

# Uganda Humanist Schools Trust

## 12th Annual Report on Financial Year 2020



**Isaac Newton High School**  
Physics exam class after Covid return



**Katumba Parents' Humanist Primary**  
Children play during Covid closure



**Kanungu Humanist Primary School**  
Humanist Schools Association meeting



**Mustard Seed Secondary School**  
Covid hand-sanitising station

January 2021

<https://ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org/>  
Charity Registration Number 1128762

## Background

This report relates to the financial year January to December 2020.

The year started well. The two high schools that we support, Isaac Newton and Mustard Seed, opened for the first term, with their full complement of 600 students. Exam results, published in February and March, were the best ever, placing the two schools as 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> out of more than 30 secondary schools in their Districts. With the infrastructure of the two high schools nearing completion, we were looking to help more schools, who wished to embrace a Humanist ethos.

After making two visits, we extended support to Katumba Parents' Humanist Primary School, near Bundibugyo on the Congo border, providing funds for learning resources and assistance towards the school fees of 100 needy children. Large donations from a generous supporter enabled us to commit to building the Katumba community a completely new school on a site that is free from flood risk.

We established, by email, a good working relationship with Robert Magara, the Director of Kanungu Humanist Primary School. The school is in a remote location on the edge of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, home of the mountain gorillas.

The number of Humanist schools in Uganda is growing. We have identified 12 such schools and were planning to bring them together for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Humanist Schools Conference in Masaka in August 2020. This was to be combined with an International Friendship visit to the schools, with invited guests from among UHST supporters and the Humanist community worldwide.

After a promising start, in early March Covid-19 reached Uganda. The Uganda government moved quickly, and a national lockdown was imposed in early April.

Schools and educational institutions were closed throughout the country, and staff and students sent home. Markets, shops and public transport were also shut down. Uganda could not pay for furlough schemes, so many Ugandans were forced to fall back on growing their own food to survive.

The impact on the Humanist schools was huge. With students at home, schools lost their local fee income and, as private schools, there was no government support. UHST stepped in to ensure that teachers received at least some pay and to help the schools cover their utility bills, local taxes and examination fees.

The closure lasted until late October, when they were allowed to reopen for exam classes only. However, they had to meet strict Covid regulations, ensuring social distancing, disinfecting surfaces, handwashing and regular temperature checks for every child and teacher. Schools had to be either day or boarding, not both. Our two high schools became boarding only and students who could not pay boarding fees were expected to leave. The primaries continue as day schools. Students on roll in the high schools fell from 600 to 100.

As a further consequence of Covid, we had to postpone the Humanist Schools Conference and International Friendship visit and have been unable to visit Uganda during 2020.

In this unprecedented situation UHST has done its very best to keep the schools moving forwards. We have made progress with completing the infrastructure of the two high schools and building completely new primary schools for the distressed communities of Katumba and Kanungu.

The impact of Covid has been much less than in many other countries. By mid-January 2021, Uganda had experienced fewer than 40,000 confirmed cases and just over 300 deaths. If things continue in this

way, then the Uganda government plans a phased reopening of schools and expects them to be running normally by April.

UHST is determined to ensure that the Humanist schools recover from the Covid experience and help them to restore the momentum they had before the lockdown.

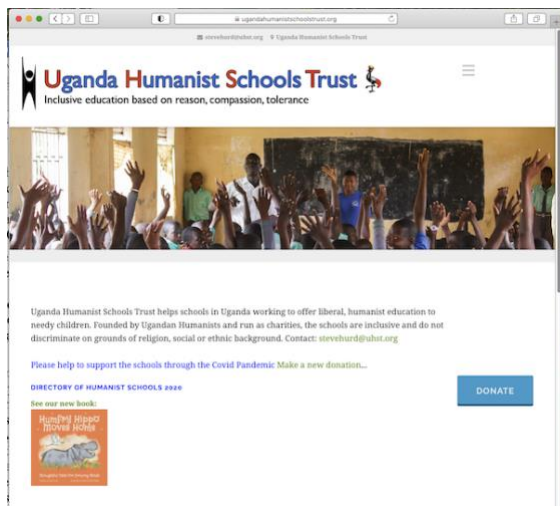
## Fundraising

In 2020, UHST received £136,183 in general donations and £37,958 as boarding scholarships for needy children. Total receipts topped £200,000 for the first time, when we add in gift aid and interest.

