



**Monkstown**  
**Educate**  
**Together**  
National School

# news letter

METNS Kill Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, 01 230 3696; office@metns.ie  
Principal: Rosario Kealy

Roll No 20060G

WINTER 2011

## in short

**LOST PROPERTY** The school are left with loads of lovely coats and jackets. These items will be displayed in the yard at the end of the term and any unclaimed ones will be sent to a charity.

**WINTER BREAK** School closes at 12 noon on Thursday, 22nd December and re-opens on Monday, 9th January 2012.

**A HELPING HAND** We are collecting food for Christmas Hampers for local families in need. Useful items include: dried or tinned goods such as cereals, pasta, rice, biscuits and crackers. You can drop food into the boxes in the front hall from

Wed 14th Dec – Fri 16th Dec. If you have any queries you can contact Ziene at 087 2940173.

Thank you for any help that you can give.



## An update from the PTA committee

A big thanks to all who attended, helped and supported our recent Christmas shopping night. Over €1,200 was raised, which will go some way to buying the stage lights for the school hall. There were advance previews of the Christmas Calendar which will be available to buy at the Christmas Fair. Raffle prizes were won by: Orla Doris (Dr. Hauschka Hamper), Jamel Gleich (Food Hamper), Bernard Tonge (Malones Hamper) & Anne Blaney (Maureen Lynch pendant).

The Christmas Fair took place on Sun December 11th with the usual vast array of stands, stalls, games and goodies. The ever-popular METNS café were in full swing and Santa himself graced us with his presence on the day.

After Christmas we hope to organise a talk on parenting from a well-renowned parenting coach, but if there are any topics specifically you would like to see addressed then e-mail us at metns@pta.ie. Also, look out for a First Aid workshop for parents & guardians – for those times when a bit more than a band aid is called for.

To all who celebrate Christmas we wish you a very Happy Holiday, Joyeux Noël, Sung Tan Chuk Has, Nollaig Shona Dhuit, Wesolych Swiat, Bozego Narodzenia, Linksmu Kaledu, God Jul, Froehliche Weihnachten!

PTA Committee 2011-2012



## From the Principal

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the children, staff, and parents/guardians for their contribution so far this year. An amazing amount has been achieved during the term. Since mid-term we have had Educate Together Awareness Week, the Food Dudes, our book fair, hockey and soccer matches and Christmas shopping night, not to mention all the learning that has been going on. A special thanks to the particular organisers and helpers of all these events. They don't just happen!

We have had projects on countries, Aztecs, Vikings, Normans, world cultures, trees and woodlands, and many more. Food Dudes inspired some wonderful work in our Health Education programme and Visual Arts which included fruit and vegetable printing, sculptures, poetry and still life studies. The school is dripping with artwork such as snail trails, gingerbread men, flags, maps, Norman collages, Kandinsky spirals, patterns, illustrations of stories and song, impressions of Dia de los Muertos, and many variations on autumn leaves in all their splendour.

The children have made a beautiful METNS calendar for 2012/2013 with the help of their teachers and SNAs. Thanks to Dolores for organising this. These beautiful calendars featuring every child at METNS will be for sale in the school and at the school fair. Numbers are limited so don't forget to get in early. A special thank you to Michael Kelly for all his work designing the calendar. Thank you also to Malcolm Heron for the printing of the calendars and newsletters.

In our assemblies, we celebrated Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and the Presidential election which coincided with our own Student Council elections. The children were delighted to get a night off homework for International Children's Day!

A Literacy and Numeracy initiative has been introduced by the DES and we will start our review based on these new guidelines in January. We are a reading school and encourage lots of it both in and out of school, so remember to keep up the reading during the holidays.

Táimid ag labhairt Gaeilge go líofa agus go minic ag METNS.

As part of our green school's programme for Transport this year, I would encourage parents who drive to identify a parking location near the school and walk the remainder of the way. This has many benefits including decongestion of parking/set down area in school, improving health and fitness, and increasing awareness of our environment. We can all make a difference.

Our new BOM will start the beginning of a 4 year term this week. A list of new members will be on our website and notice board.

We sent a note to parents looking for volunteers for our Snow Patrol. Don't forget to send the form back if you can help out should the need arise. Thank you to all who have already volunteered.

