

5<sup>th</sup> March 2021



# Rockport Newsletter

The latest news and updates from Rockport School



## Headmaster's Headlines

**Oliver Jeffers:** The children in the Early Years enjoyed a real treat yesterday morning when world-famous artist, illustrator and writer (and Rockport Dad) **Oliver Jeffers** dropped in to their virtual classroom to read and to talk to them. My inbox this morning is filled with messages containing words like 'fantastic', 'incredible', 'super' and 'great-fun' - words normally only associated with my own 'incredible' morning assemblies... our sincere thanks to Oliver for taking the time out of his busy schedule to cheer us all up at a time when it is perhaps particularly needed and certainly much appreciated. Great stuff.

**You Few, You Happy Few:** (apologies to Shakespeare) Everyone here is just as happy and excited as those of you who are bringing at least some of our children back in to school on Monday. On one level it is our little ones who have really missed out most during lockdown, given that they can't access online learning to the same degree as the older pupils. We know also that they are also at a stage when they need those social interactions in which they get to practise and develop those important skills of empathy, negotiation and compromise through structured play with their peers.

Let's hope that those qualities of empathy, negotiation and compromise are prevalent and uppermost in the minds of those who are tasked with making the big decisions about the full reopening of all schools, and that those decisions are taken with our children and young people in mind, rather than yet another bun-fight along traditional party lines. It's just too important for that.

**George Vance**

**Headmaster**

# **General News**

## **Sharing Good Practice with our Trainee Teachers**

Last term we said “Goodbye” to Miss Molly Baskin, our Queen’s University Postgraduate Trainee Teacher, who completed her placement in Modern Languages at Rockport. This term we are delighted to welcome our Edgehiill Postgraduate Trainee Teacher, Miss Kielyn Smyth, who will be working in Early Years with Mrs Elliott and R1 predominantly. Miss Smyth has been in school this week working with the Key Worker children in Early Years, so already some of the children are familiar to her. We look forward to her getting to know them all face-to-face from next week.

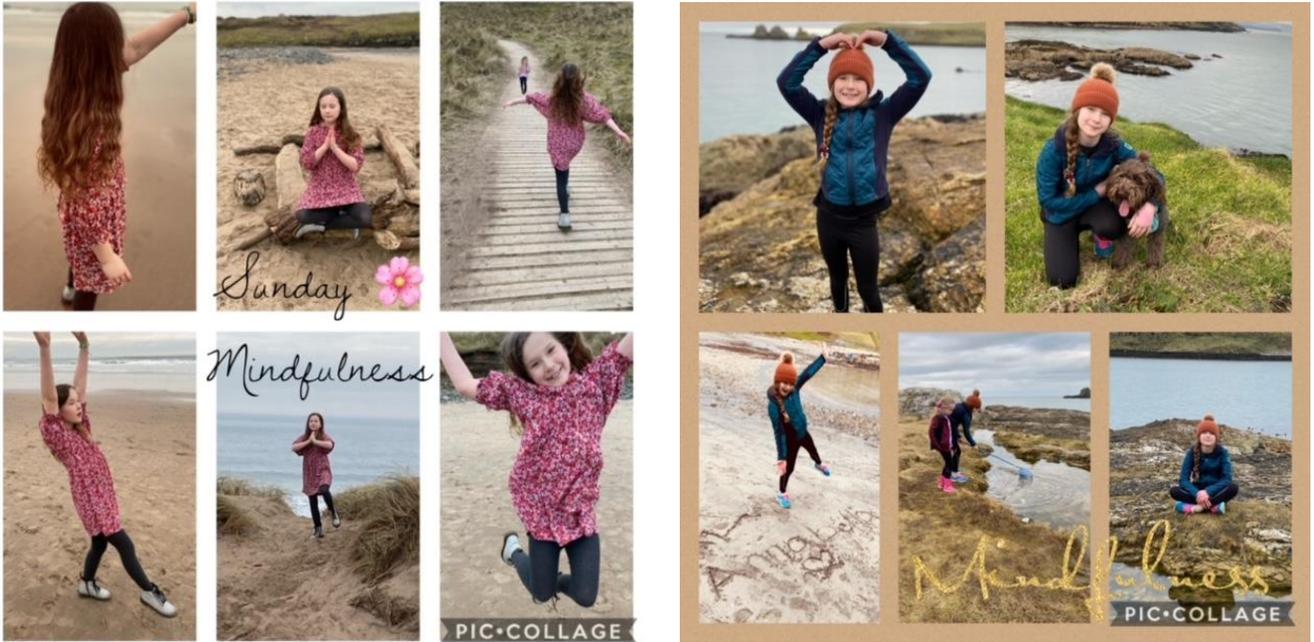
We have also been joined by another trainee teacher, Miss Emily Johnston, from Stranmillis College, Queen’s University; at the moment, Miss Johnston is working remotely with the Maths and Science Departments but we look forward to welcoming her into school once the R12 –R14 students return to campus on 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

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

# Mindfulness in March

Thank you Annabella Cole (R5) who sent these lovely photos of her enjoying spending time at the beach, listening to the waves, exploring the rock pools and walking with her dog and family. We hope everyone is enjoying the slightly milder weather and longer stretch in the evenings!

