

The Don McMath Foundation

The Don McMath Foundation Newsletter – 14th September 2015

Charity number: 1100164

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Hi All

Overall things are going well at the school, we have our third class of pupils starting at NUSRAT senior school this month and have a new intake of 33 children in Nursery 1.

From Anne:

"I travelled out to The Gambia in June/July for the end of term. During this time I was busy preparing for the September term, buying material and ordering uniforms, buying text books and sorting out students new classes. I also scanned over 350 reports to e-mail back to Mick to send to sponsors.

Hopefully all the sponsors with specific children have now received their children's school reports. If anyone hasn't could they please let Mick know and he will resend.

Nusrat Senior Secondary School.

As there seems to be a problem with internet in The Gambia I do not have the full information on who has got a place at Nusrat. Communications have mainly been done by text and so far all I know is that so far nine Grade 9 students got high enough marks in the West African exams to get a place. It is possible one or two more might also get a place. As soon as I get the results I will send them to Mick to pass on to the relevant sponsors.



At the end of August I travelled to Germany for six days and did 3 cities during that time and managed to see Sisawo & Hamsa.

Hamsa

Hamsa is the young boy who has very little use of his arms and what I think are called club feet, so could only walk very short distances. He had to write with his feet and each year we would have a desk made that was the right size for him.

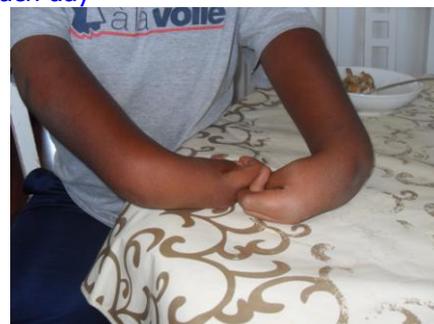
At the beginning of this year Hamsa left to travel to Germany for operations on his feet (see last newsletter). His sister who has lived in Germany for 9 years secured funding from 7 different organisations to pay for the operations. I spent the day with the family at their flat in Hamburg. Hamsa has had both legs operated on and after a time in plaster has now leather supports on his legs and has to walk each day



to strengthen his legs. For the first time in his life he is able to wear shoes and is very proud of that.

He can walk down stairs as he can use his body to balance himself on the banisters but going up stairs is more difficult as he can't use his arms.

However his sister has now secured funding for one of his arms to be operated on. From what she told me they will operate on his elbow so it



bends in the correct way, operate on his wrist to straighten it and flex his fingers. Once she has raised another 12,000 Euro's he will have the other arm done.

Sisawo

Sisawo was my Boy Friday as well as our driver at the school, he received a grant to study computer programming in Germany at the end of last year. I met up with him in Hannover, and we spent the day sight-seeing and catching up on the school. It was lovely to see him again.

He told me that after he had been at college for a few weeks he was asked by his tutor where else he had lived in Europe. He replied that this was the first time he had been to Europe. The tutor said he was really surprised as his work ethic was much better than a lot of African students they had in the past. Sisawo explained that he had worked for a British charity and they had taught him to respect time and work."



Garden party 24th May 2015



Once again a successful garden party with over 50 people attending. We ended up raising just under £2,000 the majority of which has gone to our hardship fund. £750 of this is from Barclay's Bank, as a Barclay's pensioner Mick can get matched fund raising for one charity event each year. Many thanks to Verwood Rotary for their sponsorship cheque, for those of you that don't know Verwood Rotary sponsor 9 children at the school. The photo shows Clive Grove presenting the cheque to Anne. The raffle raised £340 and it seemed that just about everyone won a prize! Thanks to everyone who supplied cakes for the party and everyone who helped on the day.

Verwood Rustic Fayre 31st August 2015

Mick and Judy once again braved the elements on a damp Bank Holiday Monday to run a stall at this year's Verwood Rustic Fayre with Hook a Duck and Lucky Dip activities for the children. Many thanks to The India Cottage/Indigo in Ringwood for generously donating a £30 meal voucher for us to raffle at the rustic fayre. This helped us to raise over £100 which has been put into school funds. We would like to thank certain sponsors who have given us unusually large donations totalling £12,000 this year, this will make up part of the reserves which we need to ensure the smooth running of the school.



Thanks to the new sponsors who have signed up over the last few months we always need more! With the new intake in September and with a few sponsors dropping out we now have about 35 children needing sponsors. 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 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.

Anne, Judy and Mick McMath – September 2015