We are delighted that the Government has decided to leave the pupil/teacher ratio unchanged in our school (for now!). A big thank you to all of you who wrote letters to Ministers and TDs.

Finally, I hope that you all have a wonderful holiday and I wish you peace and happiness for the New Year. As part of our celebration of Christmas we will have carols in the yard, so put on your hats and scarves and join us in song at 11 am on Thursday 22nd December.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir, Le gach dea-ghuí,  
Rosario

## Carols

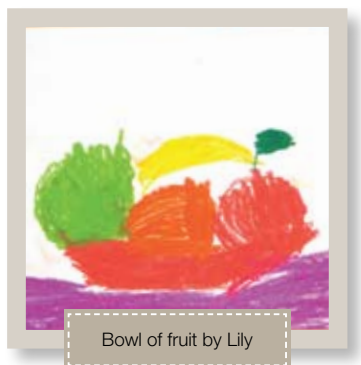
Join us in song in the school yard on 22nd December at 11 am

**LITERACY AND PISA RESULTS** I have just read a very interesting article from the New York Times entitled "How About better Parents", by Thomas Friedman ( www.nytimes.com/2011/11/20). It states that a study was done on the impact of parenting on Programme for International Impact on Students (PISA) results. The results of this study were published a few weeks ago and the findings showed that: **1** Fifteen year old students whose parents often read books with them during their first year of primary school show markedly higher scores in PISA 2009 than students whose parents read with them infrequently or not at all. **2** Even when comparing children from similar socio-economic backgrounds the findings were the same. **3** The kind of parental involvement matters. The score difference in the findings was largest when parents read a book with their child rather than any other parental activity. The research is there, you can make a real difference to your child's reading ability, so don't make any excuses. Fifteen minutes every night is the very least that your child deserves. Happy reading, Rosario.

## METNS BOM

Chairperson **Clodagh O' Brien**; Treasurer **Gerry Killen**; Recording Secretary **Joe Gallagher**; PEL Officer **Conor Moloney**; Health and Safety Officer/Maintenance **Brian Kirby**; PTA Liaison/Maintenance **Anett Minch**; Principal/Secretary **Rosario Kealy**; Staff representative/Ethos Officer **Dolores O' Donnell**.

# What are the kids up to?



Bowl of fruit by Lily

**JUNIOR INFANTS MARIE** Wow, it's hard to believe another half term has gone by so quickly. We have been very busy learning how to keep our bodies healthy and full of energy by eating good food. Food Dudes was a great success and it was great to hear parents talk about the kids wanting to try fruit and veg.

We based much of our Artwork around the theme of healthy eating, including printing, still-life drawing and imaginative paint & colour activities. We learned about our 5 senses and did lots of fun activities using our senses. We also heard about the many celebrations and festivals which take place at this time of year around the world: Thanksgiving, Advent, Hanukkah and Christmas. And finally, our hedgehogs have gone hibernating for the winter months:

*The hedgehog sleeps the Winter through  
He doesn't get up like me or you  
Nobody pulls him out of bed  
Nobody calls him a sleepyhead  
He doesn't get up 'till the flowers are out  
What do you think he dreams about?*

**JUNIOR INFANTS KATE** We've been learning so much! Jolly Phonics are such fun – especially now that we are actually reading and getting to know those funny characters Kipper, Chip, Biff and Floppy in the *Oxford Reading Tree* books.

We're learning about Human Rights and are piloting an Amnesty International programme for primary schools. We're hearing stories about people, their interactions with various governments and how their right to voice their opinions was taken from them. Then we're looking at Cinderella and other fairy tales to see what rights of theirs have been denied.

We're playing percussion instruments, singing, dancing, looking at patterns in the environment and making our own, not to mention all that counting and letter and number formation. Sometimes it seems that the day just isn't long enough!

*It's been a very busy term, with lots of science projects, the Food Dudes programme, art, sport, celebrations of all kinds, and lots, lots more!*

**SENIOR INFANTS EMMA** We have created many happy memories this term. We took part in Food Dudes and really enjoyed tasting all kinds of fruits and vegetables, we even won some prizes! During this time we have also learnt all about food, the senses and space. We carried out lots of fun experiments and went on a listening walk around the school.

