



Ramsey Voice

Updates Newsletter

"Aspiring to be the best you can be"



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Note from The Head

Welcome to this year's second edition of the Ramsey Voice. This time last year we were appealing for donations to support the refurbishment of the library and, through a combination of generous donors and careful use of school funding, we achieved our aim. The official opening was attended by a number of invited guests and governors. In recognition of their significant contributions, the two distinct areas have been named: The Milbank Library and the Earls Colne & Halstead Educational Charity Learning Centre. Without the support of these and other sponsors, this project would not have been possible. The students have appreciated the improved facilities, making effective use of the resource before, during and after school.

The recently published GCSE outcomes compared to national performance indicate Ramsey has improved in the majority of progress measures compared to national averages, demonstrating that the school ethos and approach to teaching, learning and assessment is having a positive impact on outcomes. The unvalidated Progress 8 figure of +0.21 is a significant increase from 2017 (0.00). Whilst the Academy is still within the 'average' category when compared to all schools nationally, we are placed at the upper end of the scale. Based on this data the Academy is ranked 16th out of all Essex secondary schools, showing we are continually improving in our aim of 'being an outstanding school in the heart of the community'.

It was fantastic to see our former students return to collect well-earned GCSE certificates and celebrate their success. Many have shown they have strived to achieve our aim for everyone of 'be the best you can be', progressing to sixth form colleges to study academic or vocational courses, gained places on apprenticeship schemes or entered the world of employment. We wish them good luck for the future.

We are delighted that yet again the applications from prospective Year 7 students have increased significantly. We will again be oversubscribed, with a 25% increase in the number of families choosing Ramsey as their first choice school.

The Academy always aims to ensure students are aware of their contribution to the local and wider community. During the term there have been numerous events, in which our students have represented the Academy with pride and dignity. None more so than the recent Remembrance events commemorating the end of World War I, not only in Halstead but also at the former battlefields in Belgium. The School Captains represented the Academy at the local events, but it was also pleasing to see the large number of students involved due to their participation in local clubs and organisations.

A major focus for the term has been to develop the concepts of metacognition and self-regulated learning, or, in other words, getting the students to 'think harder and be more independent.' This has raised the level of expectations, particularly for developing oral literacy skills, being an effective communicator and promoting self-confidence. If students can improve these areas they will not only achieve higher grades but learn valuable life skills which will stand them in good stead when they leave school and enter the world of employment. Whilst this is challenging, we should note the words of author Brian Tracy:

"Communication is a skill that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life."

I would like to thank all the students, parents, staff and Governors for their support during the year, and their contribution to the Ramsey Academy's continued development.

School Captains

So we're already nearly a whole term through Year 11, how scary! Our names are Hannah and Lily and we're the Ramsey Academy School Captains. We both feel so honoured to have this role- there isn't really a greater privilege than being able to give a little bit back to the school. We feel that it has given us the opportunity to accomplish so much since we've been here.

One of our responsibilities this year was attending the Remembrance Service on Armistice Day to represent the school, where we both felt very humbled to lay a cross for the fallen and to consider all they did to give us what we're fortunate enough to have today.

We hope to keep being the best version of ourselves that we can possibly be and to be really positive ambassadors for the school!



Class of 2018, Awards Ceremony

On Thursday 22nd September, The Ramsey Academy welcomed back the class of 2018 to receive their GCSE certificates and subject and special awards. It was a wonderful evening with the opportunity to catch up with students about their continuing studies and work. Alongside families and friends, we celebrated the fantastic achievements of this group of students whose results have ensured that The Ramsey Academy is recognised as one of the best schools in Essex and the Eastern Region. The special award recipients were as follows:

Outstanding Contribution to Sport

LAUREN-MAE COOKE

Lucy Jordan Plate (Awarded in memory of a former student who cared deeply about the school community)

DAVID MEAD

David Fielding Award (Outstanding Creative Writing)

LAUREN BURNS

Alan Dyer Award (Most improvement in Maths)

CHIARA DI PAOLA

Stewart Billson Award (Most improvement in Science)

TAMARA COLLINS

Halstead Grammar School Old Girls Association (Student who made a significant contribution to the School)

LAUREN-MAE COOKE

Old Colonials Association Prize for Languages (Student who made best progress in Languages)

MAISIE COBURN

The Milburn Drama Plate

BRIDGET CLEGG

Christopher Holmes Prize (Student with best all-round performance throughout their school career)

GIANNA GALVEZ

Newell Shield (Student who obtained the highest average points score in their GCSE results)

JAMES TARBIN

More photos are available on our website under the photo galleries.

