

The Rockwood Standard



ROCKWOOD
ACADEMY



The Newsletter of Rockwood Academy
6th Edition July 2018

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ROCKWOOD
ACADEMY

HEADTEACHER



DEAR STUDENTS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY,

As we come to the end of a fantastic academic year, it is with great pride that I can

look back at the many achievements of our students at Rockwood.

It's been an eventful summer term at Rockwood, with our Year 11 students completing their examinations and we welcomed our new Year 7 students to the Academy. We have celebrated high achievement, a superb sports day, our Cadets summer camp and lots of other amazing events. I was proud to see how our students were true ambassadors and played a key role in Year 7 induction events, ensuring our new students felt at ease in a new setting. I would also like to wish all our Year 11 students every success in their journey ahead. I firmly believe they will go on to achieve great things in the future.

I can truly say, we are a place where students come first. I commend our students for the hard work and resilience they have demonstrated with every challenge that they have faced, including curriculum changes; new grading and challenging GCSE specifications. I would like to say thank you to our dedicated staff who go over and beyond on a daily basis to provide the best education for our students.

Visitors to the Academy are very complementary and always comment

on the high standards the students exhibit at all times. Our CORE values truly permeate throughout everything that we do; our students' dedication strengthens their character and ability to make the most of every opportunity they have at the Academy.

A great deal of what we do at Rockwood cannot be achieved without the support and co-operation of parents, who have shown immense dedication to the Academy. We appreciate the support shown through the high attendance at our Academy performances, learning review evenings and other parent events. I look forward to further strengthening our partnerships and working even more closely with you in the new academic year.

Have a wonderful summer holiday and I look forward to welcoming you back at the start of our new academic year on Wednesday 5th September 2018.

Ms Sofia Darr Headteacher



AMBASSADORS



CORE Ambassador Nyla Butt, Year 7, was delighted to be the first student at Rockwood Academy to hold the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award in Bronze. As a CORE Ambassador she will have the opportunity to drive the Right Respecting School agenda across all year groups and ensure that we all share the same approach to make the academy a place where both students and staff can thrive.

CORE VALUES

COLLABORATION

SPANISH TEACHER

On 27.04.2018 we hosted a group of Spanish teachers from the Escuela oficial de Idomas de Albacete. This was a wonderful opportunity for our students to practice their Spanish language skills and for our colleagues to exchange ideas around education. We hope that this will be the start of a longstanding collaboration.



STUDENT INTERVIEW PANEL

As part of our interview process for key positions we have asked a number of students to sit on a student panel. The feedback from the candidates has been unanimous in that they felt that the students on the panel conducted themselves extremely professional. In many ways this part of the interview process had been the most gruelling. The students asked insightful questions aligned with our CORE values and provided detailed and very useful feedback.



OPPORTUNITY WORLD OF WORK WEEK

Monday, 25th June 2018 saw the start of Rockwood's first World of Work Week. Our Year 10 students had the opportunity to take part in an array of activities around careers and employment. CV writing, interview skills, visiting colleges and workshops at our employment partners gave our students an insight into the broad range of career choices that are open to them once they leave Rockwood Academy. The feedback from employers and students alike was extremely positive.



RESPECT SOCCER AID 2018

Staff and students at Rockwood Academy are always keen to support those who are less fortunate than us. In June we took part in the national Soccer Aid event to raise money for charity. Football related events ranging from penalty shoot outs to keepie uppies took place at lunch time on the astro turf. All students were invited to wear trainers on the day for a good cause.



EXCELLENCE ART SHOW

On Wednesday, 4th July 2018 we opened the doors to this year's Art Show exhibiting the fantastic art work created by our Year 11 GCSE group. Visitors were impressed by the quality of the work on show. It was wonderful to see how students engaged in conversations about their pieces with those who came along to admire them. The Art Department had produced a catalogue for the exhibition and it is fair to say that everyone who visited was keen to take home a catalogue as a souvenir and lasting reminder of the amazing work on display.



CURRICULUM

ART & TEXTILES

During this term the Art department have been using lots of different skills and techniques through varied subject matter.

Year 7 have been focussing on Architecture and have created beautiful foil embossing tiles inspired by the Austrian Architect Hundertwasser. They have used string, foil, glue and markers to create colourful and imaginative designs.

Year 8 have been exploring Japanese and Asian Art and have been focussing on 'Kach o' Birds using pen and water colour developing their own compositions of Birds within their habitats.

Year 9 have been developing their skills whilst exploring the theme of Nautical in preparation for their GCSE sketch books. They have been using many different

techniques to help them in the journey ahead.

Year 10 have been working on their crucial 60% course work module for their Art GCSE. Exploring artist and medias to better their skills, developing there sketch books and working towards a final piece.

Year 11 have now completed their GCSE Art and Textiles. Huge congratulations to these pupils who worked so hard in the run up to their exam. You should be very proud of what you have achieved, I certainly am very proud of all you have done. The year 11 GCSE Art Show took place during the Summer Showcase and all of the community got the opportunity to see the stunning work that has been created. Well Done Class of 2018 !!!!!



ENGLISH

This term at Rockwood, our students had an exciting opportunity to exhibit their creative talent by entering the Young Writers' Competition 2018 as well as to work with a famous writer, Joffrey White. This was brought to them through a joint collaboration by both the English Department and our wonderful librarian, Carolyn.

Twenty of our students were selected from Years 7 & 8 to engage in creative workshops with the writer in order to develop their writing skills. This was

coupled with an engaging day of lessons and activities for both year groups allowing students to submit entries for their own opening to a story. "Thank you Ms for selecting me to be a part of the workshop - it was fun," was amongst some of the feedback received from our enthusiastic students. Lucky students received signed copies of Joffrey's new book 'Earthland.'

The finale involved a passionate and light-hearted assembly where the assembly hall filled with echoes of laughter and cheering whilst listening to Joffrey's enthralling journey to becoming a writer.

In his golden middle years of life, whilst narrating bedtime stories, it was his son who persisted: "daddy, why don't you start writing books." Here at Rockwood, we believe the sky's the limit.



GEOGRAPHY

Refugee Week

Refugees risk their lives every day to escape conflict, persecution and natural disasters. For Refugee Week, years 7 and 8 have been exploring what it would mean to be a refugee and how they would welcome refugees into the Rockwood

community. They have been reflecting upon what they would miss the most as well as what they would take with them if they had to escape from conflict or persecution. This has led to some fantastic work as well as well-informed discussions incorporating empathy and reflection to make decisions.



HISTORY

This summer KS3 pupils have been creating summer projects and have been given the opportunity to research a key topic in History and explore the significance of the event. Year 7 students for example are exploring the city of Birmingham during the Second World War in greater detail. Students have been fascinated to learn how Birmingham was a leading industrial city and significantly contributed to Britain's success in the war. Year 8 students have been focusing on the French revolution, exploring the detrimental impact corruption and injustice can have upon society.

Finally, students have been participating in the Echo Eternal project where Rockwood Academy will be working with key organisations to explore and promote the significance of the Holocaust. This project engages children and young people in commemorating the Holocaust, inspired by the testimony of survivors of the Holocaust. The Echo Eternal pilot commenced in Birmingham on Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 and will run for twelve months in twelve schools. The project will then pass to a new host city within the UK where it will continue to grow and evolve. Each city will work with partner organisations to create its own distinct "echo" which will ultimately be made

available nationally via the new Holocaust Memorial and Education Centre.





Maths

Bringing a subject to life is extremely important when it comes to engaging students and pointing out the relevance of the material that we ask students to learn. This term the Maths team has used the FIFA Football World Cup as a source for 'applied Maths'. Students measured the angles at penalty shoot outs. They calculated the probability of Harry Kane scoring in the first and second half of a match. They figured out the number of players involved in the World Cup and used statistical data and charts. As this edition of the newsletter is being printed before the final, we are wondering what the odds are of 'Football coming Home'.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Broaden our students' horizons by reading Spanish Magazine

As part of the new GCSE specifications, students need to be exposed to real and authentic resources in order to be able to access higher grades. Therefore, as a department we have imbedded the use of these materials from Year 7 to 11.

