



ROCKPORT



# Rockport School News

INDEPENDENT BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL BOYS & GIRLS 3-18

Newsletter no 07 / Winter Term / 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017



October	Time	Event
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup>	All Week 9.00-12.00	Early Years Parent Teacher Consultations R1- R2 to Hollywood Library
Thu 26 <sup>th</sup>		PTA Hallowe'en
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup>	15.00	Half Term Begins

## Headmaster's Headlines

**Open Morning:** Thank you for supporting our first open day last Saturday by sending your child into school so well turned out. They are still our greatest advert and those visiting families were suitably impressed. Mrs Hamill has already received a registration form and there are also several 'taster days' in the pipeline as a result.

**Marbella Adventure:** As *Ophelia* moves on and storm *Brian* looms large on the radar, I suspect there may be worse places to be next week than the Costa del Sol. However, any envy for Miss Holland and her team of staff heading away at the weekend should be tempered in the knowledge that they will have 60 teenagers with them. A week packed full of Golf (Valderrama has been mentioned), Netball, Football and Rugby fixtures await our tourists and when they are returned to you next Friday evening just in time for the half term break they should not be too difficult to rock to sleep.

**Closure Needed:** Thanks to everyone who rallied round on Sunday night to spread the word about the short notice school closure earlier this week, with a special mention in dispatches due to Mrs Oliver who came in to the school office at midnight to post the bad news on the website. Ever proud of our 'can do' attitude at Rockport, I can tell you that it is counter-intuitive in the extreme for us to close this school but when the Department of Education announce a blanket closure of all schools in the country, we are left with little or no choice. In any case, even if the last minute announcement on Sunday for Monday's shut-down was justified as a sensible precaution, the early announcement for Tuesday's closure did seem like a classic knee jerk reaction. However, in the absence of an Education Minister I also know these are big decisions for Civil Servants to take and sometimes it's better to have a firm (if wrong) decision than no decision at all.

**Battling On Manfully:** One of the reasons we are so reluctant to close, of course, is that 25% of our Rockport student population live above the shop. Also, in the face of a coming storm, sending our boarders home on a Sunday night at 11pm to Hong Kong, Madrid or, for that matter, to Ballymena is not an option. To that end, I owe a debt of gratitude to all the house parents, boarding teachers, and gappers as well as to those office, catering, cleaning, grounds and other support staff who stayed or indeed came in to supervise, feed, and entertain the troops marooned here. As for the boarders, they seemed to have a ball.

**George Vance**  
**Headmaster**

## **Dance-a-thon defies expectations**

After weeks of counting, we can now reveal that the Dance – a – Thon in aid of Indonesia Unfolded raised a total of \$3000 (\$2970). Not only did we help the charity reach their goal of raising 10 thousand USD, we have helped many disadvantaged Indonesians. This total could not have been possible without the generosity of the parents, and I think Hannah Coombes, Early Years parent, also deserves a special mention for giving up her time to help and also providing us with glow sticks.

I would like to give a huge thank you to all participants, especially Miss Carr and Ella Fitzpatrick, for dancing 12 hours in total; I think I should also thank the late George Michael for getting them through the evening with his timeless 80's hits!

## **Robert Burke R12**

## **(Anti-)Social Media and Drugs Awareness Programme – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

As part of our preventative curriculum, we have planned an (Anti-)Social Media and Drugs Awareness day for pupils from R5-6<sup>th</sup> Form. The programme will be delivered by specialists from PSNI and the format for the day is as follows:

0930-1000	<b>R5-R7</b>	Anti-Social Media Awareness
1000-1045	<b>R8-R10</b>	Anti-Social Media Awareness
1100-1145	<b>R11-R12</b>	Anti-Social Media Awareness
11.45-12.45	<b>R11-R14</b>	Drugs Awareness
1340-1430	<b>R8-R10</b>	Drugs Awareness

## **1500-1600 – Parents – Drugs Awareness and Social Media**

All of these sessions will take place in the Centenary Studio and tea and coffee will be provided before the parents' session at 1500. Please plan to attend.

**Mrs Rhonda D. Palmer**  
**Deputy Head**

### **R11 – 14 Mock GCSE / A Levels**

The R11 – 14 Mocks will take place from Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December. The mock timetable is attached to this newsletter.

There will also be an Art Coursework day for R12 Art on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December.

Pupils will only be expected to be in school when they have an exam, but if they have a morning and afternoon exam, then they will be required to be in school all day.

Any queries please contact [creid@rockportschool.com](mailto:creid@rockportschool.com)

**Colin Reid**  
**Head of Faculty**

### **Rockport Ladies Christmas Lunch & Marie Curie**

Thank you all so much for the ticket and sponsorship enquiries. We really have been overwhelmed by the excitement surrounding our annual Ladies Lunch.

The charity we have chosen this year to benefit from our lunch is Marie Curie who are delighted to be involved with the school. It's quite clear that the Marie Curie Hospice has a special place in most people's hearts as they provide such unique services to our community at times of huge emotional need.

