



Rockmount Primary School Governors' Review



2024

Report

Welcome

Every summer, the head and governing board agree a 'school development plan' for the next year. The plan combines reflections and learning from the previous year with aspirations for the next, ensuring a school remains responsive to the needs of its community.

This year, Rockmount's overarching focus has been SMSC – the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils – and how it underpins learning. We've thought hard about the values that we hope children, parents and staff will share through their time here: respect, kindness, resilience, integrity and responsibility.

These values ensure that our community continues to thrive. I've been a part of Rockmount since 2012, and it's still a joy to watch children learning with such purpose and enthusiasm. The progress that they make here is a testament to the hard work of teachers and staff and to the support of parents and carers. On behalf of the governing board, I would like to thank you all for making our school the vibrant and inclusive place it is.

With best wishes for the summer break,

Lucy Toop

Chair of Governors

It is lovely to reflect on the journey we have all taken together over the past year and we hope you enjoy this report; it is a window into the wonderful things that go on here at Rockmount.

Children have only one childhood and we want them to enjoy their primary school experience with inspirational and unforgettable learning experiences. We are so proud of our children for living the Rockmount School Values to the maximum this year which is reflected in their achievements. I hope that the pages of this review demonstrate these fundamental values of respect, responsibility, kindness, integrity and resilience which flow through our daily practice. Pupil Voice has been a great area of focus and development; we now have eight pupil leadership groups taking a role in promoting democracy and ensuring everyone has a voice. You will be able to see some of their highlights of the year in the pages ahead.

Our school community continues to bubble with energy and enthusiasm. As ever, a special thank you must be given to our parents and carers who have encouraged their children to try their best, guided them through challenges, celebrated their achievements and have supported the school to ensure the children have been able to embrace many opportunities. Parental involvement and dedication are instrumental in making our school a vibrant, supportive community which fosters an environment in which every child can feel safe and valued. We hope that any new families who have joined us this year have felt a warm welcome into the school community.

The sense of joy and enthusiasm which flows through the pages of this report reflecting the special moments we have all shared this year, should encourage us all to take stock of the hard work it takes for these learning experiences to take place. The staff team are committed to ensuring the highest expectations for each and every child by nurturing a love of learning, encouraging independent thinking and ensuring that all experiences are creative and inclusive. The organisation and leadership behind each event and special moment require great thought and careful consideration and I would like to thank the staff team for their determination and dedication. This amazing team of people, who show the care and consideration needed to go above and beyond, make the magic happen here at Rockmount!

Helen Carvall

Headteacher

Meet our School Governors



Lucy Toop

Lucy has been a Rockmount governor since 2019. Her daughters both attended Rockmount, and she was a parent governor for four years before taking on the role of Chair. As Chair, she acts as a 'critical friend' to the headteacher and ensures the board is working together effectively for the benefit of Rockmount children: setting a clear vision for the school's development, holding the headteacher to account for the progress and wellbeing of students, and overseeing the budget. A former secondary English teacher, Lucy now works as a family support coordinator for refugees in Croydon, and also writes education resources.

Liz Parry

Liz Parry is the Clerk to the Governing Board. Her role is to provide support and information to all members of the Board, advise the Board on legal and procedural issues, and to take minutes of all meetings. Liz is extremely proud to have had such a long association with the school, having begun working with Rockmount governors in 2004! She also works in a number of other Croydon schools which helps to provide perspective on the common issues affecting all schools as well as sharing ideas and best practice.



Amy Carvall

Amy has worked at Rockmount for 7 years and is the Learning and Teaching Leader for Nursery and Reception. She is in the process of her National Qualification in Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL). As the staff Governor, Amy helps serve as a bridge between the staff body and the Governing board. As staff governor Amy acts as a voice for colleagues, representing their perspectives, concerns and ideas during governance meetings and discussions. The role entails not only actively advocating for the needs and interests of the staff, but also actively participating in the decision-making process that impacts the school community as a whole.



Louise Eggett

Louise became a co-opted governor of Rockmount in Spring 2023. She is a financial services regulator. She also

trained as an accountant earlier in her career and remains a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. This year, she's taken up governor link roles for STEM subjects, Early Years and the school website.



David McDonald

David has been a local authority appointed Governor since January 2022. He lives nearby in Beckenham but is very familiar with the borough of Croydon having worked in the Probation Service for twenty four years. He was the Chief Officer for South East London when he left the Service in 2001. David is a qualified social worker and before retiring from the Civil Service in 2010 was the lead officer for child protection at the Home Office, with special responsibility for helping the police to combat child trafficking and child sexual exploitation. After retirement and before joining the Governing Board at Rockmount, he spent nine years working as a volunteer for Croydon Citizens Advice.

David is the governor responsible for safeguarding and data protection. Parents should be aware that all governors and staff place the safety of the pupils and the protection of sensitive personal information as of paramount importance alongside their education and wellbeing.



Sarah Hubbard

Sarah has been a Governor at Rockmount since 2015. Outside of that, she leads the marketing for a commercial architecture and design company based in The Barbican.

My link role as a governor involves oversight of music, art and PE. It's been brilliant getting to know the staff who lead these subject areas over the past year; their passion and enthusiasm for what they do is infectious and inspiring. For all three subject areas, I have seen how the focus has been very much on making the classes engaging and interactive and a space where all can learn and achieve. The naming of Rockmount as a Music Mark School by Croydon Music and Arts for 2023-24 in particular has highlighted the value of the Rockmount music offering for the whole school community.





Richard Steward

Richard joined the governing board in 2020 and grew up knowing Rockmount as a local. Richard is vice-chair of the board and supports Lucy where required to ensure that the board practises effective governance. He is, alongside Louise & Russell, one of the STEM subject link governors, with a focus on Computing which aligns to his career path in technology. Richard has worked in a variety of technology management roles and currently develops business strategy & strategic programs of business change for large enterprise client teams at Microsoft.



