

## St Christine Education Centre tjugo år



### St Christine Education Centre firar nu sitt 20-årsjubileum!

**De första eleverna i St Christine började 2004, och den högtidliga invigningen skedde i januari 2005.**

Här skriver skolans manager, Ulla Stureaus, om skolans verksamhet och de senaste årens förändringar i läroplan och skolsystem i Kenya. Två före detta elever, Jacob Odiko och Maxwell Ombego, berättar om vad skolan betytt för dem.

### Elevernas resultat

Elevernas resultat har under de senaste tio åren fortsatt att vara mycket goda. Slutbetygen beräknades fram till 2023 på poängsättning av de nationella proven i alla ämnen i årskurs 8. Den maximala totalpoängen var 500. Under åren har flera elever nått poäng runt 400, vilket anses som *excellent*. Medelpoängen har varit över 300 i skolan, där 2021 sticker ut med ett genomsnitt på över 325 poäng.

Under många år har eleverna fått ägna en del av skoltiden åt det man kallar *co-curricular activities*, aktiviteter som anknyter till läroplanen. Det har varit musik, sång, dans och drama.



Eleverna har visat upp sina föreställningar vid olika sammankomster i skolan med vårdnadshavare, gästande lokalpolitiker, lärare och skollädares från andra skolor och andra gäster. Skolans grupper har tränats av några av lärarna. Eftersom det har anordnats tävlingar i sång, dans och drama, lokalt, regionalt och nationellt har skolan deltagit och nått stora framgångar på alla nivåer. Skolan tävlar även mot andra skolor i fotboll, volleyboll och korgboll. Trofeerna i rektorns rum vittnar om framgångarna.

## Förändringar i läroplanen

Läroplanen för skolan i Kenya genomgick en stor förändring år 2017. Då infördes en helt ny läroplan för Primary school (grundskolan). Läroplanen fokuserar mer på elevens utveckling och kompetens genom att trycka på utveckling av kritiskt tänkande, kreativitet och praktiska färdigheter. "Nya" ämnen som infördes i timplanen, såsom musik, dans, bild och form, drama, odling, idrott och sport blev obligatoriska. I korthet fokuserar CBC mer på färdigheter än bara ren faktakunskap. Det ger läraren möjlighet att identifiera och stödja varje elevs

talanger. De nya inslagen enligt den nya läroplanen har dock inneburit merkostnader för skolan i form av nya böcker och annat undervisningsmaterial.

Man har även infört ett nytt sätt att följa upp elevernas resultat genom att proven gjorts om från att mäta exakta faktakunskaper till att utvärdera varje elevs framgångar med olika typer av bedömningsverktyg som ska visa hur långt eleven har nått i förhållande till ämnets mål. 2022 var första gången som elever som följt den nya läroplanen bedömdes med de nya utvärderingsverktygen. I St Christine var även dessa resultat mycket goda. Både elever och lärare i St Christine har uppskattat inslagen i den nya läroplanen. Det kan man se på de alster som eleverna skapat, grönsakerna som man får på tallriken vid lunchen och de fina resultat man nått i de tävlingar man deltagit i i dans, sång och drama.



*Odling på schemat i skolans trädgård*

## Ett nytt skolsystem

Utbildningssystemet i Kenya har också genomgått förändring. Sedan 2023 delar man in hela utbildningen i obligatoriska moduler om 2+6+3+3+3, där siffrorna anger hur många år inom respektive "stadium" det finns. Två år i förskoleklass, tre år i *Lower primary* åk 1-3, tre år i *Upper primary* åk 4-6, tre år i JSS (*Junior secondary school*) åk 7-9, tre år i *Secondary school*, (gymnasium) och tre år i högre, eftergymnasial utbildning.

St Christine valde till läsåret 2024 att behålla åk 7 eftersom elever, vårdnadshavare och skolpersonalen tyckte att det skulle vara bäst för eleverna.

