



# Rockport School News



INDEPENDENT BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL BOYS & GIRLS 3-18

Newsletter no 15 / Winter Term / 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016



December	Time	Event
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	9.00-16.00 13.15 12- 16.30 approx. 18.00-19.00	R12 Art Mock Exam Modern Languages Christmas Party Netball Minor A team v Belfast Royal Academy/ St Dominics (A) Netball Club Christmas Party
Tue 20 <sup>th</sup>	9.00-11.00 9.30 12.30-14.00	Carol Service Rehearsal Early Years Nativity Dress Rehearsal R12 & R7 Captains Lunch
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>	13.15 11.00-12.00	Early Years Nativity Play, Tucker Hall Junior Choir, Richmond Nursing Home
Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup>	13.00-15.00	Christmas Jumper (non-uniform) Day PTA Santa Claus Visit Early Years Mr Hulabaloo
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>	11.00-12.00	Carol Service, St Philip and St James' Church, Church Road, Holywood

## Headmaster's Headlines

**The Prince's Trust:** A great effort by **Robert Burke** on Tuesday morning when temporarily he took over my job: taking not just one but two school assemblies to introduce the work of the Prince's Trust to both pupils and staff. Robert displayed leadership skills throughout and was especially effective when talking to the R3-R7 children, where he not only communicated his message effectively but also adapted his approach and content to suit the younger audience. Well done, Robert: a future in politics beckons, if you can just lose some of that integrity.

ROCKPORT SCHOOL, Craigavad, Holywood, Co Down, BT18 0DD, UK

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Company Reg No: NI007054 Registered Charity No: XN48119

**Mock Shock:** This week saw the start of our trial GCSE and A Level examinations, an event which seems to have come as somewhat of a surprise for a number of our students, despite much pre-planning and preparation by staff. One purpose for sitting these exams is to simulate the real thing; that our candidates who will be sitting the exams-proper in May and June might have a 'dry-run', thus making any mistakes now, and learning any valuable lessons: lessons which would hopefully then result in those errors not being repeated in the summer when the stakes are much higher. It all makes good sense. Here are some of those valuable lessons learned already this week by some of our 15-18 year-olds:

- I should turn up for my examinations
- I should probably turn up for my examinations on the correct day
- Ideally, I should report to the correct room for my examination
- I should try to turn up 10 minutes before and not 10 minutes after the start time
- It might even be a good idea to bring essential equipment with me, like a pen
- In the ideal world, I would know which exam I was sitting, preferably before entering the examination room
- Perhaps going to the toilet beforehand would preclude me from having to leave the hall during a 45 minute exam paper

I am constantly reading that today's teenagers are so much more sophisticated and capable than in the past but one or two of our number (all **boys**, it has to be said) conspire to disguise it really well. I know that we can rely on you as parents to support us in our efforts to improve their personal admin and organisation. Together, we can get them through this...

**Community Service:** Well done to all those who read, sang or played at the local Community Carol Service on Monday evening at 1900 in Holy Trinity Church in Glenraig. Yesterday, I was pleased to receive the following letter from the Vicar, Alan Parkhill:

*Dear Mr Vance,  
Thank you very much for the part you and some of your pupils took in the Community Carol Service held last night in Holy Trinity Church, Glenraig. As we always hope that our services of worship are pleasing unto God, last night's service was also very pleasing unto men. Although Ronan could be heard but not seen by many, he read very well his appointed reading. The Junior Choir gave an excellent rendering of 'This Night a Miracle Happened'. It was the first time I had heard that song and it was delightfully sung by your Junior Choir.*

*'Joy to the World' by Ji Young and Jung-Hun Yoon on clarinet were, dare I say, in a class of their own. One man told me in the parish hall afterwards that as soon as they had finished, he wanted to clap, but being a service of worship.... I told him that if he had, a lot of people, including myself would have joined in! Keep music making like that and they should go far.*

*I am sorry that I was only able to meet personally a few of the musicians from both schools after the service. Please pass on our grateful thanks to your 'team'.*

*Yours very sincerely,  
Alan Parkhill*

**George Vance  
Headmaster**

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## Christmas at Rockport

Christmas is a time of giving and also a time to think about others. At Rockport we hope to instil this in our pupils by showing our support for local charities who are dedicated to the service of others.



## Christmas Jumper (non- uniform) Day, Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

All pupils may attend school in their festive jumper. A donation of £2 will be placed on your bill, which will be donated to the Prince's Trust, for whom we are fundraising this year.



## Unwrapped Gifts at Carol Service

All pupils are reminded to bring an unwrapped gift to the church and place it under the tree upon their arrival. The gifts will be picked up by a local charity and distributed to needy children in the local area. The collection will be in aid of the Prince's Trust and we are delighted to welcome Sir Nigel Hamilton, KCB to the Carol Service to receive the collection on behalf of the Prince's Trust.