We have just finished gymnastics with Louise and drama with Emer, learning new skills and having lots of fun doing so. Big thank you to Louise and Emer! Now we are learning all about Winter and doing lots of beautiful art.

**SENIOR INFANTS LIZ** We have had a fabulous first term in school, working hard learning our sums, reading and writing. We've painted, printed and coloured some amazing artwork and learned about some famous artists too. We're all feeling healthier and smarter from all the Food Dudes' fruit and vegetables. We also drew some great pictures of our new President Michael D Higgins. We adopted a mini Paddington Bear and he visited all our houses! We learned to twist, tumble and roll our bodies in gymnastics, and Emer Casey has transformed us into all sorts of funny characters in our play *The Gruffalo*. We can't wait to relax over the Christmas break and look forward to all the excitement that comes with it! Happy Holidays from Liz and Niamh!

**FIRST CLASS VICTORIA** We've been having fun working as scientists, growing cress and observing what would happen if the seeds had no water, some water and too much water. We're also watching our sea monkeys

grow every day – come and see them on our windowsill! We have drawn and painted beautiful still life pictures of fruit and created vegetable collages. In drama we took on the roles of hunters, tailors, bakers, blacksmiths, farmers and school children in preparing their town for the arrival of Gerard The Giant and his children. We enjoyed the Food Dudes programme and it's great to see the different fruit and vegetables coming in every day!

**FIRST CLASS B HELEN** We have been making great progress with our reading on all levels: Oxford Reading Tree, Fuzz Buzz and D.E.A.R. time (Drop Everything And Read) including fiction, non-fiction, and even reading our own writing on a daily basis. Some of us have progressed to short paperbacks and are enjoying writing book reports on completion of these. We are really proud of our progress. Our ability to organize ourselves during our day in school has progressed so well. Contributing our thoughts and our opinions while maintaining a wonderful spontaneity and sense of fun has to be the hallmark of the six and seven year olds that we are!



The 2nd Class Volcano!



President Michael D Higgins by Johnathan (left) and Holly (right)

**SECOND CLASS DEIRDRE** We made yummy chocolate apples for Halloween and Diva Lamps to celebrate Diwali. We went on an Autumn forest trail, and have been learning many songs and poems including 'Down by the Bay', 'Doh Re Mi' and 'Sir Winter', and about the instruments of the orchestra. We became inventors and scientists during Science week and made a cool fishing game using magnets, investigated starch, floating & sinking, dissolving and even made volcanoes

explode! We acquired some interesting new pets in our classroom: the Sea Monkeys! We have been leading a very healthy lifestyle through the 'Food Dudes' programme and our 'fruit break' is giving us lots of extra brain power! We studied the work of artist, Giuseppe Archimboldo and we created 'funky fruit people'. We look forward to celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas, and we wish everyone a wonderful break!

**SECOND CLASS DAVID** Over the past few weeks we have learned that magnets can repel or attract each other and not all metal objects will be attracted to magnets! We studied the history of our school, including an interview with Rosario, and have made a beautiful time line showing how our school has changed. We had great fun during our Drama and Gymnastics classes and are sad that they are over but we are looking forward to going to swimming in the new year!

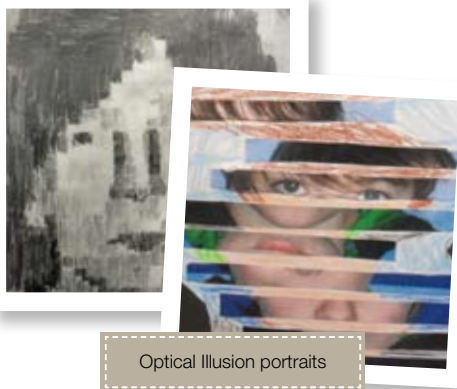
**THIRD CLASS DONAL** We studied the Vikings and went on a tour to Dublinia (with Burdocks chips after!) We incorporated the Vikings into drama and explored freeze frames of Viking villagers. We studied meditation, and learned how it can help people to relax. We looked at 2D and 3D shapes in Maths, and the addition and subtraction of money. We brought this to life, by imagining that we were at 'Eddie Rockets' and then adding up the bill at the end. We increased our Irish vocabulary and some great role plays were performed in our class shops. We learned an Irish song on food and the Vikings and improved our grammar. We covered lots of science experiments – our live sea monkeys are going great and our cress seeds are coming along nicely! The class worked hard for our student teacher, Ms. Gray and we are all looking forward to the Christmas break. We started our swimming and Gymnastics are starting very soon. Let's keep up the hard work!

