

Term 3 2025-26 report

31 July 2026

GSS assists 15 community owned pre-primary schools
with 2,200 pupils (age 2-7) and 85 teachers



Gambia School Support



Highlights



Gambia School Support

Projects & initiatives

- started assisting a 15th school in July *page 2*
- widened teacher training program working with the UEG [University for Education, The Gambia] *page 4*
- we are developing an administrative and assessment 'platform accessed via a GSS App *page 5*
- increasing GSS's resilience with the appointment of an administrative assistant *page 6*
- new logo/branding *page 6*

Measuring GSS's impact

- teacher ratings are improving *page 7*
- growth in pupil numbers *page 8*
- ECDI assessments, further teacher training to improve accuracy *page 9*

Financial

- GSS's finances are strong with new awards, GSS's income rising £156k to £200k this year *page 10*



Joyful, enthusiastic classroom scenes, note teachers at floor level



Teacher helping disabled pupil at Mariama Mae

Penyem Daycare & Nursery School 15th school in the network

- On 10 July we agreed to assist this school, founded in 2005 on a large site in the center of Penyem, an expanding rural village.
- In decline since 2023 when its sponsor stopped. Though it has 8 classrooms only 5 are in use, the teachers underpaid, number of pupils down from 219 to 125 and buildings generally dilapidated.
- Restoration needed - new roofs, structural repairs, toilet block refurbishment, tiling and repainting (cost £15k).
- Classroom furniture will be upgraded (cost £1.8k), teaching supplies re-stocked (cost £200) and playground equipment repaired/improved (cost £600).
- The Head Teacher and 4 qualified teachers will join our bespoke training program.
- We plan to grow the enrollment to 140 by Sept 26 and to full capacity (280) by Sept 28.
- Cost of assistance for academic year 2026-27 £8k (including food £1k).



Gambia School Support



The Penyem site has good potential with 8 classrooms giving the school a capacity of 280



Kemo Bah(left) meeting with the Alkalo (mayor right), an elder and Head Teacher (center)



a rather forlorn class

Highlights from Term 3

2 classrooms added to the Pirang Nursery School (red outlines) Cost £15.5k



this thriving school has had to turn children away, this project adds 70 places, increasing the school's capacity to 280



new classroom neatly added on left

Kemo Bah leading the all teacher 2-day workshop held on 5/6 June



Kumba Sambou receiving her award from guest trainer Darbonding Darboe (£10) best teacher 'learning through play'



guest trainer, Ousman Trawally, a senior lecturer at UEG



brilliant donation of 300 ECD books from BookAid

our challenge is to train the teachers to use them well as they are not big readers themselves!

Project to train more teachers



- In Oct 25, GSS’s trustees agreed to widen its contribution to teacher training through a link up with the UEG [University for Education, The Gambia] ECD qualification course.
- The UEG course runs during school holidays and many of the students do not have places at schools and, consequently, lack classroom experience.
- UEG students living within 1.5 miles (yellow circles) of a GSS assisted school will be offered a post as classroom assistants during their 3 year course and receive a GSS contribution of £500 per year (1.5m is, in our view, the upper end of the distance a student could be expected to walk to and from the school). Approx 70% of Gambians live in this area.
- When they qualify, the best students will be offered **permanent teaching posts** at their local GSS assisted school.
- The UEG in Brikama is marked with the red pin.
- **We plan to fill 20 places in 2026-27, 30 in 2027-28 and 40 in 2028-27 (subject to funding).**
- We estimate the cost will be:
2026-27 £10k
2027-28 £15k
2028-29 £20k

schools	pupils
First Steps (Brufut)	140
Brufut ECD	113
Santo Su (Brufut)	197
Pirang NS	233
Good Shepherd (Pirang)	114
Bakary Sambouya NS	244
Penyem Daycare & Nursery	125
Madina Pipeline Nursery	107
Madina Talokoto Nursery	130
Mariama Mae (Gunjur)	150
Aisha Memorial (Tujereng)	122
HENS (Talinding)	111
Smart Steps (Keitaya)	151
Makumbaya NS	147
Jappineh NS	111
	2,195



Launching a GSS/GSP 'platform'

Purpose

- gather and record information easily and securely
- make it accessible to appropriate users
- in a flexible format for ease of analysis
- produce graphics/diagrams