Det var mycket diskussioner i skolvärlden i Kenya om det man nu vill kalla JSS, ett slags förberedande gymnasieskola. Är det en del av grundskolan eller en del av gymnasieskolan? Man väljer att säga att det är en förlängd del av grundskolan. I verkligheten kunde myndigheterna inte fullfölja den ursprungliga tanken att förlägga JSS till gymnasieskolor på grund av bristande ekonomiska resurser. Grundskolorna fick helt enkelt ta den kostnaden.

Men St Christine kommer inte i fortsättningen att kunna ta in fler elever till JSS utan kommer hänvisa blivande åk 7 elever till andra näraliggande skolor, på grund av alltför höga kostnader.

## Vad beror skolans framgångar på?

När jag ber vår rektor James Odera att förklara St Christines många framgångar skriver han följande:

- Co-operation among staff members (Samarbete mellan de anställda)
- Encouragement and cooperation from the community/parents (Uppmuntran och samarbete med vårdnadshavare och det omgivande samhället)
- Discipline exhibited by the learners (Disciplinerade elever)
- Annual educational tour (årligt studiebesök för sistaårseleverna)
- Constant communication between the manager and the school administration (Regelbunden kommunikation mellan skolans chef och administrationen)
- Annual prize giving day (Årlig "prisutdelning", uppmuntran, uppskattning till elever, lärare och andra)

Jag vill tillägga:

- En skicklig skolläda (rektor, bitr. rektor och förstelärare.)
- Samt ett värdefullt "Senior Team" (Erfarna pensionerade skolmän) med förankring i lokalsamhället
- Inte minst Odada Albinus, skolans initiativtagare år 2003.

## Vårdnadshavarna

Vårdnadshavarna i St Christine inbjuds av skolans ledning och personal några gånger per läsår. Kommunikationen är öppen och vårdnadshavarnas åsikter framförs i det stora sammanhanget. Det finns många frågor och ibland uttrycks oro för att skolan inte ska få finnas kvar. Lärare och skolläda får många lovord från vårdnadshavarna och de är villiga att bidra med det de kan avvara. Varje termin har varje elev med sig en "tin" (ca 2 kg) med majs som används till skolans lunch. De flesta betalar numera för barnets skoluniform och man har även samlat in pengabidrag.

Just nu är frågan om fortsättning av årskurs 7 en stor fråga. Om eleverna inte kan gå kvar i St Christine får de söka sig till andra närliggande skolor.

## Seniorteamet

För cirka 5 år sedan upplevde skolan en del svåra disciplinärenden bland skolans anställda. På initiativ av Odada bildades då ett seniorteam med stark förankring i lokalsamhället och med skolerfarenhet som rektorer eller lärare. Teamet har samarbetat med skolläda på plats och

haft intervjuer med berörda involverade i konflikter, och hanterat svåra samtal med dessa. På det sättet har seniorteamet hjälpt till i knepiga situationer innan de vuxit till djupa kontroverser. Teamet medverkar även vid rekrytering av ny personal. Skolledningen och skolans ägare (Stiftelsen i Kenya) uppskattar verkligen teamets insatser.

## **Framtida utmaningar**

St Christine är som skola väl etablerad i samhället. Skolan har ett mycket gott rykte både vad gäller elevernas resultat i de s.k. akademiska ämnena såsom matematik, engelska, science osv. samt i tävlingarna mellan skolor i sång, musik och dans.

De många förändringarna i det kenyanska skolsystemet har inneburit ökade kostnader, förutom att det även i Kenya är dyrtider, med ökade priser för mat, skolmaterial och i stort sett allt. Den kenyanska regeringen har lagt på ytterligare skatt för att kunna bygga billiga bostäder. Skatten läggs både på arbetsgivare och arbetstagare. Transportkostnader har ökat.

De förhoppningar om ett framtida kenyanskt övertagande av skolan som vi haft har kommit på skam då situationen i landet har varit mer eller mindre kaotisk, politiskt och ekonomiskt. Våldsamma demonstrationer har förekommit framför allt i Nairobi. Protesterna framförs av unga som är frustrerade över den ekonomiska pressen, arbetslösheten och det hårdhanta styret.

