



Ramsey Voice

Updates Newsletter

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Notes From The Head

Welcome to the first edition of The Ramsey Voice for the new academic year. The first half term has passed so quickly, with every week packed with events and activities as well as normal lessons.

Firstly we must congratulate the Year 11 students on their GCSE results. Yet again the overall results have improved despite new, more rigorous examinations for English and Mathematics. The recently published progress measures indicate students are making good progress in a variety of subjects when compared to their peer group nationally. On results day we were delighted to see the expressions of relief and happiness. We wish all our former students good luck for the future.

We have welcomed our new cohort of Year 7 students; a record number of 160 means they are the largest Year Group in the Academy. This is particularly pleasing as it demonstrates our increasing popularity and the confidence of local parents in our ability to provide a valuable, all-round educational experience for young people. The Academy were over-subscribed with applications and the recent Open Evening and tours indicate this will be repeated for September 2018 entry. It also shows we are moving towards our aim of being 'an outstanding school at the heart of the community'.

All Year Groups have made a positive start to their lessons: it is pleasing to see how the Year 7 cohort have settled into the routine and expectations of secondary school. Parents report that they have been delighted with the process which can be daunting to some.

Refurbishment Proposals



An important factor in the ongoing developments at Ramsey is the improvement of the learning environment for students, allowing them to take pride in their work and their school. This year we are raising funds for an ambitious project: the refurbishment of the Library and Learning Centre. We have already secured the support of several local companies, including Milbank Concrete Products, who have made a significant contribution towards the refurbishment costs.

The project to refurbish our existing library, which is outdated, into a modern, vibrant library and learning centre to motivate and enthuse the students is an important development to ensure the development of literacy remain at the heart of the curriculum. The proposed plans can be viewed on our website.

Refurbishment Proposals



Currently the library is used extensively before, during and after school by all age groups but there are inadequate seating and study areas to meet current demand. The shelving is dated and the lighting and ceiling both need replacing. Other planned improvements include the installation of an electronic booking system and interactive screen to allow the facility to accommodate small lectures. Our plans for the future include increasing access for parents and extending the current provision of 'parent support groups' to develop a greater awareness of how the development of literacy, numeracy and study skills can be provided from home.

If you would like to make a donation to the refurbishment costs, it can be made via the Scopay website using your

child's log in details; just choose the 'Sponsor our Library' item from within the products and enter an amount. The website address is www.scopay.com

If you are aware of any businesses, individuals or organisations who would like to become one of our Community Partners please ask them to contact me directly.

The following quotation by the author Dr Seuss nicely sums up the importance of literacy and access to high quality resources

"The more that you read the more things you know. The more you learn the more places you'll go."



The Ramsey Academy - 2017 GCSE Results

The Ramsey Academy are delighted to celebrate another year of excellent results.

Building on the success and continued improvement of recent years, the quality of results have been maintained in a summer examination season which has seen students sitting the new Grade 9 - 1 GCSEs for the first time in Maths and English. Staff and students worked hard to prepare for examinations that no one had seen or previously taken.

The new examinations are more challenging and rigorous, containing different content and examination style questions. As a result, a direct comparison with results from previous years is meaningless.

However, we are delighted to report that 60 percent of students achieved grades of 9 - 4 in both English and Maths and 64 percent of students achieved at least 5 A* - C passes. It was also pleasing to see an increase in the number of student achieving the highest grades.

A number of subjects received excellent results particularly Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Textiles, Dance, Physical Education, and Health & Social Care.

Particular mention should go to:

- Chloe Phillips-Taylor who achieved grade 9 in both English and Maths, 3 A's in Biology Chemistry and Physics plus 1x7, 1C.
- Poppy Yeomans who achieved 1x9, 1x8, 1x7, 2A*, 3As & 1B.
- Phoebe Bruce who achieved 2x8, 1A*, 5As, 1B and 1x6

Mr R James, commented;

"We are delighted the hard work of the students has produced excellent results which will allow them to progress to the next stage of their education or employment. On behalf of the students, I would like to thank the staff and parents for their support.

The results show that as a school we provide an all-round education, with a range of opportunities for all students, whatever their ability level and interest. The continued improvements at the Ramsey Academy are contributing to our aim of becoming an outstanding school in the heart of the community and first choice for local families.