The MFL department has a termly subscription to a Spanish magazine which immerses students in the language and culture of Spanish-speaking countries with articles on real teens, fascinating traditions, and pop culture trends abroad. It engages students while they build comprehension and speaking skills.

As a linguist, this term I was truly proud to see our new Year 7 Spanish students using these magazines in class to feed their curiosity and eagerness to enrich their awareness of the Spanish culture as well as to develop their comprehension and translation skills.

Well done Year 7 students and keep up the hard work. You are the future linguists of Rockwood Academy.

P.S: These magazines are also quite popular in our Rockwood library. If you haven't read one, please go and grab one this week!

MFL Displays

Recently, Year 7 have been learning about places in town and how to describe their city. What better way to consolidate the learning of this topic than by being creative! Students have been working hard on designing their own imaginative and creative cities on A3 paper. Students

have used their cross curricular skills to produce a unique design which will be part of the displays in the MFL corridors. Students were able to use their engineering and architectural skills as well as their language skills.

Lingua Centre Visit / Language Award Trip

On Wednesday 27th June, a group of 27 linguists had the opportunity to visit the Lingua Centre at Hillcrest School. Students invited on the trip were chosen from Years 7 and 8 as a reward for their outstanding effort, behaviour for learning, and commitment to Spanish this year. The Lingua Centre provides a unique school-based learning experience for students, including a languages "village" and a teaching room. Having passed through passport control, students had the opportunity to shop, using Euros, and speaking only in Spanish! They also had the opportunity to use their converted currency in the café. The students interacted throughout the trip with native Spanish speakers and language teachers and had lots of fun taking part in the interactive activities. Our star students had a fantastic time, and we would like to congratulate them again on their hard work this year.



Music

Students in the Music Department have been working incredibly hard to prepare themselves for a few key performances during the Summer Term.

Our first of these was at the Citizen's UK meet which happened at Birmingham Town Hall. We worked with Miss Bi-Baroo and students from two other schools to create our own drama and rap piece focussing on issues that meant a lot of us, including social housing and the need for more opportunities for us to get involved with during the Commonwealth Games. Our students really shone in the performance on the stage with Jabrill even doing an amazing rap solo - well done!

Our second event was a brilliant opportunity to share the talents that so many young people have in our school. Our wonderful Music Service brass teacher Mr Ali teamed up with Mr Gifford at Nansen Primary School to provide brass students with the chance to perform in a joint concert which took place at Nansen Primary in June. Some of our students had been learning their instrument for 2 years whilst some had been learning for as little as 6 weeks! It was a real joy to watch everyone showcase the hard work that they had put in.

Finally, students prepared themselves for the audition phase of our upcoming talent show - Rockwood's Got Talent!

We are aiming to host a huge Summer Showcase week in July to really show off all of the hard work and dedication that students from year 7 to 11 have put in to learning their instruments this year. We are organising to have 3 mini morning concerts and a final big talent show where we will vote to find out who the overall winner is!



PE

Under 13 Cricket Festival Winners

The Under 13 Rockwood Academy Cricket side were invited to take part in the Sandwell and Dudley District Cricket Championship held at Dartmouth Cricket Club in Sandwell.

16 schools took part, with the standard being extremely high. In a tough group, Rockwood defeated Q3 Academy, RSA Academy and St Michaels to progress as group winners and through to the Semi Final.

After comprehensively winning the Semi Final the team played Sandwell Academy in the final.

Batting first the side made 62 which was slightly below what was expected. Sandwell batted well and looked on course for victory. Needing 6 to win in the last over, excellent bowling and fielding restricted Sandwell to four runs after five balls. With the last ball Rockwood took a wicket, to ensure they were victorious in the competition.