Our boarders also enjoyed a Smore's campfire last night by the Pavilion, lovely!



# Sixth Form

## Business Seminars

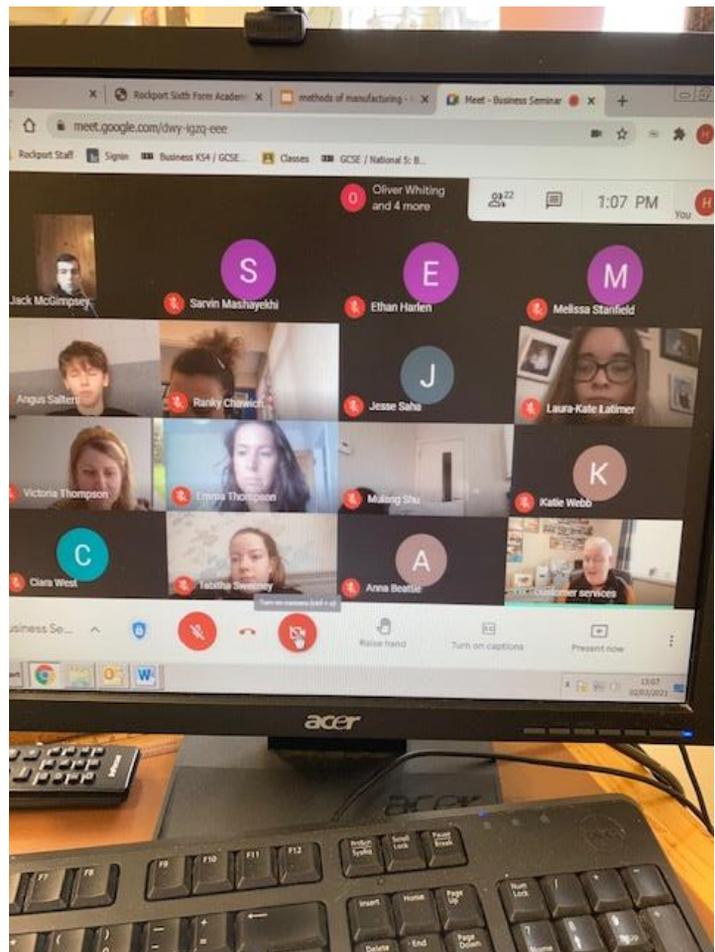
Many thanks to Stephen Downey (Auntie Anne's Belfast & Bangor) for joining Sixth Form on Tuesday lunchtime and providing us with an insight into his route towards a career in different avenues from a paper boy to managing a famous car franchise and more recently bringing the well known and much loved Auntie Anne's franchise to Northern Ireland. The pupils enjoyed speaking with Stephen and finding out what they should and shouldn't include in their CV. We look forward to meeting Emma Derby (HR Director for Vodafone) next week.

*"The seminar this week was very useful and all the sixth form students learnt a lot. Stephen talked about his life and the process he went through to open different franchises in Northern Ireland. This was not only very interesting but it also showed us how much hard work and determination is needed to own and run a business."*

Anna Beattie (Year 14)

**Heather McBride**

**Head of Sixth Form**



## H.E

On the menu this week was Spaghetti Bolognese from Year 9, scones from Yr 8 and R10 pineapple upside down cakes.

Look out for some themed goodies over the next couple of weeks!



# World Book Day 2021

The children and teachers in the Early Years would like to say a BIG 'Thank You' to Rockport Daddy, Oliver Jeffers.

We know Mr Jeffers best for being Harland's Daddy but many of our children have grown up reading his stories and enjoying his illustrations. What an incredible treat for us to have a 'live' Google Meet with him.

We celebrate World Book Day every year and this year we have missed the opportunity to do that together in school. What we did have though is something we will always remember: the opportunity to listen to and be inspired by a best-selling author and illustrator. This will be a World Book Day we will always remember. Thank you so much from all of us.

