

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the Autumn half term, I would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to our students, staff and parents for their amazing commitment during these difficult times.

Thank you for your understanding and support as we welcomed back our school community. I have been immensely proud of the staff and students of Rockwood; their response in these strange times has been incredible.

I'm proud to say COVID has not stopped us providing amazing opportunities to our students, a flavour of these are as follows.

**National Sports and Fitness Day.** National Fitness Day, was on the 23rd September 2020 and, in the words of the organisers, it was "a chance to highlight the role physical activity plays across the UK, helping us raise awareness of its importance in helping us lead healthier and active lifestyles". At Rockwood, students enthusiastically took part. Remaining in their classrooms, they carried out exercises and stretches. They were very tired by the end! Mr Smith ably led the fitness session over video.

**European Day of Languages.** On the 26th September Rockwood really got into the spirit of things! In personal development, all year groups learnt about the languages of our continent. So many students chose to enter one of our language-themed competitions: for example, students sent in pictures of cakes they had baked at home. The cakes were each decorated to represent European countries.

**Echo Eternal Awards Ceremony.** Echo Eternal is CORE Education Trust's commemorative arts engagement programme, inspired by Holocaust survivor testimony to promote respect and understanding between different communities. Rockwood is one of many schools which takes part in the project. Out of all the students involved with Echo Eternal, a student from Rockwood was chosen to be the first Eternal Flame Fellow: Sana Hanif, in Year 11. This is a prestigious award, and it recognised all the hard work Sana has put into Echo Eternal over many years.

**CORE-US.** Students in the choir have been singing 'together' over the internet using Teams. Here at Rockwood, we will ensure our students get the same opportunities they would be getting in normal times, whilst keeping them safe. In this spirit, our choir has continued to sing this term - but over the internet, keeping a safe distance from others.

**Leaders of Tomorrow.** A group students have received mentoring from the inspirational Fela Lufadeju. Leaders of Tomorrow is a programme organised by CORE, with students from across CORE schools taking part. We are playing our part in developing the future generation of national leaders.

**CCF Award Ceremony.** Our proud Year 10s and 11 received their Level 2 Young Leaders qualification, joined remotely by special guest Brigadier Stuart Williams OBE. The brigadier spoke to the students about how proud they should be of their achievements. In the Q&A session afterwards, the students even demonstrated leadership by asking the Brigadier questions which made him think about ways the CCF could be improved across the country.

**Echo Eternal: Horizons '21.** A group of Year 9 students are working with professional artists and film-makers preparing for the Horizons '21 event. Horizons is an event which Echo Eternal puts on each year in January for Holocaust Memorial Day. This year, the event will be taking place online but it will still be student-led. This year, Rockwood is the lead school for the production. Our students have a huge responsibility, but we know they are up to the task.

### Uniform

The Rockwood Academy uniform is an important part of the culture and ethos of our school. High standards of dress at all times represents a level of pride in our school and a reflection of the attitudes our students have towards their education. Please note the uniform supplier has confirmed that stock is available from Clive Marks, Kings Heath B14 7AD and Trutex, Erdington B23 6SA. Year 7 students are expected to be in full uniform by 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020. Year 7 students will be expected to wear PE uniform by 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Students in Years, 8, 9, 10 and 11 can replace their uniform as and when required.

Students need to wear their PE uniform on the day they have PE timetabled as the changing facilities will be closed. In order to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus, please ensure all clothing including uniform is washed frequently in line with government guidance.

### Keeping students and staff safe from COVID-19

- We will continue to act on the guidance from the government.
- To help us reduce the risk of infection, we will not be able to receive visitors or parents until further notice. During the day, we ask that parents communicate with us only via telephone on 0121 566 6500 or email [enquiry@rockwood-academy.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@rockwood-academy.co.uk)
- We continue to have a stock of PPE if required in an emergency.
- We will be following the government's direct guidance on what to do if a student or staff member has suspected coronavirus symptoms or is confirmed to have the virus.

### We must

Students will wash their hands regularly, including before they eat and again before they leave. They will remain in bubbles with the rest of their year group and will arrive at staggered times and have staggered break and lunch. Contact between bubbles will be reduced where possible, which will help to reduce the risk of an outbreak and minimise the number of students who have to isolate in the event there is a case. A senior leader has been assigned to each year group so we continue to meet the needs of each cohort.

There are three simple actions we must all do to keep on protecting each other:

**Wash hands** - keep washing your hands regularly

**Cover face** - wear a face covering in enclosed spaces

**Make space** - stay at least 2 metres apart - or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

### Important Dates

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020**

Students return to school at the staggered times in the table below.

School Day for Each Year Group				
Year Group	Arrival time:	Break	Lunch	Finish time:
Year 7	8.45am	10.15am	12.15pm	3.00pm
Year 8	10.00am	1.30pm	10.45am	3.00pm
Year 9	11.00am	10.30am	11.45am	3.15pm
Year 10	12.00pm	10.45am	12.45pm	3.20pm
Year 11	12.45pm	11.00am	1.15pm	3.30pm

### Events in Autumn Term 2

#### November

- One Night of Shakespeare Video Record Breaker
- Echo Eternal submission of Art Work
- Cadets Woodlands Adventure
- STEM Water Aid Workshop

#### December

- STEM Merry Chemistree
- Echo Eternal Arts Award

I would like to thank the staff for their dedication and hard work, as well as parents and carers for the continued support of Rockwood Academy and our students.

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

Yours sincerely



**Sofia Darr**  
Headteacher