

Portmarnock Community School and Action Ireland Trust annual appeal for aid for communities in Lesotho took place on Saturday last

There was a hive of activity around the PE hall at PCS with donations in excess of 30,000 items being delivered for the school's project in Lesotho.

From the moment the appeal went out, the constant stream of deliveries was heartening. Many lives will be in receipt of much needed resources and facilities - in particular the small children and patients at St. Joseph's Hospital, Roma.

With the new roof on the hospital complete we are now concentrating on fitting out wards. Two general wards are complete and we now turn our attention to the maternity ward and the hospital's outpatients facilities. Many of the fittings and equipment on the container will go directly to this aspect of the project. Action Ireland Trust will have a specialist team from The Royal College of Surgeons Bahrain in attendance at next years project. They will work with the management and staff at St. Joseph's Hospital Roma to put in place structures and facilities that will improve the services to local communities.

Dublin Fire Brigade again supplied an extensive range of equipment that will go towards improving emergency services on the ground in Lesotho. Lesotho has no dedicated emergency services as such and is very much in need of developing a dedicated service. Dublin Fire Brigade will deploy four officers next February to work with local Government officials in an effort to improve emergency response units in accidents and fire fighting.

Folens supplied five pallets of books for Junior and Leaving certificate English and Maths. This will be particularly welcome as the second level schools base their curriculum on the Irish curriculum.

In excess of 1,000 football kits and tracksuits, all brand new, will be distributed to local schools which should encourage an increased uptake in sport which is so important for school life and ethos.

We extend our appreciation to all the students, parents and past pupils who gave up so much time to the collecting, counting and packing of each item.

Our thanks also to DHL to whom we owe a tremendous gratitude for the supply of the 40ft container and the dispatch of the container on Wednesday to Durban, South Africa and from there by train to Maseru, the capital of Lesotho. All costs are being incurred by DHL.

His excellency the Ambassador of Lesotho Mr. Paramente Phamotse and his wife Mrs. Myponi Phamotse were on hand to express their appreciation on behalf of the Lesotho people.

A lighter moment on Saturday amidst all the heavy lifting was when Sarah Kelly played the piano for the ambassador and his wife before it was loaded into the container. The piano was perfectly in tune and hopefully it will be the same on arrival to Lesotho.

The container is set to be in Maseru two weeks in advance of the arrival of volunteers in Maseru for the 2013 project.