

Rosie May volunteer report

Hello, my name is Jake, I am 19 years old and live in Market Harborough, Leicestershire. I volunteered at the Rosie May home and Boossa school between the 19th of March and the 17th of April, with my aunt, Mel I went in the hope of being able to coach cricket to the boys at the school, as I am a qualified coach, and cricket is what I love. All the boys are really talented, unlike anything I've ever seen and they are all a joy to work/play with. I took some cricket stuff out from my local cricket club, this included; 2 helmets, 2 bats and a bag of Kwik cricket stuff.



I did attend the volunteer day on the 21st of January, and found it very useful and a great way of learning more about the charity, not only from Mary and Graham but the other people who had also been out there, like Clive and Gerry for example. I felt that everything I needed to know was covered on the day and if it wasn't, Mary and Amy provided their e-mail addresses so if you had any questions you could still contact them. The volunteer day did definitely go some way to helping me prepare for my trip.

For my fundraising I did a 10k run in Wellingborough, which I didn't really plan, I just decided to do it about a month before I went to Sri Lanka, so I would

definitely plan for fundraising a bit more if I was to go again and I would advise anyone else to do the same. I was really surprised that I managed to raise £650 from my run, and that was just by posting on Facebook and texting/e-mailing friends and family.

When in the home, our main aim was to try and do the English cards as often as possible with the girls. To begin with they were really interested and were really good at getting into groups while we did the cards with them but as we got more familiar with them and, I in particular, started playing outside with them (volleyball and cricket) the older ones especially would rather play outside than do the English cards. So we probably should have introduced the idea that in order to play outside they had to do their English but we didn't so this is something I would change in the future. As I thought that the majority of my time would be spent in the school I had only really bought cricket gear with me, so I didn't have much for the girls at Rosie May, I did buy some paper and already had a box of pens so I took those in and they all love art so if I went again I would definitely take more arts and craft things for them to use.

While I was out there, at weekends I either spent time on the beach or me and two other volunteers (Amanda & Caitriona) would go and do things together, this involved going to Pinnawalle for an elephant ride, the turtle hatchery that is outside of Hikkaduwa and also the Tsunami museum which is also just outside Hikkaduwa. I would most definitely recommend the Tsunami museum for any volunteer. I didn't encounter any sort of problems, cultural or otherwise really. There were times, particularly in the mornings when you had time to sit and chat to the staff and we built up a solid rapport with them. So me and Mel ended up going in later, once we had built up a relationship with the staff, to avoid this, which they were all fine with. Also when in the home, as a young man, I was a bit of a novelty for everyone there, this didn't stop me getting along with both the staff and the girls in the home. It also meant Sela, the cook, had someone else to feed up with her curries which were always amazing. As tuk tuks were quite expensive me and Mel used the buses a fair bit to get to and from RMH, however the buses are not for the faint hearted. They are rarely empty and don't ever stop properly, I even had to jump off a fast moving bus that wasn't stopping in order to get off at the right stop. However

they are really cheap, its normally between 23 and 29 rupees which translates to about 17p I think.

We stayed in the Moonbeam hotel, which is in Hikkaduwa. And while it was very basic room wise, I had a sea view and breakfast included in the fee for the room and I also cannot speak highly enough of the staff, there who are all extremely welcoming and are willing to do almost anything for you, especially Kapilla the receptionist at the hotel. And I certainly felt very safe there, they had night guards on the door who had to unlock the gate for me when I came back from various beach parties that I had attended.

And I am almost certainly planning to volunteer for Rosie May Memorial Fund again in the future and have already signed my brother, George, up for when I go again, although it may be a few years as I am going to Leeds Metropolitan University in September.

One final thing, I would just like to mention Dave and Hannah, who are absolutely fantastic and are doing a really great job out there particularly in the school. They were really great at welcoming me and Mel and showed us around the school and RMH and also Hikkaduwa when we first arrived. They were also great company for me when Mel left, and even invited me to stay at their house throughout the tsunami alert which was extremely nice of them!

Jake May 2012