

02 August, 2011.

The Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce praised the dedicated work of Tongan teachers during a special visit with His Majesty King George V to the Nuku'alofa Primary School yesterday morning.

Arriving to a warm welcome by cheering school children, the Governor-General and His Majesty were greeted by Education Minister Honourable Dr. 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki, and then presented with a demonstration of classroom lessons using educational materials funded by the Australian Government.

"Tonga has much to be proud of in education," remarked the Governor-General.

"A school is the heart of a community and the teachers are the most important people in our community because of what they do in enriching our lives... I want to congratulate the wonderful teachers here for their dedication and commitment."

She added that a description by His Majesty that Tongan children were "very mischievous" also showed they were innovative, creative, and "always looking for new adventures."

Director of Education 'Emili Moala Pouvalu said the regal visit, which also included Her Royal Highness Princess Pilolevu Tuita, His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE, and Australian High Commissioner to Tonga His Excellency Mr. Thomas Roth, was a source of pride for the school and the education department.

Mrs Pouvalu said the curriculum material featured in the presentations, developed with Australian assistance, promotes activity-based teaching and participatory learning.

The new curriculum has been written, trialed and will be implemented in 2012, as part of the Ministry's goals to provide "relevant, accessible and sustainable education for all school children".

The school programme was part of a three-day visit by the Governor-General to the Kingdom of Tonga. Her Excellency also visited the Nukunuku Village Health Centre earlier in the day, and took part in celebrations for His Majesty's 63rd birthday.

The delegation returned to Australia yesterday afternoon.

ENDS.