

10th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the Spring half term, I would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to our students, staff and each of you for your amazing commitment during these difficult times. Your support with online learning has achieved an average attendance of 95% daily, which is outstanding.

We look forward to welcoming students back to the new building when it's safe. What hasn't changed is that we are a community and our strengths come from us working together to achieve excellence for our students; regardless of the challenges. As always, I am humbled by the message of support and appreciation of everything we are doing as a school to uphold the standards during lockdown.

Our students have had some amazing opportunities during Spring Term 1, a flavour of these are as follows.

Introduction to Parliament Virtual Trip. In the final week of this half term, years 7,8,9 and 10 were given the fantastic opportunity to have a virtual trip to the Houses of Parliament. Through Microsoft Teams, our students spoke to representatives from the Houses of Parliament, learning about democracy in our country, their political rights and how they can get engaged politics.

Children's Mental Health Week. Our children's mental health is always a priority at Rockwood Academy, particularly now during the COVID lockdown. The first week of February was Children's Mental Health Week. As a school we took part in a lot of activities, including an assembly for all students with a message from The Duchess of Cambridge. Lessons throughout the week incorporated ways in which our students can look after their mental health, with activities such as making origami cranes as a break from online learning, and discussions about how our students can better express their emotions.

Leon Greenman Symposium. This half term Rockwood students and staff were invited to take part in two symposiums discussing Holocaust denial and how it can be addressed. Our fantastic Echo Eternal Flames, Sana took part in the discussion, with very strong contributions. This was a brilliant and informative event to be a part of, named after Holocaust survivor Leon Greenman.

Horizons Festival. As part of Echo Eternal, in the build-up to Holocaust Memorial Day, Rockwood Academy took part in Horizons festival 2020. The festival ran from the 7th until the 29th of January and the theme was 'Be the Light in the Darkness.' Each day the festival commemorated a different survivor, and Rockwood Academy had the pleasure of representing two different survivors. We opened the festival on the 7th of January, focusing on the testimony of Mady Gerrard and celebrating the opening of our new building, named after her. As part of the ceremony, we ran a discussion on teams with Mady, myself and our head girl, Sana. As a school we pledged to remember Mady's testimony and put Mady at the centre of our learning environment.

Holocaust Memorial Day. Rockwood Academy remembers Holocaust Memorial Day every year. This year we had to do so in a new way as a result of our students not being in school. As part of the Horizons Festival, we lit the school with a beam of light, echoing the theme of 'Be the Light in the Darkness.' Due to remote learning, a fantastic film was released of the Horizons 2021 website commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day 2020, <https://echoeternal.uk/project/horizons>

Student Ambassadors. At Rockwood we take pride in helping our students become Leaders of Tomorrow. One way that this is done is through giving our fantastic students a platform in which they can foster and develop their leadership skills. There are a multitude of ways in which our students can become leaders in our school. Students have the opportunity to be STEM Ambassadors, Holocaust Memorial Ambassadors, Rights Respecting School Ambassadors, or members of our Student Councils.

Schools reopening

We are listening carefully to the latest government announcements regarding education and the reopening of schools at some point in the future. Please note that the government has stated 8th March 2021 is only the earliest date for any pupils returning school, not an actual date of return. The government will be reviewing closely the current rates of infection both nationally and locally. As has been the case throughout the pandemic, our priority is the welfare of our students and staff. Please be assured that when a date for reopening school is announced, we will review our systems and procedures carefully and communicate arrangements to you, to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Remote learning

The school continues to provide a full timetable of lessons to pupils including Form Time and pastoral support via Microsoft Teams. In line with best practice and latest evidence about how young people engage with remote education, we are offering a blended approach that includes a variety of methods to teach and support pupils. For example, recorded lessons, live sessions, and online work. Remote learning will resume on Monday 22nd February 2021. If you require any support with remote learning or help with a laptop or internet, please contact the relevant person:

Year Group	Pastoral Manager	Senior Leader
Year 7	Mr Khan m.khan@rockwood-academy.co.uk	Mr Donaldson h.donladson@rockwood-acedemy.co.uk
Year 8	Ms Shaheen n.shaheen@rockwood-academy.co.uk	Mrs De Jesus p.dejesus@rockwood-academy.co.uk
Year 9	Ms Sahota b.sahota@rockwood-academy.co.uk	Mr Cooke d.cooke@rockwood-academy.co.uk
Year 10	Mr Ali s.ali@rockwood-academy.co.uk	Mrs Williams j.williams@rockwood-academy.co.uk
Year 11	Ms Walker s.walker@rockwood-academy.co.uk	Mr Howes b.howes@rockwood-academy.co.uk

Student absence from remote learning

If your child is unwell and unable to join remote learning, please contact the school absence line 01215666500 Option 6.

Free School Meals

Weekly FSM vouchers continue to be issued through Edenred. Over half term, vouchers are sent via text or email to the parent/carer.

COVID testing in school

We are operating a test centre on site for students and staff. Parents of those who are accessing in school provision have already been asked to complete a consent form which either grants or withholds consent for your child to be tested. All other parents will receive information ahead of school reopening to all students. If you have any questions please contact Josh Bentley, School Business manager. j.bentley@rockwood-academy.co.uk

Important Dates

Friday 12th February 2021
Monday 22nd February 2021

- Student on site finish at 3.00pm
- Students continue to access online learning.
- Vulnerable students and those of key workers return to school

Events in Spring Term 2- February/March

- LES MILLS Events
- World Book Day
- STEM – JEEP Workshop
- Echo Eternal – Young Leaders Meeting
- Echo Eternal – Young Genocide Commemoration

Thank you for all your support during this half-term, and I wish you an enjoyable break.

Yours sincerely



Sofia Darr
Headteacher