This was a fantastic achievement from the side, who conducted themselves impeccably throughout both with their conduct but their performance as well. Let's hope this is the first of many!



RE

The RE department celebrated Mental Health Awareness week during the summer term. The students explored different types of mental illnesses, symptoms, impact on individuals and people around them; how to support people with mental health and what help and support is available for people

who are suffering from mental health problems. Pupils have been actively engaged and have demonstrated various skills such as, sympathy, empathy, communication, presentation, teamwork and working on their initiatives. They have fully embedded the CORE values and we are very proud of their progress and comprehension.



SCIENCE

On the 24th May, a group of Year 10 Separate Science students were taken on a careers showcase at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst where the theme was "leading change" and inspiring "women in engineering".

This was a fantastic opportunity for our young girls to gain an exclusive insight into the various STEM related careers available for them to pursue in the future.

Events on the day included:

- Inspiring talks by STEM female role models.
- Career stands provided by military STEM employers.
- Career stands provided by industry partners.

- STEM Higher Education Providers/ Apprentice Schemes/Supported Education Schemes.
- Interactive STEM activities and challenges.

The girls were involved in a variety of activities including deciphering encrypted codes, virtual reality programmes and engineering in the military. Two of our students Farasha and Saynab, proudly stated on Forces Radio the importance of raising awareness and promoting women in STEM.

Feedback from the students was extremely positive regarding the event, students felt that this experience was unlike others. It provided them with a real hands-on experience to engage and interact with various leading companies including RINA and GSK.



SMSC

From time to time during the academic year we 'drop down' everything to focus on specific topics as part of our SMSC curriculum. On 17th April 2018 the focus was on British Values. The form groups in

each year group visited expert teachers to work on the individual strand of the Fundamental British Values of Democracy, The Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and Mutual Respect and Tolerance. On 13th July 2018 the students worked on Freedoms and Rights as part of Rockwood

being a Rights Respecting School. They explored which rights we enjoy in the UK and how we can promote these rights. The students demonstrated a great level of maturity and engaged in fantastic discussions captured in videos and art work.



KS3 PASTORAL MANAGER MESSAGES

YEAR 6 TRANSITION DAY AND EVENING

It is always exciting to meet the Year 6 students who will be joining us in September during the transition events. This year we hosted the transition day on 4th July 2018. The Year 6 students enjoyed a day brimming with activities that helped them to get to know students in their year group, staff at Rockwood and other students in the academy. During taster lessons, assemblies, a treasure hunt and a team building session the students had a chance to find out more about Rockwood Academy. What better compliment than the statement made by one of the students: "Can I come back tomorrow again?"

It was the parents turn to find out more about the academy when they joined their children for the Transition Parents Evening on 5th July 2018. The headteacher Ms Darr explained her vision and what we mean when we say that at Rockwood 'students come first'. Parents met staff and enjoyed student led tours around the building visiting the academy's departments.



YEAR 7 – MS SHAHEEN

I am extremely proud of what the Year 7 students have achieved over this academic year. Students have made fantastic progress across all subjects. Attendance and punctuality have been strong. Students have enjoyed curriculum trips and participating in co-curricular activities. They have represented Rockwood Academy in sporting competitions against other schools and made us proud.

As their Pastoral Manager I couldn't be prouder of their efforts, their achievements and the positive relationships that they have established with staff and other students. Year 7 have truly made their mark within the Rockwood Family.

I am very excited about Year 7 moving up into Year 8 in September and I look forward to all the opportunities and challenges the next academic year will hold for them.



YEAR 8 – MS WALKER

Year 8 has had a fantastic year and I am proud of their achievements and the progress they have made. Year 8 students have also had the opportunity to attend a number of trips and took part in a variety of co-curricular activities. The cadets within the year group have also had an exciting year and learnt many skills that they will put into practice during their summer camp residential towards the end of the term.

As their Pastoral Manager I am really excited about Year 8 entering KS4 in September. Students have selected the GCSE option subjects that they wish to study over the next 3 years. These will support their future career plans and I look forward to supporting the students on their journey at this very important stage of their lives.