The tool

- accessed via an App on GSS/GSP's devices
- data typed into a bespoke template, can be used offline
- designed for good record keeping and flexible analysis
- offers display options to illustrate the outputs

Its use

- Record keeping. GSS network has 15 schools, 80 teachers/trainees, 50 cleaners/caretakers/cooks, 2200 pupils and the UEG link up aims to support up to 1 trainee per class. Also the network is growing.
- School management. Manual records can be lost/damaged. The Head Teachers and school 'Board' members have smartphones/laptops. We want to see the school's administration improve.
- ECDI assessments. In the coming year, for example, there will be about 1,500 assessments x 20 questions = 30,000 data points. The tool will greatly help the analysis and dissemination of this measure.
- GSP (our local team) effectiveness Kemo Bah and his GSP team will be able to assist, inspect and monitor progress at each school with good information at their fingertips.



Brilliantly, BPL is helping us set up this platform

BPL is a leading credit and political risk insurer based in the City of London. Its Charity Committee has supported GSS since Mar 2024 and is one of our largest funders.

**When Nick Stevenson and I realised the logistical and technical challenges of analysing the ECDI data, we asked BPL if they could help us. Wonderfully, Jose Queiros & Sam Long from their IT team 'put their hand up'.
(we like classroom analogies!)**

The target is to get the platform up and running by Jan 27.

Improving GSS's UK resilience and stability

These are our first initiatives:

- 1.transferring GSS's systems away from Josh DH's software to a centralised GSS system
- 2.adding administrative resource in the UK
- 3.strengthen GSS's profile
- 4.building reliable long term income, see page 10

Recruited a Virtual Assistant through Virtalent a specialist VA agency

- We are thrilled to introduce Vicky Leek who will help administer GSS on a contract for 10 hours a month (cost £372pm). Vicky has 20 years experience in marketing, public relations and PA roles.
- Her first task is helping to set up an **centralised administrative system** which can be operated by anyone GSS's trustees choose.
- We have selected the suite of a services offered by Google Workspace for Nonprofits e.g. gmail addresses, 100TB storage, video conferencing.



Vicky has 20 years experience in marketing, PR and as a PA

SPECIAL THANKS

In May 2026
Palca Stevenson Giving
awarded GSS £6k a year for
3 years specifically to help build
the resilience of the GSS project.

This has been the catalyst for
introducing these initiatives.

*A big thank you to the trustees of
Palca Stevenson Giving*



Logo/branding & website re-design

We selected Tiger Finch (recommended by one of our funders).
The first task was to design a logo and this is the result:.



the thinking behind the logo:

- gentler lower case 'gss' rather than more formal upper case 'GSS'
- the 'gss' in Apertura font is described as a clear, modernist, no frills with a contemporary feel!
- building bricks concept plays to shapes and colours in the pupil's lesson plans as well as 'gss' building its project brick by brick
- red/blue/green brick colours reference the Gambian flag colours, the softer tones work better in presentation material
- dark green letter softer than black or grey and plays to sustainability

Tiger Finch's fee for branding including logo design, colour palette, fonts, a brand guide and Powerpoint templates is £780 (a reduced fee for nonprofits).

Measuring teaching quality



results of rating the 14 Head Teachers & 44 Qualified Teachers
we use a simple system to calculate the average score

2 = poor performance 4 = below average 6 = above average 8 = excellent

Head Teachers (14)

- The Head Teachers are key to the progress of each school. All but one are doing well and progressing steadily.
- The exception is the HT of the Brufut ECD who has been absent with uncorroborated sickness and underperforming when at the school.
- The GSP is helping to resolve this with the school leadership.
- It should be remembered that GSS assists not operate the schools in its network, so we do a lot of nudging!

