

9th December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

I am thrilled to be writing to you as Rockwood's new Head of School. Having first come to Rockwood in May 2019, I care deeply about the success of the school and our students and staff. I feel very fortunate to already know, and enjoy positive relationships with, a number of you and look forward to meeting many more parents over the coming weeks and months. As I hope you will come to see, I believe that providing a wide range of opportunities is critical for developing students' confidence, raising their aspirations, and helping them to build transferable skills. I also believe passionately that a student's background should not be a barrier to their success, and I am committed to helping every Rockwood student to achieve their very best.

Highlights from the term

This has been a positive and purposeful term at Rockwood, and I am pleased to share a few highlights:

Pakistan floods

Community is at the heart of Rockwood's values, and I am extremely proud of the students of Alum Rock Football Academy who raised an incredible £3,500 for victims of the floods in Pakistan. The most impressive fundraising challenge was the '3800 mile bike ride to Pakistan,' using the exercise bikes in our Sports Hall! Sincere thanks to everyone who gave to this important cause.

Opportunity Day

We are committed to giving our students as many rich opportunities as possible and it was wonderful to see students enjoying our first Opportunity Day of the Year on Friday. The focus was on personal development and included a live talk from the West Midlands Police, plus a live streaming of the Medical Mavericks' 'The Human Guinea Pig,' and 'The Senses' films about how the ears, nose and throat work function together to understand the world around us selected to support students' curriculum knowledge and provide a real wow factor. Year 11 were involved in careers talks. An enjoyable day for all.

Candle Conference

Our Year 11 Religious Education students were invited to the 'Rights and Wrongs' Candle Conference in London earlier this month. Presented by published author and theologian Peter Vardy, the event aimed to support students' preparation for their GCSEs in the summer. It encouraged them to build their critical thinking, communication, and evaluation skills. I am incredibly proud of their enthusiasm at the event and the mature way in which they represented Rockwood Academy.

Birmingham MAD (Make A Difference)

Looking ahead to next term, I am delighted that we have formed a new partnership with MAD, a Birmingham based youth development group that offers a sports, activities, and mentoring programme for young people. The MAD team will be coming into school to run sessions for our students, more details will be sent in the New Year.

Things to consider as we prepare for the new year and term ahead...

E-scooters

While e-scooters are growing in popularity in the city, I wanted to draw to your attention the laws which govern these. While hired scooters have less restrictions, it is illegal to use privately-owned e-scooters on public roads, on pavements, in cycle lanes and in pedestrian-only areas. Furthermore, our school is located in an area of busy traffic, and I am concerned that students may be putting their safety at risk. As you may know, recently a child was tragically killed in an incident on Belchers Lane area of Bordesley Green. We do not want any of our students penalised or, even worse, injured through use of e-scooters.

PE kit reminder

Over recent weeks we have noticed a number of students coming to school with incorrect PE kit. Please can I ask you to look at our uniform policy for PE <https://www.corerockwood.academy/school-life/uniform-equipment/> and take the opportunity over the Christmas break to check your child has the right clothing. Please remember, we can support families who are struggling with items of uniform, and we have tried to minimise the number of branded items required to make our uniform affordable.

Naseby holiday club

Naseby Youth Centre is running a free holiday club next week, with 50 places available to children on Free School Meals. Sessions run from 1.30pm-5.30pm on Monday 19th to Wednesday 21st December 2022, with a special trip to see the Blackpool lights on Thursday 22nd December 2022. Please contact Darnish Amraz, Senior Youth worker, Birmingham Youth Service - Landline: 0121 303 0002 - Work mobile number: 07548712847 for more information or to book a place.

All that remains is for me to wish you and your family a very enjoyable holiday, and a Happy New Year.

Please remember that **school closes at 12.25pm on Friday 16th December 2022 and reopens to students on Wednesday 4th January 2023 at 8.35am.**

Best wishes,



David Cooke
Head of School