

The Rookwood School Newsletter

Rook News

Friday 28 September 2018



Dear Parents,

Welcome to this academic year's first edition of Rook News. As you will read, there have already been lots of activities across the school for us to report and celebrate, including this summer's excellent GCSE results. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the staff who worked tirelessly in teaching and supporting last year's exam cohort.

You may notice that we do not have as many photographs as normal in this edition. Since Rook News is published on our website, we do need consent from everyone in the photo in order to use it. Therefore, please could I urge you to return the new GDPR-compliant photo consent form, if you have not already done so.

With warmest wishes,

Mr Kirk-Burgess

GCSE success

As this is our first Rook News of the new academic year we wanted to acknowledge our excellent 2018 GCSE results.

All our Year 11 students achieved 9-4 grades (equivalent to the old A*-C) in both English and Maths which is a great achievement. Equally impressive is the fact that 96% of all grades, across all subjects were 4/C or above. At the higher end, we achieved 27% of grades at 7+/A+. For a genuinely non-selective school these results are outstanding.

There were also some great individual success stories, including one student, William who achieved an A* with Distinction in Further Maths. This mark is only given to the top 5% of those students who take Further Maths, which in itself is already a small cohort.

Mr Kirk-Burgess, commented: 'I am really proud of our

2018 Year 11 students. They all worked incredibly hard and truly deserve their fantastic results. This year's group faced the new, tougher exams and their results are a credit to their positive work ethic.

"These students have now moved on to new and exciting challenges and I have no doubt they will continue to grow and flourish. I wish them every success."



School News – Geography Mark



Following a rigorous moderation and assessment process, Rookwood was recently re-awarded the prestigious Geographical Association's Secondary Geography Quality Mark for our innovative approach and commitment to teaching and learning in geography. The award recognised student attainment, progress within this subject throughout the school as well as our excellent GCSE results in this subject.

This is a great achievement for the school, our pupils and particularly Mrs Willcox and one we are very proud of. Here Mrs Willcox shares her passion for the subject and explains why geography is so relevant to our everyday lives.

Being re-awarded the Quality Mark means a huge deal to me. I have always been passionate about geography (despite some of my teachers' best efforts at school!) and I believe that it underpins everything that we do in our lives.

The great Michael Palin states that "Geography is not only up-to-date and relevant, it is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study today. So many of the world's current problems boil down to geography, and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them. Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future."

I hope to promote this in my classroom through exciting lessons, varied field trips, both locally, nationally, and in recent years internationally, to Iceland. Learning about our environment stimulates us to want to improve our lives now and for future generations. Geography broadens the mind. The world is so accessible now through cheap holidays, great documentaries and the Internet that it is easy to be stimulated by big geographical questions such as "What forces shaped our land?" and "Why is xx like that?" These questions can be answered through learning geography. It is not just capital cities and colouring maps! Topics are broad and varied and relevant to the young learners of today.

Skills learned in geography are transferable across many subjects. Geographers are literate, numerate and proficient in ICT. We can work independently but also thrive by working collaboratively. We are enquiring and inquisitive and as such, go on to work in a variety of professions. Theresa May, our Prime Minister read geography at University as did Prince William. Friends of mine from university are now Chartered Surveyors, Army Officers, Environmental Scientists, oil exploration experts and people looking into future technologies to power our ever-changing world amongst many others.

Hopefully by studying geography at Rookwood School some of my enthusiasm for this truly wonderful subject will rub off and pupils will be inspired to continue with their geographical studies at A level and beyond.

To end, I'll leave you with my favourite quote "without geography, you're nowhere!"

School News – LAMDA

Once again we have been delighted with the success of our pupils in the recent London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) exams. Our Lower School pupils who take up to grade 2 verse and prose maintained their 100% pass rate with an outstanding group of distinction level grades. Senior School students were equally as successful in both solo acting, duologue classes, verse and prose and Shakespeare with six students being awarded bronze and silver medals. We would like to congratulate all involved in this outstanding achievement.

LAMDA is one of the oldest drama schools in the UK and has a reputation for excellence in performance training. LAMDA has provided theatre and the world of film and television with first-class actors and drama practitioners. Notable alumni include Benedict Cumberbatch and Sir Timothy West. LAMDA began offering speech examinations to the public in the 1880s. Since then, these examinations have been refined and developed into a comprehensive performance evaluation led by experts in education, acting and communication.

