

The Ramsey Academy, Halstead

Colne Road, Halstead, Essex CO9 2HR. T: 01787 472481 F: 01787 474267
E: office@ramseyacademy.com • W: www.ramseyacademy.com



Headteacher:
Rob James

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Dear Parent/Carer

At The Ramsey Academy, we have one clear aim; **“To be an outstanding school in the heart of the community”**, whilst our students, staff and governors are challenged by our motto; **“Be the best you can be”**.

I am writing to you to gain your support to help us raise 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.

During recent years, The Ramsey Academy has seen significant improvements in many areas allowing us to be recognised as one of the most improved schools not only locally, but also nationally. Most importantly, student results have increased, the quality of teaching has developed, financial investments have enhanced the learning environment and our reputation in the local community has led to increased first choice applications and the Academy being over-subscribed.

Strategic use of limited funds have improved areas of the Academy; most notably the recladding and replacement windows in the Tower Block, refurbishment of classrooms, installation of retractable-tiered seating in the Main Hall and upgrading the IT network and wireless capacity.

The ambitious project to refurbish our existing library, which is outdated, into a modern, vibrant library and learning centre to motivate and enthuse the students is an important development to ensure the development of literacy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.

Access to a well-resourced and stimulating library is important to ensure students develop lifelong learning habits and research skills. Lord Graham Tope CBE (Chair of the Libraries All Party Parliamentary Group, May 2014) supported this view, stating:

“Every child growing up in the UK should have the chance to learn and develop through a good school library. Poor literacy skills stand in the way of children and young people achieving their potential. In an increasingly digital world, we need to teach young people how to evaluate and understand unprecedented amounts of information.

The ability of businesses to recruit people with the right skills and the success of our economy are underpinned by literate and knowledgeable people. Good school libraries build these skills. I believe that school libraries and librarians contribute an enormous amount to educational attainment, but the case must be strengthened.

With one in six adults in the UK struggling with literacy, more must be done to equip young people with essential literacy skills. I would expect the best schools to have a fantastic library; we need to ensure that every pupil across the UK has a library that is fit for purpose in their school."

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 demands. 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, which will allow the facility to accommodate small lectures. Our plans for the future include increasing access for parents and the 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.

The total cost of this ambitious project is £100,000. The additional financial pressures on education budgets mean at the current time the project cannot be fully funded from existing resources. Therefore, we are seeking alternative funding sources to make this vision a reality.

As a school community we have already had preliminary discussions with our Parent Forum group and Governors who are keen to arrange a variety of activities to raise the required funds.

The primary reason for writing to you directly, as a parent, is to offer you the opportunity to support this project and help us achieve our aim: **"To be an outstanding school in the heart of the community"**.

We intend to arrange a number of fundraising events during the year but initially we are launching, 'Buy a book to fill the bookshelf'. The concept of the scheme is for individual donations to be represented a book. The value of each book is entirely up to you, any donation is welcome! To recognise your support a permanent display of named 'books' with your name will be placed in the new Library and Learning Centre.

Donations 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

There is also a range of sponsorship opportunities available, including renaming the library, for the right donation, in recognition of the support provided. 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.

If you would like to support us by investing in the future of the young people of Halstead and surrounding area please either send a donation to The Ramsey Academy or contact me to discuss the options available.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully



Rob James
Headteacher