



Rockport School



INDEPENDENT BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL | BOYS & GIRLS | 3-18 YEARS

NEWSLETTER

Newsletter no 12 / Winter Term / 25th November 2016



NOVEMBER

Time

Event

Tue 29th New York Trip leaves (back Sat 3rd December)
R14 Mountain Biking, Tullymore

Wed 30th 13.10-14.30 R5-R8 Belfast Giants' Visit, Centenary Building

DECEMBER

Thu 1st 9.30-14.15 R1-R2 Trip to Mount Stewart

Fri 2nd Rockport Ladies Lunch

Sat 3rd AQE Test 3

Headmaster's Headlines

A Good School: A shorter offering than most this week as I am joined today by someone from *The Good Schools Guide* who has been enjoying a tour of the school led by pupils (and I suspect, **not** really enjoying spending most of the morning interviewing me). If successful, this will mark our first inclusion in this austere and prestigious publication which is effectively the *Who's Who* of top schools in the UK.

American Dream: Last night's *Thanksgiving Dinner* organised by the PTA was once more very well attended and certainly achieved the relaxed family atmosphere and sense of community that was intended. As I said last week, this event was originally established some years ago by a number of American families but is now firmly established on the school calendar. Indeed, it occurred to me last night that, although we have some American boarders, none of those families from the USA who initiated the event are still here. Instead, we shared the evening with the rest of that rainbow of nations that make up our international school community. I can think of no nicer legacy for our USA families than to have created such a lovely event. Sincere thanks to the PTA and to the other staff and parent volunteers who made last night possible.

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Stocking Fillers: I am reliably informed that the School Calendar for 2017 has already gone to print; and that it will fly off the shelves when it goes on sale next week despite not having me on the front cover (they tell me I've been relegated to the back page...).

Pre-ordering in the school office will guarantee that you get all the copies you need for the Grandparents at Christmas.

George Vance
Headmaster

2017 Calendar



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GENERAL

Junior Choir and woodwind group at Culloden Hotel, Sunday 27th November

Please note the times for Sunday's tree light switch on:

Woodwind group – meet in Culloden at 3pm, finish at 3.30pm. Boarding pupils will travel to the Culloden with Miss Carr at 2.45pm, and return to school with Mrs Toland, shortly after 4pm.

Junior Choir – please arrive in the foyer **no later than 3.20pm** for a prompt 3.30 start. All pupils performing must wear FULL SCHOOL UNIFORM.

Junior Choir to Ladies Lunch

Junior Choir will once again be singing at Ladies Lunch this Friday. **Full school uniform required.** Pupils will leave school on the minibus at 10.30am, and return to school between 1-1.30pm. Lunch will be provided at the Culloden.

Melanie Carr
Teacher in Charge of Music and Drama

Hollywood Festival – Photo Shoot

Could all those who have taken part in the Hollywood Festival, please bring in their cups, medals and certificates on Tuesday 29th November for a photo shoot in front of the school. Many thanks.

Catherine Hunter
Singing Tutor

R5 Breakfast Club

The R5 class is very keen to run their own Breakfast Club. We have had a very successful run this week and I am now handing the organising over to the children. Unfortunately I cannot afford to fund it single-handedly and I have suggested that each pupil who wishes to take part, brings in £2 on Monday morning. They will organise the finances which will help greatly with their maths. They will have to provide a balance of food, linking to their Science and many other skills will be developed. All in all, a worthwhile challenge! And very good value! Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Clare Neill
R5 Form Teacher/French



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Speech Day 2017

Please be aware that Speech Day 2017 will take place on **Thursday 15th June**, not Friday 16th June as previously advertised. We have had to make this amendment due to multiple GCSE examinations taking place that day. Further details will be available closer to the time.

Mrs Rhonda D. Palmer
Deputy Head

New York, New York!

Those lucky students travelling to New York next week are to meet at school at **5.30 am on Tuesday 29th November** to travel to Dublin Airport for an 11.15 am flight to New York (JFK) (Flight DL405). We will return to Rockport School by coach at approximately **11.30 am on Saturday 3rd December**. Please note baggage allowance is one bag to check in (**23kg**) and one piece of hand luggage.

Parents and guardians, please keep an eye on the school's **Twitter** and **Facebook** accounts for daily updates!

Mr P Lutton
Head of Arts Faculty



Found Parcel Shelf!

A parcel shelf has been found in the school grounds. If you have lifted one out of your car and forgot it on the lawn, please come to the office to pick it up. Thank you.