**FIFTH CLASS EVA** Fifth Class have been having lots of fun with Ms Walsh, who has been teaching us this month. We have been learning all about the Aztecs and are working on group projects focusing on different aspects of Aztec life. We are really looking forward to our "Aztec Food Fair". We will be planning the event ourselves and will be eating lots of different kinds of Aztec food! We have been enjoying the novel *Trapped in Tenochtitlan* which is about a young boy who is transported back in time to the Aztecs!

In art, we have been creating our own Aztec artefacts using paper mache. In science, we have been investigating food preservation and

observing how freezing, refrigerating, drying, sugaring and salting affect a selection of foods.

**SIXTH CLASS CHRISIE** During science week we went down to Deansgrange library to take part in some 'Scien-tastic' science experiments in which we tested various



Optical Illusion portraits

materials for acidity, and messed around with potions. Our science week sea monkeys are growing well and are the source of much TLC! We are also finishing off a project on experimenting with the splitting and mixing of light, secondary colours and how the eye works. We've also done some 'Digital' portraits and 'Optical Illusion' portraits in art: Take a look!

We've been getting pretty serious in History as we've been looking at the events leading up to 9/11 and how the world has been changed by that day. We have also been reading a novel that deals with ideas around conflict and the use of terrorism, and for ethical education we've been looking at different belief systems.

Of course, being dead brainy, we have done loads of other stuff, but now we are gearing up for the holiday season and our teacher is having a nervous break down!!

## Extra activities

**HOCKEY** has taken off this year with bigger numbers than ever turning out to Newpark hockey pitch every week. We are delighted to welcome everyone back, and to welcome so many new players, including 14 from 2nd class. We have a great coaching team: two very talented hockey players from Australia (Marcus and Sean), and our own 2nd class teacher, David McGivern, all with coaching qualifications. We are very grateful to all our volunteer helpers and in particular Ana Grehan who turns out every week to encourage and cajole the 2nd class team. Anyone interested in volunteering with the older age groups would be most welcome.

During the first half term, we hosted a hockey blitz with Dalkey School Project and we were so proud of the good leadership shown by captains and experienced players, and the great attitude of our gutsy new players. Our teams showed a fabulous inclusive team spirit and played with real commitment bagging some wins, draws, a few losses – and a lot of fun.

Our 5th and 6th class girls have entered the Leinster girls' league. One match already played and 2 points gained. Next event will be the Christmas blitz on the 13th. After Christmas our sixth class mixed-league team will start their group stage matches.

It will get even colder on the pitch after Christmas so waterproof jackets, hats and hockey gloves would be useful little presents! We hope all the players are enjoying their Monday afternoons. If there are any concerns at all please contact either myself, Christine on 086 8335091, or David in 2nd class.



The enthusiastic 2nd class players after a training session

a very big  
**THANK YOU**

... to all the parents who helped with the Food Dudes programme: Riona, Loukia, Ciara, Varvara, Christine, Bairbre, Gavin, Sinead, Hailey, Aileen, Lorraine, Noelita, Rhona, Shane, Laura Lucy, Joan and Grace. We will be sending out a short survey soon to get your feedback on the programme and would really appreciate your input.

## planning ahead...

The grassed area beside our school building, has been of some concern over the past 3 years. It has been either water logged or dangerous and generally unusable for the children. The good news is that we have had confirmation from the DES that the drainage of this area will take place in July 2012. As a result we will be able to install a junior playground and, hopefully, an obstacle course for the older children. We are planning to do this in August when all drainage has been completed.

We have some plans in the pipeline to build a separate after school/ parent/resource room within the grounds of METNS. Tiago Esquivel Faria and Ciaran Mc Intyre (parents) are kindly doing a feasibility study and plans for this. However, it is very early stages and we will inform you when and if this becomes a reality.

A big thank you to Brian Kirby ( parent / BOM member ) and his team who fixed our collapsed ceiling over the mid- term break. He also removed the birds from inside the roof which was a big job entailing stripping back, clearing and re-insulating one area of the roof.