KS4 PASTORAL MANAGER MESSAGES



YEAR 9 – MR ALI

I am delighted with the achievements of my year group over the last term. Looking back at their journey from the start of this academic year to where they are now, I am proud how students have grown in confidence. They have gone from strength to strength during their first year at KS 4. A large number of students got involved in the co-curricular programme that is on offer at the academy which has supported their development in becoming responsible young adults. I am looking forward to our rewards trip to Thorpe Park and wish my students and their families an enjoyable summer break.



YEAR 10 – MR KHAN

My highlight of this academic year has to be the Year 10 World of Work Week. I am immensely proud of my students conduct and the maturity they displayed during this week. They embraced the opportunities on offer and impressed the employers with their attitude and conduct. I am sure that the year group is now better equipped to make decisions about their future when they have to choose colleges and apprenticeships next year. May I thank the parents and carers of my students for their support during this very busy year. This year my year group will receive revision work for the summer holidays and I hope that you will encourage your child to return their booklets after the holidays. I wish you all wonderful summer holidays – the students have certainly earned them.



YEAR 11 – MR DHILLON

We have made it! After a long exam season we finally said 'Good Bye' to our Year 11 students at their Graduation Evening and their rewards trip to Thorpe Park. I am delighted to report that the students worked extremely hard in lessons and revision sessions and conducted themselves in an exemplary fashion during the exams. I hope that all their efforts will be rewarded with fantastic grades in August when we meet our Year 11 students one last time at results day. There have been so many highlights this year, but the Graduation Evening was a truly remarkable event. It was amazing to see the students joining the staff in celebrating the many aspects of excellence we encountered over this academic year. It is safe to say that I will miss "my students" and I would be honoured if students would stay in touch so that I can follow their success outside Rockwood.



CO-CURRICULAR

SUCCESS AT COMPETITIVE SPORTS



This term a large number of students took part in an array of sporting competitions. We played cricket at Lordswood Boys' School, King Edward VI Camp Hill, Small Heath School. Our U13 boys won a tournament at Sandwell Academy beating 15 teams from across the West Midlands. Our girls took part in a football tournament at West Bromwich, whereas the boys played football at the Birmingham City FC football ground. At the Birmingham School Games out boys won a bronze medal in softball. We also took part in an inter trust football tournament to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide using the power of sport to bring communities together. Whereas the girls came third, the boys were the winners of the tournament.



MAKE IT CHALLENGE

On 25. and 26.04.2018 our Year 9 students visited the CV Show at the NEC to enter the Make It Challenge. As well as working as a group, individual students had the opportunity to shine through demonstrating leadership skills. In a Dragons Den scenario the students had to present their ideas and 'sell' them to a panel of experts.



THE WINDRUSH GENERATION

A group of Rockwood students visited the Tally Ho Centre on 18th June 2018 to find out about the Windrush Generation. Even though the trip had been planned well ahead of the topic being highlighted in recent news, it could not have come at a better time. In the true sense of 'Bringing History to Life' the students explored the reasons for immigration, the living conditions of the Windrush Generation and their impact on the British economy and society.



PARENT ENGAGEMENT

AFTERNOON TEA WITH THE HEADTEACHER, PARENTS EVENINGS AND LEARNING REVIEW EVENINGS

At Rockwood Academy we pride ourselves of working closely with parents and carers to support and encourage all of our students. We share achievements on Twitter, our website and newsletters, but nothing can replace a face to face conversation. This academic year we met parents at the popular Afternoon Tea with the Headteacher as well as during Parents Evenings and Learning Review Evenings. We feel privileged that we can count on the support from our families who value the informative and constructive meetings with our committed staff.



RAISING ASPIRATIONS

THE GREAT GET TOGETHER

2 Years on from MP Jo Cox's death her powerful message of 'More in Common' still lives on. The Great Get Together has now become an annual event for people to come together to celebrate their differences, but more importantly to focus on the fact that we have far more in common than what sets us apart. Our sister school City Academy Birmingham hosted a Great Get Together on 22nd June 2018 for all schools in the CORE Education Trust. Students made a pledge in the spirit of 'More in Common' and were humbled and inspired by the life of Jo Cox.



