



Fond farewell: Coldfall Primary's Evelyn Davies, centre, and Emma Coleman, right, in Sierra Leone.

## Living and learning in Sierra Leone

Late last term, a team of six from Coldfall Primary School in Muswell Hill travelled to Sierra Leone for two weeks working with the EducAid schools and teacher training project. Here, headteacher Evelyn Davies shares her impressions from the trip.

The Coldfall Six, as we became known, taught business administration lessons to degree students. We also ran a sports day in the primary school and a maths fair in the secondary school.

We met so many students and children with the most distressing stories to tell: being recruited as child soldiers in the civil war, losing members of their family in a landslide or to disease through lack of medical facilities.

We are so rich in comparison to these lovely people, who have so little and yet share everything they do have. For them having an education, which we often take for granted, is the most important thing and they are so eager to learn and take some control of their futures.

### School life

The children share their living quarters with up to 40 others in a dormitory with bunk beds and small wooden boxes where they store their

few clothes and belongings. They are put into mixed age and gender 'family groups' with a learning leader who ensures they live and work together happily, reading them a bedtime story at night time, and leading a daily discussion session with them after the morning assembly at 9.30am.

The teaching conditions are so different to ours, with no resources apart from the blackboard and chalk. Students sit on wooden benches around wooden tables and electricity is only on for a few hours in the evening so the rooms are dark most of the time.

The rains when they come are torrential and, with the tin roofs, create amazing thunderous sounds completely drowning out any teaching, often for up to an hour or more... yet the students take it all in their stride!

### Coldfall children make a difference

Before we left the UK, we

asked the children at Coldfall to donate packets of pants for the children and their families in Sierra Leone. As a result of their generosity, we were able to distribute two pairs to each of the children in the primary school. The smiles and cries of excitement brought tears to our eyes... such a small gift making such a big difference.

So now back at Coldfall we are very keen to share all that we have learnt with our children here and continue our work with EducAid. We are also planning a joint project for the next academic year.

## A new venture for an old hand

By Carmen Stevens

Perhaps some Archer readers are unaware that the Meze and Shish restaurant in the High Road is the newest venture of Aziz Ahsac, for the last 13 years the owner of popular café Casa Pepe just a few doors away.

Although Aziz purchased the restaurant site on the corner of Lincoln Road two years ago, it took a year to repair and refurbish, and get a licence in place, before opening. His large friendly team includes his nephew Dysie as manager.

They now have a flourishing restaurant specialising in Turkish and traditional charcoal grills where they make their own breads and pastries and their food is freshly prepared. Offering a special two course lunch at £6.95 (Monday to Friday) plus an a la carte menu, it attracts local tradespeople as well as evening diners.

The main restaurant is open plan with eclectic decorations and there is an airy wooden framed conservatory with open veranda.

Aziz came to England in 1994 from Gaziantep, southern Turkey. Initially he ran a clothing business, but after training at a restaurant in Edgware and elsewhere and opening two Mediterranean vegetable shops, he alighted on Casa Pepe, which was somewhat rundown at the time, and took it over.



The Meze and Shish restaurant Photo Mike Coles

## Take tea on Silver Sunday

Senior citizens from across Barnet are invited to take their family or go along and make new friends at the fourth annual Silver Sunday afternoon tea party.

The free event takes place at Woodhouse College, Woodhouse Road, North Finchley, from 12.30pm to 3.30pm on Sunday 7 October and everyone is welcome.

There will be a variety of entertainment to join in or sit back and

enjoy, as well as lots of information on things to do and services for senior citizens. It is organised by Barnet Seniors' Association in tandem with Barnet Council.

It is not necessary to book but organisers say it would be helpful for catering purposes to let them know if you plan to go along. Email [distribution@barnetseniors.org.uk](mailto:distribution@barnetseniors.org.uk) or leave a message on 020 3778 0151.

## Headscratcher

By Oliver Skanberg-Tippen

### Word ladder

Find a way to change 'Paper' to 'Bills' in five steps, changing just one letter and making a new word each time. Turn to page 11 for the solution.

paper
bills

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