Many donations come as monthly standing orders. These provide a firm basis for forward planning. We also receive money by post and by bank transfers. Our website is used by supporters responding to updates about the schools sent by email or posted on our website blog and Facebook.

Please note that, due to changes in the host server, we had to redesign our website this year and it has a new address:

<https://ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org/donate/>



Large donations from individuals and organisations have transformed what we have been able to do for the schools. Partnership with the Ethical Society of St. Louis has been very fruitful. Their members generously fund 30 full boarding scholarships for girl students. They pay for

re-useable sanitary pads (Afripads) for girls in the high schools and contribute additional funds to improve welfare and education for all children in the two high schools. A new partnership with Humanist Aid (Sweden) is being forged. They have taken a close interest in Katumba Parents Humanist Primary School and provide funds to help teachers there through the Covid crisis, for a school nurse, medical supplies and sanitation measures.

Our reserves reached rock bottom in September. At which point, we appealed for help and would like to thank our supporters for the speed and generosity of their response. We are grateful to North London Humanists who donated £35,000 – part proceeds of a bequest from one of their long-standing members. Another long-term supporter, who had taken a close interest in the Humanist Schools, left money to help the schools in her will. These are already making a huge difference to the schools.

## Grant Allocation in 2020

UHST allocated £237,955 in grants to the Humanist Schools in Uganda. The major recipients have been the two high schools that we have been nurturing since the charity began, Isaac Newton and Mustard Seed. In addition, two Humanist primary schools, Katumba and Kanungu, have also become major recipients.

Funds have been allocated for the following purposes.

### *Scholarships* (£40,090)

All 130 children supported on scholarships were in school until April, but only those in their O and A-level examination years were allowed back by the Uganda government in late October. The monthly transfers of scholarship money have provided a lifeline to the schools and their teachers during the Covid lockdown. Without this money, the



students would have had no schools to return to once the closure was over.

When exam classes returned, the small amount of additional fee income and supplementary payments by UHST made it possible to maintain staff pay at 75% of normal levels.

### **Infrastructure (£127,841)**

Work has continued, albeit with some restrictions, on infrastructure developments.

### **Isaac Newton High School**

£29,000 was allocated to the construction of a much-needed school hall.



The Hall accommodates 600 students for assemblies, music, dance and drama events, and for debates. Tables and benches are being constructed so that it can be used for dining.

### **Mustard Seed Secondary School**

At the beginning of the year, the school was so short of sleeping space for the boys who needed to board at the school, that they had resorted to using classrooms as bedrooms. As space on the site was limited, we approved the purchase of an adjoining plot of land, which gives the school another entrance. We approved funding, during the lockdown, for a second boys' dormitory (below).



Mustard Seed now has 4 high-standard dormitories with adjoining toilets and washrooms, all with piped mains water and electricity. The buildings are divided into family rooms of 8 students, accommodating 96 students in all. New Covid regulations on social distancing, if they remain unchanged, will reduce occupancy by 50%.

### **Katumba Parents Humanist Primary**

The village of Katumba lost many young men in an abortive cult uprising in the early part of 2016. Only a year earlier, the community had come together to construct a much-needed Primary School, from trees hewn from the surrounding montane

forests. Following the uprising, over 100 children in the school were left without fathers and their mothers have done their best to preserve the school and to rebuild it with a Humanist ethos, rejecting the superstitions that fuelled the insurrection.

On our first visit to Katumba in July 2018, we were impressed by the community commitment and attainment of children in the school. Unfortunately, the wooden classrooms had been built on a site that was prone to flooding.

In 2019, with help from a generous benefactor, we committed to the major challenge of building the Katumba Community a completely new school on a dry site, donated by a grandmother of children in the school.

2020 saw the completion of a fine new Nursery section, with 3 classrooms – next picture. The site has been connected to mains water and electricity. Lighting and power have been extended to the classrooms, enabling them to be used for community meetings in the dark evenings.



In the second half of the year, work continued on the construction of an infants' section, with 4 rooms to accommodate Primary 1 to Primary 4 classes.



Blair ventilated pit-latrines were built as a joint venture with the Katumba community. UHST paid for the materials and the community contributed their labour to the project.

Our plans in 2021 are to construct a Junior section, with rooms for Primary 5 to Primary 7 classes. In addition, work will begin on a cook house, where meals will be prepared for the children's breakfasts and lunches. It will be necessary to cook using firewood. However, to economise on the use of scarce timber and to prevent the cooks having to ingest smoke, which is very harmful to the lungs, we will be paying for energy efficient, externally vented wood-burning stoves.