Jennie Gilbertson

Jennie is the School Business Manager for Rockmount and is responsible for the financial and administrative operations. Jennie's role includes budgeting, accounting and financial planning to ensure the school operates within its means whilst meeting educational goals. Jennie plays a key role in strategic planning and resource allocation, contributing to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the running of the school.



David Burgess-Bellay

David has two children at Rockmount and has been involved in the Parent / Carer Forum since 2022, becoming Co-Chair in 2023. He joined the Governing Board in 2023 as one of the two Parent Governors.

The Parent Governor role is to bring a parental perspective to the issues discussed. David serves as the bridge between the Parent / Carer Forum and the Governing Board and his link role focuses on Art, PE, French and Music alongside Sarah Hubbard. Outside of school, David has spent 20 years in corporate commercial roles but now runs his own coaching practice having retrained as a Personal and Professional Coach.



Russell Whitehead

Russell joined the team as a parent governor in November. The first six months involved plenty of training to get up to speed with the role, particularly learning about the safeguarding of children in education.

As a structural engineer involved in designing buildings, he is using his knowledge and experience within the school as part of the team focused on STEM subjects - sciences, technology, engineering, mathematics and computing. In the year, this involved meeting pupils to find out about what they had been learning in computing, particularly around internet safety; reviewing work on the new science teaching scheme, a tour of the learning kitchen, and a visit to the chickens!

Russell is also the governor responsible for overseeing health & safety in the school.

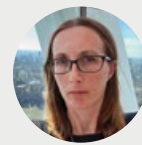


Our Link roles



Lucy Toop

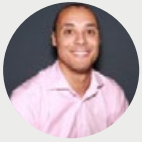
My link role at Rockmount is with English and Humanities, alongside David McDonald. During our three governors' mornings in schools, we meet with the subject leads for reading and writing, history, geography and RE to look at developments in the curriculum, examples of children's work, and assessment strategies. The school has introduced the concept of 'Golden Threads' – key concepts such as, in history, settlement and trade, or human world/diversity in geography – to support students in understanding links through and between subjects. This year, there has also been a real focus on developing students as writers through their experiences as readers.



Louise Eggett

My link role regarding the school website involves supporting staff with meeting the long list of statutory publications, as well as being a critical friend with regards to structure and presentation. The website is a great resource for all those connected to Rockmount





Richard Steward

My link role at Rockmount is STEM alongside Louise

& Russell. As a group we split the subjects and my focus is Computing, working with Connor. Our responsibility is to meet with all of the subject leads for Computing, Maths & Science and discuss progress in the curriculum at various stages throughout the year plus against the subject action plan. During the governors visits to school we meet with the teachers and children to observe lessons plus look at examples of their work. The focus this year has been promoting Internet Safety & Keeping Children Safe (online). This is reinforced by the 'Golden Threads' that also include researching, debugging and programming plus more.

Louise, Russell and Richard are LINK governors for STEM. Two highlights of this year have been the STEM fair in March, which saw children excited to engage and experiment in these subjects, and the introduction of a new scheme of work for science. Having discussed the scheme and resources with staff, it was rewarding to see the clear progression in children in different age groups in their use of scientific terminology. Pupil conferences across all STEM subjects provide a good opportunity to hear directly from pupils and see how they use tools such as organisers to support their learning. The design technology curriculum has given many opportunities to foster the culturally inclusive learning environment envisaged in the school plan, while at the same time encouraging sharing of resources. Finally, online safety has been discussed several times by governors, and the school actively supporting both pupils and the wider Rockmount community in managing the risks.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

At Rockmount Primary School, SMSC underpins everything we do. We recognise that the personal development of the children, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally plays a significant role in their ability to learn and to grow into well rounded members of society.

By integrating SMSC into the life of our school, we aim to develop a sense of society, tolerance and collaboration that tackles prejudice and promotes equality. We aim to teach children to make sense of the world we live in, how to interact positively with others, how to know themselves and the person they may become in the future. We seek to provide opportunities for children to be aspirational in how they can contribute to society and to have an awareness of current and topical issues.

Learning is relevant to our children, school and locality and a broader understanding of the world, beyond their locality is explored. This is done formally; through taught lessons and informally; by providing activities and experiences we also ensure the hidden curriculum/ ethos as displayed through the expectations, relationships and attitudes of everybody in school.

Our rich and varied curriculum provides the opportunity to celebrate difference and diversity, have an understanding of moral obligations in life and to develop an awareness of influential and inspiring figures in religions and society from the past and today. We aim to instil a sense of pride in being part of the Rockmount community and in the school as a building where all can learn and belong.

This year, our school values have been introduced to the children and are incorporated into everything we are trying to achieve. Each of these values has been identified as key to the children developing emotional intelligence and being successful learners.



Health and Safety



The school site manager, Andres Lopez, and School Business Manager, Jennie Gilbertson, have responsibility for ensuring the school building is safe and well maintained for our school community and that all of our health and safety inspections are completed on time and comply with statutory building requirements. Daily health and safety checks are completed as well as extended health and safety survey walks.

Staff and pupils are also encouraged to be aware of their own health and safety in school. Representatives from the School Council attend Health and Safety Committee meetings in order to share the views of their peers. It is important that all children have a good understanding of the different aspects of health and safety and how health and safety concerns might impact on their wellbeing and their experience of school. Children can approach the school council reps with any concerns and they can bring these to the next meeting for discussion. The whole committee works to ensure that the school environment is a safe space for children and adults alike.



Our Incredible Early Years

Fine motor skills involve the coordination of small muscles in the hands, fingers and wrists of children, requiring intricate and precise hand movements, control and hand-eye coordination which is the foundation of many everyday tasks. Being a fundamental aspect of child development, it plays a pivotal role in their ability to perform everyday tasks like being able to feed themselves, do up buttons on clothing and being able to write.

In our setting, continuous provision such as arts, crafts and modelling are an everyday part of our 'free flow' learning through play sessions. The act of holding and manipulating tools such as crayons, pencils, scissors and brushes helps to strengthen the muscles in the hands leading to improved control and grip strength.

This year we have had a huge focus on the development of fine motor skills across Nursery and Reception. Mark making and types of mark making are an essential part of our learning through play approach. In our setting we provide a range of activities and ensure they are embedded into our everyday routines.