We wish all the students good luck and best wishes for the future."



Awards Evening



On Thursday 21 September we gathered to celebrate the achievements of students in Years 8, 9, 10, and 11. Awards were presented in all subjects for achievement and progress. Our guest speaker, Sean Millbank, presented the awards and provided an inspirational talk on the subject of challenge, which involved Toblerone!

In all, over 120 students received awards and the evening culminated with the presentation of the Year shields to-

- Reece Smith & Jessica Thomas (Current Year 8)
- Bobbi Field-Mullins & Frasier Hughes (Current Year 9)
- Hannah Birch & Finlay Higgins (Current Year 10)
- Beth Curnock & Jarad Gribbin (Current Year 11)
- Mr C Leys

Literacy Leaders

Literacy Leaders are a group of students from Year 10 who help younger students in Year 7 and 8 with their literacy. During DEAR time we read with small group of 4 - 6 students, we use this time to bond with the students and read with them to help them become more fluent and confident in reading out loud in class and in front of groups of people. When I was a Literacy Leader I was the Head Leader, this meant that I had a lot of responsibility; with making sure the selected students were turning up and comfortable in their groups, this was my responsibility to make DEAR time as enjoyable and fun as possible. I really enjoyed the experience of being a Literacy Leader, being able to help younger students succeed in literacy was very rewarding and I will miss it very much. I can happily say that the Year 10 group that are taking over from us will do a great job in motivating the newly selected students and making DEAR time enjoyable and successful.

- Lolly Cooke (Year 11)



Year 10 Visit to France and Germany July 2017

On Sunday 16 July at 5.00 a.m, the Year 10 language students set off by coach on their long road trip to Strasbourg in the Alsace region of France, on the French and German border. It was a long journey but well worth it. On arrival at the Hotel Ciarus, we were shown to our rooms where we unpacked our belongings and then had our first taste of French food. Afterwards, we set off for a walk to stretch our legs and to explore our new surroundings. Monday dawned bright and sunny, we set off for a walking tour of Strasbourg around the old part of the city and went on a boat trip along the river and canals. We took lots of photos and talked to people in the shops and the markets, which enabled us to use our foreign language skills. My favourite part was being able to spend some time in the massive shopping centre. The tour guide was very informative about the history of Strasbourg and we learnt so much from it. Later in the afternoon we visited the Musée du Chocolat at Geispolsheim, where we were allowed to taste all the different types of chocolate and the cocoa beans. We had a master class in chocolate-tasting!

On Tuesday we went to Stuttgart in Germany to the huge Mercedes Benz Museum, which was amazing, but also very informative about history and politics. Later we spent some time exploring Stuttgart in the beautiful Schlossbergplatz and did more shopping on Königsbergstrasse.

On Wednesday we spent the whole day at the Europa Theme Park, which boasts the tallest rollercoaster ride in Europe- too scary for some, but most of us were brave enough! It was very hot, at least 36 celsius, but the water rides cooled us down!

I think I can say on behalf of all the Year 10 students that we all really enjoyed this trip and would love to go again. It was a great experience and we will never forget it. We all had so much fun and we learnt so much about the culture and the language in Strasbourg and Stuttgart, enabling both French and German students to combine our language skills.

Amelia said: "I really enjoyed the theme park and walking around there with my friends."

Chiara said: "I found the tour really interesting."

Gianna said: "I really enjoyed the Mercedes Benz Museum; I found it really educational and fun to learn about."

- Lolly Cooke, (Year 11 Deputy Head Girl).



Upcoming Ypres Trip



From Thursday 2 - Friday 3 November forty seven Year 9 students will be visiting the Ypres Salient to learn about WW1 and to pay our respects to the fallen. During the visit we will make time to lay a wreath for the fallen from Halstead at the Menin Gate during the Last Post Ceremony. We will also visit graves belonging to men from Halstead and lay memorial crosses for them. We are always interested to find out more about any of the men who fought in and around Ypres. If you have any family connections to someone who fell in the area we are more than happy to lay a wreath on your behalf, and would love to know anything about them to help our students to understand the true impact of the Great War. The final resting place or memorial point of all casualties from WW1 can be located using the commonwealth war commission website, www.cwgc.org . Please contact Mrs Perrins for further information.