## Carol Service – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016

Please remember that your children should be dropped off at St Philip and St James' Church, Church Road, Holywood on Friday morning 23<sup>rd</sup> December, **not at school**. Please arrange to **drop your child off at the church by 10.30am**. Form teachers will be there to meet and seat the children. Please ensure that all pupils are dressed in full school uniform, with white shirts, blazers and ties. Shoes should be polished and hair should be neat and tidy.

The carol service is scheduled to start at 11am and will be followed by handshakes outside the church before the end of term. All parents and friends of Rockport are warmly invited to attend this lovely end to the winter term. However, if you are unable to attend, please ensure that you **pick your child up from the church at 12 noon**.

## Original Rockport Christmas Puddings

Only **a few puddings are remaining!** They can be purchased from the Dining Hall at the cost of £6 each.



### Santas Snow Logs (R11 Business Class)

In order to celebrate our young enterprise success with our mini company as well as the running of the Bookfair, the class will have a chance to relax and also give our Spanish students in the class Vera and Carlos a good send off back to Spain at the end of term. We have decided to have an evening out in Little Wing Hollywood. The pupils will travel on the 4.29 pm train to Hollywood and return on the 6.53 pm back to Seahill. If you would like to collect your son or daughter in Hollywood rather than back at Rockport, please let me know via email: [hmcbride@rockportschool.com](mailto:hmcbride@rockportschool.com)



**Heather McBride**  
**Teacher of Business Studies**

### Christmas Charity Update

- Penny Post will continue until Wednesday 21st December.
- Festive Bun Sale will take place on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December in the dining hall during morning break. Bring £1. Thanks to all those pupils, parents and staff volunteers who have offered to bake over the weekend.
- Wear your Christmas jumper to school on Thursday – no money needed (£2 added to bill)
- Bring some pocket money for the church collection on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December as well as an unwrapped gift to place under the tree. Our donated gifts will be received by the Prince's Trust this year. Please bear in mind that this charity typically works with 13-30 year olds. However, any toys donated will also be much appreciated by the young parents that they come into contact with.

Thank you and Merry Christmas !

### Penny Post

Our Christmas Postal Service was very busy this week and the R6 class certainly helped us all to get into the festive spirit as they merrily sang their way through daily deliveries. The post box will remain in the front hall until Wednesday, so there is still time if you would like your card delivered by Santa's Little Helpers!

**Suzanne McCartney**  
**R6 Form Teacher & Charity Co-Ordinator**



### **R12 GCSE Coursework Day**

R12 GCSE Art & Design pupils will be off timetable to work on the final piece for their coursework in the art room on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December**. They will work from 9 am – 4 pm and follow normal break and lunch. Pupils must bring any equipment and resources needed, as discussed previously in class.

**David Hamilton**  
**Teacher of Art & Design**



### **ICT Catch Up Session**

There will be a catch up session for any R12 GCSE ICT student who has outstanding controlled assessment, on Wednesday 21st December 4.00pm-5.30pm in CS1.

**Sarah Parke**  
**Head of ICT & ICT Co Ordinator**

### **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh**

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh club will be starting in January 2017 every Thursday from 4.30-5.30pm beginning on the 19<sup>th</sup> January. If you are in R10 and interested, come along.

### **A Continental Christmas**

On Monday 19th December pupils who have signed up are invited to the Continental Christmas Party at 1.15pm in the Languages classroom, where there will be festive food and music from several European countries. One of our R10 Spanish students is providing us with traditional Spanish Christmas treats in addition to one of our R8 French pupils bringing in a homemade 'Galette des Rois'.

**K Megarry**  
**Teacher of French and Spanish**

## **SPORTS**

### **Gymnastics**

On Sunday 11th December Caragh O'Sullivan represented LX Gymnastics at the GNI (Gymnastics Northern Ireland) winter challenge at Twisters Gymnastics Club. With 750 children at LX and only 24 chosen to compete this was a great honour. There were 7 clubs competing and over 100 gymnasts. Caragh performed brilliantly taking two bronze medals in what was a closely fought contest. The next competition will be the Northern Championships where Caragh will hope to continue her success. Well done, Caragh!

**Gail Holland**  
**Head of PE & Personal Development Faculty**

## **Festive Bun Sale**

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

All buns £1 each. Free juice drink with each purchase. In the dining hall from 10.30-11.15am.

## **Christmas Counts**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 , Tucker Hall, 1.15pm**

You, your family and friends are warmly invited to our Christmas Nativity on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 in the Tucker Hall. The show will start at 1.15pm. Mince pies and mulled wine will be available in the Home Economics room from 12.30pm. **All children from Playgroup – R4 can go home after the performance. Daycare will be available as usual.**

## **Christmas Jumper Day**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**

Wear your festive gear to school (£2 will be added to each pupil's bill). This is set to be a busy day! Children will enjoy a visit from Santa in the morning, followed by Christmas Lunch and then Mr Hullabaloo is coming! This is a special treat for the children and we would like to keep it as a surprise. The cost is £3 per child and will be added to your bill.