We often have activities such as:

- Threading beads
- Playdough/plasticine/clay
- Cutting activities
- Junk modelling
- Pegs and tweezers
- Elastic band boards

All these activities help to support and stimulate finger dexterity to improve hand control so that children are ready for writing. This year we hosted a 'fine motor skills' showcase for Nursery parents/carers to show the importance of fine motor development in the Early Years. This session helped parents/carers gain a deeper understanding of what we mean by motor skills, how children develop their gross and fine motor skills and the importance of developing these skills for other aspects of learning such as writing.

Each area of the classroom is separated into different learning stations. We often have big rolls of paper on the floor for 'tummy mark making', to support postural control.



Fine Motor Skills



EYFS Curriculum Highlights

In Nursery and Reception, our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we nurture confident, curious learners. With a holistic approach, we emphasise play-based learning, where children develop problem-solving skills, communication, and social skills. Our carefully designed learning environments and outdoor spaces, including a garden and school animals, support these goals. We also maintain strong partnerships with parents and carers through workshops and events. Diversity and inclusion are celebrated, fostering respect and empathy from an early age.

Reception enjoyed a year filled with rich learning experiences. In the autumn, children explored classic stories and fairy tales and celebrated festivals like Diwali and Eid. In spring, we explored superheroes and cared for ducklings as part of learning about life cycles. In the summer, children learned about animals and designed and created habitat dioramas reflecting all they had learnt about different animals.

Several enrichment events took place such as our watching our ducklings hatch and our fantastic visit to Hobbledown Down Farm. Our Dance-a-thon also raised £1500 for our school trip!



"I really liked making the habitat boxes, I used lots of different things to make it."

Flore



"Some dinosaurs had feathers and all dinosaurs lay eggs!"

Funmilola

"We raised lots of money for our school. We had to dance in our sparkly clothes. It was fun!"

Liyana





“Paddington keeps marmalade under his hat.”
Teison



The youngest pupils in the school had an amazing start to their exciting journey at Rockmount Primary School, making friends and exploring everything that the nursery has to offer. We explored various themes through role-play, storytelling, and outdoor activities. In autumn, children enjoyed “The Tiger Who Came to Tea” and learned about autumnal changes. In spring, they explored transportation with Paddington Bear and became palaeontologists, creating an erupting volcano.



In summer, children learned about marine life and the solar system. They explored the life cycle of a butterfly and discovered interesting facts about planets and the moon.

“The moon is covered with rocks and dust.”
Louis

“The octopus squirts ink so the fish chasing him can’t see.”
Nico



Year 1 Curriculum Highlights



I really enjoyed the outdoor learning activity because we got to make our own potion

Year 1 children have had a wonderful year full of exciting learning opportunities. We started the year off by learning about 'Fairy Tales and Castles'. As part of our focus, we read a range of fairy tales but also explored alternative fairy tales; a particular favourite was 'The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig'. Reading a wider range of books helped us to include descriptive vocabulary in our own writing. In Autumn 2 our focus was 'Staying Alive', where we learned more about how to look after our bodies as well as learning about the amazing work of Mary Seacole. As part of our learning, 'Mary Seacole' visited our school to teach us more about the changes she made to medicine. We also had an exciting outdoor learning experience where we created our own medicine using natural items as well as making our own soap from conkers!

In the Spring term we journeyed to space and it was out of this world! We learnt all about the moon, the stars and the planets

in our solar system. To support our learning, we were visited by a planetarium which the children found fascinating. In Spring 2, we left space behind and said 'hola!' to Mexico for our 'Off We Go to Mexico' topic. Children loved exploring different Mexican stories and non-fiction books, and used these to inspire them to create their own captivating stories. As part of our outdoor learning, we created Mexican clay pots using natural materials as well as making our own (spicy!) Aztec hot chocolate. Mexico day was a special celebration where we prepared fajitas, margaritas, Huichol masks and a Mexican dance for our family and friends!

In the Summer Term, we had lots of fun learning about our topic 'Journey Around the World'. We started the topic by reading Jeannie Baker's book 'Mirror' and we used our imagination to envisage what the characters were saying in the pictures. We even created our own collages inspired by the beautiful Moroccan buildings. We particularly enjoyed learning about different children around the world and comparing their

cultures. The children had lots of fun learning all about wild animals and their habitats in our topic 'Carnivals of the Animals'. They fully immersed themselves into our jungle role play area by camping in the tent, cooking, going on safaris and being a photographer capturing pictures of wild animals found in our role play. The children created their own 'Who am I?' riddles, made habitat boxes using a variety of arts and crafts material and ended with a trip to Howletts Animal Park.

I like reading and playing in Year 1. I liked learning about space because it was really cool!

I really enjoyed the book 'Bringing the rain to Kapiti plain' because the author used some good descriptive language. I could really imagine being on the African plain.

Year 2 Curriculum Highlights



Throughout the year, the children have immersed themselves in activities to bring all the topics to life. From outdoor learning in our brilliant school grounds, to taking the train into central London, the children have enjoyed expanding their knowledge and skills.

In the Autumn term, the children learned all about India; finding it on the map, researching the capital city and reading traditional Indian folktales. They all took part in an immersive day full of Indian-style dance, art and food. They dressed up in their most colourful outfits and enjoyed tasting a variety of traditional Indian snacks, such as papadams, mango chutney and samosas. They were also lucky to have an Indian-inspired dance workshop, where they learned some dance moves from traditional Bollywood films and had a go at putting together a

routine. They also braved the rainy weather and went outside to make a vegan curry on the campfire! The children practised important DT skills, peeling and chopping vegetables; they loved the curry so much that they wrote a set of instructions to help others make one just like it.

During the Spring term, the children went on a fantastic visit to the Tower of London, as part of their 'London Ablaze' topic. They navigated public transport and spotted all the London landmarks along the way, using the maps to help them. The children took part in an interactive workshop to learn all about the Great Fire of London and how it started, and they even saw the crown jewels! They loved pretending to be knights shooting arrows, looking at the impressive armour and spotting the huge ravens around the grounds.