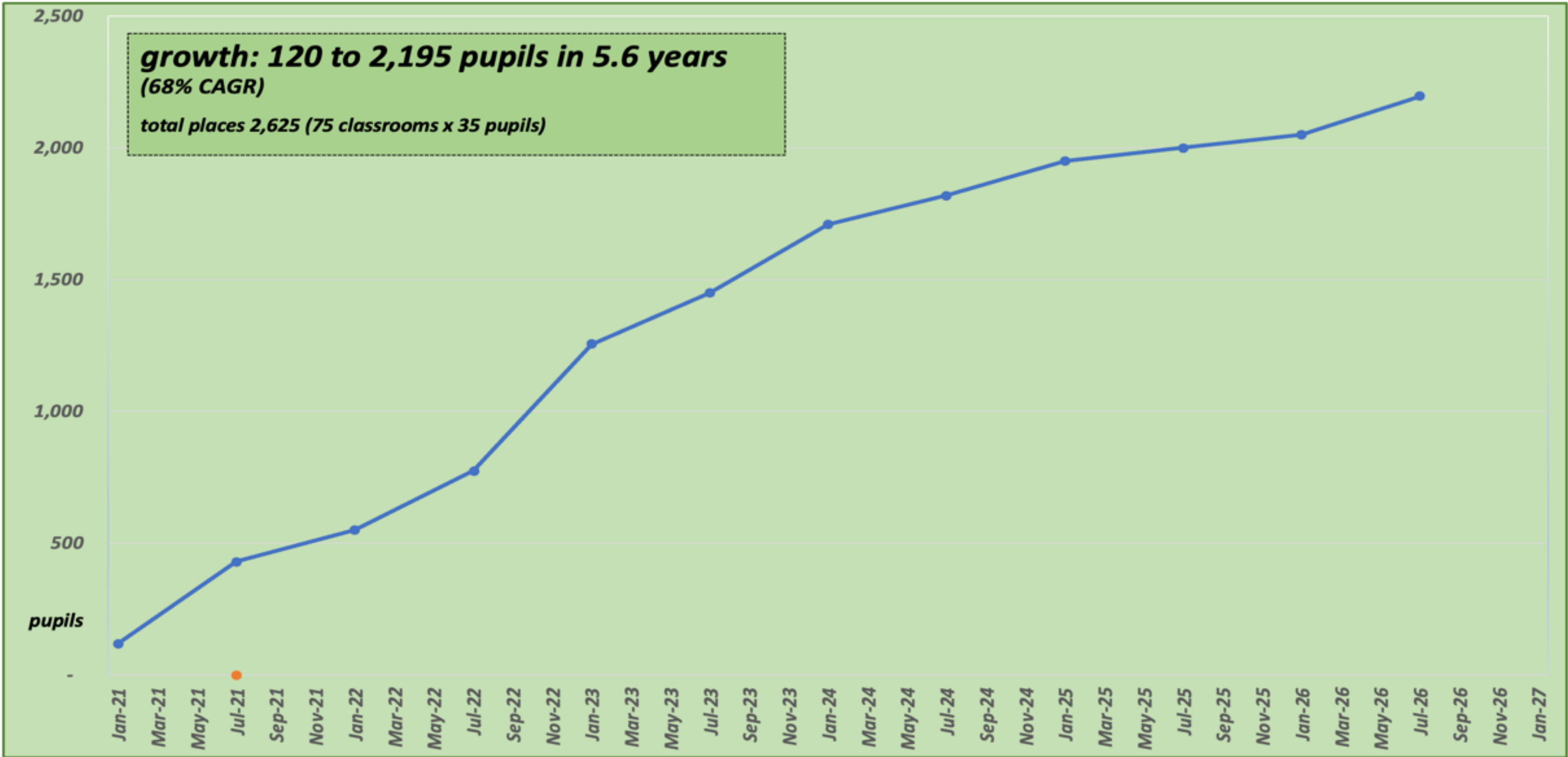
Head Teacher	Mar 23	Jul 23	Dec 23	Mar 24	Jul 24	Dec 24	Mar 25	Jul 25	Dec 25	Mar 26	Jul 26
Excellent	3	3	3	4	7	7	6	7	8	4	6
Above-average	1	5	8	6	4	4	5	4	4	8	7
Below-average	5	2	0	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	0
Poor	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
average score	4.9	5.5	6.5	6.5	7.3	7.0	6.6	6.8	7.1	6.5	6.6

Qualified Teachers (44)

- This measures the overall standard of teaching in the network.
- The results are influenced by teachers leaving, less experienced ones joining and maternity leave often with a need to ‘get up to speed’ when returning.
- The recent rating shows a marked improvement suggesting that teachings standards are their highest level since Mar 23 when we started the process.

