

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL

SCHOOL AIMS:

To rehabilitate the deaf child by;

- " Assisting the deaf child to acquire formal education.
- " Assisting the deaf child to become self-reliant and useful to the community.
- " Creating in the deaf child a sense of self-worth and appreciation.
- " Creating awareness to the community about the education for the deaf children and assist the community to understand and accept the deaf.
- " Assisting the deaf child to accept and respect different social and cultural heritage backgrounds.
- " Providing high quality education for self reliance and self worth.

SCHOOL VISION:

To be the model school for the deaf child to acquire formal education for self reliance, self worth appreciation, awareness and respect for different cultural and social heritage in all aspects of life.

SCHOOL MOTTO:

Taken out of their silent world.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL:

St. Mary's Primary School for the Deaf - Nyang'oma, a mixed boarding school from ECD to standard 8, was started through the initiation of the late Rev. Fr. John van de Ouderaa, a Mill Hill priest from Holland and Franciscan Sisters of St. Anne Oudenbosch in September 1961.

The school was initially started as an experimental unit in Lwak Mission with Sr. Antonieta de Jong as its first headteacher.

In 1962 when Fr. Ouderaa moved to Nyang'oma to start a new catholic Parish, he moved with the school and established it at its present site. Records show that the first deaf child to be admitted was a girl named Adek. I believe she is also present here celebrating her school Golden Jubilee. Sr. Antonieta continued to head the school up to 1964 when she was succeeded by Rev. Sr. Laetitia Hootmans, from the same Congregation.

At Nyang'oma, Fr. Ouderaa teamed up with Franciscan sisters of Oudenbosch (Now St. Anne) from Holland who accepted to come to Nyang'oma and take up the administration of the school.

Between 1964 to 1972, when Sr. Laetitia Hootmans was the headteacher the school marked a considerable growth in terms of enrollment. The approach Sr. Laetitia used was to go through health centres, Chief's barasas, church announcements and even making home visits to personally talk to parents with the deaf children.

Initially, the medium of instruction was the language of the school neighbourhood (Dholuo), but due to response by deaf children from other parts of the country, the medium of instruction was changed to English to make the school have a national outlook.

Records show that in 1962, the school enrollment was 17, in 1964 the number rose to 50 pupils and in 1966, the number shot to 90. This shows that there was constant upward trend in enrollment, which confirms that the approach employed by Sr. Laetitia was breaking the barriers.

Through the influence of Sr. Laetitia, a number of specially trained teachers for the hearing impaired came from Holland to support the programme. Among them was Miss Regina Kieslich, sponsored by Misereor, a German Charitable organization (1967-1969).

Rev. Fr. G. Kraakman, assistant Parish priest to Fr. Ouderaa, also with assistant from well wishers supervised the construction of the big boys' dormitory, occupying the Southern end of the school compound. The same block also housed three more classrooms, two rooms for speech training and a nursery classroom for small children. Many more buildings were added in the course of time.

A part from the facilities mentioned earlier, Franciscan Sisters of St. Anne took part in the provision of hearing devices (Aids) from Phillips, school furniture, construction of additional buildings in the school compound and staff houses in Part B.

Rev. Sr. Laetitia also facilitated the creation of St. Joseph's technical School for the Deaf (Now St. Joseph's Technical Training Institute for the Deaf) a post primary Institution, established by Rev. Fr. Ouderaa, specifically to offer vocational training geared towards preparing the deaf boys to be self reliant in terms of skills acquisition and employment (Self or paid) opportunities. St. Joseph's Technical School, according to Fr. Ouderaa was supposed to admit all the pupils who had completed primary education from St. Mary's primary school for the Deaf - Nyang'oma with regardless of what grades they achieved in C.P.E. or K.C.P.E.

Both St. Mary's and St. Joseph's institutions and other schools for deaf in Kenya, in the initial stages shared a common MOTTO - which was 'TAKEN OUT OF THEIR SILENT WORLD' through

- Teaching the basic language skills orally to facilitate reading the words which helps in communicating with the hearing (by lip reading)
- Expressing ideas and needs to the hearing community.
- Engaging on training in trades that make them self-reliant or paid employment.
- A step a head was realized in the year 1983, during Sr. Jacinta Chemba's tenure of office when the school first registered her std. 7 candidates for the national examination (C.P.E.) with the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) alongside their hearing counter - parts in regular primary schools.

Currently, the school headteacher is Rev. Sr. Bernadette Teresa Agola, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Anne (FSA) Lwak Convent. She took over the school leadership in 1988 when the school had already started the popular 8.4.4. Primary system of Education. The school first registered for the certificate of primary education (C.P.E.) in 1983 and has been doing it continuously except in 1984, 85, 86, 87 and 89 when the school did not register her candidates for the examination. This was due to change over from C.P.E. (7:4:2:3) to K.C.P.E. (8:4:4). as shown on table