

16th April 2021



Rockport Newsletter

The latest news and updates from Rockport School



Headmaster's Headlines

And, We're Back in the Room! I'm just as excited as the next guy about the hairdressers opening up again next week (unless the next guy is Mr McIlveen), but I'm afraid that even that excitement will have been trumped by getting the whole school back together on Monday. Everything crossed, hope upon hope, that we have seen the back of the dreaded online schooling and death by Google Meet. Live lessons I've attended and observed in school this week are so much more vibrant than before; and the level of student participation has soared already, although I can see that some of our teenagers are still definitely more passive than active in lessons, although not quite as bad as that 'dead from the neck up' impression you sometimes got whilst teaching them online. It will take a while. Anyway, I've thanked teachers before and we have talked about the importance of that teacher/parent partnership, a partnership that was never more necessary than during remote learning. Without you collaborating and cajoling at home, none of this would have been possible and every last one of you deserves a teacher of the year award. Great stuff.

Notes of Former Pupils: Staff will remember fondly OR **Henry Greer** who, while boarding, was always an invaluable help in environmental projects in the grounds, including looking after the school chickens. Whilst at school Henry also won many prizes for eggs from his own flock and so it comes as no surprise that he is now excelling in the agri-food industry. Nominated by his employer Finnebrogue Artisan, Henry has now been selected as one of only 5 Finalists in the Food Manufacture Apprentice of the Year Awards.

Swim Ulster: Well done to two of our elite swimmers **Cody Dunnion** and **Charlie Eatwell** (both R11) and good luck to them both tomorrow as they join others from across the province racing in trials for selection to the Irish Squad.

George Vance

Headmaster

General News

Welcome Back to Summer Term

How lovely it is to see all of our students enjoying the Spring sunshine this week! I stopped to watch the boys playing football on the back lawn earlier and thought how lovely it was to see them back enjoying each others' company and the fresh air that they have craved since December!

As the lovely weather (hopefully!) continues, please do bear in mind that we are in Summer uniform in the Senior School – white reverse collared blouse, blazer and no tie for girls with white ankle socks or green tights. The uniform doesn't change for the boys, so that makes it easier for them!

Just a reminder too that we do have standards in terms of acceptable jewellery, make-up and nail polish! These are only permitted from Year 10 up as follows:

- **One** plain gold or silver ring, **one** pair of plain gold or silver stud earrings, **one** fine plain gold or silver necklace
- Make up must be **subtle**
- Nail polish must be **natural**

Please help us to ensure that our students are adhering to these guidelines.

Covid-19 Tests

Any Year 12, 13 or 14 student who signed up for the Covid-19 Tests to complete these bi-weekly will need to collect their next pack of tests from Mrs Hamill. Please do ensure that you give her your name, so that she can register the tests to you.

Summer 2021 Assessment Arrangements for GCSE and A Level

Please spare a moment to consider our poor R12, R13 and R14 students who are currently in the full throes of working through assessments in order to achieve grades at GCSE and A Level. For these young people, this is undoubtedly an extremely stressful time and I would like to encourage them to study hard for the next few weeks; for the next 6 or 7 weeks, they are going to be under huge pressure to meet deadlines and complete assessments in most of their subjects. However, with the support of their teachers we will get them through it!

Mrs Rhonda D. Palmer

Deputy Head

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award

A reminder that Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award club is running this term on Thursday afternoons 4:30pm to 5:30pm. For the next two weeks, only R10 students are required. From Thursday 6th May R10 and R11 students are required.

I am hopeful that we will be able to complete the expeditions in June but they will look a little different from previous years due to Covid-19 restrictions. I will send out details and dates in two weeks time once I have confirmation from the Education Authority.

In the meantime, students should be completing their skill, volunteering and physical sections and uploading their evidence and assessors reports to eDofE.

Thank you for your continued support with the Duke of Edinburgh award.

Miss Sophie O'Hara

Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator

Early Years

Cross Country – R3 and R4, Tuesday 20th April 2021

Pupils in R3 and R4 will be taking part in our annual Cross Country event on Tuesday. Unfortunately parents will be unable to attend to cheer them along but the boys and girls in Playgroup-R2 will be there to support them. **Children should wear their PE whites** (white shorts, white polo shirt, white socks and trainers). They should bring their Canterbury's to pull on after the race.

We will be sure to take lots of pictures!

Transition to R5 Meeting - R4 parents - Thursday 22nd April 2021

Parents of children in R4 are invited to join Mrs McCartney in her classroom on Thursday 22nd April at 3pm for a chat about the transition into Upper Juniors.

Only one parent per child should attend and we ask that you kindly wear a face covering.

Lynn Athanasiou

Head of Early Years

Sport

Inter-House Cross Country

This year's belated Inter-House Cross Country will be taking place next Tues (20th April) for Early Years & Thursday (22nd April) for the rest of the school during the pupils' PE sessions.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid regulations, spectators are not allowed but we hope to have a video and photographic display of runners and medal winners. These will be in the Newsletter and our social medias.

Inter-House Tennis Trophies and coaching

Competitions for the traditional tennis trophies will be starting within the next few weeks:

Holland Trophy (Boys R8 & below) / Barnett Trophy (Girls R8 & below) / Groves Raines (Mixed R8-R10) /Turner Trophy (Senior School)

I am also delighted to announce that Andy Strain (ILTA Qualified Coach) will be starting tennis coaching lessons from the week beginning 26th April 2021.

If you want your child to participate you will need to let his/her form teacher know asap as numbers will be limited.

Details are as follows:

Monday: Rec/R1 2-3pm R2/R3 3-4pm (6 weeks - £30)

Tuesday: R4 3-4pm R5/6/7 4-5pm (8 weeks - £40)

Wednesday R8-R12 4.15-5.15pm (8 weeks - £40)

Parents please sign up with form teacher and payment is required directly to the coach by the 1st day of coaching - Bank details: Mr A Strain Account no: 38419512 Sort code: 07 02 46

Cricket

Fantastic news! Hollywood Cricket Club will be starting their annual coaching sessions at Rockport from Monday 26th April. A huge thank you to Hollywood CC for their continued support.

Hollywood CC are also starting their club sessions from Wed 28th April, more information shared through our social media platforms.



Golf

Golf is up & running again with our young people getting back into the groove!

All pupils from Early Years upwards are getting the opportunity to improve their skills and the developing/elite performers are also preparing for the upcoming season when hopefully competitions will resume.

The following squads have started already at Rockport and we will have them on the golf courses as soon as the clubs allow:

Wed – Early Years PE sessions

(Debbie Hanna (PGA Professional, Blackwood Golf Club)

Wed - Junior Development (Debbie Hanna)

Wed - Elite Group 4-6pm

(Stephen Crooks Head PGA Professional, Holywood Golf Club)

Thurs - Senior Development

(Stephen Crooks & Ricky McCormick PGA Professional Holywood GC)



Athletics

How wonderful it is to see the track marked out for summer athletics – last year we were all stuck at home!!!

Sports Day is scheduled for Thurs 3rd June, 2021. Presently no spectators are allowed but if regulations change, we will look forward to inviting you all back for this eventful day in our sporting calendar – not to mention the Pimm's & strawberry tarts!



Sports are back!!!

G Holland

Head of P.E. & Personal Development Faculty