Year 3 Curriculum Highlights



This year has been a year full of excitement for Year 3, from escaping dinosaurs, exploding volcanoes, extreme weather and a trip to the Science Museum to travelling back in time to the Stone Age! We have written stories, poems and playscripts as well as newspaper and weather reports. We have saluted our sisters during Black History Month and even took part in a boxing class to celebrate Nicola Adams' achievements. Our PSHE floor books are full of ways to look after ourselves and each other both in body and mind.

The Autumn term saw Year 3 tackling forces with a visit to the Science Museum to bring it all to life. Building volcanoes in the outdoor learning area with Grace was muddy but a lot of fun; it was

so exciting, waiting to see if our volcanoes would explode!

Writing stories based on Dinosaur Cove was challenging but we were really pleased with the results. We measured out dinosaurs using metre sticks in the playground. Some of them were huge!

In the Spring term the highlight had to be Stone Age Day, which has turned into a bit of a tradition at Rockmount. Everyone looked fantastic in their stone age clothes and we made some stewed fruit crumble from a recipe which has been around since stone age times.

For the first part of the Summer term we moved forward in time to Ancient Greece! Focusing on myth and legends, we had to use



our powers of persuasion as we travelled down a decision path. We wrote letters to Pandora persuading her to open her box, or keep it closed. We used rhetorical questioning to support our arguments, would you open the box? We also mastered our skills in art, making slip by mixing clay and water to produce Greek vases with handles which were well bonded. We researched colours and patterns to make our vases authentic.



Year 4 Curriculum Highlights

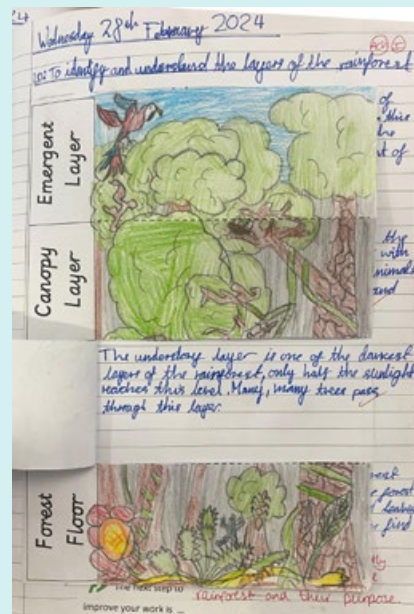
Year 4 pupils had a fantastic year filled with a range of enriching activities that have enabled them to experience the curriculum in a variety of exciting ways. We started off the year with a focus on electricity and explored how to create working circuits with batteries, bulbs, wires and motors. We investigated how to fix broken circuits and learnt about conductors and insulators through scientific enquiries.

The Autumn term was a chocolate filled term learning all about chocolate! This included learning about the history of Cadbury's, how we can incorporate chocolate as part of a balanced diet, where cocoa beans come from, what Fairtrade means, as well as taste testing, designing and making our very own chocolate bars! Pupils wrote their own scripts to perform and film adverts persuading others to buy their delicious creations.

In the Spring term, we learnt all about the polar regions and the similarities and differences between life in the Arctic and Antarctica. Pupils learnt about the history of the intrepid explorer, Ernst Shackleton and wrote their own descriptive diary entries imagining what life might be like trekking across the dangerous terrain of Antarctica.

We also visited Christ Church in Gipsy Hill as part of our learning in RE and explored the features of a Church. We also learnt about the layers of the rainforest and the important role these layers play in the ecosystem. Pupils created informative flip-books with detailed drawings and notes, explaining what they have learnt. We had a great day out visiting Kew Gardens, experiencing what life would be like in a rainforest in their tropical greenhouses! We decided it was far too hot for us and much preferred living in a cooler climate!

In the Summer term we went back in time to imagine what life was like living in the Roman Empire! After learning about how they invaded Britain, we learnt more about their contributions to architecture, such as the Roman Baths and even visited the ruins of a temple in central London called the Mithraeum! We also learnt more about the different types of gladiator fighters, their strengths and weaknesses and wrote instructions on how you could trap one! We finished off this fun topic by writing our own Roman myths, including lots of vengeful and sneaky Gods and Goddesses such as Jupiter, Juno and Mercury.



Year 5 Curriculum Highlights



Turquoise and Ruby classes have enjoyed a myriad of captivating and exciting opportunities within the curriculum.

Year 5 began with a 'bang' with our space topic called 'The Eagle has Landed'. In our exploration of the cosmos, the pupils delved into a Virtual Reality workshop, immersing themselves in space exploration, uncovering fascinating insights about the planets. Following on we then learnt about World War One and Two. As part of our examination of historical conflicts, we arranged a visit from the Rainbow Theatre company. The children experienced the life of evacuees, engaging in activities such as agricultural efforts, assisting at local stores, and even constructing bomb shelters! They enjoyed travelling back in time and dressing up for the day.

In Spring our focus shifted to the 'Shifting Sands of Africa'. The children learnt about the significance of the River Nile in Ancient Egyptian civilization. In an outdoor learning session, they honed their engineering prowess by constructing their version of the 'shaduf' to gather water from the pond, learning its pivotal role in water collection and

transportation. We all enjoyed baking and tasting Egyptian flatbreads too!

A highlight of the year was the one-night residential to Broadstone Warren Scout Site, fostering teamwork and independence among the children through various outdoor activities.

The children all took part in team-building activities, orienteering (using maps and compasses), camp fire, wide games, night hike (no torches), making their own lunch, frisbee golf and most importantly, a trip to the site shop with their money! A great time was had by all and a good stepping stone to their residential trip in Year 6.

Throughout the year pupils also engaged in stimulating science workshops designed to ignite their curiosity and deepen their understanding of the natural world. These workshops covered a diverse range of topics, from properties of materials, living things and their life cycles, and forces. The children made diatom models, tested different bird beaks for evolution, and made catapults to investigate forces.



