

RUSHEY MEAD ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

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Friday 1st November 2019



Together We Make
A Positive Difference

Trip to Wales

On Monday 30th September 45 year 9 students left RMA by bus to head for the Snowdonia National Park in North Wales. There was a great deal of excitement as students discussed the challenging outdoor activities they would be taking part in. For some, the main challenge would be a week without a mobile phone!

Through the week the students knew that they would be working towards a John Muir Award. This focused on Exploration, Discovery, Conservation and Sharing. There was certainly a lot of exploration and discovery of wild places. Students canoed across Lake Lynn Gwynant and some even jumped off the top of Elephant Rock into the lake. They bravely abseiled down Eagle Rock, investigated the wilderness of the beach at Borth Y Gest, clambered up waterfalls at Afon Goch and climbed the spectacular mountains of Yr Aran, Cnicht or Y Garn.

The students and staff were all very proud of each other for facing many fears and stepping out of their comfort zones. The conservation element saw students rebuilding outdoor education spaces, removing rhododendrons (an invasive Canadian species) and adding protective fencing. The students shared their experiences in end-of-day meetings and kept a diary to always remind themselves of their activities. Each student qualified for the John Muir Award and will be receiving their certificate in an assembly soon. Well done to all!

Harvest

It's that time of the year again when our students show their creativity and generosity by designing and donating for harvest boxes. We have had an amazing array of designs for the boxes and also an outstanding amount of food donated. Thank you to all of the students, parents, and staff for your contributions that will be donated to Open Hands Leicester. [#Rushey1BeKind](#)

Collaboration with Curve Theatre

Year 10 GCSE Drama students were involved in a collaborative project with the Curve Theatre last half term. They worked with a youth director from Curve Young Company exploring acting techniques in two workshops before seeing the play *My Beautiful Laundrette* at Curve. The play was of a high quality and explored challenging themes which meant that students were able to have excellent discussions about how meaning had been conveyed effectively. Students will now work on a written task preparing them for section B part of their GCSE written exam. They met the actors after the performance and asked them questions, giving them an opportunity to explore career paths within theatre, as well as an understanding of how a professional actor would prepare for a role. They have now begun a mock assessment this term where they are expected to perform extracts from a play, they will be performing scenes from the play they have seen and this experience should put them in a good position to do this well, having been inspired by the professional actors.

Theatre Centre

Last term, we were once again visited by Theatre Centre, a professional touring 'Theatre in Education' group producing thought provoking and original drama. This year's performance was 'Borders' exploring the effects of Borders separating communities. Students in Year 9 and GCSE Drama were given the opportunity to see the piece, which gave the students an entertaining but thought provoking look at the issues, also demonstrating Brechtian techniques that would support GCSE Drama students in their studies. After the performances, GCSE Drama year 11 students were then given a workshop with some of the cast, a high quality experience that will support their work in the upcoming practical exams forming part of their final GCSE grade.



Careers News

Post-16 Information Evening – Tuesday 8th October

We had a great turnout of students and parents at our Post-16 Information Evening where we had a number of visitors from universities, colleges, and training providers. Students were able to speak to visitors on each of the stands and take away useful information to help them decide on their next steps after Rushey Mead.

If you have not done so already, could you please complete the following survey to give feedback about the evening: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LNRPRYL>

Post-16 Online College Application – PS16

This is now live for students to access and all students have been given their login details. They will be able to research college courses and open day events and work on their personal statements ready for their applications to be submitted in December.

Leicester College drop in session – Friday 11th October

A number of students came to the Careers Library on 11th October to speak to staff from Leicester College (Victoria Pratt, Jack Campbell and Ranvir Singh). Students were given the opportunity to speak to staff about college courses and apprenticeship opportunities available at Leicester College. We have prospectuses available in the Careers Library for students to take away.

College Open Days – reminder to attend

Don't forget that college open days are now taking place. A link to these can be found on the Rushey Mead website - Careers Guidance page, lists are also displayed in the Careers library, on Show my Homework and each Year 11 form tutor has been given a list of dates. It is important that your son/daughter attends these open days to see what courses are available and what entry requirements each college has as these are different for each one.

Apprenticeship Evening – Tuesday 22nd October

We had a good turnout from both parents and students to our Apprenticeship Evening on 22nd October, we had visitors from LEBC (Leicestershire Education Business Company), Leicester College, ASK, LLEP (Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership) and Crown Packaging who all presented on what services they are able to offer for apprenticeships and the amazing opportunities available to students. Grace Rudkin from LEBC is currently doing an apprenticeship with LEBC so it was very interesting to listen to her from an apprentice's point of view.



