

THIKA

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Thika is a small town an hour's drive from downtown Nairobi. The town itself is quite small and is perhaps best known for being the primary pineapple-growing region in Kenya. The growing town has over 13 schools, but most notable are the primary and secondary school for the blind, reportedly Kenya's first school for the visually impaired.

The salvation army founded the Thika school for the blind many years ago. It ministers to children who range from partially sight-impaired to entirely blind. The children come to stay at the boarding school, but return to family during holiday. The school's motto is "Faith and Courage". It provides hope for the children who otherwise have nothing in their future.

Some of the staff is also visually impaired. One teacher even began there as a student but has returned after a higher education to work with other blind students. The academic standard is the same as sighted schools in the nation, and some of the students go on to universities after their secondary education.



IMPRESSIONS

As we walked around the school compound, I was impressed with the order and cleanliness of the grounds. There was plenty of space for the children to play, yet the layout was very organized which would be helpful to blind children. The compound felt very safe and quiet although I believe the quiet part would change once all of the children arrive back to school after holiday!

We were taken on a tour by one of the teachers and once again I was impressed by the school. The 3 staff members that I met were all incredibly helpful and welcoming. They showed a true love for the children, and I was drawn to their smiles as well as their character. I believe they would bend over backwards to make any volunteer feel at home with them.

As a whole, this was a ministry that I would love to work with and to be a part of. What an amazing opportunity to love the children others see as a burden...to show them God's love and offer them the hope God so freely gives.

Christy Veer

