



Newsletter 96
20 December 2024

Message from the Chair of Operation Imprezza

The school goes from strength to strength with our students continuing to do well in both exams and careers. The current school year finished at the end of November, National Exams (equivalent to our A levels) finished a week earlier. Anxious times for our students as they wait for results before deciding on their next steps... jobs, college, University. As I write this we have just had news that three more of our ex-students have just graduated and will go on to secondary school teaching, one Geography and Business Studies, one Chemistry and the other Biology. One of the latter two are returning to teach at Imprezza. We are so pleased for them and yes, it proves that Imprezza works!

One of our Trustees, Anne, went to Imprezza Academy in January and came back with very positive reports. It was her first visit to the school, and she was very impressed at the dedication of all the staff and the success that the school continues to have. Combe Pafford School are taking a student trip out to Imprezza in March and their recently retired Head, Mike Lock who will be joining the trip did a familiarization visit in September. Like Anne he came back extremely impressed with all that Imprezza offers and achieves and the quality and dedication of staff. Both also noticed how keen the students are to learn. As a result of Mike's visit, he has become a Trustee. This was superb timing as, after 18 years Bob Cross, also a retired school Head Teacher himself, stepped down as a Trustee. After myself, Bob was the longest serving Trustee and will be very much missed by everyone here and in Kenya. Bob has visited the school on several occasions and has had contributed so much over the years to the charity and school, including a sky dive fundraiser on one occasion!

We are still holding funds which have been specifically donated to develop our agricultural project but feel we cannot move forward at the moment due to organised gang thieving. We have had to abandon growing anything significant or introducing livestock as it will likely be stolen. Normally for about 8 months of the year the school grows enough vegetables to feed the staff and students, but sadly this has proven extremely difficult this year. This is a huge blow as money we could use for something else, must be used to buy food in the local market. What are we doing about it? We have launched an appeal to put a secure fence around the whole site, over 10 acres. This will have metal uprights set in concrete; with heavy-duty chain-link fencing topped off with razor wire. This will cost £12,000 so our fundraising campaign will be asking people to buy a metre of fence for £10. We already have £1,600 towards this but will officially launch this project when Catherine is over in January. Once secure, we will be able to

grow crops again and introduce cows, goats and poultry as well as trial a poly tunnel.

Catherine will be here from 18th January to 2nd February. It is not just a matter of inviting Catherine over nowadays, as she is an MP we must get permission from the Speaker of the Kenyan Parliament. Catherine being an MP has not affected Imprezza, she is still involved especially at weekends and when parliament is not sitting. Rose, her sister, who has been at the school since it started, has taken on more day-to-day responsibilities aided by the very good staff we have.

There will be no turkey at the school on Christmas Day it will be BBQ goat which is far more popular. Thank you for your interest and support for Imprezza. Without people like you, none of what the school achieves would have been possible and the many children, well over 2,000, would not be holding down jobs and often supporting siblings through school and helping with our school costs when they can.

Have a great Christmas and all the best for 2025

Chris Hulme

NEWS OF CATHERINE.

We are delighted that Catherine is able to visit us in January, she arrives on Saturday 18th January and leaves on Sunday 2nd February 2025. We are in the process of finalising her programme and will circulate it to ensure everyone who wishes, can meet her and hear first-hand about the success of Imprezza Academy.



Ex-Student update

Chris mentioned above the recent success of Imprezza's ex-students:

- Fransisca has now qualified as a Chemistry and Biology teacher and is returning to Imprezza to teach
- Kevin and Godfrey, one has graduated with a degree in geography and business studies, the other in sciences.



Recent events



On 9th October we gathered at St Michael's Church in Teignmouth to be entertained by Riviera Concert Brass with a special guest appearance of the Corps of Drums. The music echoed through the church and was enjoyed by all who attended and we raised nearly £300!. A big thank you to all who attended!

An excellent evening of foot-tapping music was held at Teignmouth Social Club recently, with Bow Movement and Folklore performing during the evening..... not only did everyone leave with a smile, they helped raise £242, many thanks to all involved!!



Recently we held a very successful Irish Evening at The Tradewinds restaurant, Teignmouth with live music from Celtic Dawn and mesmerised by Merlin the Magician. A great evening was had by all and the event raised around £400 !!



Many thanks to Kennford Productions for donating part of the proceeds from their excellent production of 'A Christmas Carol.' December 2024

Events for 2025... Further details will be shared as they become available

- Italian Night in Budleigh Salterton. We are hoping to share details shortly of an evening of superb Italian food, drinks and music..... further details to follow

- Bhumika Sinha, one of our Trustees is hoping to undertake a 10K run to raise funds sometime this year.
- Edward 'Tomo' Thompson is planning to walk the Cotswold's Way in the summer to raise both awareness and funds for Imprezza. Tomo has worked at Combe Pafford School for over 35 years and is a keen long distance walker, he is a keen supporter of Operation Imprezza and wants to use his next walk to help raise funds. He will begin in Chipping Campden and then spend 5/6 days walking the 102 mile route to Bath. Further details of how you can both support and follow his progress to follow.

Funding update

We have received a grant for £1,000 towards the further development of solar power on the school site

Mailing List

We are keen to review and refresh the Mailing list of those who receive information about Imprezza Academy, receive newsletters and general information about events.

If you no longer wish to receive information, please let us know, similarly, if you know of anyone interested in the work of Operation Imprezza and would like to be added to the mailing list, please let us know

A big thank you for all your support in 2024, hopefully we can continue to rely on you again in 2025 and ensure we are all able to support Catherine, her staff and all the students in the school in Kenya

Everyone here wishes you a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year!

Operation Imprezza is a UK charity which supports Imprezza Academy, a secondary school in Western Region, Kenya that provides education for children in poverty.

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