LAMDA examinations have a reputation for excellence across the globe and the bronze, silver and gold examinations carry UCAS points which can be used to assist in securing a place when applying for university. Rookwood has offered private LAMDA lessons and examinations for over 10 years. The examinations are designed to equip candidates, whatever their age or aspirations, with a range of skills that will serve them throughout life. They help to unlock the imagination and creative-thinking, develop strong communication skills, refine technical skills and artistry, promote team-working as well as build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Mrs Booth whose two daughters both take LAMDA lessons said; "LAMDA has provided a great opportunity for my children to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Since starting LAMDA lessons at Rookwood, I noticed their ability to stand up in front of an audience has grown, an important skill to take through life. I'm grateful to Miss Abraham for her past support and to Mrs Blackmore for her current support as both my girls' progress steadily through their LAMDA grades."

Polly our Senior Drama Prefect, who recently achieved a distinction in her silver medal, believes that LAMDA has given her a fantastic boost of confidence. "I really enjoy my LAMDA lessons as it has helped me develop my acting even further and understand pieces of texts such as Shakespeare and Greek Theatre which I never thought I would be able to do. My recent result provides me with UCAS points for college and is a good thing to have on a CV, even for people who decide not to take drama at college or university. Mrs Blackmore's lessons have helped me with my confidence issues which I am pleased to say I no longer struggle with."

For more information on LAMDA lessons and the opportunities they provide please contact Mrs Blackmore. hblackmore@rookwoodschool.org



School News

Reception

Our new children in Reception have made a fantastic start to their school journey at Rookwood. They have been getting to know each other and exploring both the inside and outside spaces.

Mrs Walsh has been really impressed with both their enthusiasm and commitment to learning. They have embraced new challenges and activities and appear to be enjoying all aspects of school life. Well done Reception for such a wonderful start and living our motto - Sapere Aude! (Dare to Know)



Year One

Year One has also made an excellent start to the autumn term settling in and getting to know the new children and making everyone feel welcome.

They have been working in all subject areas and have been learning about number bonds to ten and beyond in maths using Numicon to help them see the bond patterns. They have also used bead strings to help show number partitioning.

In literacy, they have been practising correct letter placement using vowels to make different CVC words. The children have enjoyed painting and working with collage to make displays for the classroom.

What a brilliant start and well done to everyone for all their hard work.



Roots and Shoots

Mrs Fazal and our Lower School Captains had the honour of attending an event to mark the International Day of Peace.

Each year on 21 September, Roots and Shoots groups across the world gather to celebrate Roots and Shoots Peace Day on the UN International Day of Peace. Roots and Shoots Founder, Dr Jane Goodall, has been a UN Messenger of Peace since 2002 working to inspire people to live in harmony with nature and each other. This year, Andover Trees United and the town of Andover were selected to host the UK's main event.

Our pupils took part in a peace march through Harmony Woods followed by a motivational speech and thank you, via PowerPoint, from Dr Jane Goodall. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire Lady Portal MBE DL also gave a speech about peace and a tree was planted to mark this important occasion.

School News

Duke of Edinburgh

On Saturday 15 September Mr Barnes and I took two new Bronze DofE groups out for a training weekend. The weather was extremely kind to us and we walked around Whiteparish, on the Northern edge of the New Forest in glorious sunshine.

Over the two days, the groups learnt how and where to set up their tents, how to cook on Trangia cookers, basic compass work as well as the more common features on a 1:25,000 OS Map.

After walking 6km on Sat and 12km on Sun, whilst carrying their full pack, you would have thought that they would sleep on the journey home, but no....Olivia and Matilda had made up a song whilst walking the last 2km and wanted everybody to hear it, it was called 'Rocks in my shoes'.

Overall, it was an extremely productive weekend, and if the students continue the way they have started they will have absolutely no problem when it comes to their actual Expedition. Congratulations to all who attended the weekend.

Mr Witcomb, DofE Co-ordinator



Diversity talk

As part of Rookwood's PSHEE programme we welcomed Steve Wardlaw from Diversity Role Models into school to deliver a talk to Year 10 & 11 students.

Diversity Role Models is a charity which has been set up to prevent homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools. Steve talked openly about his own personal experiences and explained some of the jargon associated with the LGBT community.

Pupils listened with interest and asked mature and intelligent questions about supporting their peers and challenging stereotypes.



Christmas Shoebox Appeal launched

While thinking about Christmas in September may be too much for most of us, Mrs Willcox and 8W recently launched the Rotary Christmas Shoebox Appeal in an assembly.