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BOARDING

Parents of Boarders – Contacting the Boarding House

For all non-urgent enquiries please direct them by email to Mrs Dawn Toland and I will ensure that they are forwarded to the correct person within the Boarding Team dtoland@rockportschool.com

Should you wish to contact the Boarding Department by telephone, please always make your initial contact using the main school telephone number. From 8am until 5.30pm the school office staff will transfer your call. After 5.30pm this number is automatically transferred upstairs to the fixed line in the Houseparent Office. **Rockport School Telephone Number : +44 (0)2890428372**

The Houseparent and Duty Staff are often engaged in supervisory duties in dorms or during second prep. As a result they may be unable to answer the fixed line. A new mobile number is now available. **The new mobile number is +44 (0)7763511864**

Please disregard any other numbers that have been issued previously. When possible please try to ensure that contact is made before 9/9.30pm as boarding staff are engaged in preparing supper for the boarders and settling them into their dorms for the night.

Senior Boarding Staff – Duty Nights

(Assisted by Gap Year Students Miss Laura Renyard, Miss Susannah Wolfe and Mr Adam Milburn)

Monday	Miss G. Fitzpatrick Mr R. Reynolds
Tuesday	Miss G. Fitzpatrick Mrs L. Hobson Mr J. Hobson
Wednesday	Mrs G. McGimpsey Mr R. Reynolds
Thursday	Mrs G. McGimpsey Mr G. Donnell Mrs C. Donnell
Friday Saturday Sunday <i>Staff work alternate weekends</i>	Mrs Jennifer Coates & Mr Sean Flynn OR Miss Amy Greer & Mr Patrick Magee

Dawn Toland
Head of Boarding
dtoland@rockportschool.com



ARTS



Arts News

In conjunction with our ongoing partnership with **Standard Utilities**, Rockport Art pupils have this week been presented with two terrific opportunities to broaden their creative horizons. Acclaimed artist **Susan MacWilliam** visited school on Monday to present aspects of her practice to a group of senior school students. There was a chance to see and interact with some of Susan's pieces, including her own, hand-made Stereoscopic glasses, a version of a virtual reality headset – proof indeed that Science and Art can sit alongside each other!

On Wednesday R13 AS Level pupils visited **Array Studios** in Belfast, with local artist and studio director **Jane Butler** kindly playing host. The studios are the working hub for a collective of contemporary artists in various fields and pupils were very lucky to see up-close the process behind pieces as they toured the space. The students (and teacher!) left feeling suitably inspired and are looking forward to working with Jane again, as she will be visiting school in the near future to hold some practical workshops



ARTIST VISIT

As part of our ongoing series of artist workshops, next Monday (the 28th) sees Rockport host **Miguel Martin** to talk about his practice. Miguel works within traditional still-life drawing and multi-media installation, has exhibited extensively in the UK and the USA and is a member of **Platform Arts** in Belfast. This talk will run from 4.15 – 5.00pm in the Art room and **all** R12 and R13 Art pupils should attend (we still be home in plenty of time for an early night ahead of the New York trip!)

David Hamilton
Teacher of Art & Design



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SPORTS

Good luck to Ellie Gordon!

Ellie has qualified and will be competing in the All-Ireland U14 Cross Country Championships in Abbotstown, Dublin on Sunday. It is a great achievement to qualify for this event but knowing Ellie, she will be there to win! We look forward to hearing about the weekend and will update her progress in next week's newsletter.

Congratulations Ellie!

Congratulations to Ellie Gordon who has been selected for the U15 Netball NI Future Internationals Academy. This is an astounding achievement as she was competing against girls from Years 10/11 and she is still only in Year 8. Well done, Ellie!



Aimee's cheerleading

Aimee Deaney will be performing in cheerleading for the Belfast Giants at the SSE Arena this weekend. Aimee has been a regular member of the team for the past 5 months and was selected from a squad of 30. Well done, Aimee!

Parents please note:

As the Golf Academy is now up and running plus the Astro Turf pitch is complete, the PE programme for the last few weeks of term is detailed in the table below. Some activities will change for the spring term but the amended version will be issued in the late December newsletter. Please check your son/daughter's timetable and ensure they have the required gear.

Black Canterbury tracksuit bottoms must be worn for PE and only regulation Rockport PE clothing is allowed. Under armour, hats and gloves must be black.

Gail Holland
Head of PE and Personal Development Faculty



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Sports Programme

This programme will change after Christmas. Revised programme will be in the December Newsletter.