Year 10 Trip to Berlin Monday 16 July - Thursday 19 July 2018

Forty Five Year 10 students will be heading to Berlin in July to practise their German language skills and to explore the historical city. We will visit the Reichstag and survey the city from the top of the famous Fernsehturm. As well as visiting the Wall museum and Checkpoint Charlie, we will touch the Berlin Wall and relax on a boat cruise through the city.

Students have received details of key dates for payments and passports, but if any other Year 10 students are interested in joining the trip, please speak to Mrs Sims or Mrs Starke as soon as possible. Equally, if any student has decided that they will now be unable to travel, please inform Mrs Sims immediately.



Activities Week 17 - 21 July 2017

Elizabethan Odyssey

For the two Activities Days at the end of the summer term, the English, Drama and Music departments pooled their skills to produce an Elizabethan theatre, dance and music experience for Year 7 students. On the first day, a drama and theatre specialist came in to work on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' looking at themes, characters and the plot of this popular comedy by Shakespeare. Students were able to role play different scenes and used drama games to make them more confident with performance. On the second day, a carousel of activities took place, consisting of mask making, dance and music. Students were able to learn Elizabethan tunes to play on the recorder and all participated with great enthusiasm in a sixteenth century dance, Pavanne La Bataglia. Mask making completed the trio of activities with colourful character masks from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' lending an air of Elizabethan magic to the days. Full immersion in sixteenth century performing arts gave students the confidence to put on a brilliant performance of all they had learned on the afternoon of the last day. Thanks to the English, Drama and Music teams for all their input and to Mr Taylor for his spectacular dance performances. - Mrs M Gibbs



House Signs in Art



In July, students and teachers from all Houses came together in Activities Week to produce three beautiful representations of Ramsey's Houses. With the help of the staff in the Art Department, the students used their creative abilities to design and make large wooden letters. The students were split into groups of their Houses; for example students from Aspiration House made the Aspiration wooden letters. We decorated them in our House colours and used all sorts of different methods and materials to enhance each letter. Some students wrapped theirs in wool, others stuck patterned fabric onto them and some camouflaged theirs with glitter! It was a challenge to get it all done in just two days but when we did they looked absolutely wonderful. It was great seeing everyone laughing and having a good time while working together to produce something for the school to display. - Keira Herbert (Year 9)

Plane Building In Product Design

Three magnificent teams designed, fabricated and tested balsa wood and tissue paper flying machines. They went "up diddly up," (not very high!) and "down diddly down, down" (crash & burn) Traditional plane frames were skinned with stretched tissue paper, everything cut out and put together by hand. Aerodynamics, air pressure, skill in launching and lack of accurate centres of gravity made for some 'flight of the bumble bee' flightpaths.
- Mr S Pittuck



Bushcraft Residential Trip

During Activities Week ninety one Year 7 and 8 students went on a three-day Bushcraft residential adventure to Cornbury Park, Oxfordshire.

The trip provided fantastic development of leadership skill, demanding resourcefulness, decision-making and practical thinking from students.

Each day was made up of a range of hands-on workshops, offering a chance to really get to grips with life in the outdoors within a truly unique environment.

As they got off of the coach all the students and staff were excited about the adventures ahead and the new surroundings; we had a short walk through the woods to the camps where we were shown our tents and then put into small tribes of between ten and fifteen, with each tribe assigned a Bushcraft leader who would look after us during our visit.

Both camps were just a walk apart and in the heart of the forest, covered by a huge canopy of trees. In the centre of each camp was a Yurt, a enormous open-sided tent where we all hung out together and ate our meals and spent the evenings telling stories of the day's events.

Each day started with breakfast followed by two activities, then lunch, followed by another two activities, dinner and then bed.

We all quickly found out about all the fun activities that we would be doing which included shelter building and lake swimming:- that was freezing and so much fun. Wilderness First Aid, Bushcraft's Got

Talent where the two camps came together were hilarious; Night Stalking Games and even a chance to eat fish eyes!