Rookwood has supported this annual Rotary Appeal since 2010 and collected nearly 1,000 boxes in that time. These boxes have been sent to disadvantaged children in Albania, Montenegro, Moldova and Romania and they really do make a huge difference.

If you would like to support this worthwhile cause then an email has been sent out with further details. Boxes are being collected in the Geography room or Lower School office and need to be in school by Tuesday 30 October. Thank you in advance.

School News Continued

Boarding

Since returning from the summer holidays our boarders have already enjoyed a full schedule of activities. On their first weekend back at school they headed to Oxford. It was a lovely sunny day and they spent time walking around the university parks and seeing the shrunken heads and dinosaur skeletons in the Pitt Rivers Museum. It was a great start to the term.

During the week they took part in a ten-pin bowling competition where the promise of a prize of chocolate seemed to bring out everyone's competitive side! In the end it was very close; Freya finished strongly in 3rd with 68, Dakchya had 74 but Elliot just came out on top with 76. On the 'barrier up' lane, Alex beat Alya by one pin. Mr Witcomb commented that it was really nice to see all of the boarders laughing and generally enjoying themselves, especially whilst doing the same activity.

Last weekend after a having a late breakfast the boarders headed to Basingstoke to spend a couple of hours jumping around at Flipout. After burning up a lot of energy they enjoyed coming home to tasty brownies that had been made that morning.

On Sunday, after a break in the weather, they headed into town for some shopping and a quick walk around before coming back and making rock cakes.

Growers in full swing

The Growers club has wasted no time this term – they have been taking cuttings from various houseplants since returning after the summer holiday, and were delighted to find that some have already rooted.

The first autumn frosts have killed off the club's climbing beans, so they were taken down and added to the compost bin, where they will rot down and make lovely compost that can be used to feed next year's crops.

In the Lower School Growers club pupils had the opportunity to view seeds under a microscope. They were totally amazed at just how different they looked and how much detail you could see in them. The whole session was punctuated with 'wows' and 'ohhs' and Mrs Yarlett was delighted to see how fascinated the pupils were.



Dates For Your Diary

Week commencing 1st October 2018

Monday 1 October

Lower School Staff Meeting 16.15

Friends of Rookwood AGM - Hall 18.30

Friends of Rookwood Meeting - Hall 19.30

Tuesday 2 October

Year R & 1 Phonics Workshop 15.30

YR 10/11 District Badminton John Hanson

Year 11 Parents' Evening 16.30 - 19.00

Wednesday 3 October

Years R-2 Harvest Festival

U12 & U13 Girls Netball v Sherfield (H)

U10 & U11 Boys Football v Sherfield (A)

Year 7 Boys Football v John Hanson (A)

Thursday 4 October

Years 10 & 11 Woman in Black Workshop & Show

Senior School Parents Rep Meeting 15.00

Manchester Tour sponsored 3 Surface Football

U14 & U15 Girls Netball v Test Valley (A)

Friday 5th October

Year 9 Cheddar

U16 Boys Football v Wellington Academy (A)

Week commencing 8th October 2018

Monday 8 October

Years R-2 Parents Evening 15.45

Senior School Staff Meeting 16.15

Tuesday 9 October

Years R-2 Parent's Evening 15.45

Years 3-6 Meet the Tutors

U13 Boys Football v Leehurst Swan (H)

Years 7 & 8 Girls Football v John Hanson (A)

Wednesday 10 October

Year 6 Structures Challenge (selected pupils)

Year R-2 Parents' Evening

U10 & U11 Boys Football v Leehurst Swan (A)

U12 Boys Football v The Clere (H)

U10 & U11 Girls Netball v Sherfield (A)

Thursday 11 October

Year 11 John Hanson Careers Fair

Year 5 Winchester Cathedral

U15 Girls Netball v Leehurst Swan (H)

U15 Boys Football v Leehurst Swan (H)

Senior School Prize Giving, St Mary's Church

Friday 12 October 2018

Year 11 PSHEE Careers/Wellbeing Day

Years R-2 Parents' Evening 15.45

Growers sale

The next Growers Sale will take place at the Lower School Music Showcase on Monday 15 October.

A wide variety of plants will be on sale including venus flytraps, aloe vera, purple oxalis and kalanchoe.

All of which will brighten your home this winter.

And finally

A huge congratulations to our former Head Girl, Sophie Compton for being selected as cox for the Cambridge Women's 1st boat crew. Sophie is currently in Year 4 at St John's College, Cambridge.