



Newsletter no 17 / Spring Term / 13th January 2017



January	Time	Event
Tue 17 th	16:30	R12 Home Economics Trip to Victoria Square
Sat 21 st		Ski Trip Returns

Headmaster's Headlines

This Term is dragging in...: Welcome back! Winter has finally arrived with a vengeance but we are glad to get the children busy and back into the Rockport routine, if there is such a thing... One repeat order is always worth issuing at this time: please reinforce our message to the children that they must wear something bright (or carry a torch) as they walk to school and, if you are a driver, please pay particular attention and drive very slowly down Rockport Road and through the school grounds on these dark and stormy days.

Rockport Top PISA: Not the leaning tower, but the *Programme for International Student Assessment*, the OECD's Pisa rankings which compare the test results of 15 year olds in countries and regional education systems across the world. These tests are widely reported in the media and considered important enough to shape education policy in many countries. In **Maths**, Rockport effectively came 9th, only 22 points behind world leaders Japan (NI were placed 21st overall and the UK 26th); in **Science**, Rockport pupils were ranked 4th and only 8 points off Japan (NI 18th); and in **English** we are actually rated 1st, one point above top country Canada (NI 20th)! A very pleasing effort.

It's Not the Winning...: We have grown accustomed to hearing of success by our netball 'A' teams but this week I want to single out those valiant girls in the Under 12 and Under 13 'B' teams who (like Captain Scott of the Antarctic) have managed to cover themselves in glory whilst coming second. A great effort by all secured narrow defeats by only the odd goal or two yesterday, when playing away to the leviathan Methodist College. Be very proud, girls.

Carols and Service: Thanks to all those who worked so hard to put together the annual School Carol Service in St Philip and St James' Church in Holywood on the last day of term, as well as all those who sang, played or read. As well as bringing the whole school community together at the end of a busy term we managed to collect more than £800 towards our appeal for The Prince's Trust.

George Vance
Headmaster

Belfast Giants Trip

Those pupils going to the Belfast Giants match on Friday 20th January need to remain in school after 4pm and go to Prep and Supper that evening. The coach will be leaving promptly at 5.30pm. Pupils must remember to bring in casual clothes to change into after Games and may bring in spending money if they wish to purchase merchandise/snacks at the SSE arena. Pick up will be at school at approximately 10.15pm that night.

Helen McConaghy
R8M Form Teacher

Duke of Edinburgh

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh club will now begin on Thursday 26th January 4.30pm-5.30pm as a lot of those that are interested in doing the award are away on the ski trip next week.



K Megarry
Teacher of French and Spanish

R6/7 Stationery

All pupils in R6/7 should have the following items in their schoolbag each day. Please check and restock over the weekend if necessary:

- 2 pencils
- 2 writing pens (black or blue – keep to one colour only)
- Red biro
- Green biro
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- 30 cm ruler (should be a firm rather than bendy ruler)
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Highlighter
- Colouring pencils
- Felt-pens

Note that R6/7 are not allowed to keep correction fluid – they may borrow this from the class teacher when required.

Suzanne McCartney
R6 Form Teacher

Early Years Clubs

Early Years clubs will commence next week, beginning Monday 16th January 2017.

Tuesday	Monkeynastics	2.00pm-2.40pm	Playgroup, Reception, R1	Jackson Hall
		3.00pm-3.40pm	R2-R4	
Thursday	Alphabet Club	3.00pm-3.30pm	R2-R3	R2 Classroom
Thursday	Speech and Drama	3.00pm-3.45pm	R2-R4	Jackson Hall

**Please return forms for Monkeynastics to your class teacher by Monday 16th January 2017.*

**There is no charge for Alphabet Club. Let the class teacher know if you would like your child to attend. This club will run until half term.*

**There are spaces available for Speech and Drama. Please speak to Mrs Athanasiou for further information.*

Playgroup – Arrangements for morning drop off

As our Playgroup is steadily increasing in size, there are new arrangements in place for morning drop off. Drop off in the Jackson Hall will continue from 8.20am. However, if you arrive at school after 8.50am, you should take your child directly to the Playgroup building. Pick up at 2pm from the Jackson Building as usual.

Lynn Athanasiou
Head of Early Years

MUSIC

Junior Choir – BBC School Choir of the Year

The Junior Choir have been successful in their audition for School Choir of the Year competition. Our first heat will take place on Wednesday 1ST February, at 9.30am, in Bangor Grammar. There is a wonderful buzz and air of excitement in the music department as rehearsals are already in full swing. Choir members **MUST bring their sheet music to school every day next week**, preferably in a folder for safekeeping.

Melanie Carr
Teacher in Charge of Music and Drama

Happy New Year

It is very late saying it and I've been told bad form after a certain date BUT the PTA would like to say it anyway. Happy New Year to you all and we hope that 2017 is a happy and healthy one.

Will it snow? My eldest boy was extremely excited about the prospect of snow hitting Northern Ireland this week. He announced on Tuesday that he wouldn't be going to school on Thursday because of it and that the school would definitely be closed. After seven years at Rockport, Peter should know better...Rockport never closes. There was slight disappointment on Thursday morning when all he could see were green fields for miles with not even a hint of a flurry.

Dates for Your Diary:

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 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