### **Kanungu Humanist Primary School**

Robert Magara was a young boy in the year 2000, when he discovered that members of his father's family were among 800 local people murdered in church by a religious cult. His commitment to Humanism came in later life, when he realised that, by providing enlightened education he could protect the new generation from a similar fate.

We heard about Robert's efforts to provide Humanist education from others and began to exchange emails with him. We do not normally support a school until we have visited and built up a relationship of trust

with those involved with it but, in 2020, our planned visit was cancelled due to Covid.

We were aware that the Kanungu school was perched precariously on a steep hillside. However, when a storm seriously damaged the first buildings, we were inclined to break our normal rule and help without having visited. Initial funds had come from the Brighter Brains Institute in the U.S.. However, BBI moved out of Uganda and eventually closed down, so Robert was left without support, yet we had little knowledge of the situation on the ground.

Fortunately, Peter Kisirinya and Moses Kanya, the Directors of the two Humanist High Schools and leaders of the Uganda Humanist Schools Association, offered to help us by visiting the school to meet Robert and assess the position. On their advice we committed to supporting the development of Kanungu Humanist Primary School.

Our initial focus was on school governance. Following our experience with Katumba School, we knew that governance had to come first. With help from a Uganda lawyer that we work with, the school was established as a not-for-profit company, with Board members drawn from the community and one from UHST. A public service accountant, responsible for auditing the high school accounts, set about the task of creating baseline accounts for both Kanungu and Katumba.

The next step was to support education by empowering the teachers and children with books and learning materials, that foster independent learning. We opened an account for the school in Aristoc bookshop, to enable Robert to buy books and play materials for the 180 children already in the school. When Covid forced the temporary closure of the school in April, we gave money to help school staff to survive. A

large tank was fitted to harvest rainwater for hand-washing stations and infra-red thermometers were purchased for regular health monitoring of staff and children.

Robert prepared detailed plans, setting out what needed to be done to complete facilities already started on a safer site. After receiving reasonable cost estimates for the building work, we agreed to fund the completion of the school in stages.

Partially completed primary 2 and 3 classrooms



Construction of nursery.





Work on primary 6 and 7 classrooms.



All stages above are now complete. So, Kanungu can now house children from reception through to Primary 7. We approved spending in January 2021 on new ventilated toilets and on a kitchen with an efficient wood burning stove. Robert and his team of local builders have worked hard to get the school ready to re-open as soon as permissible.

#### ***Other expenditures*** (£40,090)

The Covid closure has provided an opportunity to carry out many important small works.

At Isaac Newton, the sides of the cess tank under one of the girls' toilets caved in and had to be reconstructed. An additional toilet block, for boys, staff and visitors has been constructed. Mains electricity and water have been distributed around the school site. Site drainage, paths and roadways have been further improved and flowers and trees planted to enhance the site.

Mustard Seed completed additional toilets in the centre of the new school site and built toilets and washrooms alongside the new boys' dormitory – all with running water and on-site electricity. The science lab and library, created by dividing the old school hall in 2019, were fitted out for use.

Mains water and electricity were brought to the new Katumba School site. As mains water charges are high, we also paid for a large water tank to harvest rainwater from the new nursery building roof.

Additional furniture was made for the schools, including beds for the Mustard Seed dormitory, dining-room furniture at Isaac Newton School, and tables and chairs for the new nursery and junior sections at Katumba School.

All schools were given assistance to make them Covid-safe (handwashing stations, thermometers). We also gave every school funds to enable them to supplement staff pay to help them to survive the Covid-lockdown.

With the schools closed for 7 months, spending on learning resources was less than usual. In 2020 Uganda started to phase in major curricular reform in the secondary schools. The heavy knowledge-based curricula had been reformed to bring in behavioural objectives, emphasising what students can do and not just what knowledge they can regurgitate. The intention was to implement the new curriculum with the 2020 first year student intake and to move it up through the school with that cohort of students. Such fundamental reform requires new textbooks, teaching methods, and in-service training.

Covid halted implementation of the new curricula in 2020 but gave publishers more time to prepare new textbooks. We allocated no funds for secondary books in 2020, but they will need a further injection of funds for 2021. We have continued to help the schools to stock their science labs with materials that promote practical science. Katumba and Kanungu had few learning resources in total, so we allocated

funds to each school to buy books and play materials.