Follow the link <https://www.ramseyacademy.com/photo-galleries-86/2018/ks4-awards-ceremony-2018>



Christmas Events



On the morning of Monday 10th December, Year 7 students, accompanied by the school band and the school choir, went along to a Christmas Carol service at St Andrews Church. Solos were sung by students, Natalie and Alfie, in Year 7. It was a very Christmassy occasion.

On Wednesday 12th December, The Ramsey Academy, along with the 1st Class Brass Band, performed an evening of Christmas Carols in the school's hall. The Concert was attended by students, staff and parents and was a magical, rousing start to the Festive Period. Please enjoy some pictures of our evening which are available on our website in the Photo Gallery area.



Airineers Local Competition



On Tuesday 16 October, two of our students took part in a local Airineers Event. This involved the students designing and building their own micro drone, then competing against other schools in various race formats.

The day began at 9.30 a.m. with the morning being set aside for trouble shooting which allowed the students to fine tune their drones and ask advice from the Rapid Electronics experts on how to improve performance and handling.

The afternoon session comprised of teams taking part in various races and competitions with varying degrees of success.

Overall the day was highly successful and enjoyable with the students returning to Ramsey with many new ideas on how to, not only improve the look of their drone, but, more importantly, a greater understanding of the engineering behind them.- Mr S Hendry



Art and Humanities Competition -

Art and Humanities have worked together this term on a competition to commemorate the one hundred year anniversary of the end of World War One. Students were asked to portray World War One through a medium of their choice. This competition hugely engaged the students, who produced some incredibly heartfelt pieces of work. Entries ranged from sewn and knitted poppies; to photographs, poems, historical research and collages. Together, these exhibits have made an outstanding tribute to the fallen of World War One, and shows sensitivity and recognition of the enormous impact of the war. This can be seen at the front of the school. Particular congratulations to Isabella Farrelly for winning the overall best entry, and Ella Masterson, Hannah Birch and Bence Halasi for taking the prizes for each house. Second for each house were Holly Van-Blerk, Katie Rose and Jessica Thomas, with Thomas Walker taking the prize for the best historical exhibit, and Kain Dawson for the most historic exhibit. Well done to all students who entered this competition, to help the Ramsey Academy pay tribute to the immense loss of World War One - Mrs Price



Youth Essex Assembly

On the 10th October 2018 I was invited to the Youth Essex Assembly. Ten students were chosen between Years seven to nine to go on this trip.

We visited the Chelmsford Race course and spent a whole day talking about politics and how things were running and what we would do in their shoes. We were separated into small groups with some of the other schools. We started the day with an introduction, then we were given a sheet of paper which showed us what the Government pay for and then we had to say how much money we would give to each topic if we were running the country.

Throughout the day we learnt more about politics and how having a young voice can make a difference in how the country, and even the world, is running today.

Towards the end of the day we got to talk to some of the people who ran the whole Youth Essex Assembly, some politicians and a girl, aged thirteen, who has been in the Youth Essex Assembly for two years.

At the end we all got a certificate and a goody bag. All in all it was a very good trip; I have brought a lot back from it.

By Courtney (Year 8)



Library Renovation

During the Summer break, several teams of people were involved in the renovation of the school's tired and outdated library.

We replaced the furniture, lighting, ceiling, and part of the carpets. We also redesigned the layout and installed a new computerised library management system.

With the new look came a new name and, in September, we opened 'The Milbank Library' and 'The Earls Colne & Halstead Educational Charity Learning Centre' in recognition of our main benefactors. I think that all that use the library would agree that it has made a vast improvement and the modernised space is used with much respect by many of the students.

None of this would have been possible without the contributions received from local businesses and parents and we would like to thank you all for making this transformation a possibility. - Mrs K Walters - