

8th January 2021



Rockport Newsletter

The latest news and updates from Rockport School



Headmaster's Headlines

Here We Go Again: Although not totally unexpected, this is definitely not the start of the Spring Term we would have wanted for our children and young people. Thank you once more for your continued support and please find below my message sent to Parents last night re remote learning, reprinted here, just in case you missed it.

The Move To Online Learning: Following the announcement from the Department of Education all classes tomorrow (Friday) will be online for all pupils from Playgroup right up to Upper Sixth and remote learning will continue thereafter until the close of play for half term on Friday 12 February.

The previous lockdown showed us that the online learning experience our children will receive over those 5 weeks is likely to vary from pupil to pupil according to their age and even from subject to subject, but with your cooperation we will endeavour to make it as effective and rewarding a process as possible for each and every child and young person. As always, communication will be key, and so please be assured that your child's teachers will value your feedback in helping them to plan more effectively as we go forward.

Finally, as we I am reassured that the resilience, ingenuity and determination to succeed which we as a school community demonstrated throughout the spring and summer of 2020 will not just stand in good stead, but that that sense of togetherness in pursuit of a common goal will once more come to the fore.

George Vance
Headmaster

General News

Examinations Update for GCSE, AS, A Level and BTec Students

As you will by now be no doubt aware, GCSE, AS and A Level examinations have been cancelled for Summer 2021. This applies to our main English examination board (AQA) and also to the Northern Ireland examination board (CCEA). No updates have been provided just yet from Welsh exam board (WJEC) or other English boards, such as Pearson and Cambridge International. As soon as information is made available, we shall of course pass it on to you.

This therefore means that there will be some sort of assessment methodology applied in order to arrive at grades for those students. As yet, we have not received any information about how this is going to work but have been advised that the regulatory body (JCQ) is in touch with the exam boards and is working through this. It is likely that grades will be awarded based on Centre Assessed Grades, substantiated by evidence available here in school.

This therefore means that, from now until the end of June, it is absolutely critical that every piece of work set by teachers for the students in these year groups is completed, as it may well be used as evidence to justify the award of a grade. Please ensure that you are up to date with submission of all work and it is at the highest possible standard in order to evidence the award of your grade.

Remote Learning (Again!)

I can hardly believe that I'm writing about this again! The novelty factor of remote learning back in March 2020 has well and truly worn off, both from the students and their teachers (and I'm also fairly sure, from their parents!) However, I'm really pleased to say that the students have "hit the ground running" and, despite a few little glitches, have all been able to access their learning online. Teachers have stepped back into the virtual classrooms with relative ease and I would like to take a moment to just say a big thank you to them; it's so much easier to have students in front of you physically than it is to teach remotely. Some little pointers for remote learning for students:

If you experience any issues whatsoever with your remote learning, it is important that you make us aware of the situation so that we can address your challenges. Please send any technical queries to ssmith@rockportschool.com and any other queries to either your subject teacher or your form teacher. If you know that you are not going to be online or in a certain class, please let your form teacher know at registration in the morning and he/she will be able to convey this information to your class teacher, thus ensuring that you won't be marked absent.

If you are ill and know that you won't be online all day, please email the school office schooloffice@rockportschool.com in order to let them know; they will send a message to all of your teachers on your behalf.

An attendance register will be taken for each lesson, starting at registration each morning (0840-0855). Please ensure that you are at registration as this is when any relevant information is shared with a form class in preparation for the day ahead.

Any absence from class or any failure to complete and submit work will be followed up, initially by the class teacher with your parents, then by your form teacher and then by me, if necessary.

Please ensure that you have your camera and microphone enabled for lessons, unless asked otherwise by the teacher; from a teacher's perspective, it is very challenging to teach to a blank screen – we need to see faces in order to gauge understanding.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

One of my many roles in school is that of supporting our young people when they need someone with whom to chat or talk through a problem. Please know that I continue to be available for all students who may wish to chat through a worry or a concern. If students wish to arrange a virtual chat with me via Meet, please email me at rpalmer@rockportschool.com and we can arrange a mutually convenient time. Also, Form Teachers are providing this same service every morning via registration Meets, so it is important, if anything is worrying or upsetting our students, that they talk to someone about it. Emotional well-being is crucial to overall health and so I would also encourage our students to ensure that they get fresh air and exercise every day too.

Thank you

Mrs Rhonda D. Palmer

Deputy Head

Online Learning

This week has been challenging for our senior students with the news regarding the cancellation of A Level and GCSE exams. I can also confirm that the BTEC exams scheduled for the 12th and 18th January are now cancelled too.

Our sixth form students should however continue to work towards completing all work for each of their subjects in order to prepare them for university. Therefore, I would expect to see all pupils signing in using Meet at 8.40 am with Mrs Thompson and myself. All students should be up out of bed, washed and dressed and prepared for the day.

Students will be continuing to follow their daily timetables. I understand this is again an uncertain time for our young people but we are all here to support them and will do our best to continue to maintain the structure they require.

Many Thanks

Heather McBride
Head of Sixth Form

"Never has outdoor space seemed more precious. We present 44 schools where enviable rural settings complement excellent all-round education, providing plenty of fresh air, freedom, easily accessible outdoor activity and, in many cases, sheer beauty of surroundings."

We received news of a lovely feature that Rockport had been included in, courtesy of Rockport parent Mrs Cunningham, via her brother in Australia!



R10 Digital Technology

R10 have been studying Andy Goldsworthy's typography work as a part of their Photography unit in Digital Technology. They have been working hard at recreating their own pieces of work this week in Goldsworthy's style. Check out their fab work below! Well done R10!

C Rice



SAM CROSSLE R10H



ISABELLA DORAN R10M



ZACK PIERCE KANE R10H



GRACIE KIDD-BEGGS R10M



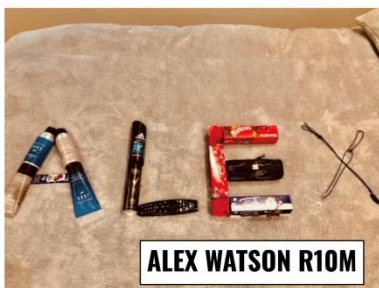
HANNAH BOLE R10M



OLIVER TWEED R10M



BRUNO BARO R10H



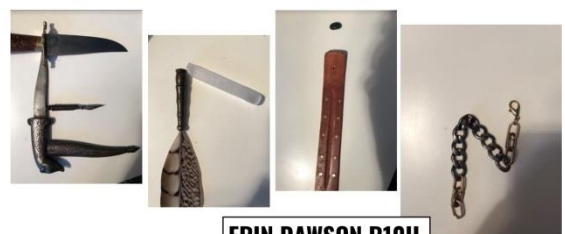
ALEX WATSON R10M



KYLA BELL R10H



HOLLIE HARLEN R10M



ERIN DAWSON R10H