Although there were fewer students in school for most of the year, we did make sure that the girls who were able to attend were provided with supplied of re-useable sanitary pads, which do so much to enhance the girls' confidence.

## Prospects for 2021

The Covid pandemic has been a major setback for school children throughout Uganda and will continue to overshadow 2021. Uganda is hoping to receive its first vaccine supplies soon – the Oxford-Astra-Zeneca vaccine via India and/or the Chinese vaccine; and it has promised to prioritise health workers and then teachers.

Uganda's Ministry of Education is ready to reopen schools once it receives final approval from the Ministry of Health. Examination classes are already back in school and a phased return of other classes is expected to be completed by April.

What follows is a list of UHST priorities for 2021. They focus on ensuring the survival of the 2 high schools and 2 primary schools that we already support.

No funds are allocated for infrastructure in the two high schools, which we consider to be adequate for the time being. We will endeavour to press on with completing the infrastructure of the 2 primary schools. The high schools will need textbooks and learning resources for the new curriculum, and measures to train staff to deliver it.

While we want to help new Humanist schools as they appear, we wish to avoid spreading our funds so thinly that quality is compromised. This may mean having a core of well-funded schools and helping others in smaller ways.

At our 2020 AGM we laid out the following tentative plans:

1. **Cash Flow Assistance** – We will do what is necessary to help our schools to survive the economic shock of Covid - help with staff pay, and for students who cannot afford full school or examination fees.
2. **Scholarships** – We hope to attract more boarding scholarships, to give more bright but needy children the gift of good education.
3. **Learning resources** – more books, play, science and arts materials.
4. **Welfare** – improvements in childrens' welfare, including sanitary pads, hygiene and food standards.
5. **Katumba School** – Construction of junior section for Primary 5,6 and 7 classes.
6. **3<sup>rd</sup> Uganda Humanist Schools Conference**  
We wish to organise this as soon as reasonably possible (perhaps January 2022). We estimate that this will cost £6,000 if we are to invite teachers from the 12 Humanist Schools that currently exist.
7. **New schools** – We will continue to forge links with new Humanist Schools and consider how best we can help them to play their part within the Humanist Schools Association family.

The Covid Pandemic has created extraordinary times, but we are determined the help the schools to come through it and to be even stronger than before. UHST and the Uganda Humanist Schools are very grateful to our supporters for increasing their generous donations to help us through this challenging time.



Should you wish to donate to help take forward the pathbreaking work in Uganda to develop the world's first Humanist schools, please visit our website:

<https://ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org/donate/make-a-donation/>

If you wish to learn more about the new Humanist schools then take a look at our new [Directory of Humanist Schools in Uganda](#). This can be downloaded from the front page of our website.

## Uganda Humanist Schools Trust

### ***People and contacts***

The UHST (UK) is a charity that raises funds to support education in Humanist Schools in Uganda.

Charity Number 1128762.

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### ***Board of Trustees in 2020***

Steve Hurd B.Sc., M.A.(Econ), PGCE  
(Chair)

Professor Hilary Hurd, B.Sc., Ph.D., PGCE,  
FRES, FRSTMH, MIBiol  
(Scholarships Manager)

Daniel Hurd, B.Soc.Sci., ACA., MABRP  
(Honorary Accountant)

Paul Ewans, B.A.(Hons)  
(Cambridge Humanists)

Christine Smith, B.Sc., PGCE  
(Shropshire & Dorset Humanists)

Glenda Miller, B.A. (Hons) (Lawyer)

Derek Miller, LL.B. (Lawyer)

Krystal White, B.A., M.A.T.  
(St Louis Ethical Society, U.S.)

Lee Denison, M.Eng, ACGI,  
IT Specialist, Google

## UHST Objectives

Object 1: To support the educational work of Humanist Schools in Uganda.

Object 2: To provide support to enable needy children to attend those schools.

The Charity supports schools providing a broad general education consistent with the principles embodied in the 2002

Amsterdam Declaration on Humanism:

<https://humanists.international/what-is-humanism/the-amsterdam-declaration/>

## Grant-making Policy

The Trust offers grants to Humanist schools in Uganda. We normally expect the schools we support to be not-for-profit organisations and to be members of the Uganda Humanist Schools Association (UHSA). Our mission is to help the schools provide a good educational experience for children attending them. A condition of support is that a proportion of places are made available to disadvantaged children from the local community.