Day	Groups	Activity/Activities	Venue	Staff	Times	Transport
Monday	R5/6/7 Girls & Boys	Hockey	Rockport	DI /RR/HMcC	14.50-16.00	None
	8/9/10 Girls	Netball	Rockport	KMcV	14.50-16.00	
	R8/9/10 Boys	Football		SMcI		
	Girls Golf Dev Squad	Golf	Hollywood GC	Stephen Crooks	14.50-16.00	Minibus Parents to pick up at golf club at 16.00
Tuesday	Elite Golf Squad	Golf	Bangor GC	Stephen Gordon	09.00	Parents
	R3/4 R5 –7	Swimming	Aurora	EMcK/LA	School time 14.50-16.00	Bus
	U11 Dev Squad	Golf	Blackwood GC	Debbie Hanna	14.50-16.00	Minibus Parents to pick up at golf club at 16.00
Wednesday	Rec – R3	Golf	Rockport	DHanna/SMc I/HC	School time	Minibus
	R4	Golf	Blackwood GC			
	R8/9 Girls	Golf	Blackwood GC	DHanna/HC	14.50 – 16.00	Bus
	Boys Dev squad 1	Golf	Hollywood GC	Stephen Crooks	15.00 – 16.00	Minibus to golf club
	R5/6/7 Boys	Tag Rugby	Rockport	EM	14.50 – 16.00	Parents to pick up at golf club at 16.00
	R5/6/7 Girls	Netball/games Hockey	Rockport	RB	14.50 – 16.00	No transport required



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PTA

I Am Truly Thankful

Last night over one hundred pupils, parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, brothers, sisters, teachers, Rockport staff, husbands and wives came together to celebrate thanksgiving; and enjoy a delicious meal together. Thanksgiving may be a very important date in America's calendar but it has become an important date in Rockport's too. In short it was wonderful. Thank you to everyone for coming along and adding to the organised chaos. A massive thank you to our kitchen staff for staying on and cooking for us. Everyone agrees, it is their favourite meal of the year.

The Dining Hall was adorned with all the heartfelt thoughts of our Early Years department. Mums and Dads ranked high on the lists along with sweets, teddies, friends, bed, home and school. Reading them would put a smile on anyone's face.

Talking of being thankful, I am indebted to my fellow PTA-ers who have taken over while I was away celebrating my husband's 50th (I know you're shocked, he doesn't look a day over 40 ☺). Firstly Cait Greene did a marvellous job with writing the newsletter. Cait is a natural so I offered her a permanent deal but she declined. Sure she'll pick it up again next year when she becomes Chair....as a parent pointed out to Cait this week, the only way you can leave the PTA is through the Witness Protection Programme.. Cait is currently considering home schooling her son and whatever happened to Kavin Millar, if that is still her name ☺.

This time of year it is PTA mania but Cait and Jo both rose to the challenge, code for thrown in at the deep end, and organised not only Thanksgiving but the Ladies Lunch too. Thank you, honestly, I couldn't have relaxed by the pool or on the beach for hours on end, day in day out, sipping cocktails if it weren't for you both ☺



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Rockport School Ladies Lunch, Friday 2nd December, 11am - Stuart Suite, Culloden Estate

In accordance with the Culloden's cancellation policy, final numbers for the Rockport Ladies Lunch must be with us no later than Friday 25th November. Please ensure you have your name down if you wish to come and if your table numbers have changed, please let the office know or contact us through our email address pta@rockportschool.com. There are some tickets left, so please let us know if you can come. It'll be fantastic!

Please note tickets will be available from the office from Monday 28th November.

Last week Cait announced we will be joined next week by Chris Tomlinson, an Ambassador for the Healthy Happy Child campaign. Chris is a former Long Jump world record holder and Silver medalist, having competed in three Olympic games. Married to Lucia and dad to Raphael, Vincenzo and Valentina, Chris advocates a whole child approach to health. At a towering 6ft 6, blonde and eyes of blue, you definitely can't fail to spot him at the Ladies Lunch.

Joining Chris at the Rockport Ladies Lunch is Grammy-nominee musician, Alana Henderson. After spending 2014 establishing herself as an up-and-coming Irish solo artist at home and across Europe, Alana was invited by Irish star Hozier to join him on his worldwide tour throughout 2015 and 2016 as featured cellist, vocalist and support act. Described as 'One to watch' by Hot Press, we are delighted Alana will be performing for us at the Rockport Ladies Lunch.





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This year we are kindly sponsored by:



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BALLYCLARE DENTAL PRACTICE



We are raising funds not only for our school but also for:

The Boom Foundation – a charity supporting patients with sarcoma

www.theboomfoundation.co.uk

Reverse The Trend Foundation – a children’s charity addressing health which runs the Healthy Happy Child campaign

www.reversethetrend.org.uk



Dates for your diary:

Santa Claus visit – Thursday 22nd December

Easter Bunny visit – Thursday 6th April

Dad’s Day Out – Friday 28th April

Belfast Marathon – Monday 1st May

School Fete – Sunday 7th May

Speech Day – Thursday 15th June

Thank you for your continued support for all our events. Together we raise much-needed and appreciated funds for our school which benefit each and every child.