



# Rockport School News

INDEPENDENT BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL BOYS & GIRLS 3-18

## Newsletter no 24 / Spring Term / 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017



February	Time	Event
Wed 15th	10.00 9.00-12.30	R5-R9 Grand National Trophy at Rockport R11 & R13 Art pupils to Seacourt Print Workshop
Fri 17th	All Day	Founder's Day

### Headmaster's Headlines

**Boarding Inspection:** A great effort by Mrs Toland and the whole boarding team has resulted in a clean bill of health in our annual RQIA Inspection last week. Thanks also to those boarding parents who completed and returned the inspection survey forms. Whilst we must not relax our efforts, it is gratifying indeed to see such a high level of satisfaction in our residential facility and to hear of the excellent boarding experience enjoyed by our children and young people.

**London Calling:** As I write (Thursday), I am preparing to leave for our ORs/Friends of Rockport event in London tonight. We had a really encouraging response to our invitation for Old Rockportians and others connected to the school to join us at a reception in the Royal Air Force Club, Piccadilly and I am very much looking forward to catching up with some old friends this evening.

**Notes on Former Pupils:** It was remiss of me not to mention before the achievement of Old Rockportian **Nigel Casey** MVO, who has been decorated in the 2017 New Year Honours List (I must have missed his name as I scoured the list in January...). Nigel is the Prime Minister's Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs and was made a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) for services to British foreign policy.

**Every day is an Open Day:** Or so it would seem at the moment as I spend an increasing amount of time touring prospective parents and visitors to the school. On Monday our tourists were 12 overseas boarding agents who were on a British Boarding Schools' Workshop familiarisation visit to Northern Ireland. Our guests who hailed from China, Hong Kong, Kazakhstan, Germany, Kenya, Malaysia, Thailand, Turkey, Russia, Spain and Ukraine seemed genuinely impressed by the school, especially by the high level of activity and happy children (normal) as well as the beautiful sunshine (not normal).

**George Vance**  
**Headmaster**

## Practice Expeditions

All Silver and Bronze DoE participants have been issued with an information letter and kit list for their up incoming practice expeditions, due to take place from **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April (Silver)** and **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>-Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April (Bronze)**.

Students must have a good pair of walking boots, a rucksack and a waterproof coat for this. A copy is attached to this newsletter and can also be viewed on the Rockport website. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact either Mrs Parke, [sparke@rockportschool.com](mailto:sparke@rockportschool.com) or Mrs Megarry, [kmegarry@rockportschool.com](mailto:kmegarry@rockportschool.com).

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

## R7 Engage with Early Years

Mrs Athanasiou invited the R7 class to read to some of the Early Years pupils as part of their Arts Week activities. There was great excitement and some trepidation as the R7s prepared to meet their 'reading buddies'. What a great opportunity it was to learn first-hand the importance of using voice and facial expression to engage an audience! We would like to thank our very youngest pupils and their teachers for welcoming us. How long before we can make a return visit?

**Suzanne McCartney**  
R7 English teacher



## Founder's Day – Environmental Afternoon

After lunch the R5-7 pupils will be taking part in some environmental projects:



- R7 will be planting and carrying out gardening tasks around the school grounds
- R5 & 6 will head off-campus for a beach clean-up, walking from Rockport to Seapark.



These projects will be funded using part of the £500 Anniversary Challenge Bursary that R11 pupil Robert Burke managed to secure single-handedly from Round Square – very well done Robert!

A preparation morning will take place on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March – Mr Reid will take R7, accompanied by school council members, Robert Burke and Sophie Shiel, to visit local nurseries in order to choose and purchase bedding plants, compost and containers. They will be out of school from 9-11.30am and should bring a small snack for their morning break as well as their school coat.

It would also be helpful if R7 pupils could bring in one or two gardening tools from home – such as trowels, forks and yard brushes – so that they can each play an effective role in the gardening tasks on Founder's Day afternoon.

**Suzanne McCartney**

### Sixth Form Options

A reminder to all students in R12 that option choices for Sixth Form should now be completed and returned to the school office.

**Paul Lutton**  
Head of Arts Faculty



### **Netball Tour was 'Wicked'!!!**

Thirty girls and staff travelled to London last Wednesday to take part in the I.A.P.S. netball tournament for U11's/U12's and U13's. It was a great success in all respects with our girls representing Rockport well both on and off the court. It would not be a complete tour if we didn't take in a show and this year it was the amazing 'Wicked'. Not only did the girls see the show but were also treated to a 'Wicked Workshop' at the interesting 'Pineapple Studios'. However, Louis Spence wasn't present and missed our girls' outstanding talent!



### **Multi-Sports Tour**

The letters for October's Multi-Sports Tour will be issued to students today and will be available for pupils in R8 and upwards next academic year. So that your child's place can be secured I would ask for an immediate response.

In today's over-zealous climate of Health & Safety a lot of teachers do not even entertain taking tours. In fact on our flight to London a passenger commented that his daughter has never had this opportunity and she is in a grammar school very near to us in Holywood – I will not name names!

I am delighted to say that Rockport staff will continue to go above and beyond to ensure that our young people benefit from the invaluable tour 'experience'!

**G Holland**

**Head of PE & Personal Development Faculty**



## **Early Years' Arts Week**

What a week we have had in the Early Years Department. I think we can say that our Arts Week was a success!

The idea behind this week was to enable our children to take part in a rich range of creative experiences through Literacy, Drama, Art, Music and Dance. From Author and Illustrator, Paul Howard, to Artist Ed Reynolds, Bright Young Things Drama School to Fun with Drums and SO MUCH MORE – our children did just that and had the best time!

A huge thanks to all those staff and parents who contributed – Miss Carr, Mr Kevin Mawdsley, Mrs Melanie Holmes, Mr Robert Wilson, Mrs Mary Jane Carswell and Mrs Emma Tolland. Thanks to the pupils - you were all amazing and we so appreciated you coming to show us your amazing talents!

We're already looking forward to Arts Week 2018!

**Lynn Athanasiou**  
**Head of Early Years**



### **Colour Run Crazyies**

Thank you for your swift response to our Colour Run fun run/walk. We have had a positive response throughout the whole school, including parents yay!! Now to pray for a beautiful afternoon with no wind or rain:)

Any parents who would like to help out on the day by chucking colour, marshalling the start/finish line or by dishing out hot dogs (all pre cooked so no need to barbecue), please drop me a line to [pta@rockportschool.com](mailto:pta@rockportschool.com). All help on the day would be greatly appreciated :)

### **Christmas Puds**

I was thrilled last week to be given a donation by Alan Greene from the sale of his scrummy Christmas puddings and cranberry sauce. Unfortunately we will have to wait until next Christmas (only 41 Fridays to go) to purchase these treats again.

### **Dates for Your Diary:**

**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