Year 6 Curriculum Highlights

This year has been jam-packed with exciting activities for our Year 6 students.

We started off the year by delving into the Victorian era, leading up to our immersive and exciting Victorian Day experience. They enthusiastically embraced dressing as Victorians and engaging in activities based on the era. We had the opportunity to visit a cemetery to explore the lives of those who lived during the Victorian era.

After our exploration of the Victorians, we delved into Crime and Punishment Throughout the Ages. From ancient Roman judicial systems to modern laws, the children discovered the origins of our legal system and all the punishments that shaped our society today! We developed Design and Technology skills by creating a realistic guillotine to demonstrate one of the gruesome punishments!

During the Spring Term, we dived into learning all about North America—its climate, landscapes, people, and history. The children crafted their own

Native American-style legends, using vivid language to transport readers to different settings. Additionally, they created a fantastic, Native American inspired front cover.

The next area of learning was a focus on Natural Disasters to develop geographical understanding of the world. Despite living in a region largely free from major disasters, the children were fascinated by their destructive power and historical impact. In Design and Technology, they collaborated to design hurricane-proof shelters, testing them in a homemade wind tunnel—an exhilarating experience! Finally, we finished our topic with a visit to the iconic Thames Barrier to explore the history of the Thames and how it helps keep London safe from floods for years to come.

In Science, we had an incredible journey! From light bulbs to evolution and electricity to animal's habitats- they really developed their scientific knowledge and understanding of the world around them!

Year 6 pupils embraced the PGL residential trip to the Isle of Wight, as they all set their minds to adventurous mode, enjoying a variety of team building activities, faced their fears and showcased a range of skills including communication, co-operation and resilience. What a fantastic farewell and last trip together as a cohort!



Music, unleash the magic!



Rockmount has hit all the right notes this year! From captivating choir performances and electrifying Rocksteady gigs to belting out classics in singing assemblies, our students have demonstrated their commitment to ensuring music pulses through the heart of school.

Rockmount choirs have had another successful year. The choirs rehearse weekly during their lunch break, requiring a great deal of maturity and commitment from the children, but the performances make it all worth the effort. It was a delight to hear all three choirs, comprising 70 children, joining forces to perform together at our festive events. The Year 5 & 6 choirs' collaboration with the CSMA Junior Choir at Fairfield Halls was also a highlight of the year, featuring a confident solo from Max Dragoi (Year 6).



Another musical success this year has been our singing assemblies, with students (and staff!) refining their vocal technique and wholeheartedly embracing the pure joy of singing for pleasure. Another notable triumph has been the launch of our 'Musician of the Month' initiative. Each month, children have delved into the lives and works of both familiar and lesser-known musicians, from jazz legends and classical virtuosos to rock and pop icons. It has sparked engaging discussions within our school community and beyond, fostering a deeper appreciation for music and hopefully igniting a lasting passion for musical explorations.



Other standout moments from the year were our Christmas Concerts spanning from Nursery to Year 6. The concerts not only showcased fantastic class and year group performances with up to 120 children all performing together but also featured many of our gifted instrumentalists. Additionally, the 'Rockmount Proms' series of Summer Concerts provided a stage for as many instrumentalists and singers as possible to showcase their talents. Many thanks to all the performers and our dedicated team of instrumental teachers for their invaluable contributions in maintaining Rockmount's thriving music department.

For a glimpse into the magic of our musical performances, we invite you to visit our Rockmount Musicians LIVE page on the school website:

<https://www.rockmountprimaryschool.co.uk/music-rockmount-musicians-live/>



Sports leaders

Innovate, Dominate, Inspire!

This year, we have continued our journey with the Croydon School Sport Partnership (CSSP) to enhance Physical Education at our wonderful school.

Our amazing Year 5 Sports Leaders embarked on a thrilling journey of their own. Guided by our valued link advisor, Daniel Beecham, they undertook a rigorous six-week Sports Leader training. This course unearthed the depths of roles and responsibilities, empowering them to coordinate a range of sporting activities within our school.

One of their most remarkable achievements has been planning and organising a variety of sports events; they stood at the front and centre of these events, marshalling their peers to partake in the exhilarating contests. They have shown remarkable leadership that has left an indelible mark on our school's sporting legacy.



Year 6 Leadership Team

We are proud to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our Year 6 Leaders. Their dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm make a significant impact on our school community.

Our leaders have excelled as ambassadors for Rockmount. They consistently demonstrated the school's values, acting as role models for other students. Additionally, they have delivered and led assemblies, informing and engaging the school community about various events and charity initiatives.

A highly successful Red Nose Day was led by the Year 6 Leaders who ensured all children understood the reasons for the charity initiative and the benefits it affords many other children around the world. Through their innovative planning and tireless efforts, they managed to raise an impressive amount of money by selling iconic badges, hosting a jokes competition as well as baking scrumptious Red Nose Day cupcakes!

School Council

This year our School Council has had regular meetings to make sure that children in our school continue to have a voice. We started off the year with the group organising a fundraiser for the 'Poppy Appeal' for money towards the Royal British Legion's fundraising campaign, held every year in November during the period of Remembrance. The School Council also embraced the theme of 'Enterprise' and got together a business venture for the winter fair selling personalised goody bags.



Exploring Democracy and Debating: Our School Councillors' Adventure to Parliament

At Rockmount we believe in empowering our students to become active participants in shaping their communities and respecting others. Our School Councillors had the incredible opportunity to venture into central London to visit the Houses of Parliament.

The children had a fantastic tour around the Houses of Commons and Lords. They even got to watch a real debate in the House of Commons with the Justice Secretary.

The debating workshop was a highlight of our visit, underscoring the importance of critical thinking, communication skills, and community engagement in shaping a vibrant and inclusive society. The children debated 'Should we ban homework?' Some argued that homework fosters responsibility and reinforces learning at school, while others advocated for more time for extracurricular activities and relaxation in the evening.

In addition to the Parliament tour, our School Councillors were treated to a royal spectacle as they made their way to Horse Guards Parade. There, they witnessed a breath-taking rehearsal of a marching band in preparation for King Charles' birthday celebration.

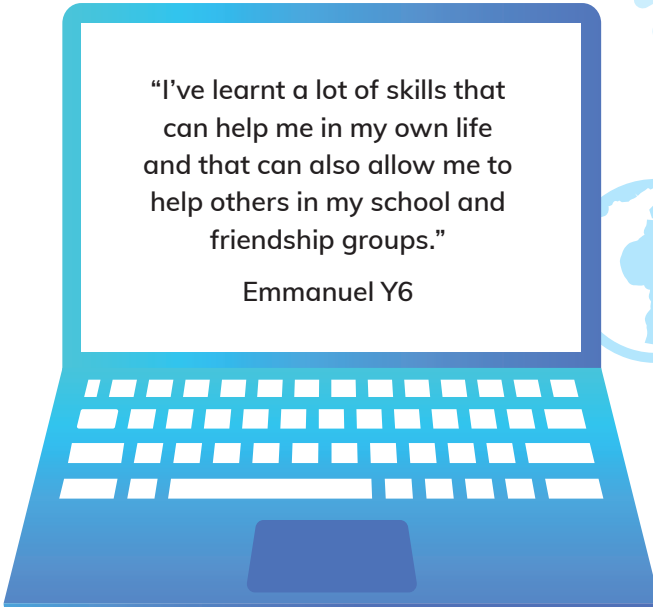
Digital Leaders

A great example of how we take online safety and responsibility seriously as a school community is our Digital Leader programme. The scheme is available to all pupils in Years 4,5 and 6. We find that the children love the fact it gives them a voice, responsibilities and opportunities to inform and engage – not just with each other, but also with pupils in younger year groups, staff, and parents and carers.

Through the programme, we are able to celebrate the digital safety learning that occurs in school with our families; share online safety advice and tips with all members of our school community; promote open and family-orientated discussions about digital safety; and provide parents, families, and carers with advice about apps and games, the majority of which is delivered by the Digital Leaders themselves.

Our Digital Leaders have been very busy this year, working on various projects including, the STEM fair, organising Internet Safety Day and hosting a safer internet day event at the BT Tower. The children from Year 6 got to meet industry leaders and quizzed them on how they plan to keep children safe online through their games and apps.

We are looking forward to training our new 'STEM' ambassadors, who will also complete the Childnet Digital Leaders programme, which is a youth leadership training programme empowering young people to educate their peers about online safety.



"I've learnt a lot of skills that can help me in my own life and that can also allow me to help others in my school and friendship groups."

Emmanuel Y6



Peer Mediators

This year, our Peer Mediators have played a pivotal role in fostering a positive and inclusive school environment. Selected from Years 5 and 6, they underwent targeted training to develop skills in conflict resolution, empathy, and active listening. These pupil leaders have been instrumental in supporting their peers, helping to resolve minor disputes during playtimes and promoting respectful interactions across the school.

They have been actively involved in raising awareness about bullying prevention. They led assemblies and facilitated discussions in classrooms. Their efforts have helped reinforce our school's zero-tolerance stance on bullying and foster a culture of kindness and respect.

Through regular meetings and support from staff, the peer mediators have strengthened their leadership skills and contributed to a safer, more inclusive school community. Their work continues to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of all pupils at Rockmount.



Eco Warriors



At Rockmount, the staff, governors, pupils and parents all believe in the importance of the world around them and their environment. The Eco programme encourages everyone to work together to develop their knowledge and environmental awareness.

The school's current Eco-Warriors (38 children) are made up from children from Year 4 and Year 5. They are split into teams with a Year 5 Eco Champion to lead them. Each week they rotate duties, which include looking after the chickens, looking after the rabbits, keeping the school environment clean and tidy and looking after the school's recycling area.

They are also expected to play a pivotal role in promoting a sustainable environment, energy awareness and promoting active travel to and from school. This year the Eco-Warriors have also taken on the role of selling eggs and working with 'Little Recyclers' to raise funds for the outdoor area.

Year 6 Leavers – Before we move on

The final half term for our Year 6 students at Rockmount was an unforgettable experience! After a year of hard work, we ensured they had numerous opportunities to celebrate their achievements and prepare them for their future endeavours, making it a period they will always remember fondly.

We kicked things off with transition workshops designed to prepare the children for life beyond Rockmount. They particularly enjoyed the financial workshop, where they earned 'money' through various activities and learned valuable lessons about saving and finding good deals. A visit to The Ben Kinsella Trust, where students engaged in a workshop which highlighted

the impact of knife crime and ways to prevent it, left a lasting impression on everyone.

A significant portion of time was dedicated to rehearsing for their school drama production - 'The Greatest Showman'. The hard work paid off with three fantastic performances for their peers, parents, and carers, showcasing the incredible talent and teamwork of our Year 6 students.

The long-awaited PGL residential trip to the Isle of Wight was a resounding success! The children challenged themselves with a variety of activities and enjoyed quality time with friends, making memories that will last a lifetime.

Our adventure continued with a trip to Adventure Island Theme

Park, where everyone enjoyed the thrilling rides. It was clear to see that we definitely have some thrill seekers in the year group!

The term concluded with a disco for the children to enjoy an amazing party with their friends, showing off their dancing skills and the Year 6 Leavers' Assembly; a heartfelt event where students shared their most cherished memories from their years at Rockmount. The assembly was filled with humour and poignant moments, bringing laughter and tears to many. The emotional day wrapped up with a lovely school community Year 6 BBQ; a perfect farewell to Rockmount.

Community Club Sundays

This year, we continued to develop the Community Club days which have gone from strength to strength. We have an amazing number of families who regularly join us no matter the weather. These days are open to all families and are held once a month to help maintain the Edible Garden and the Outdoor Learning Environment. The jobs completed are invaluable; we would never have sufficient time in school to maintain the area to such a wonderful standard which ensures access for all. We plant, weed, rake, prune, paint, clean the pond, prepare food on the campfire, play with the rabbits and chickens and laugh a lot! Look out for the information every month and come along to join in.

Refreshments are always provided as a way to thank all those who join in. Children can cook with their adults over the fire-pit - sausages, smores and popping your own popcorn are always very popular on a busy morning!

Our Christmas Craft session was very popular with children making gifts such as bird feeders as well



Opportunities For Writing

Year 5 students sharing their science projects on comparing animal life cycles.



Year 4 editing their plans in pairs before writing their own Roman myths.



as planting their own bulbs. The end of the year BBQ was a wonderful event - a well attended celebration of a year of hard work and wonderful growing.

The London Children's Flower Society rewarded our efforts with recognition in their growing competitions again this year. We have been invited to an awards event at Guildhall in London to receive the Rosemary Ann Challenge Cup for the Spring Bulb Competition. Their judge, Emma-Jane McGrath has been visiting us for several years and was delighted to see that we now have a well established, food producing garden which supports the educational development of the school community in a whole different way!

Thank you to all those families who have attended this year for all your time and effort.

Reading



Children who read will do well at school and beyond!

Children who read will do well at school and beyond!

At Rockmount, we are committed to developing a positive attitude towards reading and to supporting our school community to foster a love of books through our enthusiastic reading culture. This year, we have strived to embed our strong reading culture within the community with a rich and varied experience of texts, authors and enrichment opportunities.

Reading Breakfast

Building a strong Reading Community is essential to promoting a love of reading. Teachers share their love of reading with children during Book Club and read books aloud to children every day. Our Reading Breakfasts allowed us to make a connection between reading at school and reading at home. Children and parents were able to come together, enjoy croissants and share some good books. This was a great way for everyone to share their love of reading.



Author Visits

What better way to encourage children to read than to meet someone who writes the books they love! This year, we've had a record number of visits from authors who write a range of books from picture books, graphic novels, chapter books and more.

Taking part in the Stepping into Stories: Kids' Lit Fest, allowed us to have a range of local and award-winning authors visit the children to talk about their writing journey. Gabby Dawnay (author) & Alex Barrow (illustrator) gave a captivating talk about their book, 'If I had a Crocodile.' All children had the opportunity to purchase one of their books to be signed and illustrated by the pair.

Mayor and Mynah by Karen Owen was well loved by many children in KS2.

If you love vampires and mystery, then The 13th Vampire by Alice Hemming might be your book. KS2 enjoyed a great workshop



and talk from Alice about her struggles with writing and what motivated her to write her first book.

Poetry is an engaging style of writing which captivates the imagination of all ages. The Poet, James Carter, engaged the whole school with a very dynamic and lively poetry performance. He was able to inspire a range of children with his poetry writing workshop; showing children how easy and exciting writing poetry is. Following the visit from James Carter, each class learnt and recited a poem which they performed to the whole school.

Read, Write, Inc

At Rockmount we use 'Read Write Inc' (RWI) as our phonics scheme to support early literacy development, focusing on phonics as a foundation for reading and writing. This scheme is designed to help children learn to decode words fluently and develop a love for reading from a young age. This year we have further developed the scheme by advice from a Read Write Inc consultant and managed to secure funding to specifically go towards resources, training and a school portal allowing us to share virtual classroom videos via Google Classroom.



Book club

Book Club happens every week at Rockmount. This has been a great opportunity for children to share their favourite books with their peers and recommend books to their class. This has encouraged children to read lots of different types of books, to develop their reading skills, expand their knowledge and become inspired.



Phonics

Using RWI, our children are introduced to phonemes (the sounds that letters make) in a systematic way. They begin by learning the simple sounds and gradually move on to more complex letter combinations. Each sound is associated with a specific mnemonic and engaging visuals, making it easier for children to remember and apply them in their reading.

Daily sessions are structured to ensure children are consistently practising phonics through both reading and writing exercises.

This year we have hosted phonic workshops for parents/carers to attend to get an insight of how the phonics scheme is taught and how to continue this at home.

By using the Read Write Inc. scheme, we ensure that all of our children are given the best start in reading and writing, preparing them with essential literacy skills for their future learning.



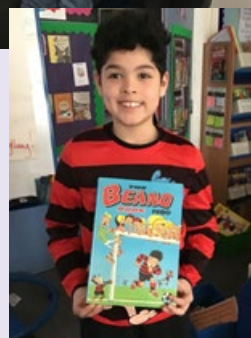
Reading Ambassadors

This year, we have introduced a new pupil voice group to promote the love of reading. Our newly appointed Reading Ambassadors work to share their love of reading with the school community.

So far, they have shared their book recommendations in assemblies, led Book Club with their class, organised book fairs and their favourite job has been reading with the younger children.



World Book Day



Pens down talk, listen and join in!



In November, the whole school enjoyed taking part in 'No Pens Day' which was a day dedicated to engaging children in a range of creative activities across the day without a pen in sight. Each year group picked different activities to partake in which included painting with our feet, chalk mark making, sensory walks and lessons taking place outdoors. The purpose of the day was for children to have an opportunity to develop their oral language skills in fun, practical ways.



STEM Fair

At Rockmount, we believe that fostering a passion for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics in primary schools is essential, as it ignites pupils' curiosity and critical thinking, empowering them to not just understand the world around them but to become problem-solvers and innovators who will shape it in the future. In March, we held our first ever STEM fair which was a huge success.

One of the main attractions of the STEM Fair was the coding event featuring the popular Microbits. These tiny programmable computers provided an excellent opportunity for children to dive into the world of coding and technology. Pupils had the chance to explore the basics of programming by creating their own projects using the Microbits. Whether it was designing simple games, producing music, or developing interactive displays, the children engaged

enthusiastically with this hands-on learning experience.

The STEM Fair featured an array of engaging science challenges that had pupils displaying their scientific reasoning and collaborative skills. Each challenge was designed to inspire curiosity and encourage experimentation. For instance, the children participated in a hands-on activity to build the tallest tower using only marshmallows and spaghetti. This particular challenge proved to be both entertaining and thought-provoking as the children quickly learned about structural stability, teamwork, and perseverance.

The STEM Fair at Rockmount Primary School was more than just an event; it was a celebration of creativity, curiosity, and collaboration. Parents were encouraged to get involved, giving them an opportunity

to witness their children's enthusiasm for learning and innovation firsthand. The event fostered a sense of community, with families sharing ideas and accomplishments as they explored the various activities together.

Feedback from the day was overwhelmingly positive, with many parents expressing their delight at witnessing their children engaged in such enriching experiences. The success of the STEM Fair has inspired the school to plan similar events in the future, fostering an ongoing interest in STEM fields and encouraging the next generation of scientists, engineers, mathematicians and inventors. As Rockmount Primary School continues to shine a spotlight on STEM education, we look forward to seeing what other innovative ideas our pupils will bring to life in the future!



Art and Design

Art and Design is a subject that enables learners to develop a positive attitude to creative thinking. As well as practising different artistic skills such as painting, drawing, sculpture and collage, pupils are encouraged to celebrate their own and others' experiences. This sense of community fosters diversity as they will learn about art and design from cultures across the world.

At Rockmount, pupils refine these key strands of art year on year, building on their prior learning and practising these skills in a variety of ways. This includes collaboratively and in their own individual sketchbooks, which act as their own personal learning journeys.

Highlights of this year include Year 4 creating their own fantastic dragon eye sculptures from clay, which they painted using metallic paints. These were inspired by the class text 'Krinklekrax' and pupils used different sculpture techniques including rolling, squeezing, pinching, pulling and joining. Furthermore, Year 1 was inspired by their class book 'Mirror' by Jeannie Baker, which contains detailed collages. They created their own collages based on the landscape of Morocco. In Year 5, pupils enjoyed learning about the work of Hawaiian artist Mary Spears, who creates colourful and bold fine art collages inspired by the essence of the tropics. This was linked to their topic 'Water.'





Health and Wellbeing at Rockmount!

Wellbeing is a part of everything we do at Rockmount. It is an essential and integral part of our culture. Our vision shows that, promoting Wellbeing and good mental health, will make resilient learners who will in turn feel empowered to make good choices for themselves now and in the future.



Wellbeing Ambassadors

At Rockmount, we are lucky to have a group of children who support, lead and empower children to develop their health and wellbeing. The Wellbeing Ambassadors meet fortnightly and collaborate with teachers and school staff to organise events and campaigns focused on mental health and wellbeing. They actively participate in school life, showing kindness and empathy towards their peers and modelling healthy behaviours. They act as a liaison between students and school staff, sharing feedback and insights on the mental health needs of the student body. This then helps to ensure that school policies and practices, effectively support the wellbeing of all students. Overall, Wellbeing Ambassadors play a crucial role in fostering a supportive and caring school community where every student feels valued, understood, and empowered to prioritise their mental health.



Staff Wellbeing

At Rockmount, we know that by creating a supportive, healthy and nurturing environment, teachers will feel valued, empowered and motivated to perform their very best. We work hard to make all members of staff feel supported and part of a school community. Through listening to staff feedback, we have improved the teachers lounge, to make it a positive place to feel empowered, planned staff days out every half term and run friendly completions throughout the year. By doing this we aim to cultivate a positive work culture that enables staff to thrive personally and professionally, ultimately benefiting the entire school community.



Mental Health Support Team (MHST)

The MHST at Rockmount Primary School plays a crucial role in creating a supportive and inclusive school environment where all students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. They work collaboratively with parents and staff to address the diverse emotional health needs of the student population and promote a positive culture of mental health awareness within the school community.



Wellbeing Conference

This year, the Wellbeing Ambassadors were invited to a Croydon's Wellbeing Conference at Selhurst Park. The ambassadors were able to share their own experience and insights on how they promote the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' at Rockmount. They each had an opportunity to speak about special planned events and initiatives completed at our school. The ambassadors had the opportunity to connect with other ambassadors and professionals, who like them are dedicated and

passionate about promoting wellbeing in schools. It was a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other's experiences. At the conference, the ambassadors also demonstrated a breathing exercise that they use at school, which everybody took part in. The method they demonstrated was the 'Rectangle Breathing Technique'. The children then spoke about how beneficial breathing exercises are for your body and mind.



British International Award



What is the International Award?

The British Council's International School Award celebrates a school's international work. This is a globally recognised accreditation and helps a school enrich their learning and improve their teaching. It does this through providing guidance in the school's international learning activities, by the means of introducing international education into the curriculum as well as embedding it within a school's culture.

Highlights from this year

At Rockmount we strive to increase our knowledge, awareness and tolerance about other countries, cultures and languages.

During the month of October, we participated in Black History Organisation's theme of 'Saluting Our Sisters'. Each class expanded their knowledge of black women who have played a part in shaping history, inspiring change and building communities. Children displayed their incredible work at a Black History Month showcase exhibition which was attended by families. It was a wonderful opportunity for the school community to come together to celebrate the amazing work produced by the children. To recognise the diversity in our school, children were also invited to wear traditional clothing from their culture on 'Cultural Dress Day'.

To launch the International Award, each class learnt new French vocabulary linked to the famous black women they were studying as well as the curriculum. We even had French vocabulary awards across the school for children who showed enthusiasm in their French lessons. Additionally, each classroom now displays

French words around the learning environment to support translating classroom objects in French!

During the festive period, each class designed and created a 'Christmas Hoop from around the world', embracing the traditions and celebrations of Christmas from different cultures. Additionally, each class had an international focus for their enterprise initiatives at the Winter Fair.

Beginning in the Spring term, pupils in Turquoise class in Year 5 wrote letters to children at Peter Lougheed School, Calgary, Canada. The children have exchanged letters, book reviews and even created a video! They were delighted to receive replies from the other side of the world, learning all about life as a Canadian child.

In the summer term we hosted the 'Rockmount Olympics'. Every child from Nursery to Year 6 had cross-curricular focus based on the Olympics. Each class chose an athlete from around the world to research and produce a piece of work based on them. Additionally, the children created Olympic flags and logos. It was amazing to see all the spectators at our Rockmount Olympic sporting event on the rec!

