



Rockport School News

INDEPENDENT BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL BOYS & GIRLS 3-18

Newsletter no 15 / Winter Term / 20th December 2018



Jan	Time	Event
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Christmas break begins on Friday, 21st December 2018 (after Carol Service)
All pupils return on Tuesday 8th January 2019, 8.45am
Boarding is open for returning students from Monday, 7th January, 6pm

Headmaster's Headlines

Christmas Jumper: I'm afraid I jumped in on Santa, Mr Claus and their band of PTA helpers today (Thursday) in the Old Library as Santa was talking to the Early Years children. The event has caused much excitement amongst children of all ages including those big kids who work in the front office. Santa's visit is especially welcome today, coinciding as it does with our Christmas Jumper Day and our annual Christmas Lunch. Sincere thanks to all our PTA volunteers not just for this week, but for helping us so much throughout the term. And well done to the catering staff for preparing all those lovely turkey dinners.

Nativity! Thanks also to the Early Years staff for their hard work, as well as to all those of you who created those wonderful costumes for our annual production of The Nativity in Glencairg Church yesterday Wednesday (are there any tea towels left in your kitchens?). As we approach the end of such a busy term, it must have taken a great effort by the children to learn all those lines and songs; all delivered and sung so beautifully in what was a seamless performance (although the pedant may have commented on the *two* wise men...). Great also to see so many parents, grandparents and other relatives and friends come along to what was a lovely event.

We Wish You a Merry Christmas: Speaking of lovely events, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible tomorrow (Friday) in Holywood at our annual end of term School Carol Service in St Philip and St James' Church. Thank you in advance for your gifts and toys for The Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children which should be deposited (unwrapped) under the tree in church by our children as they arrive. The church offering this year will also be donated to the hospital. As I said last week, this is one of the signature events of the year and a great way to end the Winter Term. I look forward to seeing you there, and afterwards the children will shake hands with all their teachers as they leave the church. Finally, on behalf of all at Rockport I thank you for your continued support and wish you and yours a Happy Christmas and our best wishes for the New Year.

George Vance
Headmaster

Rockport wins 'Best Newcomer' at First Lego League

On the 5th December seven Rockport students from R6 to R11 competed in First Lego League at W5, Belfast. This competition, despite the name, has been running for nearly 10 years worldwide. This year saw Rockport enter for the first time and our fantastic students made us immensely proud.



The competition is focused on getting students interested in STEM and Engineering careers with four elements to the competition. The elements included a robot game where students had to build a fully automated robot to complete several challenges against the clock. In this element alone the team achieved 5th place out of 19 different teams, most of which had greater experience in the competition.

Students also had to take part in team building challenges, discuss their robot design and present a research project about issues faced in space exploration. The students designed an intricate and advanced solution for astronauts to work out on Mars. With the research including topics such as Gravitons (the Gravity particle) and the use of Centripetal force, even the most advanced Physics buffs would have been impressed. And indeed the Queen's University professors who were contacted to discuss the students' ideas certainly were.





After an exciting and action-packed day the students were duly rewarded with winning the 'Best Newcomer' award out of 5 teams on the day. This has put Rockport on the Lego map and we are excited to get involved again next year.

The students who did us all so proud were Jack Calvert, Louise Leonetti, Tabitha Allen, Baptiste Leonetti, Christian Simms, Mimi Thompson and Mathew Thompson.

Also a huge thank you to Miss O'Hara for her support in running the club and Mary & Brad George who, as well as being Rockport parents, were also our industry mentors throughout the competition and helped us have the loudest support of any other team!

We are pleased to be adding some Lego-ware to Rockport's large amount of silverware!

Stephen Smith
Teacher of Digital Technology & ICT Support

Fee Payment Reminder

Just a reminder that all fees for the Spring Term need to be paid before we all return on January 8th 2019. For those on Direct Debit, the payments will continue as usual.

If anyone has any queries, please contact the School Bursar.

Stephen Ballentine-Kearns
Bursar

Christmas Celebrations

We celebrated the end of term in style with what has become a traditional meal out at Pier 36 in Donaghadee. Many thanks to all the staff and Mr and Mrs Waterworth for accepting a school booking for 35 people at their busiest festive period. The food and service was fantastic and we really enjoyed our night out.



It is with some sadness that we say goodbye to Tatiana Gobius who has completed her Gap Year at Rockport. We wish her well as she returns to Australia and also in her forthcoming Occupational Therapy degree; and also to Katinka Nohr Rasmussen from Denmark who has been at Rockport for four months. Katinka and Tatiana have both made an amazing contribution to the Boarding Department and we are sorry to say goodbye but hope they take happy memories with them. We look forward to welcoming Hannah Garven and Emma Gaskon from Australia in the New Year to work alongside Skye Vassey in the capacity of Gap Year students.

MERRY CHRISTMAS to all of our Boarding Students. We hope that they enjoy a lovely family Christmas and we look forward to their return to school in January 2019.

Please forward any remaining return travel plans and note that Boarding is not open until 6pm Monday 7th January for parental drop offs.

Dawn Toland
Head of Boarding



UCAS Applications

I am pleased that all of those Year 14 pupils applying for university in September have submitted their UCAS forms. Pupils are reminded to track these applications and respond to any offers via email. Please ensure you are aware of any invites to interview or if you have to provide extra information to support your application. It is a good idea to get into the habit of checking this regularly.

BTEC Business Studies

Parents and students are reminded that both Year 13 and Year 14 will sit their external exams in January. Year 13 will have their Personal and Business Finance exam on Wednesday 16th January and Year 14 will have their Developing a Marketing Campaign exam on Friday 11th January, both exams are at 9 am. Students must ensure they are carrying out the necessary revision for these exams over the Christmas break.

Head of Sixth Form

From January Year 13 & Year 14 will have a new form teacher and head of sixth form. Their new form teacher will be Miss. O'Hara and the joint head of sixth form is both Miss Carson and Miss O'Hara. Any queries / concerns can be emailed directly to them.

I would like to wish our pupils a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year.

Heather McBride

Head of Sixth Form

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

And a Happy New Year! As the first term of the school year draws to a close the PTA would like to thank the parents, staff and friends of Rockport School for your support. Rockport is a small school with the full range of ages from pre-primary to secondary education, whose parents may work long hours or may not be in this country which can sometimes mean that parents don't get to join in or attend PTA events. We understand this and therefore try to put on events that include children, with or without parents, at different times of the day. I always get a little nervous just before we start an event, will anyone turn up? Thankfully you do, time and time again, with your children, and friends, and family. Without your support we wouldn't have a PTA (well maybe just me☺), and the PTA team would like to thank you and wish you all a very merry and peaceful Christmas.

NB- apparently there's government guidelines on coping with kids with a hangover. Anyone know where this can be sourced? Asking for a friend :/

Carol, Iain, Cait, Catherine, Sharon & and our volunteers