There are still sponsorships available and these will include tickets which will be confirmed before the website sales portal goes live, so if you really want to show your generosity as well as getting first shout on tickets, please contact [sineamdall@gmail.com](mailto:sineamdall@gmail.com)

We are working with the website designers at the minute and ironing out all details before the sales portal is launched. The date for launch is expected to be week commencing 6th November but keep checking the school's website for details.

The Lunch will be in the Merchant Hotel on Friday 8th December 2017.

**Sinead Dall**



## Golf

The boys' golf team played under tough conditions at Royal Portrush Golf Club on Thursday in the U19 Scratch Championships. All competed well with Ben Beaumont bringing in the best score of 6 over despite suffering from the flu. Well done, boys!

## Swimming

Samuel Wright has been performing well in swimming competitions and last weekend achieved personal bests at the Ulster Qualifying at Lisburn. He will be representing Rockport in this weekend's Ulster School Swim Ireland Championships at the Aurora LC. Good luck, Samuel!



## Sports Tour

The sports tour party will be flying out from Belfast City Airport this Sunday to compete in a multi-sports trip in Spain and Gibraltar.

We will be keeping everyone up to date with 'tweets' and posts on our Facebook page throughout the tour.

**Parents - please make sure that your son/daughter is ready to check in at 11.30 at Belfast City Airport.**

**Gail Holland**

**Head of PE & Personal Development Faculty**

## **Library - Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October**

R1 and R2 are off to the Library on Monday morning. Don't forget Library cards, as well as Rockport backpacks to carry all the books! Please wear everyday uniform as there will be no PE.

## **Clubs**

There will no French Club next week. It will resume after half term.

## **Halloween Fun**

It's that time of year again and we are excited to see what wonderful creations will adorn the Jackson Building. Finished pumpkins can be brought to school from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October, the children in the Early Years are invited to come to school in fancy dress. The PTA have some fun organised for us!

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

### Halloween...

Is coming and the goose is getting fat. Do you remember that rhyme?

I used to start around two weeks before Halloween knocking on doors wearing a bin liner and an ill-fitting mask (with scratchy staples) from Crazy Prices or the Spar. ☺ My friends and I would begin at the opposite side of the village and work our way across each night, knowing fine well we were seriously pushing our luck starting so early and basically begging for a sweet or monkey nuts (devastated when we got a mandarin). It was always handy to have a younger sibling in tow to take the bad look off us ☺

### Hallowe'en Hamper

PTA mum Alison McAtamney has kindly donated a Fortnum & Mason Hallowe'en hamper to raffle. The hamper will be on display in the foyer of the Jackson Building from Monday 16th October. The price per ticket is £1. If you wish to be entered into the draw, please leave a sealed envelope with payment for as many tickets as you would like with your child's form teacher. Please mark clearly your and your child's name on the envelope. Feel free to enter as many times as you wish.



**Can we have all entries to the raffle handed in by Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October please, so we can pick a winner on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Thank you!!**

### Playgroup-R5

**Pumpkin display** – Please carve out or create a pumpkin masterpiece (there's no pressure to be competitive unless you really want to be and then it's GAME ON!) to display at the front of the Jackson Building. If you have never carved a pumpkin don't be afraid of it, it really isn't that hard and certainly a lot easier than scooping out a turnip like our parents had to in the 80s! There are lots of ideas online and using a thin serrated knife to cut out a face or design is quite easy. If your little one would prefer to decorate their pumpkin with glue, glitter and sequins this can be a lot of fun too. Please bring your pumpkins in during the last week before half term and give them to your class teacher. I can't wait to see them!

**Trick or Treating** – this year we are trick or treating! Dress up in your favourite costume and come trick or treating around the school. I know that some teachers have some yummy treats for us! Please note that a cost of £3 per child PG-R7 will be added to their bill to cover cost of treats.

### **R6+ Spooky Alley**

I cannot wait for this, although I HATE being frightened. I know exactly what is going to happen during the walk, so I will wait outside.....I have had lots of questions like "Will there be a clown?", "Are you going to use a chainsaw?" Well, I'm afraid my lips are sealed and I can't give anything away. Mwhahahahahaha

### **Tropic Pamper Party – Change of date to Tuesday 14th November**

We have Tropic Glambassador Corrina MacLean coming to school to show us the wonderful Tropic skincare and make-up range. It'll be a fun night and maybe a great way to get some Christmas shopping done!

### **Fireworks!! – Thursday 23rd November**

This year we have decided to change the timing of the Halloween fireworks due to school commitments. Instead we will enjoy Mr Shiel's annual explosions after our Thanksgiving Dinner. As many of you know Thanksgiving is a highlight for families at Rockport. Not only do we get to have a DELICIOUS meal catered for by our very own top notch kitchen team but it is a time to enjoy each other's company. It's a noisy occasion but one I highly recommend you come along to.

Cost:

Thanksgiving Dinner

Adult £15

Child £7

Under 4s Free

Fireworks to be billed at £5 per family to cover costs

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Halloween – Thursday 26th October

Tropic Pamper Party – **Tuesday, 14th November**

Thanksgiving Dinner & Fireworks – Thursday 23rd November

Santa Claus – Thursday 21st December

**Carol Thompson**

**PTA Chairperson**