

Dear All

I am very sorry for the generic start to this email but I wanted to round off our Rwanda fundraiser with one last message to you all and the book bag is not always a reliable method! I write to thank all of you who took part in our recent Rwanda run. We achieved the most amazing total, both in terms of miles run and monies raised. More than that though, I felt we also achieved a tremendous sense of community effort and spirit, which was certainly hugely heartening and uplifting for all those who took part.

Let's start by saying I apologise for the timing- it was cold and wet- but maybe that played in our favour as the boys just loved the mud. When I look back at the photos I just laugh at the good / bad luck we had in choosing that weekend. I ran around what I will now forever call the King's House loop (Isabella who?) on Sunday and it was dry as a bone. Anyway on to my thanks.

The committee were a tremendous support helping set everything up and cajoling and persuading people to lend us equipment and support the day. Thank you to all of them, they put in a lot of extra hours and I am grateful..

Parent runners put in many miles at home, on holiday and on treadmills all over the area. We actually covered just under 6,000 miles, a huge distance and reaching Rwanda by quite a nice, safe but slightly circuitous route. For those of you who joined me in setting your own personal challenges I ask, "Why do we do it?" and, "can that really be good for our knees?" Thank you very much too all runners and walkers.

The marshals on the day were frozen and wet but very much appreciated by all who took part. I hope you have now warmed up and dried out and thank you.

The boys ran and ran and many achieved staggering totals for such small boys (with such small legs). Their little faces were a sight to behold and the enjoyment they got out of slipping and sliding their way around was something I will certainly take away from the day. I have already thanked them for their part in the day but I am sure you must all be hugely proud of them, we certainly are.

Last but not least has been all the fundraising. Parents, boys, grandparents, staff, staff families, I have had contributions both big and small. We have raised an amazing £15,000 so far and all of us who work with Rwanda Aid and in particular our school are incredibly grateful. We will be able to make a huge difference to the lives of those children.

We can switch on the lights, we can pay their bills for at least a year and, in addition, we can pay for the new classrooms which mean they do not need to leave school at 13 but can stay on for at least another two years at our school. Outstanding!

As soon as we have photos of the developments they will be on the Rwanda page of our website. Please rest assured every penny goes straight to the school, we monitor that all the way and I will be there again this summer to see how the money is spent and how the school is progressing.

Thank you all so very much.

Stephanie Piper