



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

As we head into the break and onwards towards 2014, I'd like to pay thanks – on behalf of the Board of Management - to the entire school community for, yet again, going the extra mile to ensure we close out the year in style.

We can often take for granted the scale and breath of your various contributions into the school. These become visible, of course, during big school events and performances like Winterfest, where all staff, parents and pupils pull together to create a magic that's unique to us.

But that sense of co-operation is inherent in every aspect of the day-to-day life of this school too and, although not always as obvious, is key to how we roll and conduct our business.

Joining us for this year's Winterfest performance are two former Principals of the school, Paddie Murphy and Sinéad Watson. Sinéad came to see the performance on Wednesday, and I'd like to welcome them both back to R.E.T.N.S. In the atmosphere, energy, creativity and mood around the school, I know they'll recognise the belief systems and ethos they over-saw here during their respective tenures.

Leading the school from the Principal's office is now the responsibility of Mary Carron. Mary assumed the Principalship last October and this is her first Winterfest in that role. It's important that R.E.T.N.S. continues to thrive and develop in a positive and pupil-centred manner and, to that end, the school is in very capable hands. I know you'll join with me in wishing Mary the very best of luck for 2014 and beyond.

I hope you all enjoy a joyful and peaceful break.

Colm O'Callaghan

STUDENT COUNCIL REVIEW

Halloween

We judged the staff costumes and had to go around the school looking at the staff's costumes. Over all we had a good time. The winner was Patricia in 5th class, second was Dennis the care taker of the school and Brian in junior infants came in third.

Yard boxes

At the meeting we all decided that there would be two people (Kyle and Saoirse) doing a monthly check-up on the yard boxes.

DVD Covers

Every child in the school got a chance to draw a picture for the cover of winter fest DVD cover. The student council members judged them. Some of the older classes got to write a blurb and they judged them to. We eventually chose the winner , it was a very hard decision.

Meeting with Colm

We had a meeting with Colm (Chair Person of board of management). We asked him questions and he asked us questions on how we run the meetings.

By Liadain and George.

The Principal's Desk

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This time of year is often a time of reflection, and for me in particular this year it is a time to look back over the first term in my new role as Principal of RETNS. It has been such a privilege to take on this role in a school that is already a thriving educational community, and to attempt to lead us forward as a school. I owe a great debt of thanks to all those, whether staff, parents or children, who have helped make my transition from teacher to principal so easy, and who have helped make the last few weeks so rewarding.

As always, the enthusiasm and hard work of the parents of RETNS is so appreciated. I would like to thank the members of the PA committee who give up their precious time to work for the good of all the children and the benefit of the whole school community. Their commitment to the school is a tremendous support to the staff and to myself as Principal. A special thank you must go to all those parents who have spent hours in the school, and at home, sewing and painting and sticking, and all other manner of things, in preparation for this year's Winterfest celebration. You have helped to create a very special atmosphere around the school over the last few weeks.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the Board of Management for their real dedication and commitment to the school, and for the invaluable work they do in keeping the school running so well. It is a privilege to have the support of such a dedicated group of people.

To the pupils I say, well done! You have learned, played, danced, chatted, co-operated, laughed, joked, sometimes cried, and all the time each and every one of you has strived to do better, learn more and build this school community into a place where there is enjoyment of learning and a real team spirit.

Lastly, but certainly by no means least, I would like to thank my colleagues, the fabulous team that is RETNS staff. Whatever their role in the school, they give wholeheartedly and willingly of their time, energy and commitment to make this school the great learning environment that it is. The discipline, achievements and happiness of the children is largely down to their dedication and their commitment to achieving the highest standards for all our children in all areas.

We are all looking forward with great anticipation and excitement to the climax of our term's work – our Winterfest celebration on Thursday, December 19th at 10 am. To all in RETNS school community we wish you a very happy and peaceful festive season and look forward to seeing you all again in 2014.

