



# Rockport Newsletter

The latest news and updates from Rockport School



## Headmaster's Headlines

**Testing Times:** On Monday we welcome children in R4-R7 who join those in the Early Years to once again complete the Junior School. Also returning that day are all our young people in R12 and in the Sixth Form who will, along with the adult staff, be invited to take part in the twice-weekly lateral flow voluntary testing programme organised by the Education Authority in partnership with the Public Health Agency. This afternoon, parents of young people in those year groups will receive more guidance and consent forms.

It is my hope that everyone who is invited to *does* engage with the programme as it is designed to help to reduce the transmission of any positive cases which might occur, thereby helping to keep as many of our staff and children in school as safe as possible going forward. Please be reassured that there will no 'compulsory mass testing' or in fact any testing centred in school.

Put simply, students who bring in completed consent forms on Monday will be issued with a pack of test kits which will then be taken home and administered there by the students themselves at their own convenience. Mrs Palmer has produced more detailed guidance which will be included along with those other attachments going to R12-R14 parents later today.

**Founder's Day:** A big thanks to all those of you who helped in our efforts to promote mental health and well-being in our school community on Saint Patrick's Day. Well done also to our children who engaged in all of the activities on offer with such enthusiasm. The feedback so far has been that the challenges planned did indeed achieve our primary aim to keep our children and young people active, but in a way that encouraged them to spend some time away from the screens of their computers and other devices. A similar initiative for university students in Botanic Gardens and in the Holy Lands area of Belfast was apparently less successful. Great stuff.

**George Vance**  
**Headmaster**

# General News

## Covid Safety

Last week I sent out the updated amendments for the Bubble Book relating to return to school COVID-19 safety. There are a couple of issues which I feel we need to underline in particular this week:

1. All adult visitors and parents to the school site must wear a face covering when on campus – this includes at drop-off and pick-up. Please remember that, even though you are outside, you may still spread the virus!
2. Even though the weather is getting better and the temptation is to stay outside and enjoy the sunshine, please do not linger at pick-up and drop-off times on the front lawn. It is important that we continue to minimise the number of people on the campus over the next few months.
3. As R12, R13 and R14 return to school on Monday, a reminder that they will be required to wear face coverings at all times while indoors. Upper Juniors will not be required to wear face coverings but may choose to do so, if they wish.

The last thing anyone wants is to have us close our doors to day pupils again, so please do play your part in ensuring that we are all addressing these issues. We thank you for your support.

We received a lovely letter recently from Jenne McDonald, Play Co-Ordinator at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, thanking us for our gifts at Christmas. A copy of the letter is overleaf.

Finally, a reminder that school will finish for all pupils at **12 noon on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March.**

Thank you

**Mrs Rhonda D. Palmer**

**Deputy Head**



Belfast Health and  
Social Care Trust

caring supporting improving together

Ms D Toland,  
Rockport School,  
Craigavad  
Holywood  
Co Down BT18 0DD

Dear Mrs Palmer,

On behalf of the children attending the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children, may I thank the pupils, parents and staff of Rockport School for their continued support and the wonderful Christmas presents that we received.

I am sure that we all feel that 2020 was a very difficult year. The Children's Hospital put many changes in place to protect our patients and we had a very quiet Christmas with very few decorations and no special visitors.

Schools have also struggled and I am sure you cannot wait until things are back to normal.

Lovely Christmas presents were one of the few exciting things we had at Christmas. May I thank everyone for their thoughtfulness. The range of gifts was tremendous, and the items for young people in particular were much appreciated.

Hopefully this year, the school will get back to having the Carol Service.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jenne'.

Jenne mc Donald

Play development Coordinator R.B.H.S.C.

## Sixth Form

### Business Seminar

Many thanks to Bryn Cunningham from Ulster Rugby for his motivational chat with our Sixth Form. Bryn spoke to the group about managing his studies at Trinity College and the progression towards becoming a successful professional Rugby Player. Bryn spoke about his strong family values and how leaders must be well rounded individuals who bring out the best in other people.

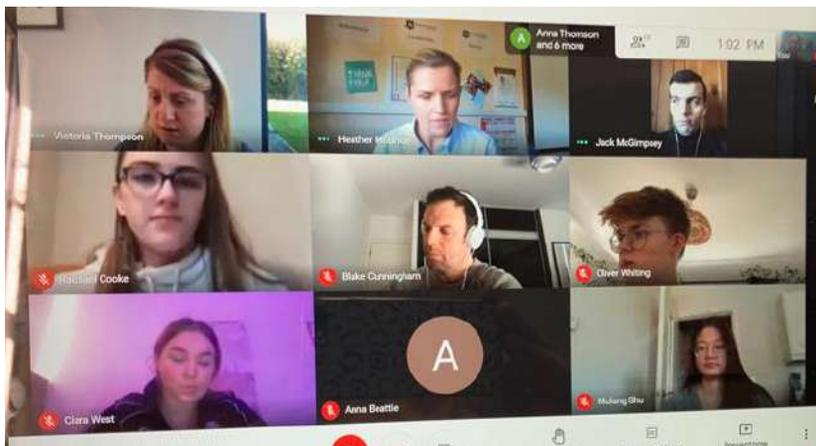


Thanks again and we look forward to hearing from Stephen Orr, Vice President and Director General, Spirit AeroSystems (formerly Bombardier) on our last of these events on Tuesday 23rd March.

*"I really enjoyed hearing from Bryn Cunningham at this week's Business Seminar. We got to hear about the history of his career, advice he would have liked to have known as a teenager and tips on how to stand out from the crowd. It was really cool to hear how Bryn ended up working in Ulster rugby Human Resources & all the different events in his life that led him to his current career."*

**Oli Whiting (Year 13)**

**Heather McBride  
Head of Sixth Form**



# Founder's & St Patrick's Day fun

A fun filled few days of St Patrick's-themed baking... Scones, soda bread, cupcakes, Irish Stew and much more!



# Founder's & St Patrick's Day fun



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We loved seeing photos of all the activities you got up to as we took a little time away from our screens on Wednesday, to appreciate a slower way of life! Long walks, baking, gardening and crafts were just some of the activities. We hope everyone enjoyed their day.



## Early Years

### End of Term

A reminder that **school will finish for all Early Years children at 12pm next Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March**. After-School will **not** be available.

### Summer is coming...

A reminder that children from Playgroup to R4 should return to school after the Easter holiday in their summer uniform:

Girls: Summer dress, grey v-neck, white ankle socks and black shoes.

Boys: White polo shirt, grey v-neck, grey shorts, school socks and black shoes.

*Playgroup and Reception children wear green Rockport sweatshirts instead of grey v-neck.*

**Lynn Athanasiou**

**Head of Early Years**



