

Sandrine's Story

Sandrine is approaching the end of her time at primary school at Thika Primrose Academy in Kenya. She joined our Scholars Programme in January 2021.

Sandrine and her younger brother Balusco, who is living with autism, live with their mother in the Kiandutu slums in Thika. Her father desert the family when her brother was born with a disability. Relatives and friends have also stayed away from the family a situation that has forced the family to live with stigma.

Her mother works in a nearby stone quarry where she extracts building stones for a small fee. The work is dusty and she is often out of work as she suffers from asthma.

Three years ago a well-wisher noticed that Sandrine's mother carried her son to the quarry as she could not leave him at home because there was no one who was willing to take care of him because of his condition and hyperactivity. The well-wisher sought out an appropriate school for the young boy and identified Thika Primrose Academy which has a special unit class for autistic children. The only problem was that Balusco was so used to his mother and Sandrine that



he would not go anywhere without one of them: this is quite common with autistic children as they do not take well change of routine. The well-wisher could not afford to pay school fees for both children so he persuaded the school to offer Balusco a place on their sponsorship programme if he paid Sandrine's fees. Balusco has improved remarkably as the school has been able to offer speech therapy and also assist his mother with nutritional training.

Unfortunately, the well-wisher died of Covid, potentially leaving both children unable to continue at school. By paying Sandrine's fees both children are able to continue with their education.

To support Sandrine costs Rafiki Thabo £500 per year