



Rossall

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

STATEMENT REGARDING FOOTBALL MATCHES BETWEEN ETON AND ROSSALL

Two teams from Rossall School participated in friendly football matches at Eton this Saturday. In making the decision to honour the invitation, senior staff took careful consideration of the guidance provided by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport which confirmed that, 'there was no formal obligation for organisations to postpone or cancel sporting fixtures or events at either elite or grassroots level, between now and the State Funeral'.

The Headmasters and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) provided guidance to all schools in its association which replicated the advice from DCMS. Before the match, Rossall students visited Windsor Castle to lay flowers and pay their respects on behalf of our School community. They wore black armbands and observed a period of silence before each match. The Contingent Commander of the CCF laid flowers in front of Buckingham Palace, once again, on behalf of all here at Rossall.

Given that so many sporting and cultural events did go ahead, it is perhaps easy to understand the very real frustration of those who believe that lovers of our national game should have been afforded the same opportunity to come together and play fixtures with dignity, whilst expressing their sadness on the occasion of the passing of Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. However, the decision to go ahead with the matches was taken in good faith and with no desire to cause offence or ignore guidelines issued by other governing bodies. It was clearly understood by both schools that the matches in question were not covered by the FA postponement given that they were not FA fixtures but part of pre-season training.

Here at Rossall, flags are flying at half mast and a beautiful and very moving service of commemoration for all members of our community took place on Friday morning. Various events such as the launch of our Performing Arts Academy and a Sixth Form social event have been postponed.

Rossall is a community that has paid a uniquely heavy sacrifice in terms of service to crown and country and the emotional ties to the monarchy are extremely strong here on the Fylde coast. Our families and school community share in the grief of the nation at this time.

We apologise for any offence or upset caused by the playing of this match and take full responsibility for the decision to honour the fixture.

Rossall School