Här i Sverige har det blivit tuffare att samla in pengar till skolan. Konsekvenser för alla av den höga inflationen, initiativtagarnas och styrelsemedlemmarnas ökande ålder har bidragit till att intäkterna numera inte ökar och det blir därför svårare att ha möjlighet att finansiera skolans olika verksamheter.

Trots alla framtida utmaningar kan vi hävda att vi under de 20 år som gått uppnått mycket betydelsefulla framsteg för barnen i Kabondo och förhoppningsvis gett dem en bättre start i livet.

## **Tack!**

Ett stort tack till alla medlemmar i föreningen Kisumu för ert engagemang och era bidrag! Ni har tillsammans med sponsorer gjort det möjligt för flera hundra barn att få gå i en bra skola, få äta sig mätta och få bra undervisning av vuxna som har kompetens och engagemang.

Ett stort tack till alla sponsorer!

Ett stort tack till alla styrelsemedlemmar som satsat tid och engagemang för att förverkliga drömmen från 2003: En bra skola för föräldralösa barn!

Ett stort tack till alla medarbetare i St Christine Education Centre!

Ett stort tack till alla vårdnadshavare!

Ett stort tack till alla vänner och supportrar i Kenya!

***Ulla Andersson Sturaeus, manager för St Christine Education Centre***

**Här följer två berättelser av tidigare elever som beskriver vad St Christine betytt för dem:**



**Jacob Odiko, elektroingenjör, före detta elev vid St Christine**

År 2012 tog Jacob Odiko sin grundskoleexamen (KCPE) i St Christine school. Han var en av de första som med sina strålande resultat kunde söka sig vidare i utbildningssystemet, i första hand till Secondary school (gymnasieskola), senare universitetet. Jacob är ett gott exempel på och ett bevis för att man kan uppfylla sin dröm om att nå framgång om man får rätt

stöttning och ges ekonomiska förutsättningar. Lägg därtill ett målmedvetet hårt arbete från honom själv för att nå sina mål. Idag skulle han vilja fortsätta att bygga på sin examen till en master i elektronik, men saknar ekonomisk sponsring för det. Det är också lättare att få ett arbete som är välbetalt om man har en högre examen.

**Jacobs berättelse:**

**JACOB ODIKO AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

My name is Jacob Odiko. I was born in Kenya. I joined St: Christine in the year 2005. I was among the very first lot of students to be enrolled. I was almost five years old when I joined and it was my first time stepping into a classroom. The school was very particular in admitting orphans from humble backgrounds, which I was.

Joining the school was a relief to my family since I could now access quality education for free. The support from the school not only eased the financial burden on my family which had loomed large, but also served as a beacon of hope and inspiration, motivating me to excel academically and dream big. It also marked the beginning of a significant journey of my life. It was during this time that I realized my academic prowess. During my primary school, I often found myself faced with challenges that seemed insurmountable and it was the benevolence of the sponsors that provided me with the means to pursue my education without worry. With this support I was able to focus on my studies and fully immerse myself in the world of knowledge.

The teachers and the facilities at St: Christine enabled me achieve academic excellence during my time in the school. The academic foundation laid for me from the school became the bedrock upon which I built my dreams. Through the generosity of the sponsors and their commitment to education, I gained access to quality education, enabling me to explore my potential, broaden my horizons and eventually pursue higher studies.

I left the school in 2013 having attained my certificate for primary education. My good performance at St: Christine not only enabled me to join a top high school in Kenya but also helped in getting a sponsorship that would enable me continue with my studies. So I joined Agoro Sare High School for my secondary education. My years at this high school were not easy but the hardworking attitude I developed at St: Christine enabled me to overcome these challenges.

After four years of hard work I graduated from high-school with a very good grade that landed me a spot in an engineering class at one of the top universities in Kenya. I joined Technical University of Kenya to pursue a bachelor's degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, a course that I had always dreamed of since childhood. I always wanted to be an engineer to serve as inspiration to others. Today, I stand as the first engineer the school has produced, a testament to the transformative power of education and the impact of your generosity. The knowledge and skills I have acquired will open doors to the world of opportunities. I am now equipped with the expertise to contribute meaningfully to the society and make a positive difference to the world.