Hollie Sturgess - ASK Apprenticeships



Kevin Cox - Crown Packaging



Grace Rudkin - LEBC

Forthcoming events

PL Monday - Monday 11th November, school closes to students at 2.00pm

Year 10 Information Evening - Tuesday 12th November, 6.00pm - 7.00pm

Music Winter Recital - Wednesday 4th December, 7.00pm - 8.30pm

Year 11 Parents Evening - Thursday 5th December, 4.30pm - 7.30pm (further information to be sent out shortly)



'Sadfishing' is described as a behavioural trend where people make exaggerated claims about their emotional problems to generate sympathy and attention. The term was created at the beginning of the year by a blogger using the term to describe certain celebrities who embellish their emotional difficulties to generate sympathy and gain more followers. The term has now gained traction and is seen as a growing trend on social media. The challenge with sadfishing is that sometimes real problems can become overlooked or young people can even be bullied for having shared their problems online.



What parents need to know about SADFISHING



ATTENTION NEEDING

This is sometimes also called attention seeking. The urge to belong is universal. Everyone seeks attention. The feeling of belonging and knowing that others are thinking about you is part of what it is to be human. As the use of social media has grown, the opportunity for attention is enormous but this sometimes comes at a price. Positive interactions (such as someone liking your tweet) trigger the same kind of chemical reaction (dopamine) that is caused by gambling and recreational drugs. This reaction reinforces a behaviour and for minimal effort, a young person is rewarded with dopamine and attention.



OVERSHARING

Oversharing is the act of revealing too much personal information. When young people share too much about their feelings or problems they are often desiring very much to connect and belong. In order to gain more attention and likes a young person might be tempted to overshare their feelings beyond a normal face to face conversation. The challenge with this is that the young person is sharing personal thoughts and feelings with people they do not know and the support they gain back is 'unregulated' and might be very unhelpful.

SHOWING VULNERABILITY

Being vulnerable and oversharing can sometimes lead young people open to being groomed online, offering predatory social media users an opportunity to gain their trust by offering sympathy. A Digital Awareness UK report includes the case study of a teenage girl who, after posting about her depression online, was approached by a friend of a friend who shared their experiences and later ended up pressuring her to send him explicit pictures.

BULLYING AND DISAPPOINTMENT

According to Status of Mind report by Royal Society for Public Health UK, social media platforms are a useful tool to maintain or build on real world relationships, improving mental health and wellbeing. When young people do share their feelings and worries online, they are seeking emotional support from others. However, whilst some friends may comment and like a post to be helpful, other friends may accuse the post of 'sadfishing' and trying to gain attention, ultimately making the situation and feelings about themselves worse.



Safety Tips For Parents

A CULTURE OF OPENNESS

Maintain and commit to having a culture of openness at home where your child can express their feelings without judgement, and you acknowledge their world and current difficulties. Support your child to navigate growing up in a world with social media and their developing sense of self.

ASK MORE THAN ONCE

Being a parent of a teenager means a constant negotiation between keeping them safe and letting them go. If their behaviour has changed or they have a prolonged bout of low mood or stress, let them know you are there for them when they are ready to talk. Sometimes this may mean asking them more than once. This gives them the message that you are there for them and that they are not alone.

POSITIVE ATTENTION

Provide opportunities during the week for time together. Teenagers sometimes prefer side by side conversations like going out for walk, at the dinner table or driving in the car somewhere. Regularly commit time to a family evening together where you can share time and/or an experience together like a home movie and popcorn, a game (even an online game which may be suitable), shopping or cooking.

PROMOTE HEALTHY FACE TO FACE RELATIONSHIPS

Where possible, help your child maintain healthy relationships with friends who are helpful and supportive. This may mean inviting them over regularly, providing transport to and from activities with the group of friends, or helping your child organise activities. Spend time helping to encourage healthy, supportive face to face relationships.

TALK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BOUNDARIES

Discuss the consequences of oversharing, particularly on social media. Maintaining a healthy privacy outlook is important when we are perhaps sharing our feelings with people who are not known to us. But as friendship and trust develop, it is healthy to share more information and talk more openly.

Meet our expert

Anna Bateman is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



SOURCES: <https://www.digitalawarnessuk.com/>, <https://www.rsph.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/status-of-mind.html>