

## Report on Lesotho visit Andrew Uglow, Trustee, July 2014

### Ha Fusi School update



*Ha Fusi School as seen from the road*

Ha Fusi School is in good health – quite a transformation over the past few years. Amongst its facilities, it now boasts:

- Fully equipped IT room, with 30 computers, projector and screen, printers, scanner and a digital camera.
- A Science Lab, with some equipment to enable experiments to take place.
- Running water, with a pump and tank system.
- Electricity (currently only to the computer room).

In addition to this, the school continues to provide a meal for all students each day, and has some very smart new long-drop toilet facilities.

There are currently around 180 students attending school. This is lower than last year, but reflects the declining birth rate in the area. Many local primary schools are also struggling with numbers. The Principal is confident that, as results continue to impress and fees are consistently around M1,000 less than competing schools, students will come.

As part of his drive to keep fees as low as possible, the Principal has set up a number of money-making enterprises. The school has two sows and, at present, 9 piglets. The piglets will be sold later this year, with proceeds going into the school coffers. The school also has a poultry house, with around 400 laying hens. Students will get eggs twice a week as part of their meal – and the rest will be sold locally.

### Future plans at Ha Fusi

The Principal is negotiating with a local landowner to purchase some more fertile land for the school. His aim is to encourage students to plant and grow crops as part of their agriculture curriculum – again, with the aim being that this will supplement their meals. He is also looking to purchase a herd of cows, and has plans to harness the water from a local stream to set up a fish pond. In the longer term, the Principal is keen to extend the school into a High School, meaning that students will be able to remain at Ha Fusi until they complete their education. At present, those wishing to complete the final two years have to travel. He is also exploring the idea of building a refuge for vulnerable children.

Mr Ramaqele has developed good initial links with Sentebale (who are very impressed with his work at Ha Fusi), and is looking to extend these links when school restarts.

## The Rafiki Thabo Committee

I met with three members of the Rafiki Thabo Committee to discuss developments on the ground. The Committee is made up of Mr Thabelo Ramaqele (Principal of Ha Fusi Secondary School), Mr Sello Moshoeshoe (Priest at St Agnes Mission), Mr Thabelo Nkoko (Church warden) and Mrs Eelloang Nthimo (shortly to become Principal of Ha Fusi Primary School).



*From l-r: Mr Ramaqele, Mrs Nthimo and Fr. Moshoeshoe*

The committee asked about the scope of the Foundation – i.e. whether children from outside Ha Fusi could be considered and put forward for sponsorship. There was general agreement that it would be unfair to limit the support, and that it should be given according to need rather than simply where the children attended school.

In addition to meeting the committee, I also met the students that are currently sponsored by the Rafiki Thabo Foundation.

It was good to meet the students we support and their reports (sent to Mr Ramaqele by each school) are very encouraging. There is a general expectation that Nthatua (far right) will graduate as one of the best students in Lesotho in December, and there are equally high hopes for Morake (the child in red). Mr Ramaqele takes a very active interest in their progress, visiting their schools regularly.



*Students sponsored by the Rafiki Thabo Foundation*

The Committee seemed very engaged (especially Mr Ramaqele and Fr. Moshoeshoe) and keen to ensure that those most in need receive it.