Mary

WINTERFEST 2013

This play is based on the original book written by Roald Dahl, where an innocent boy named Charlie Bucket wins one of five Golden Tickets to meet the magnificent Willy Wonka and take an adventure through his chocolate factory. See five lucky children win a ticket into their own imaginations!

The innocent Charlie Bucket will be surprised and something may just change his life forever...

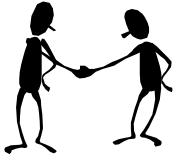
Just wait and see as R.E.T.N.S take you on a delicious adventure into a world of chocolate and sweets guided by the Candy Man himself, Mr. Willy Wonka.

Be stunned by the music and the songs, including Pure Imagination, The Candy Man and lots more!!

This journey filled with ups and downs, highs and lows and sweet and sour.

Sit back and enjoy, as we take our turn in the spot light!

BY MOLLY (4TH), ZOE (5TH)
SEAN, DARRACH, ADAM, CAOIMHE, MEADBH (6TH)



RETNS PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

We've had another busy start to the school year with our traditional coffee mornings to welcome everyone back after the summer break and meet the new members of our school community.

We hosted coffee for parents to farewell Sinéad and wish her well in her new role as Principal of WETNS and also to welcome Mary in her new position as Principal of our school.

Our PA AGM was held in October and I would like to thank the outgoing members of the PA Committee and welcome our new members on board. Dr Gráinne Kirwan also gave a presentation on Social Media & Internet Safety on the evening.

The PA represents all parents, working to promote ongoing communication and co-operation between parents, guardians, teachers and school management. Class Reps provide an invaluable link with individual parents and guardians from each class and I would like to thank them for their ongoing efforts and remind everyone that the PA can be contacted through any of our committee members. The PA letter box is located inside the front door and we

We are also members of the NPC which provides a wealth of information and support for all parents – for more information see www.npc.ie.

And finally on behalf of the Parents Association I would like to wish you all well over the winter break and look forward to seeing you all back in 2014.

Sharon Wilson

Chairperson

Parents' Association Committee



5th Class & parents making festive Gingerbread houses



Another busy school year started with our annual Positive Behaviour Week in September, and children got an opportunity to examine practical ways of creating a positive environment during class and playtimes. The children then worked to create their own class rules in each classroom.

The older children practised democracy in action in voting in a new Student Council and Green School Committee in October. The new representatives have been busy with a variety of activities and all the candidates learned about active citizenship through preparing speeches and posters during a keenly fought campaign! Other children learned about active citizenship through attending a course on anti-bullying in Swords ETNS in November. Smiling faces were the theme for the week as the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors intrigued us with posters before revealing their anti-bullying message at a special assembly on December 5th. The term finished off with older children learning about that great exponent of **Equality and Justice**, Nelson Mandela.

Classes studied the traditions associated with a diverse range of **Belief Systems** including Harvest Festival, Thanksgiving, Sukkot, Hanukkah, Diwali and Halloween. At Halloween children combined dressing up with learning about the old Celtic traditions of Samhain. The focus this month is on Yule, Winter Solstice, Christmas and New Year traditions from around the Globe. See some of the colourful displays around the school!

Tree Day and World Biodiversity Day provided opportunities for learning about **Ethics and The Environment**, as did the bulb planting and work undertaken in the Wildlife Garden.

Buddy activities and the intense preparations for Winterfest enable the development of our core values of respect, co-operation and inclusivity in practical, everyday situations.

The annual **Ethos Conference** in November was attended by some members of the school community and the workshops and presentations provided us with some great ideas for the Spring term. We are sourcing some new books to explore diverse families and cultures through the Learn Together and English curriculum. ET are holding a conference in February to discuss the revision of the **Learn Together Programme** and RETNS will be supporting the ONE DAY TOGETHER ET fundraiser on February 27th - more about these two events in January!!

Seasons Greetings- Nollaig Shona- Feliz Navidad- Happy New Year!!
Mary Griffin



**Anti-Bullying Committee
launching their campaign to
the whole school.**