

BibleLands

..... Overseas Partner Fact Sheet.....

Johann Ludwig Schneller School

How it all started

This school was founded in 1952 but its story goes back to 1860, when a persecution against Christians broke out in Lebanon. A German Pastor, named Johann Ludwig Schneller, took ten orphans from Lebanon and Syria to his home in Jerusalem. His son, the Reverend Theodor, and then his grandson, the Reverend Hermann, continued the work until 1948, when the property was confiscated by the Israeli army and Hermann Schneller was deported to Australia. The orphanage moved to Lebanon and on Hermann Schneller's return, in 1952, moved into the newly opened school at its current location in the Bekaa Valley. The school continued to function throughout the civil war and today continues its original aim of providing care and education for disadvantaged children.



A BibleLands' grant paid for this basketball court

Key facts

Founded: 1952

Location: Bekaa Valley, Lebanon

First BibleLands' grant: 1976

BibleLands' Annual Grant: £39,864 p.a.

Current Activities

By providing primary and secondary level schooling, vocational training and a boarding home for socially underprivileged children, the school helps them to grow into men and women who are responsible members of their society.

The School: Over 350 children, aged between 4-20 years, attend this school, of which 220 are day students. The children learn all the usual lessons in Arabic, and English is introduced early, as is German. Each year, up to 200 children apply to join the school and the decision to accept them is made according to need. Whilst the school is open to children of all faiths, it has its own chapel and chaplain and holds morning assemblies and Sunday School for its boarders.

Vocational training: The students' last two years at the school can be spent in either the academic section or the vocational training section. Those who decide to take vocational training are offered a choice of carpentry, maintenance, general mechanics and auto mechanics in their first year. Plumbing and electrical installation workshops are also available, to those students in their second year.

The Boys' Home: About 100 boys, aged between five and eighteen, grow up together in eight 'families'. Two house mothers live with, and take care of, each of the younger families, and one house father takes care of each of the older families. The house parents work hard to bring up the children in accordance with ideals of peace and religious tolerance. This makes it possible for children of different backgrounds to live together in harmony. Most of the children go home during the holidays but there are usually some boys who remain at the Schneller home, due to their family circumstances.



Carpentry is one of the subjects offered to older students, in the vocational training section



One of the 'families' in the girls' boarding section

Girls' Boarding Section: For the first time in its 50-year history, girls were accepted as boarders at the school in 2003. To be a child from a poor family is enough of a disadvantage but for girls this often additionally means no access to education, meaning that they are increasingly marginalised. However, thanks to a grant made possible by BibleLands' supporters, this new boarding section has ensured the future of girls' education in this region. The school has already started to look even further ahead – to providing secondary education and vocational training for the girls ten years from now, so that they can become fully responsible and independent members of a new post-war Lebanese community.



Following its 15-year civil war, Lebanon was beginning to rebuild itself and there was an optimism for the future, despite huge international debts and high unemployment. However, the war with Israel in 2006 left the country unstable once again and many people fear a second civil war.

Within Lebanon's fragile peace there is a great need for healing and reconciliation. With your help, the work of the Reverend J L Schneller continues as a symbol of Christian love for children of any religion who need education and shelter. Thank you for helping a child to feel secure and to have a Christian education.

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