

A day in the life of a student at Woe EP School

Woe EP School is located in the rural area of Woe in Ghana, near the Keta Lagoon. It provides a free education to approximately 500 students, from Kindergarten through to junior high school.

Despite being run by the government, Woe EP School is severely underfunded. There is often a lack of essential classroom and educational resources, such as desks, chairs, exercise books, and textbooks.

The following pages describe a typical school day for a student at Woe EP School.

7:00am – 7:45am: *I wake up and help my aunt wash and dress my siblings. My mother and father live in the nearby town, as there are more job opportunities there, so me and my siblings live with my aunt and uncle. I have two siblings, aged six and three. We live in a single room together, where we cook, eat, sleep, play, and study. There is no running water in our home, so I have to wash and go to the toilet outside. I get dressed and pack my school bag. I love learning, and always look forward to the school day!*

7:45am – 8:00am: *My siblings and I leave home and walk to school. While we are at school, my mother will try to earn money by selling fish at the local market. Fishing is our family's main source of income, and we are all expected to help our father catch fish in the evenings for our mother to sell the next day.*

8:00am – 8:15am: *I arrive at school and meet my friends in the sandy playground between the classrooms. Our classrooms are made from brick, with corrugated iron roofs. It can get very hot in there, which can make it hard to concentrate. We play together outside until it is time for our first lesson.*

8:15am – 9:15am: *The first lesson of the day is Maths. We learn by rote - repeating what our teacher says and following along from a textbook. I usually don't have breakfast before school, so it is sometimes hard to concentrate.*

9:15am – 10:15am: *The next lesson is English. As our classrooms are next door to each other, it can be noisy, but all of us enjoy learning and being at school. My class has around 45 pupils in it, so it can be a little loud, but this is typical at most Ghanaian schools. Sometimes, lessons take place outside due to a lack of classroom space.*

10:15am – 10:30am: We have a short break, during which we usually play outside. We often share one football between all the students, and love playing together! We try to make use of what we have available to us, so footballs are often made by tying plastic bags together. Some students play games such as hide and seek.

10:30am – 11:30am: Our next lesson is Ewe, which is the language that we speak at home. Again, we learn by rote and from a textbook. Students take turns answering questions and writing the answers on the blackboard. We enjoy being in class, but learning in this way can get a little repetitive.

11:30am – 12:30pm: Next, we have Geography. Again, as we learn by copying from textbooks and the blackboard, it is sometimes hard to fully understand what we are being taught. There are not enough teachers at our school for all the children, so our teacher is often busy with other classes as well as our own. This means it is easy to get left behind if you don't understand something.

12:30pm – 1:00pm: We have a second break, during which I usually buy a snack for my lunch. Local people come to the school to sell us fruit and other treats. I am often quite tired by this point in the day, as I am usually up late helping my father fish on the lagoon, or helping my aunt get my siblings ready for bed.

1:00pm – 2:00pm: After break, we have a PE lesson. We all love PE, as it gives us the chance to play and have fun. We play counting games, dance together, or enjoy a competitive game of catch with balls and bean bags.

2:00pm – 3:00pm: Our final lesson of the day is IT. We don't have any computers at our school, so our teacher draws diagrams on the board and explains how computers work in this way. The teachers are very busy, so some students feel bored and misbehave, which can distract the other students.

3:00pm – 9:00pm: After school, I walk home and get ready to help my father fish on the lagoon. As fishing is our main source of income, the entire family is expected to help out. After this, I return home and help my aunt make dinner – okra with plantain is my favourite. After we have eaten, I wash the plates and cooking pots outside using a bucket of water. I try to complete any homework I have been given, but, as I share a room with my family, this can sometimes be difficult. When it is time for bed, we lay out our bedding on the floor. It can be a bit cramped, but I like sleeping next to my family.

Photos of Woe EP School



