

Gambian head teacher visits Highworth



Mr Jammeh with Deputy Mayor Steve Weisinger at Highworth Pre-school

On 11th April 2008 Lamin Jammeh, the headmaster of Marsden Nursery School, left The Gambia for the first time in his life to visit Highworth. After flight delays he eventually arrived in Highworth at 6.00 a.m. on Friday morning, tired but full of anticipation.

The following day he began his busy schedule by visiting the Football club. By this time he was beginning to get used to our unpredictable weather.

Mr. Jammeh met with the Lions Club, an introduction made through the late Colin Jones for which Mr Jammeh will always be grateful. He also visited the 4th Highworth Rainbow group who had raised funds by a Sponsored Sing. They sang one of their songs and he in turn sang to them in his own language, Mandinka. He helped them plant sunflower seeds and in return they presented him with 2 badges celebrating their 20th & 21st year's anniversary.

He visited Westrop School where the head teacher Mrs Urban showed him around the school. He was quite amazed by what he saw. The teaching aids used here are not available in The Gambia and even if they were they would be way outside Mr Jammeh's school budget.

Mr Jammeh then went over to Highworth Pre-School. This is where the support for Marsden Nursery School began and indeed continues

with increasing enthusiasm. He was so pleased to meet all the staff and was very interested in all the wall displays and early years' resources. He was at his most relaxed sitting with Mrs Uzzell and a group of children having fun with play dough.

That evening Pre-School hosted an Informal Reception attended by the Deputy Mayor Steve Weissinger and other guests, including Mr & Mrs Lunn who had generously donated the money to purchase the land in The Gambia for the new school building.

Mr Jammeh gave a moving speech expressing his gratitude to everyone in the community of Highworth who were both supporting the children at his school and also fundraising on their behalf to make the dream of a new school a reality. He presented Certificates to Katy Frost, Chair of Highworth Pre-School and Mr & Mrs Lunn. 4th. In return he was presented with a symbolic 'wall of bricks' each brick bearing the name of individual sponsors. Mr Jammeh has now returned to The Gambia taking with him very happy memories of the people of Highworth. Highworth Pre-School will continue to fundraise to pay for the bricks for the new school and then hopefully buy resources for their classroom. If you would like to support this project please contact me on Tel: (01793) 861457.

Charmaine Gallimore