

City of Rochester School Newsletter



Autumn 1

Introduction from the Head

Welcome to the first Newsletter of the new academic year. The big news for the school is obviously the change of name to City of Rochester School and the major refurbishment of the premises over the summer. On the 24th September, we had an unannounced 1 day Ofsted inspection. The purpose of the visit was to check progress against the Independent School Standards. I am delighted to inform you that we have now met all 8 standards and the message from the Inspector was a positive one. You have already received a copy of the report, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you want to go through this in more detail.

Key Dates

Parents Evening –
17th December 2019

Last Day of Term
18th December 2019

News

Farm School

Farm School got off to a great start, taking place at Kent Life. Pupils attended every week for a structured programme that included: animal husbandry, understanding the food chain from field to fork, learning about different animals and participating in learning about an agricultural way of life.



Gurdwara Visit

Pupils from across the school visited the Gurdwara Temple to learn about the Sikh faith. Pupils had a guided tour of the temple, learned about the faith of Sikhism and sampled food from this culture. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed this trip. Visits of this kind form part of our PSHE curriculum where we teach about tolerance and acceptance of others of different faiths.

News continued

Harvest Festival

This year the pupils at City of Rochester School have voted to support the Homeless as our chosen charitable cause. As part of our celebration of Harvest Festival, a full day of organised activities took place. This included: a talk from One Big Family (a homeless charity in Medway) who talked to pupils about the plight of the homeless in the area; we had a musical event and two pupils wrote and performed a song they had written; pupils built shelters made from cardboard boxes to understand the challenges that homeless people face in our society; pupils also had a session on the origins of food and as a result could therefore appreciate the food they eat and the benefits it brings. In addition, some pupils made dog biscuits to give to the charity so these could be passed on to the homeless people who have dogs for companionship. I would also like to thank parents/carers for their donations of food, clothing, bedding



Ofsted

An Inspector Calls

You will know, that we had an unannounced Ofsted monitoring visit on the 24th September. The inspector came to check how our school was performing against the Independent School Standards. This is a detailed set of requirements that schools like ours have to fulfil. You will be pleased to hear that we have met all 8 standards. This is an important step forward for the school and the DfE have written to us to say that no further action is necessary, and that we will now form part of the usual inspection cycle which means that we can expect a full inspection in approximately 12 months' time.

Excerpts from the report include:

- The curriculum focuses on giving pupils real-life experiences. Six week blocks of work cover specific themes, such as 'farm school' or 'film school'. Pupils talked with enthusiasm to the inspector about how they enjoy learning about new things. This included their weekly trips to a farm and the trip to a local castle they had experienced the day before the inspection.
- New teaching staff have been employed since the last standard inspection. Classroom visits during the inspection showed that relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Staff know pupils well and plan learning that better meets the needs of pupils than was the case in the past.
- Leaders are very clear that the spiritual, moral, social and emotional, and the cultural, development of pupils needs to have a high priority., This is especially the case when pupils' complex needs are taken into account.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff have a better understanding of keeping pupils safe. Appropriate safeguarding training has been undertaken. This includes for the school's designated safeguarding leads. Consequently, staff understand what to do if they have concerns about pupils.
- Leaders moved fast to introduce new key policies and address aspects concerning the welfare, health and safety of pupils after the last standard inspection.

Coming this term . . .

City of Rochester Film School:

We look forward to Film School – where we hope to develop a new cohort of budding film producers and future screen actors! Pupils in the primary classes will be making animated films and pupils in the secondary school will be making documentaries linked to a topic which affects them as young adults.

Our parents' evening on 17th December will showcase these films. I look forward to seeing you then.

Children in Need : 15th November 2019

The school will participate in a variety of activities – including a dress up day, a sponsored walk and a cake sale.



Anti-Bullying Week : 11th–15th November 2019

Pupils will participate in a range of activities including positive relationships and an assembly led by children.

Uniform reminder

Please note that City of Rochester School has a uniform for all pupils (with the exception of the 6th form). Pupils and parental engagement so far has been largely positive, but there are still pupils who are not complying. Please let us know if we can be of any further assistance to ensure that all our pupils are dressed appropriately.



New Staff:

New staff: Michelle Homer & Lauren Gauschino.

In addition, we welcome: Gilly Jarvis, HLTA; Sarah Long, Learning Support; Belinda Foster, Learning Support; Rob Pope, Caretaker.



My name is Michelle and I am very pleased to have joined the team at City of Rochester School as the Assistant Headteacher this term.

I am responsible for safeguarding at the school and help to ensure that all pupils feel safe and supported in school. I also teach ICT to most of the classes and look forward to introducing Marty the robot to the children.

When I'm not at school I enjoy spending time with my young daughter, reading books and watching musicals.



Hi my name is Lauren and I'm very excited to be part of the team here at City of Rochester school. My main role here is to get the students active and hopefully develop a love of sports through fun and engaging PE lessons as well as supporting them in the classroom.

I am looking forward to seeing the students develop and help them to understand how a healthy lifestyle can help them in so many other ways.

When I'm not at school I love going kitesurfing and spending time with my family.

We have some more new staff joining us over the next few weeks and I look forward to introducing them to you in due course

Calendar

Please find attached the school calendars for the academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

Please note the additional staff training days (blue) when children will not be in school.

Thank you, as always for your continued support.