I want to assure you that your investment in my education has not only benefited me but will also continue to have a ripple effect on the lives of others. Your support has helped me achieve my dreams and has also inspired me to give back to the community. I am committed to using my knowledge and skills to create a better future for those who, like me, once faced seemingly insuperable challenges.

In closing, with an overwhelming sense of gratitude and immense joy, I express my heartfelt thanks to our esteemed sponsors who have played a pivotal role in shaping my journey from primary school to becoming a recent graduate engineer. Your unwavering support and generosity have been the cornerstone of my educational success. As I embark on this new chapter as a graduate engineer, I carry with me the lessons and values you have provided, and I am determined to make the world a better place.

With sincere appreciation, Jacob Odiko,  
Graduate Engineer.

### **Maxwells berättelse**

Ytterligare en ung man, Maxwell Ombego, berättar om att det går att nå sina mål, trots en fattig bakgrund, om man har turen att få ekonomiskt stöd och uppmuntran av någon eller några.

Maxwell har nyligen examinerats som mikrobiolog vid universitet i Nairobi och arbetar nu vid Delmonte, Kenya.

St Christine School var under de tio första åren en egen enhet under grannskolan Anyona School. Det var ett sätt att snabbt komma i gång med skolverksamheten och att göra oss kända i området. År 2013 blev vi en privatskola. Maxwell gick i Anyona School under St Christine Schools tio första år. Därav hans nära kontakt med vår skola.



Hello, I'm Maxwell Ombego, and my educational journey has been an incredible odyssey from Anyona Primary School to Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. My story is one of perseverance, shaped by not only academic achievements but also a deep commitment to giving back to the community that played a pivotal role in my early years. Starting my educational

voyage at Anyona Primary School, I found inspiration and unwavering support from my dedicated teachers and fellow students at St. Christine. My outstanding performance during primary education, scoring an impressive 398 out of 500 marks in the final exams, laid the foundation for what was to come. Despite facing financial challenges during my time at Agoro Sare High School, a turning point emerged when I encountered the kindness of the sponsors. Their sponsorship not only saved my secondary education but set the stage for my subsequent academic pursuits.

With determination, I embraced higher education at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, pursuing a degree in Medical Microbiology. Motivated by the health challenges in Western Kenya, I aimed to make a tangible impact by addressing infectious diseases prevalent in the region. Consequently, throughout my educational journey, I haven't forgotten my roots. Returning to St. Christine, I share my story with current students, offering a beacon of hope and inspiration. This commitment to giving back reflects my belief in the transformative power of education and mentorship.



*From left my mother, one of the sponsors on the right and myself at the Centre.*

### **Primary Education at Anyona Primary School**

During my time at Anyona Primary School, every day was a journey of discovery and growth. The school provided me with a solid foundation for my education, and the experiences I had there shaped the person I am today. The teachers both at Anyona and St. Christine were not just educators; they were mentors who took a personal interest in each student's development. Their dedication and passion for teaching created a positive learning environment, fostering a sense of curiosity and enthusiasm among the students.

One significant aspect that enriched my primary education was the connection I established with St. Christine. The interactions with teachers and students from St. Christine became a source of inspiration and support. We shared experiences, exchanged knowledge, and built a community that transcended the boundaries of individual schools. The collaborative spirit between Anyona Primary School and St. Christine created an atmosphere of camaraderie, and I found solace in the encouragement and motivation we provided each other.

