

Headteacher: Helen Carvall

Deputy Headteachers: Amber Pearless
Vivian Bull

Tel: 020 8653 2619



Rockmount Primary School
Chevening Road
Upper Norwood
London
SE19 3ST

office@rockmount.croydon.sch.uk
www.rockmountprimaryschool.co.uk

19th July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a busy last few weeks we have had across the school - action packed but not with as much sunshine as we would have liked!

Our newsletter will be published next week with a round up of the Summer Term activities and highlights for all year groups so do take a look at this on the website. Our Year 6 pupils spent last weekend on a residential trip at a centre on the Isle of Wight. They had an amazing time with many children making personal achievements and the school was commended for the considerate manner and excellent engagement of all pupils. One parent commented: *'It's no co-incidence that the children were so well behaved. It was because of the ethos initially instilled in the school environment and the unrelenting hard-work of teachers on the school trip.'* We are incredibly proud of the children and I am sure parents will join me in thanking staff for giving their time to ensure the trip could take place.

Despite the rain and hailstones, our Summer Fair on Saturday 6th July was a huge success! We managed to raise just short of £5000 which was a great achievement. Many thanks to all of you who attended the event or supported it with donations and prizes. A huge thank you to the Rockmount Friends and Community for their hard work in planning and co-ordinating the event and pulling together an enormous amount of help for the day. As usual the day enabled us to come together and reflect on the wonderful school community we have here at Rockmount, as well as opportunities for festival dancing in the rain!

We have included an early reminder about uniform in advance of parents and carers purchasing items for the return to school in September. We ask that particular attention is paid to the footwear requirements as we will be asking parents/carers to address the wearing of incorrect footwear with their children. No coloured, branded logos are allowed on footwear; it is easy to obtain plain black trainers or shoes from many retailers.

black, flat shoes or plain black trainers with black laces (shoes and trainers must be completely black/ no coloured logos)

School uniform is available from **Stitch 2 Stitch**, a family-run, local supplier, based in Penge. Information can be found on the school website. Please note that for sustainability and safeguarding reasons, there is no longer a name embroidery option when purchasing Rockmount uniform from Stitch 2 Stitch. Parents/Carers are reminded to name all uniform on internal labels.

General Uniform

- royal blue cardigan or school sweatshirt
- grey trousers, shorts or skirt
- royal blue jogging bottoms (**Nursery, Reception, Year 1 children only**)
- white polo shirt or white school shirt
- blue/white checked dress
- black, flat shoes or plain black trainers with black laces (**shoes and trainers must be completely black/ no coloured logos**)
- black, brown, navy or white flat sandals
- black or grey tights

- white or grey socks
- a royal blue fleece jacket is also available for the colder weather

PE and Sports Kit (Years 1-6)

- royal blue shorts
- plain black plimsolls for indoor or outdoor PE (plain black trainers are optional for outdoor PE only)
- plain white t-shirt or white Rockmount t-shirt
- royal blue jogging bottoms

Children from years 2-6 will have an allocated double PE slot on one afternoon per week. To give as much time as possible to those PE sessions children should come into school in their **PE uniform** on their PE days. You will be advised of the allocated days in September once timetables are finalised.

Jewellery

- Plain watches may be worn (no 'smart' watches)
- Earrings may only be worn if they are small, plain studs
- No other jewellery is permitted
- Nail varnish is not permitted

If you are unsure whether an item of your child's clothing or footwear complies with school policy, please ask a member of staff for clarification. If you have any difficulties in providing uniform for your child, please do not hesitate to call the school office to ask for assistance.

As part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a positive and healthy learning environment, we would like to inform you of an important change that will take effect next year: **our school will become a 'smartphone free' school.** This means that children in Years 5 and 6, who are allowed to bring phones to school, will not be allowed to bring in smartphones.

Currently, there is a national conversation about the appropriate age for children to receive their first smartphone. While technology offers numerous benefits and opportunities, recent research has highlighted a concerning link between the age at which a child gets their first smartphone and mental health issues in young adulthood. (see research <https://sapienlabs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Sapien-Labs-Age-of-First-Smartphone-and-Mental-Wellbeing-Outcomes.pdf>). (A group of Rockmount parents and carers have conducted a survey to establish parent/carer interest in this and more information will follow from them in the autumn.)

We understand that many parents choose to provide their children with smartphones once they start walking to school independently, primarily for safety reasons. However, over the past few years, we have observed a significant increase in problems related to phone use and social media participation among our children. Also, once a child has a smartphone (especially if it is linked to a contract), it can be challenging for parents to retract this decision. Some parents, despite initial reluctance, eventually give in to provide a phone to prevent their child from feeling isolated from their peers.

Recognising these challenges, and following the trend set by many secondary schools, we have decided to implement a smartphone-free policy. We encourage parents who feel the need for their child to have a phone for safety reasons to consider pay-as-you-go basic phones without internet access. These phones are both affordable and readily available. Please note, pupils will still be required to hand in their phones at the beginning of each school day.

To further discuss this topic, we will be holding a workshop in the new year. This session will provide more information and address any concerns you may have. In the meantime, if you are contemplating getting your child a smartphone, we wanted to give you advance notice of this policy change.

For more detailed information and resources, please visit the Smartphone Free Childhood website.

[Smartphone Free Childhood](#)

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

This Sunday we will hold the final Community Club session of the year with a BBQ to mark the end of the year in the outdoor garden area. Huge thanks to all of those families who have supported this throughout the year. All of the efforts with weeding, planting, watering etc. paid off last week with awards from the London Children's Flower Society. The same lady has visited us to judge our efforts over the past five years and she was delighted to see how it has developed into an extremely well-established school garden.

I hope to see many of you on Sunday, have a lovely weekend,

Helen Carvall