs of the building, but the shortfall has been generously made good by a supplementary grant from IHEU.

The **science lab**, also built with an IHEU grant, had stood unfinished for 18 months. However, as a result of grants from UHST, the lab has been completed and is being used to teach science lessons. Windows and doors have been put in and the building made secure. The prep room has shelves to store chemicals and equipment bought with money raised by the School of Life Sciences at Keele University. We have also provided money for the construction of wooden benches and for 50 lab stools.

With the computer lab (in the centre of the photograph), opened in July, the Isaac Newton High School is developing into a fine looking school.

In the past three months UHST has provided the school with £2,400 for textbooks for Senior 2 and 3 classes and 20 scholarships to enable local children, from poor circumstances, to attend the school.



## **Report and pictures from Peter Kisirinya**

### **ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT**

*The school received another consignment of textbooks in November 2010 from UHST amounting to Uganda Shillings 4.6 million for the S2 class following a similar amount allocated to the S4 class in the year 2009. Currently the school's books account at the Aristoc Bookshop has money to the tune of £1200 (4.6 million shillings) from UHST for the S3 class. Once we have collected these new books every class in the school will have basic textbooks.*

*The textbooks have greatly contributed to the improvement of examination grades of students as seen from the results released by the National Examinations Board. It is the first time for the school to have a candidate passing in division one and the rest of the candidates passing without any failure registered. The recently released Uganda National Examinations Results for the A' level class showed that out of the five students who sat the exams four scored at least two principal passes to enable them to be admitted for university courses. The best candidate, Edward Mugambe, who has been a scholarship student from UHST, scored 15 points in the following subjects (A-level grades in brackets):*

*History (B), Economics (C), CRE (C), Geography (O), General Paper (C)*

*Teaching of the science subjects has improved since the science laboratory becoming operational. The science laboratory has now enough tables and soon enough stools to have 60 students perform experiments at once. The prep room/store is now furnished with shelves and secure to keep the equipment. Laboratory equipment bought by UHST is very helpful in this regard. We have just received more money from UHST to purchase additional chemicals and equipment.*

*The school has begun teaching science subjects at A' Level and three young science teachers from Makerere University have been recruited on a part-time basis. The science subjects introduced include: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Agriculture and Mathematics.*

### **SCHOOL FACILITIES/INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Last year the school received a grant from IHEU to build a four classroom block to solve the dire problem of lack of teaching space. I am happy to report that the classrooms are now finished and usable (see Photo). This has gone a long way to improve the structures at the school. Now the school campus has a total of 5 building blocks- the science Laboratory, the main hall, the computer lab, the administration block, and the new classroom block.*

*Additional 55 four-seater desks were made courtesy of the IHEU grant and this takes the total number of desks to 124 (496 places).*

*The school has ordered for 15 beds to be used by the boarding boys. Girls are expected to have a fully furnished dormitory soon courtesy of a bequest through UHST.*

### **ENROLMENT**

*The school has had an enrolment of 126, which is good considering the presence of a public school in the area where students study for free under the Universal Secondary Education Scheme. The school has even attracted students from the public school to join it. Parents, students and teachers express greater confidence in the school as never before. We have not lost a single student this year to other schools.*

**Table of enrolment in school**

Class	Boys	Girls
S1	14	17
S2	12	15
S3	10	19
S4	10	13
S5	05	04
S6	06	01

**Boarding Students**

Boys	Girls
16	24

**STAFF**

The school currently employs 22 people: 18 teachers, 1 security person, 1 book-keeper/matron, 1 estates manager/storekeeper, 1 cook.

**SPORTS**

The school's football and netball teams participated in the national Coca-Cola post primary events and the football team reached the semi-finals. The netball team was eliminated in the quarter finals. The school received sports kits from Stoke City FC of UK and the players were putting on in the Potters Jerseys to the admiration of other teams.

**Current and Future Priorities**

The school is still facing several challenges including:

- Lack of a permanent water source (need for a borehole and pump)
- Insufficient kitchen equipment and energy saving cooking facilities
- Lack of playing fields
- Lack of a perimeter fence
- Lack of a school medical facility(sick bay)
- Insufficient farm land to grow food
- Lack of accommodation for students and teachers
- Obtaining approval to become an examination centre
- Lack of electricity from the National Grid

If you feel you or your group would like to contribute to meeting any of these needs then please contact us at [uhstinfo@gmail.com](mailto:uhstinfo@gmail.com) or download a supporter form from our website: [www.ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org](http://www.ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org).

Steve Hurd  
23 March, 2011