Our days were kept busy with all the activities, we only stopped for food, which was plentiful and delicious. We cooked kebabs on open fires, enjoyed full English breakfasts, pancakes, pasta and brownies cooked in large silver pans also on the fires, and hot chocolate before bed.

Our sleeping tents were warm, cosy and dry, which was a good job as we had a lot of rain but that didn't stop us enjoying ourselves; in fact it made it even more fun the night we had the opportunity to sleep out in the shelters that we built.

During our three day stay we didn't wash and only brushed our teeth if we wanted to, the students loved this, also we didn't have our mobile phones and they weren't missed at all.

Quickly the time came to leave and students left with a sense of achievement, confident in their ability to live and operate in the outdoors, as well as a greater understanding of the British landscape. Our time spent living in the wild was truly fantastic and we were all taken out of our comfort zone.

Climbing onto the coaches, smelling of bonfire, we all thanked our Bushcraft leaders for a wonderful stay and said we would be back for more next year!

- Miss L Buschman



Bridge Building

During Activities Week Year 9 students took part in an activity designed to foster many of the skills they will need when they enter the world of work.

The task sounded simple: they had to work in teams to build a bridge from the construction kit K'Nex. They soon discovered that it was far from simple.

The bridge had to be two metres long and be able to support as heavy a weight as possible. Each of the pieces of K'Nex had a cost and the team had a budget within which it had to operate. If they made a mistake and bought more pieces than they needed, they could sell them back but only received half the original cost.

The teams appointed a Project Manager, a Finance Director, a Construction Manager and a Research and Development Leader. They spent most of the morning experimenting and planning before completing the construction.

The bridges were judged on their aesthetic appearance, cost, length and strength. The strongest bridge was able to withstand a weight of 1.7kg.

The students said that the day was challenging, but enjoyable. Hopefully the skills they developed will be useful for them in the future. - Mr M Everett



Duke of Edinburgh Award

This year The Ramsey Academy enrolled 59 students onto the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The award entails an expedition camp and three skills sections to complete: one of the three must be done over a six month period, and the other two over a three month period. The sections are Volunteering, Physical Skills and the camp expedition is two days with a one night camp.

The students started one of their set skills before setting off for the camping expedition; one weekend is a practise and the other weekend is an assessment, where we are joined in camp and on the walk by our assessor, Phil.

The students are provided with a kit list of essentials to take on the walk and the camp. They have to be out from start to finish for a time of 6 hours and generally cover around 30 km on the walk; rest breaks are taken along the route to enable them to regroup and check where they are and where they are going. We walk around Essex and stay in Scouts' camps for the night. The students set off from The Ramsey Academy very excitedly on the Friday mornings of Practises and Expeditions, they are dropped off at the start point and do map and compass checks and bags are checked for comfort for their walk. They set off with a Go-Pro to take pictures of the areas they walk and to take videos for the project set.

When they get to camp at the end of the day they set up their tents and start to prepare their tea to cook and marshmallows toasted over a fire before bedtime. They are all up early on the Saturday to do it all over again to the end point. They are generally exhausted on the second day, but still excited that they have managed till the end, teamwork is essential for all taking part in the D of E.



They then do this all again for the assessment before the end of term, this one is generally a lot warmer to walk and camp, but still a tiring but worthwhile two days the students tell us at the end. The students then arrive to complete their skills before they leave in Year 11.

This year was Mr Murray's last camp with us before he moved onto pastures new, many thanks to Mr Murray for all he has done over the years with D of E and us. This year thanks need to go to Miss Meechan, Mr Walker, Mr Martin, Mr Murray and Mr Lugton for the successful camps and walks. - Miss H Ralph

Gardening Club Update

An excellent start to the autumn season with long-standing members and quite a number of enthusiastic younger ones. Many congratulations to 'Halstead In Bloom' in the Anglia In Bloom competition - another Gold award and 'Best Town in East Anglia'. Our members enjoyed meeting the judges again, promoting the town, school, and the Gardening Club.

I was delighted and surprised to be awarded a Jack Petchey award for Youth Leadership. All the more as it came from a group of students nominating me. The £500 award will go towards our next project - the Fruit Cage.

Our five potting stations have been fabricated and fitted by club members. They are now in use in the greenhouse, making it easier to have more people working effectively in a confined space.

