



Rangi Ruru Girls' School

**Media Release**

**28 January 2013**

### **Rangi Ruru Team Helps Renovate Indian School – An Experience of a Lifetime**

School is back this Wednesday and 14 girls from Years 10-12 at Rangi Ruru are still buzzing after a life-changing experience following four weeks in Southern India and Rajasthan.

Together with two school leaders (staff members, Ali McQueen and Jane O'Callaghan) and one World Challenge expedition leader (Jodie Burton), the group spent their time experiencing an amazing mix of adventure, endurance, excitement, extreme temperatures and diverse culture on an incredible journey.

One of the most rewarding parts of the trip was a 10-day project which involved renovating Surakiapatti School near Sempatti. Sempatti is one of the villages in Aruppukottai Taluk in Virudhunagar District in Tamil Nadu State, the eleventh largest state in India. The girls and leaders cleared sites, built a new kitchen (which had an official opening), painted school buildings and worked and played with the children.

Ali McQueen says the whole school is very proud of the girls who prepared for the trip for 18 months.

“Like so many school trips away, so much work and fundraising is needed. These young women were also instrumental in the planning, organisation, budgeting, accommodation, transport and food for the entire trip,” she says. “They’re all a very harmonious group who worked co-operatively and developed excellent leadership, problem-solving and decision-making skills along the way.”

McQueen says they became very involved in the local community and made a real difference to the lives of the local children.

The group also trekked through steep and challenging terrain and primitive villages in the Western Ghats, another highlight.

“Such an amazing biodiversity; tea and cardamom plantations, pepper, lemon grass, bananas and beautiful scenery,” she says.

Year 11 student Georgie Staples says Christmas in India was a really different experience.

"We went to a midnight Christmas service, had Christmas dinner which was lovely but we weren't initially sure what it was. A work-day at the school was interesting and the whole thing about being away from home in an unknown world was mind blowing," she says.

Ali McQueen says the trip has provided unforgettable memories of a shared adventure, a greater appreciation of our world, and was a real privilege for all involved.

## **ENDS**

For more information please contact Ali Jones on 0272473112 or Steph Barnett (Rangi Ruru) ph 983 3706

## **Additional**

World Challenge is a Global organisation (first started in UK, now in Australia and NZ) facilitating educational expeditions in the developing world, teaching life skills and expanding minds and horizons. <http://www.worldchallenge.com.au/>

Rangi Ruru's first trip was to Vietnam and Cambodia in 2010. A few other NZ schools have participated – Burnside and CHGS have also undertaken challenges. Some choose to go in July – Rangi preferred Dec/Jan so that students have different cultural experiences from those they're used to and have some time to properly reflect on their return.

*"The World Challenge ethos also fits well with the Rangi Ruru Girls' School principle - to empower the girls to become ethical global citizens. For instance, we admire the way World Challenge discourages their groups from buying water in plastic bottles and instead encourages them to purify local water so as to reduce plastic waste in-country."* Ali McQueen,

## **Rangi Ruru Girls' School - Christchurch**

Rangi Ruru is an independent school for Day and Boarding students in Years 7 to 13 (ages 11-17).

Rangi Ruru Girls' School has a long and distinguished history in the education of young women. In 1889, two sisters, Helen and Alice Gibson founded Rangi Ruru with the intention of creating a school where girls were nurtured and challenged and where a wide range of opportunities was available to them. Over one hundred years on, Rangi Ruru Girls' School builds on the Gibson sisters' dream and has firmly established itself as a setting where girls can pursue their individual goals in a supportive and challenging educational environment.

The school now offers an independent (private) education to approximately 700 girls in Years 7 to 13, including 120 boarders who live onsite in our school boarding house.

Every year Rangi is placed in the top New Zealand schools for a wide range of Academic, Sport, Creative and Cultural activities, competitions and events; with more than 90% of Rangi students going on to further tertiary study in New Zealand and overseas.

[www.rangiruru.school.nz](http://www.rangiruru.school.nz)