Qualified Teacher	Mar 23	Jul 23	Dec 23	Mar 24	Jul 24	Dec 24	Mar 25	Jul 25	Dec 25	Mar 26	Jul 26
Excellent	3	4	7	9	8	8	10	7	17	13	20
Above-av	6	18	17	14	16	18	18	21	19	17	22
Below-av	22	13	9	6	7	5	9	13	7	12	1
Poor	4	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	2	1
average score	4.5	5.4	5.7	5.9	6.1	6.2	6.5	5.8	6.5	5.9	6.7

Measuring ‘quantity’ of GSS’s contribution by number of pupils



Measuring pupil development ECDI [Early Child Development Index]



Target: is to show that GSS’s pupils develop at a faster pace than those of the UNICEF international ‘norm’

- *GSS adopted the ECDI method in Mar 25*
- *ECDI was launched in Nov 2020 by UNICEF, designed to collect data on children’s development between the ages of 40 and 60 months*
- *it uses a straightforward 20 question assessment method carried out by their teacher in 3 categories: Learning, Psychological well-being, Health*
- *to date 653 assessments showing, unsurprisingly, that children at GSS assisted schools are developmentally behind the UNICEF international ‘norm’*
- *we want to see the trendline for the development of our pupils rise faster than the line for the UNICEF ‘norm’ i.e. the developmental deficit narrowing over their time*

UNICEF’s 20 questions

- Learning
- 1.say at least ten words?
 - 2.speak using sentences of three words e.g. “I want water”?
 - 3.speak using sentences of five words?
 - 4.name an object he/she knows well?
 - 5.correctly use any of the words ‘I,’ ‘you’ e.g. “I go to the store”?
 - 6.recognise at least five letters of the alphabet?
 - 7.give you three objects e.g. three stones?
 - 8.count 10 objects?
 - 9.know all numbers from 1 to 5?
 - 10.write his/her own name?
 - 11.do an activity such as colouring without giving up too quickly?

- Psychosocial well-being
- 1.get along well with other children?
 - 2.ask about familiar people other than parents e.g. “Where is Grandma?”
 - 3.offer to help someone who seems to need help?
 - 4.seem to be very sad or depressed?
 - 5.compared with children of the same age, how much does the child kick, bite or hit other children or adults?
- Health
- 1.dress him/herself, that is, put on pants and shirt without help?
 - 2.fasten and unfasten buttons without help?
 - 3.jump up with both feet leaving the ground?
 - 4.walk on an uneven surface e.g. a bumpy path without falling?

Two challenges:

1. some teachers have been over enthusiastic about the progress of their pupils and scoring their pupils too high. We are addressing this through training. For example, at the recent GSP workshop all teachers were trained on how to carry out ECDI assessments.

2. The analysis and display of the results is needs more resource and IT expertise. We are development of the ‘tool/platform’ to analyse and display the ECDI’s outputs (see page 5)

- Next step**
- in Sept about 600 new pupils age 3-4 will be starting at the 15 schools
 - the plan is to assess them in Jan 27 after the teachers have had a term to get to know them
 - the target is to have the ‘platform’ running by then and their baseline results reported in the GSS 31 Mar 27 report

GSS’s financial position is strong and our income is growing



from Annual Accounts submitted to the Charity Commission (GSS’s year end is 31 July)			
	income	expenditure	cash held at end of year
2020-21	76,219	68,610	73,229
2021-22	121,555	76,970	117,814
2022-23	114,214	117,551	114,477
2023-24	101,324	94,716	121,085
2024-25	156,514	131,053	146,546
2025-26	200,000 (est)	180,000 (est)	£165,000 (est)

At 31 July 2026 GSS held:

- £100k in its reserve (held in a fixed bond 4.22% with Shawbrook Bank)
- £45k in its CAF Bank account
- £20k in the GSP account at Trust Bank in The Gambia

The cost of supporting the current project in 2026-27 is expected to be c. £170k

Building a reliable income

In the coming year, we expect GSS’s income to come from the following sources:

- £30k from 40 individuals (monthly donors)
- £84k in commitments from 12 charitable trusts, church groups and UK & overseas charities
- £27k corporate benevolent schemes
- £20k from a range of supporters through the Christmas BigGive (including £5k match funding from GSS trustees and £5k from a ‘Champion Funder’)
- about £15k one-off donations from individuals who regularly support GSS
- £4k interest on reserve

Total £180,000

We will be making applications to grant making organisations as part of a continuing effort to grow the GSS project and its impact.

