

The Education Year in Rwanda begins in January so it is a time of much activity.

The students take the National Examinations in November. It seems a long a complicated process to get the marks complete and the Ministry of Education makes decisions about where the students are to be placed at secondary level. The students are asked during their time in Primary school where their preference might be but often the decisions do not correspond with the requests. The Government is encouraging students to attend day school as there is a development in building provision for this. Many of our students live in conditions which are not compatible with study in the evening. Impoverished families do not always have money for very basic needs and the children can be trying to study while tired and hungry. For this reason we try to find boarding school places where we know the students will have a sleeping place of their own, regular food and a place to study after class.

Much of what you will find in the boarding schools does not relate in any way to what we know of boarding schools in Europe. For example, the students do their own washing, some of them cultivate garden plots and they sleep in dormitories of up to 60 students in 2 tier bunks. Discipline is extremely strict.

Nevertheless our students seem to be thriving, they are growing up into fine young people and it is good to hear of them taking a lead in different ways in their separate schools. I am proud of what they are achieving.

What makes me very happy is the very strong bond they have after being with the KCP project from small children and some of them are wonderful role models for our current youngsters.

This year we are sending 89 students to secondary and two have finished Senior 6 marking the end of one journey and the start of another. It is a challenging process to get everything together for them to take with them. There is a prescribed list from the respective schools, down to the number of toilet rolls to bring and we do our best to find everything. Some families contribute but there are others, orphaned or cared for children who do not have the means to find much.

Everything is packed into a locked box in the hope that the meagre possessions remain safe, but the first year in particular can be tricky for many.



We take the first-year students, the others make their own way to their different schools.

Normally the students will stay at school for the whole term, they are sent home if they become ill but otherwise we would not expect to see them. There is an open day, usually on the first or second Sunday of term when parents and relatives visit. Random visits are not encouraged.



The students stay on campus over the weekend, they do their own washing and cleaning. There is prescribed study time but there is also time to relax and have fun, some schools have their own sports and dance teams, but not all. There are other clubs and activities in which the students participate.

Most settle into secondary life quickly, fortunately the majority of our students now go to schools where there are already several others from KCP so they can help each other out.

Above are some of this years' newbies, below are pictures of most of the secondary students who are being supported by sponsors and by KCP I just did not manage to catch them all!

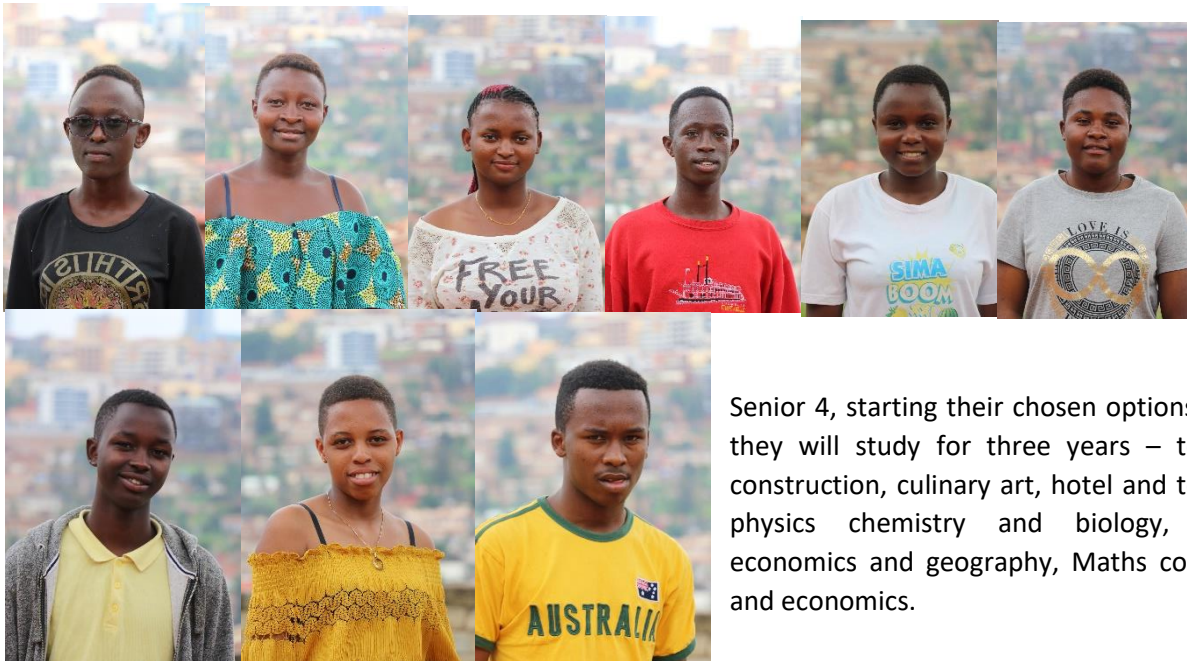
Many thanks to everyone, we cannot do this without you.

Senior 6 – on the last leg – studying different options, Physics and Chemistry, Maths, Computer Applications, Tourism.





Senior 5 studying construction, computer applications, physics chemistry and biology, physics chemistry and maths.



Senior 4, starting their chosen options which they will study for three years – tourism, construction, culinary art, hotel and tourism, physics chemistry and biology, maths economics and geography, Maths computer and economics.

You may have noticed that no – one is studying languages or creative arts. This is because opportunities throughout the country are very rare. The secondary experience is divided into two sections, the first three years are more general and then after the examinations the students are directed by the government to other schools with a particular option as you can see above. The decision does not always match the aspiration of the student in which case we try to find a place where they can follow their dream.



Senior three, last year of the first section in secondary, beginning to think about what they might choose to do in the future.



Senior two.

And the newbies in Senior 1 – wishing them a successful first year.





There are some smart children setting off on their secondary journey, full of ideas and talents. I hope they do well and make wise choices, they are doing something their families could never have dreamt of thanks to the kind support of generous sponsors who put their trust in us – we will do our best!

Our senior numbers are growing, probably peaking in two years' time, who could have predicted this 10 years ago? Certainly not I

Finally, our trailblazers about to complete the secondary and higher level studies, waiting for results and hopefully on to more good things. Time really does fly it seems.



Wishing you all the success you could wish for yourselves during 2020. May it be a year of hope, peace and love for everyone.

Meg