As my primary education culminated in the final exams, I was thrilled to achieve a notable milestone – scoring 398 out of 500 marks. This accomplishment was not just a testament to my hard work but also a reflection of the supportive environment fostered by both Anyona Primary School and the extended community from St. Christine. The high performance opened doors for further educational opportunities and set the stage for my journey beyond primary school. Crucially, my connection with teachers from St. Christine played a pivotal role during this period. They generously offered their guidance and support, extending beyond the confines of their own school. Access to the St. Christine library, with its

wealth of educational resources, became a cornerstone of my academic success. The teachers' commitment to nurturing my potential went beyond the classroom, providing me with the tools and encouragement necessary for a successful academic journey beyond primary education.

### **Secondary Education at Agoro Sare High School**

My secondary education at Agoro Sare High School brought both academic challenges and unexpected moments of grace. In Form 2, I encountered significant financial difficulties that threatened to curtail my educational journey. The burden of school fees weighed heavily on my aspirations, and I faced the unsettling possibility of having to discontinue my education. During this trying time, the future seemed uncertain, and the prospect of realizing my dreams appeared increasingly distant.

In the midst of these challenges, a turning point emerged when I crossed paths with my sponsors. Their unwavering generosity and compassion reshaped the trajectory of my education. I shared my predicament with them, and to my immense relief, they decided to sponsor my school fees for Forms 2, 3 and 4. This act of kindness not only alleviated the financial strain but also instilled in me a profound sense of gratitude and motivation. With newfound support, I was able to refocus on my studies and pursue my educational goals with renewed determination.



*From left is myself and my former classmates.*

The culmination of my secondary education marked a triumph over adversity. Despite the initial hurdles, I successfully navigated through the challenges, culminating in the achievement of an A- in the final exams. This accomplishment was not just a personal victory but a testament to the transformative power of support and mentorship. The sponsoring played a pivotal role in my ability to overcome financial obstacles and achieve academic success, laying the groundwork for my subsequent educational endeavors. The experience underscored the profound impact that acts of kindness and generosity can have on an individual's educational journey.



*Our last day of final exams in high school*

## University Education at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Embarking on my university education at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology was a transformative phase, where I delved into the intricate world of Medical Microbiology. This academic pursuit represented not only a personal aspiration but also a commitment to making a tangible impact on the health challenges prevalent in Western Kenya. The curriculum provided a comprehensive understanding of microbiological sciences, and each lecture fueled my enthusiasm for exploring solutions to infectious diseases.



*Myself at the Centre with two of my classmates*

Throughout my time at university, the unwavering support from Kerstin remained a constant source of encouragement. Her consistent mentorship and belief in my potential were instrumental in navigating the complexities of higher education. Kerstin's guidance extended beyond academic matters; she became a confidante, offering valuable insights and advice that shaped my holistic development. Her continued involvement in my journey reinforced the significance of having a dedicated mentor, particularly during the crucial years of university education.

The motivation driving my choice to study medical microbiology was rooted in the pressing health challenges faced by communities in Western Kenya. Statistical evidence highlighted the devastating impact of infectious diseases, including the prevalence of tropical diseases like malaria. Fuelled by a desire to contribute meaningfully to my community, I saw Medical Microbiology as a gateway to understanding, preventing, and treating these ailments. The prospect of making a positive impact on public health in my region served as a powerful motivator, propelling me through the rigorous academic demands of university education. In studying Medical Microbiology, I aimed not only to advance my own knowledge but to channel that knowledge towards practical solutions for the health challenges faced by my community.



*During lab sessions*

## **Difficulty Levels in Education**

Navigating through primary education presented a formidable challenge, earning a rating of 7 out of 10 on the difficulty scale. The daily struggle to concentrate on studies while grappling with an empty stomach cast a shadow on the learning experience. Limited access to basic amenities like electricity compounded the difficulty, making after-school hours a constant battle for adequate lighting to study. Despite these hardships, the dedication of teachers and the supportive community at Anyona Primary School and St. Christine played a pivotal role in mitigating the challenges. The bond formed with teachers and peers became a source of strength, offering a sense of camaraderie that helped overcome the formidable difficulties associated with primary education.