MOSAIC MENTORING

During the summer term we celebrated another group of students graduating from the Mosaic Mentoring programme. We celebrated with our business mentors that their mentees had grown in confidence and that their outlook on their professional future had significantly broadened.



PARTNERSHIPS

CADETS

Opportunities do not come any bigger than the annual Central Camp for our Rockwood Academy Cadets. A whole week of adventures awaited our students in Nesscliffe. It was fantastic to see our young people to try new things and to work together with cadets from other schools. The cadets grew in front of our staff's eyes: confidence, inter personal and leadership skills increased day by day. This experience enabled our cadets to live and breathe our CORE Values: Collaboration, Opportunity, Respect, Excellence.



LTA AND TENNIS FOUNDATION

This term Rockwood Academy students had an opportunity to get a hands-on experience of elite tennis as well as observing world class tennis. On 23rd April 2018 a group of Rockwood students joined students from all academies in the trust in visiting the National Tennis Centre in Roehampton. On 10th July 2018 six lucky students who had displayed a passion for tennis as well as all round excellence in PE set off the visit Wimbledon. The students enjoyed a fantastic day on court 2. Again this experience was shared with students from across the trust in the true spirit of collaboration. Unbelievably good tennis was observed by our students at the National Wheelchair Tennis Championships in Nottingham on 18th July 2018. This was a truly inspirational experience.



VISIT TO THE REP THEATRE

As part of the Birmingham Literature Festival 2018 a group of Rockwood students went to the REP Theatre to watch a screening of the critically acclaimed memoir "The Boy with the Topknot". The students found out what it takes to turn 300 pages into 90 minutes of gripping and moving TV and met some of the key people behind the movie.



UCL BEACON SCHOOL IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

We are delighted to announce that we have been confirmed as a UCL Beacon School in Holocaust Education for the cohort of 2018-2019. It is a real honour to be working with the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education and being recognised for excellent practice and an innovative and creative approach towards the teaching of the Holocaust. We will update you on the exciting developments this opportunity will hold for us as a school.



HEAD BOY AND GIRL



This term we had to say “Good Bye” to our fabulous head boy Zain and head girl Fatima. They took to the stage during the graduation evening to inspire their peers to carry on chasing their dreams and to work hard to open doors for a brighter future. We would like to thank them for being incredible role models to the whole year group and all students at Rockwood Academy. They have been supporting the Headteacher and staff expertly during their tenure as head boy and head girl.

LIBRARY

FIFA WORLD CUP 2018 COMES TO THE LIBRARY

The World Cup is a wonderful occasion to focus on the football books available in the library. Interested pupils have been completing the World Cup Challenge, which consists of five tasks: Read a football fiction book, a non-fiction book about football, a biography of a player, something about the host nation (Russia), and finally a match report on one of the books they read.

So far, four completed challenge sheets have been submitted from Danish Sharif, Sannah Abbas, Abbas Gul and Noorulain Khan.

Danish Sharif also suggested the World Cup Prediction contest currently running in the library: each day the matches to be played are put up in the library and all are invited to sign up for the team they think will win that match. It has generated interest from many staff members too.



UNICEF

UNICEF RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

Rockwood Academy has recently joined the UNICEF Right Respecting Schools rewards scheme. UNICEF works with schools in the UK to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive. Using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as our guide, we work towards embedding these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens. The award contains three stages: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Rockwood Academy is delighted to announce that we have already achieved our Bronze award. The Rights Respecting Schools Award team have worked relentlessly to ensure this success. We are excited to embark now on our journey to silver.



Rockwood Academy
Naseby Road, Alum Rock, Birmingham B8 3HG
Tel: 0121 566 6500
Email: enquiry@rockwood-academy.co.uk
www.rockwood-academy.co.uk

