

A day in the life of a student at Cherish School

Cherish School was set up by Moses Kombo in Nakuru, Kenya in 2009. The school provides a free education and daily meal to 120 children between the ages of four and 16.

If community projects such as Cherish School did not exist, it is likely that these children would not attend school at all, due to the costs associated with attending a government school such as buying uniforms, exercise books, and textbooks.

The following pages describe a typical day for a student at Cherish School.

7:00am – 7:45am: *I wake up and help my mother wash and dress my siblings. I have two siblings, aged six and 10. 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 the slum area where we live, and walk approximately 10 minutes to school. While we are at school, my mother will try to earn a little money by washing laundry for other families in the town. Unfortunately, this does not provide us with a regular income, as this work is done on an ad hoc basis and she is not formally employed.*

8:00am – 8:15am: *I arrive at school and meet my friends in the playground area between the classroom blocks. Most of the classrooms are made of corrugated iron, which has been painted with bright colours, but some of the newer buildings are made of brick. 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 normally haven't eaten anything before coming to school, so it can be difficult 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.*

10:15am – 10:40am: *We have a short break, during which we play outside. We often share one football between all the students, and love playing together! Some students play hopscotch or tag.*

10:40am – 11:40am: Our next lesson is Swahili, 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.

11:40am – 12:40pm: 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. As our teacher is so busy with other classes as well as our own, it is easy to get left behind if you don't understand something.

12:40pm – 1:00pm: We have a second break, during which we line up outside to receive our lunch, which is usually ugali or rice with bean or vegetable stew. Our school gives each student one daily meal for free, to try and ensure that we all eat at least one nutritious meal each day.

1:00pm – 2:00pm: After break, we have Science. Our teachers are unable to provide much individual support as they are so busy, so the students who don't understand the lesson tend to feel bored and sometimes misbehave, which can distract the other students.

2:00pm – 3:00pm: Our final lesson of the day is IT. We don't have electricity or computers at our school, so our teacher also helps us learn by drawing a diagram of a keyboard, mouse, and monitor on the blackboard.

3:00pm – 9:00pm: After school, I walk home and help to look after my younger siblings until it is time for bed. If my mother has enough money to buy food, we share a simple evening meal of rice and beans, or ugali. I enjoy cooking, and usually help my mother to make dinner, which is cooked over a small fire in the corner of our home. 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 of our home. It can be a bit cramped, but I like sleeping next to my family.

Photos of Cherish School