Transitioning to post-primary education marked a shift in the difficulty landscape, with a rating of 4 out of 10, indicating a comparative ease during this phase. The move to a boarding National School alleviated some of the challenges experienced earlier. The structured environment of a boarding school provided a more conducive setting for focused learning. Access to resources, including consistent electricity and a supportive academic atmosphere, significantly eased the academic journey. While still encountering hurdles, the overall experience during post-primary education became more manageable, fostering a more conducive environment for academic growth. The change in difficulty level reflected not only a shift in the educational setting but also the adaptability and resilience developed through earlier challenges in primary education.

## **Job and Career**

In my current professional phase, I am working as an intern with the expectation that my contract will conclude this year. While the current role may not be characterized as well-paying, it has provided me with invaluable experiences and the means to sustain myself. More importantly, it has allowed me to contribute towards paying off my university student loan, a crucial step in securing my financial future. Despite the temporary nature of the position, it has served as a stepping stone, equipping me with skills and insights that I believe will pave the way for a promising career trajectory.

One constant in my post-education journey is my commitment to giving back to the educational institutions that played a significant role in shaping my path. I actively return to St. Christine to share my personal and academic journey with current students. The motivation behind this endeavour is deeply rooted in my desire to provide a glimmer of hope and inspiration to students who, like me, may be facing challenges in their educational pursuits. I want them to see that despite the obstacles, it is possible to overcome adversity and achieve one's dreams. By sharing my experiences, I aim to instil a sense of resilience and determination among the students, encouraging them to persevere in the face of difficulties and pursue their aspirations.

The motivation to return to St. Christine stems from a belief in the transformative power of mentorship and shared experiences. I understand the impact that mentors and positive role models can have on a student's journey, and I want to play a role in being that guiding figure for others. By actively engaging with current students, I aspire to be a living testament that education, perseverance, and mentorship can create pathways to success. This commitment to giving back is a testament to the sense of community and support that I

received during my own educational journey, and I am eager to pay it forward to the next generation.

### **Key Challenges in Reaching Current Position**

One of the most significant challenges in my journey to the current position was the financial strain encountered during my secondary education. In Form 2, the prospect of dropping out loomed large due to financial difficulties. The burden of school fees threatened to truncate my educational aspirations. However, this obstacle transformed into a turning point when I met with the sponsors who generously sponsored my school fees for Forms 2, 3 and 4. Their support not only rescued my education but instilled in me a profound sense of gratitude and resilience. Overcoming this financial hurdle became a testament to the transformative power of generosity and mentorship, reinforcing my determination to succeed against all odds.

Another notable challenge was the initial difficulty of navigating university education. The academic rigors and new environment presented a steep learning curve. However, consistent support from mentors who played a pivotal role in helping me adapt and excel in this new academic setting. Their guidance extended beyond academics, providing crucial insights into personal and professional development. Overcoming the challenges of university life was a process of continuous learning, adaptation, and resilience. These hurdles, rather than being roadblocks, became stepping stones that shaped my character and equipped me with the skills needed to navigate the complexities of the professional world, leading me to the current position.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, my educational journey from Anyona Primary School to my current position has been a tapestry woven with challenges, triumphs, and the unwavering support of remarkable individuals. I am immensely grateful to the dedicated teachers and mentors at Anyona Primary School and St. Christine who not only imparted knowledge but also became beacons of inspiration during my formative years. Their commitment to education and mentorship created a foundation that set the stage for my subsequent endeavors.

A profound debt of gratitude is owed to the sponsors, whose timely intervention rescued my secondary education, transforming adversity into opportunity. Their act of kindness has had a lasting impact on my life, motivating me to give back and pay forward the generosity I received. Additionally, the continuous support from Kerstin throughout my university education has been invaluable. Her guidance transcended academic matters, shaping my character and fortifying my resilience.

To those who have played a significant role in my journey, you have not only shaped my academic and professional trajectory but also instilled in me a sense of responsibility to uplift others. As I move forward, I carry with me the lessons learned and the inspiration derived from each person who contributed to my growth. Your belief in my potential has been the catalyst for my achievements, and I am deeply thankful for the transformative impact you've had on my life.

THANK YOU.