

The Don McMath Foundation Newsletter – 2nd September 2013

The Don McMath Foundation



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Hi All

A few things have happened since the last newsletter in March, the school has been running quite smoothly as has the fundraising in the UK.



We are extremely proud to announce that of the 14 Grade 9 Upper Basic Children who took the Gambian National exams 9 have gained high enough grades to go on to NUSRAT Senior Secondary School, with the possibility that 2 more might get in. This is a fantastic result for which all the pupils and staff involved are to be congratulated. We will be contacting the sponsors of the successful children to see if they are prepared to carry on their sponsorship for another 3 years. The pupils get marked for each exam and the lower their aggregate score the better the results. The lowest aggregate you can get is 6 and the highest is 54. (54 means you have failed every subject). Two of our pupils (Fatoumatta Jallow and Fatoumatta Sankano) scored 8 nine more scored 24 or less. At the moment we do not know

what NUSRAT cut off point will be. They decide what their intake will be and work down the list of aggregates until they have that number. In the past it has hovered around the 24 mark.

In other national exams for grades 3, 5 and 8 we achieved good results:

Grade 8 (better than expected)

English	100% passed	average 69%
Maths	94%	64%
Science	89%	65%
S E S	94%	67%

Grade 3 - we had a 100% pass in all subjects. All subjects taught by Mr Kallon

Average marks:-

English	87%
Maths	87%
Integrated Studies	95%

Grade 5a & 5B - We had a 100% pass in all subjects except Maths which was 92% pass

Average marks:-

English	85%	Mr John
Maths	59%	Mr Janneh
S.E.S	85%	Mrs Boye
Science	81%	Mr Darboe/Mr Camara

With the new intake in Nursery 1 this month we now have 340 children at the school.



The new classroom furniture was delivered in December last year, once again many thanks to all at Reed Elsevier for their generosity. We now plan to replace the old wooden desks in the rest of the classrooms (grade 3 to 9) which will cost about £8,000 and are currently looking into this.



The next shipment has arrived in the Gambia and as I write this is awaiting delivery to the school. Many thanks to all that contributed goods for the school especially to Debbie Appleby of Orchard Day Nursery for her classroom storage units and Richard Carter for the computers. There are several other people who donated items to the

school. Unfortunately Anne had this information on her lap-top, which was stolen when she was there in July. Please accept our apologies for not including you in this news letter. We would also like to belatedly thank Mary Dymore-Brown for introducing Andy Robinson who donated three full football strips to the school in January and the Arkefly crew from Amsterdam who donated a large collection of toys and clothes.

An email from Anne from July:

Everything went well for the first 3 weeks, though it was busy as we had school exams and I was suffering with the heat and humidity. Then one night while I was sleeping, some one sawed through the security bars on the spare bedroom window, came in and took my laptop that Paul & Yolande brought me, Don's watch and my ancient Gambian mobile. While I can replace two of the things Don's watch is irreplaceable. I have had iron bars now fixed to all the windows!!!! I have a desk top computer at the house, so have been using that, but it has taken me sometime to reconstruct the DMF accounts that were on the laptop. I am flying home tomorrow (Tuesday) and hoping for some TLC from my friends and family and have some normality again. (I have been out twice while I am here - once to the beach and once to The Clay Oven an Indian restaurant.) A very positive thing is that I have lost half a stone while here, so every cloud does have a silver-lining.



The Verwood Garden party was once again a great success. We raised a total of £1,293 with an additional £750 from Barclays Matched Fundraising which brought the total to £2,043. This will buy a lot of tables and chairs for the school. Judy would like to thank everyone who helped with food, freezer space and loans of tables and chairs. Also everyone who donated raffle prizes, especially Tracey Thew for her generous prizes of a night at her bed and breakfast in the New Forest www.theblacksmithshouse.co.uk and a day's fishing with "the Fishwives" <http://tracysfishwives.blogspot.co.uk/>. The raffle alone made £356. It was nice to see some of our sponsors from Bexhill at the Garden Party.

This year we only invited sponsors to the garden party as space in our garden is limited and the number of sponsors has grown to nearly 300. We feel that in future years we need to look at a new format for the annual fund raising get-togethers. If anyone has any ideas please send them to us.



We also had a busy day at this year's Verwood Rustic Fayre where we managed to raise another £117, most of this from the £1 a square to win £30 worth of Hall and Woodhouse vouchers. Many thanks to Diane of the Monmouth Ash for the donation of the vouchers.



Over the last few months we've also received large donations from English Provender Company (Thanks to Cat McMath), Peter Scudamore, Wiltshire College from a collection and from

Alfatronix, thanks to these people and organisations.

Mick and Judy will be travelling to the Gambia at the end of November to take individual photos of the new Nursery 1 intake children and class photos for the school year 2013 to 2014. We hope to distribute these to sponsors before Christmas.

Thanks to the new sponsors who have signed up over the last few months we always need more! We have another 33 children starting this month (September 2013) as the new intake in the Nursery 1 class and so far we only have sponsors for 2 of them. Please pass this on to anyone you think might like to sponsor a child, as Anne has mentioned in the past "£5 a month is only the cost of a bottle of wine!"

Please note the website address: www.donmcmath.org (recently updated with all teachers and class photos) and the email address: info@donmcmath.org. You can also reach Anne and Mick via: anne@donmcmath.org and mick@donmcmath.org. If anyone who currently receives this newsletter through the post is now on email could you please let us know your address so we can email you future newsletters as this will cut down considerably on our costs. Thank you all for your support.

Dates for your diaries: Spring Term: Winter Term: 17th September to 20th December.