The composting station is proving its worth. Six months' worth of waste has rotted down nicely and been moved to the second bay. In another six months we will sieve it and put it in the final bay ready for use. Many thanks to the catering classes for their regular donations of peels and vegetable matter.

A small task force has been strengthening our aging raised beds. By screwing in corner pieces we should get another one or two years out of them. If anyone knows of a supply of free scaffolding boards, it would be a good project to replace them next year.

Our flower beds have been weeded, geraniums pruned and potted up, and horse chestnuts planted in pots. Leaves are being collected as they drop, so we should have a good supply of rotted leaf mould next year.

As we approach the end of the year, all is well in the garden! - Mr S Pittuck (Gardening Club Leader)



Careers Fair

On Wednesday 20 September, Year 11 students visited the Careers Fair at Chelmsford City Racecourse. The Fair hosted representatives from public and private sector employers, as well as universities, local colleges and training providers. The event, including transport, was fully funded by "Make Happen" which is part of the Essex National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) funded by HEFCE.

Alongside local employers such as Maycast-Nokes and Milbank, local law, accountancy and care firms. Students were able to talk directly to representatives from industries and institutions as wide ranging as the chemical, oil and gas industry, football and rugby academies, the armed forces, the Royal Horticultural Society, hair and beauty salons, recording studios, construction, and mechanical engineers and Sixth Form colleges.

Year 11 students are currently facing the difficult choices that will shape the next few years of their lives and, potentially, the education, training and career paths they may take for the rest of their lives. They certainly made the most of this opportunity to research and confidently ask questions about the options open to them post 16. Back at Ramsey, the students will now take advantage of visiting speakers and personal development lessons to support themselves in their decisions and help them to build CVs and prepare personal statements and professional covering letters.

Whether they choose apprenticeships, A Levels, vocational programmes or employment with training, we certainly wish them the very best of luck with their application process this Autumn! - Mrs A Barnes



Drama Theatre Trip



The Ramsey Academy took a cast of 24 students to The Lakeside Theatre in Colchester to perform their production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare. This formed part of the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival, a nationwide project that encourages young people of all ages and abilities to engage with their cultural heritage, community and creativity through the performance of Shakespeare.

Work on "A Midsummer Night's Dream" began in the summer term and from then the students had been rehearsing hard in their own time with Mrs Barnes to bring this show to life. Students also had the fabulous opportunity to take part in cast workshops, working alongside professional directors from the Shakespeare Schools Festival organisation and The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

The performance was vibrant, entertaining and delighted a packed house at the Lakeside Theatre.

We commend our students for their behaviour, commitment, maturity and enthusiasm during the project was outstanding. The workshop facilitators from the Shakespeare in Schools Festival organisation were highly impressed and particularly pointed out how well they had done. Well done all! - Mrs A Barnes

The Sex Factor

In July the whole of Year 9 was treated to a performance and workshop from the group 'Tip of the Iceberg'. The experience is aimed at examining the issues of safe and unsafe behaviour; empowering young people to make informed choices about their lives and responsibilities, and to raise awareness of issues such as teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and methods of contraception. The play highlighted concepts of control, decision making and self-esteem, and explores the divide between our feelings, what we know (our knowledge) and what we do (our behaviour). The Year 9 students were impeccably behaved and contributed well to the workshops. The theatre group's mix of hard hitting messages, humour and sensitivity made this a great experience for all. - Mrs H Price



The Ramsey Ram



After a very eventful and successful year for the Ramsey Ram, the student team are gearing up for another busy year of reporting and writing. The student magazine, which started in April 2016, has really flourished and showcased our students' passion for writing and their school. From Christmas tree finding competitions to interviewing teachers, the magazine has really thrived and the students should be exceptionally proud of their achievements.

With growth in mind, the editing team is about to expand. With this exciting new development, students who are interested in new responsibilities have been asked to write a letter of application detailing their suitability for the roles offered and their reasons for applying. It is hoped that with a larger team of students involved we can cover more stories and events that often go unreported in our magazine. The students are already meeting regularly with their ideas for the development of the magazine so this year hopes to be really exciting. - Miss H Siseman

Football Team's First Fixture of the Year

On Wednesday 4 October, the Year 11 Football Team travelled to close rival Hedingham School for their first game of the year. Year 11 is always a difficult year to get a team together with all the added pressures of revision classes and extra tutoring they may have organised in preparation for their exams in the summer.