In addition to all of this we are starting the procedure of applying to the DES for an extension to facilitate Resource and Learning Support rooms as we will not have spare classrooms in the next few years. This process could take a few years so it is important to plan ahead. If any parent has skills in this area and would like to become part of our planning team for the new extension, I would be delighted to hear from you.

Finally the plans for IADT to build a sports hall, classrooms and a workshop have been cancelled by the government.

We will have busy time ahead, but much to look forward to. RK



### Extra activities METNS SOCCER VS SCOIL MHUIRE, BALLYBODEN

We played our first inter-school friendly match against Scoil Mhuire shortly after the mid term break. The squad of 15 players was selected from 5th and 6th class. METNS got off to a great start dominating the play and ending the first half 2 goals up. In the second half a renewed Scoil Mhuire came out and the tables were reversed! The game finished 4-2 in favour of the visitors after a controversial penalty was awarded against METNS. Scoil Mhuire had some premier level club players so this was a challenging side to take on in our first match. Well done to everyone, great play all around. Particularly strong performances came from Rebecca Brady, Luis Faria, Jonah Rennicks, Vishvajit Sundavrajan, Oisín Connolly, and David Murphy **FRIDAY SOCCER** Our senior players are competing in our own scaled down version of the German Fußball-Bundesliga. We have eight small sided teams battling out to qualify for the annual Aaron and Andy Cup and Shield competitions. With just one fixture remaining the table looks very tight. **SENIOR ATHLETICS** Relay races have been the main stay in the activity diet of our senior athletes over the last few weeks: Chinese Relays, Straight Relays, and Circular Relays! The weather has turned colder and wetter, but once we are moving, we don't seem to notice. Some of runners are showing great form and determination to be at the front. Elisabeth Manning, Laoise NicGearailt, Emma Connor, Eve Buckley and Lucy Murphy are looking mighty quick. Our younger athletes are making great steps in their baton passing skills and Leah Norton, Molly O'Toole, Lily Bennett, and Kate Murphy formed a great team that presented a formidable challenge to the older relay teams. Jack Rowan and Joe Speers can clear hurdles with ease. Ferdia O'Neill, Elva Dunne, and Alice Gallagher all exhibit boundless energy in so many, many, ways. DS



### MEETING THE MINISTER

METNS pupils, Jack Rowan, Jack Ring, Oliver McGannon, Caetano Faria, and Lennon Doyle, all of whom play for Dalkey United U11 soccer teams, had the honour of representing their club at opening of a new all-weather pitch and playground in Hyde Park. The boys were a central part of the ceremony and they got to meet Minister of State, Michael Ring TD and the CEO of FAI, Mr John Delaney. Before returning to school the boys polished off some tasty snacks. Thank you, boys.

We are delighted that the Government has decided to leave the pupil/teacher ratio unchanged ( for now!)



A big thank you to all of you who wrote letters to Ministers and TDs, it helped a lot. RK

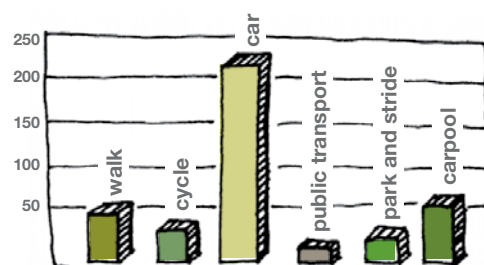
**SCHOOL RUN** In 1981 15% of children traveled to school by car. In 1991 it was 18%, and in 1996 it was 32%. In 2002 it rose to 38%, in 2006 to 41% and in 2009 it was 49%!

## → green flag updates

For the next two years in METNS, the green flag theme will be transport. We will be working on improving our carbon footprint by walking or cycling more and driving less. A carbon footprint is the amount of fuel (carbon) that we send into our atmosphere. We have held surveys in each class to find out how the pupils in MET travel to school. The majority drive to school and back every day. The results of this survey are on display

inside the front door of the school. We are trying to encourage the children and parents to think about how much they drive and to try to reduce that amount even if only by one journey a week. We are introducing 'WOW ( Walk On Wednesdays/ Weekends) days' in 2012, starting in January. Keep your ears open for transport flag bulletins and watch out for the next Green article in the newsletter.

Lisa Murphy and Ali McIntyre



How we travelled to school on Nov 8th