**Playgroup, Reception and R1 should be picked up at 2.15pm on this day.**

## **Whole School Carol Service**

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016 at St. Philip & St. James, Holywood, 11am**

The Early Years choir will be performing at our whole school Carol Service. Children should not come to school on this day. Instead, R1-R4 pupils should meet their teachers at St. Philip & St. James, Holywood at 10.45am. They should wear full school uniform (white shirt, tie, grey jumper and blazer).

**Playgroup and Reception children are not required to attend but are welcome to come along with parents.**

## **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Maisie and Ruby Tolland! Both girls have been taking part in Irish Dancing festivals and we are so proud to report on their success!

Maisie (age 4) came 3<sup>rd</sup> in her first ever Irish Dancing Festival and received a trophy for 'The Most Promising Beginner'. Ruby (age 6) has recently won 1<sup>st</sup> place for her three hand reel and 2<sup>nd</sup> place for her light double jig at the Holywood Festival. She is now officially a 'Champion Dancer' and will go on to dance the 'prizewinners' category of every competition from now on! She will also be dancing in the Northern Ireland Championships! Well done girls!



**Lynn Athanasiou**

**Head of Early Years**



### **Old Rockportian visits the Music Department**

It was such a delight when Old Rockportian, Thomas Hunt, returned from London for a visit. Thomas, who is currently studying Music at the Fine Arts College in London, gave Miss Carr a performance of his most recent piano composition. It is fantastic! It was great to see you again Thomas, and wonderful to hear how you are developing as a musician. Stay in touch.

### **Junior Choir to Richmond Nursing Home**

Junior Choir will be singing at Richmond Nursing Home on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December, from 11am to midday. **Full school uniform must be worn.**

### **BBC Radio Ulster School Choir of the Year.**

Our wonderful Junior Choir have submitted an entry into the newly revived School Choir of the Year competition. The children worked really hard on Thursday to record their entry. We will find out on 9<sup>th</sup> January if we have been successful and selected for the Regional heats. Fingers crossed! Watch this space!

**Melanie Carr**

**Teacher in Charge of Music and Drama**

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:dtoland@rockportschool.com)

### **End of Term Arrangements for Boarders**

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December, the house will be open from 9.15 until 10.00 for parents who wish to collect their son/daughter and their belongings from the boarders' entrance, the foyer at the green door. Please come upstairs to collect your child and let Mrs McGimpsey know that you are departing. We look forward to seeing you at the carol service from 10.30am at St Philip and St James, Church Road, Holywood.

Parents and guardians who are unable to collect their child and their belongings from Rockport in the morning before 10.00 can do so immediately after the carol service from St Philip and St James Church, the carol service is scheduled to finish at 11.50. Arrangements will be made to store Boarders' luggage at the church for departure from this point.

### **Return to Boarding after the Christmas Break**

Please ensure that you child's return travel arrangements have been emailed to Mrs Christine Hamill at [schooloffice@rockportschool.com](mailto:schooloffice@rockportschool.com) by Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December. We require this information in advance to enables us to arrange airport collections should they be required.

The Boarding Department will be open for students on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January from 6pm. Please notify the office or boarding directly by emailing [dtoland@rockportschool.com](mailto:dtoland@rockportschool.com) if it is your intention to board that evening in preparation for the new term.

**Dawn Toland**

**Head of Boarding**

[dtoland@rockportschool.com](mailto:dtoland@rockportschool.com)

**Let the Festivities Begin!**

On Monday night I attended my first Carol Service at Holy Trinity Glenraig Parish Church with the Rockport Junior Choir. The service included singing from Glenraig Integrated Primary School, readings from Rockport's Ronan Jordan, Girl Guides, Heads of school to name a few. The Junior Choir looked like angels, sang like angels and behaved like angels. They may be small in number but they sang their little hearts out; an absolute joy to listen to and so were Ji Young Yoon and Jung-Hun Yoon as they played their musical piece note perfect. I love Christmas Hymns and hitting the high notes can be a little tricky but my favourite hymn is "Ding Dong Merrily on High" I enjoy the challenge of singing Glooooooooooooooria in one breath!

Next Wednesday the Early Years present their nativity play which is always a treat. It is the most innocent and pure of performances by our youngest actors. I enjoy the excitement in their faces, the exuberance of their acting and of course the occasional misdemeanour 😊.

On Thursday the Naughty and Nice list will be checked off by the lovely Mrs Claus and her band of helpers. Anyone who fancies dressing up and joining in; you are most welcome. We will meet in the resource room in the Jackson Building just after drop off. At 10.30ish The Big Man Himself (not Ian Paisley) Father Christmas, Santa Claus, Saint Nicholas or as I like to call him Big Red will be delighting the children when he arrives to hear them sing and answer serious questions about hypersonic travel, time zones and how many mince pies he can actually eat. Santa will be bringing a gift for every child in the school so if you are in the Senior School you can collect your gift from the school office.

**Dates for Your Diary**

**Santa Claus visit – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December (CAN NOT WAIT)**

**Easter Bunny visit – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April**

**Dad's Day Out – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April**

**Belfast Marathon – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May**

**School Fete – Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May**

**Speech Day – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

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

**Carol Thompson**  
**PTA Chairperson**