Some late additions to the squad such as Jordan Mayes-Allen meant that the fixture could go ahead. This was important as the GCSE PE students needed to be recorded for their assessment.

The game started very even with both teams finding their feet. Ramsey had the first chance but we hit the crossbar and then the ball was cleared off the line. Unfortunately, Hedingham went straight back down field and scored on the counter attack. The first half ended, 1-0 to Hedingham. With Ramsey unable to capitalise on their chances. Hedingham started the second half strong, and scored 2 quick goals.

Being 3-0 down, Ramsey pushed players forward and goals by Dominic Emmerson and James Burgess brought the game back to a close affair. Ramsey had a number of chances to take the lead, missing open nets and hitting the crossbar.

Unfortunately, Ramsey's efforts were not enough, and they were punished for not taking their chances by another 2 goals from a clinical Hedingham side who finished every chance they got.

The game ended 5-2 to Hedingham; Ramsey will be playing New Rickstones Academy in their next fixture which is a must-win game. - Mr M Child

North West Essex School Sport Partnership School Games Events

The School Games programme is part of Active Essex's core programme to engage with children and inspire them to lead healthy and active lifestyles. The North West Essex School Sport Partnership (which is based at The Ramsey Academy, Halstead) has had a really positive start to the year with lots of primary and secondary school students taking part in School Games Events and teachers becoming upskilled in sessions delivered by the Academy.

On Monday 25 September, Primary School Sports Co-ordinators were invited to the Academy to take part in a Table Tennis CPD session. Our coach, Dean Andrews, who runs our Monday after school club, delivered the session to staff. Teachers were guided through a range of skills and drills that could be used for KS2 students as well as sharing good practice and ways to teach the sport without any table tennis tables! The Year 5/6 Table Tennis competition took place on Monday 9 October at The Ramsey Academy, Halstead. Congratulations to St Andrews, Great Yeldham who won the competition. They will now be representing our district in the County final in November.

The Academy also hosted a Change 4 Life Festival on Tuesday 3 October. Over 60 students from Year 3 and 4 took part in the fun and active session. Activities ranged from team games to musical statues! Thank you to all of the primary schools that attended.

- Mrs S Patching (School Games Organiser)



OCTOBER HALF TERM TENNIS CAMPS



The Essex Golf And Country Club

Tuesday 24th & Thursday 26th October
10am - 3.00pm



The day will be held on the indoor courts and will include COACHING, FUN GAMES and a MINI TOURNAMENT.
Prizes will be awarded at the end of the day.

AGE: 4 plus **FOOD: Bring a packed lunch**
STANDARD: All welcome **RACKETS: Can be provided**

COST: £16 Members
£18.50 Non-Members



FOR MORE INFO OR TO BOOK YOUR PLACE PLEASE CONTACT SHAUN ROBINSON ON 07535 023675.




Halstead Football Centre

Wednesday Evenings starting 6th September

U6/7's	-	5:30 - 6:30pm	£4.50 Per Session Discount for Block Bookings!
U8/9's	-	5:30 - 6:30pm	
U10/11's	-	5:30 - 6:30pm	
U12/13's	-	6:45 - 7:45pm	
U14/15's	-	6:45 - 7:45pm	
U16's	-	6:45 - 7:45pm	

- Focusing on the individual in an enjoyable coached environment
- Sessions will be progressive, challenging and involve fun SSGs
- Development for players of all abilities in the technical, tactical, psychological and social corners

To book please contact Adam Hampson on: 07976 931 040 or adam.hampson@epcoaching.co.uk



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Dates For your Diary

Monday 23 - Friday 27 October - Half Term

Thursday 2 - Friday 3 November - Ypres Trip
 Tuesday 7 November - Parent Voice Meeting

Friday 17 November Non-Student Day
 Thursday 23 November - KS4 Awards Evening

Wednesday 20 December - Last Day of Term

Tuesday 2 January - Non-Student Day
 Wednesday 3 January - First Day of Term