Gambia School Support

Trustees of UK registered charity 1176136



Josh Dale-Harris
Oct 14

Chair of Trustees & Executive
former Senior Director
at CBRE Global Investors
Role: day-to-day operations,
including 'investor' relations and
co-ordination with the GSP



Tim Lodge
Jan 19

former CFO Tate & Lyle, ran
their operation in Zambia
Role: Oversight of GSS and it's
strategic development



Nick Stevenson
Jun 17

Trustee & Secretary
former Head of Equity Research
at SG Warburg, Mirabaud
Role: Governance & compliance,
ECDI and assessing GSS's impact



Robert Whitcombe
Oct 14
Trustee & Treasurer
farmer & former agricultural
project operator in Ghana
Role: banking and financial
arrangements



Nicola Kelly
Oct 24
Trustee
Client Manager Ley & Wheeler

Role: promotion, use of social
media and communication



Ed Dale-Harris
Oct 14
Trustee
built schools Senegal, Sierra
Leone

Role: sustainability,
horticulture and permaculture

The Team



Lady Kira Dalton
GSS/GSP consultant
- lives in The Gambia since
2002
- extensive local
experience and
connections
- Chair of UK charity
African Oyster Trust

Mrs Ada Bright
Independent Examiner
of GSP's accounts

Good Schools Project Charity (GSP)

Incorporated Gambian Companies Act 2013



Kemo Bah MSC
GSP General Secretary
One of the foremost ECD educators in The Gambia
MA's in Education & Public Administration
25 year teaching experience (8 as Headmaster)
GSS project leader since 2019

3 member GSP coach/inspector team



Adama Camara



Alhassan Jarju



Alex Gomez



Fanding Manjang
maintenance & construction



Fatoumatta Bah
assistant



Pa Gibba
assistant



Gambia School Support



Gambia School Support

‘porridge’ being dished out for the 110 pupils at the Madina Pipeline Nursery

- The cook (red top) is Mam Fatou Kanteh is paid £30 per month. She is being helped by the school cleaner, Hawa Tamedou, who also gets £30 per month. Her 1 year old boy Saiko is on her back!
- Typical ingredients: rice, beans, moringa powder, milk powder, peanut powder, peanut butter, cornflour, banana essence.
- Moringa and peanuts are a good source of Vitamin A and iron, this helps prevent anaemia and stunting.
- GSS donates £1,000 a year for 110 pupils x 200 school days = 22,000 servings a year
- Cost per serving 4.5p.

**Gambia School Support UK Register charity 1176136 -
report prepared by Josh Dale-Harris
31 July 2026**

**GSS does not hold any assets or are party to any
contracts in The Gambia. GSS works through a
trusted implementing partner, the Good Schools
Project Charity 2024/C23843**

GSS's Trustees give our heartfelt thanks to all our donors

more than 250 private individuals and the following organisations:

African Oyster Trust
Allan & Nesta Charitable Trust
All Saints Church (Fulham)
Ashworth Charitable Trust
Austin Bailey Foundation
Arcadya Charitable Foundation
Be Global Foundation
BPL Charity Committee
CBRE Charitable Trust
CBRE Investment Management
Coles-Medlock Foundation
De La Rue Charitable Trust
Frost & Willan
Gambia Schools Project
Greatham Nursery School
Help in Progress (Stuttgart)
Highclere International Investors
Kambeng Trust
Mad Hatters Nursery School
Marie Helen Luen Charitable Trust
Nakupenda Sana (Malaga)

Palca Stevenson Giving
Pat Newman Memorial Trust
Philip King Charitable Trust
Prudence de Lotbiniere Trust
Review Hairdressers
Rising Brook Community Church
Sage Publishing
Sir E Lewis Foundation
St AVI Foundation (Holland)
St Mark's Overseas Aid (SMOAT)
The Mercers' Company
The Mila Foundation
The Peter Cundill Foundation
The Tallow Chandlers'
UK charitable trust (*does not wish to be named*)
UK educational trust (*does not wish to be named*)
XPS Pensions Group

Mike Willan of Frost & Willan who Independently
Examine GSS's accounts
Steve Watson for the GSS website



a still from a video of an impressive maths lesson at Good Shepherd, Pirang, using bottle tops