UHST funds items that contribute to improvements in the education and welfare standards of children attending the schools. The Trust gives grants for learning materials, staffing costs, staff development activities and towards the improvement of school buildings and infrastructure or for additional buildings and such other items that meet the objects of the Trust. The Trust also funds boarding scholarships so that schools can recruit bright children without the means to pay.

Trustees will consider applications for funds from (a) individual Humanist schools and (b) from organisations offering services on a collective basis to the schools (for example, to pay for professional development events for teaching staff). Applicants are advised to approach the

Trust on an informal basis and to seek advice before they make a firm application for funds. Where bids exceed the funds available the Trust reserves the right to provide a proportion of the funds requested or to mount an appeal for additional funds to meet a need that has been identified.

From time to time, the Trust may offer grants to schools for specific purposes determined by our Trustees. The Trust may also announce a total amount of money available for a specific purpose and invite applications from schools either individually or on a cooperative basis.

In most cases, successful grants go through the following stages: (1) initial enquiry and outline bid, (2) full application with reasonable and realistic cost estimates from suppliers, (3) on approval of larger projects, payments may be sent as each stage is completed, (4) recipient supplies evidence of completion with a list of outcomes, including photographs, (5) a final account with receipts are submitted.



Steve Hurd & Peter Kisirinya discussing priorities

UHST requires a copy of the relevant annual accounts and bank statements of each school supported and we expect the amount and purpose of each grant to be recorded in those accounts as well a record of how the money donated has been spent.

# UHST Accounting Summary 2020

## RECEIPTS

Scholarships	£37,958
General Donations	£136,183
Gift Aid	£33,495
Interest & other	£319
Total Receipts =	£207,955

## PAYMENTS By Purpose

Scholarships	£40,090
Infrastructure	£127,841
Utilities (water, sanitation, power)	£22,689
Learning materials	£3,617
Covid emergency funding/salary support	£29,100
Legal & accounting	£774
Furniture	£8,500
Directors' honoraria	£3,100
Other	£1,776
Total Payments =	£237,486

## GRANTS by School

Isaac Newton High School	£83,718
Mustard Seed Secondary School	£75,222
Katumba Parents Humanist Primary School	£56,940
Kanungu Humanist Primary School	£20,670
Kasese Humanist Schools	£936

Charity Name		No (if any)		CC16a	
UGANDA HUMANIST SCHOOLS TRUST		1128762			
Receipts and payments accounts					
For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date		
	01/01/2020		31/12/2020		
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations - unrestricted	115,096	-	-	115,096	91,237
Donations- restricted	-	21,087	-	21,087	21,788
Donations- scholarships	-	37,958	-	37,958	41,904
Gift aid	33,495	-	-	33,495	-
Interest	294	-	-	294	247
Bank charge refund	25	-	-	25	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	148,911	59,044	-	207,955	155,176
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	148,911	59,044	-	207,955	155,176
A3 Payments					
Isaac Newton Kateera - unrestricted	61,145	-	-	61,145	48,296
Isaac Newton Kateera - restricted	-	-	-	-	1,378
Isaac Newton Kateera - scholarships	-	22,573	-	22,573	21,340
Mustard Seed School - unrestricted	56,618	-	-	56,618	33,893
Mustard Seed School - restricted	-	1,087	-	1,087	24,142
Mustard Seed School - scholarships	-	17,517	-	17,517	21,714
Kasese Humanist Primary School - unrestricted	937	-	-	937	400
Katumba Humanist Primary School - unrestricted	22,940	-	-	22,940	2,800
Katumba Humanist Primary School - restricted	-	34,000	-	34,000	6,000
Kanungu Humanist Primary School - unrestricted	20,670	-	-	20,670	-
Bank charges	134	-	-	134	121
Sub total	162,443	75,176	-	237,620	133,415
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	162,443	75,176	-	237,620	133,415
Net of receipts/(payments)	(13,533)	(16,132)	-	(29,665)	26,805
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	44,887	18,412	-	63,299	41,403
Cash funds this year end	31,354	2,280	-	33,634	68,208
Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period					
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £	
B1 Cash funds	Donations - unrestricted	-	2,280	-	
	Donations - restricted	31,354	-	-	
	Total cash funds	31,354	2,280	-	
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK		