

26 January 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In my remarks at the first assembly of the new year, I spoke about the values that bind us as part of the UWC movement, peace, sustainability, and mutual understanding. At a time when the world can feel increasingly fractured and uncertain, these principles are not abstract ideals, but practical commitments. They call on us to be brave enough to engage in challenging conversations, wise enough to listen deeply across difference, and thoughtful enough to act with empathy and compassion.

I also reflected on the importance of empathy and kindness as forms of leadership within our community, not loud or performative, but quiet, intentional, and deeply consequential. These qualities are too often absent from today's political discourse, yet they remain central to the way we live and learn together at UWC Robert Bosch College. This spirit was beautifully demonstrated over the Winter Break by the many RBC and UWC families, as well as our Host Families, who generously opened their homes to students unable to return home. Every hosted student I have spoken with has expressed sincere gratitude for the warmth, care, and sense of belonging they experienced. This spirit was beautifully demonstrated over Winter Break by the many RBC and UWC families, along with our Host Families, who generously opened their homes to students unable to return home. Every hosted student I have spoken with has shared heartfelt gratitude for the warmth, care, and genuine sense of belonging they experienced. I am also deeply thankful to our Host Family Team, Tina and Carina, and our Director of Student Life, Cassie, for their outstanding coordination and support in making this possible.

As we settle into the rhythm of the new term, it is remarkable to reflect on all that has been accomplished in just two and a half weeks. Our first-year students have embarked on their Theory of Knowledge (TOK) journey and begun to consider ideas for their Extended Essays, while second-year students have submitted their TOK essays and are now focused on next steps. For some, this includes working on university applications, while for others it involves careful planning for the year ahead as they prepare for life beyond RBC. Time at RBC really does seem to have its own unique pace.

Looking Ahead

- **Global Affairs (Wednesday 21 Feb)** entitled "Neurodiversity" which will include testimonials from members of the RBC community.
- **Special Focus Day (Thursday 29 Jan):** Our second Special Focus Day, centered on Peace and Conflict. This day will provide students with the opportunity to engage thoughtfully with our four peacebuilding pillars: *Peace with Self, Peace with Others, Peace within the Community, and Peace with the Environment*. Through a range of workshops, the community will participate in discussion-based

sessions exploring peace- and conflict-related issues, skills-based workshops developing practical peacebuilding skills, and action-based activities involving creative and hands-on peacebuilding initiatives.

- **Project Week (Sunday 1 February – Friday 6 February)** will see students engaging in a wide range of meaningful and enriching activities. While some groups will remain in Freiburg, others will travel by bus and train within Germany or elsewhere in Europe. Throughout the week, students will take part in service projects such as supporting people experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable members of society, contributing to the Stolpersteine Project here in Freiburg, as well as creative and experiential projects in photography, painting, and theatre.

- **Important Updates and Reminders**

1. **Spring Break:**

- Spring Break begins on **Thursday, 2 April**. Students must remain on campus through their final commitment/class on **Wednesday, 1 April** but may depart afterward.

2. **Closing Ceremony and Visa Invitation Letters:**

- Parents or guardians requiring visa invitation letters for the Closing Ceremony should ask their child to contact Kim Hansser, Senior Management Assistant.
- Please note that seating is limited. Each second-year student will receive a maximum of **two guest tickets** for the event.

3. **Key Dates for the 2026/2027 Academic Year:**

- **Student Arrival:** Thursday, 27 August 2026 (Incoming flights to Frankfurt will be met by prior arrangement. Students arriving at Basel Airport should take the airport bus to Freiburg train station. Similarly, students arriving in Freiburg by train or bus will be met by prior arrangement.)
- **Winter Holiday Departure:** By 10 a.m., Friday, 18 December 2026
- **Winter Holiday Return:** Campus opens at 10 a.m.; students must return by 7 p.m., Sunday, 10 January 2027
- **Departure of Y2 students:** By 12 p.m., Friday 21 May 2027
- **Summer Holiday Departure for First-Year Students:** By 10 a.m., Friday, 18 June 2027

Thank you for entrusting us with the education and growth of your children. As this next term unfolds, we look forward to supporting them in their journeys and inspiring their curiosity, resilience, and commitment to creating meaningful change.

Best,
Helen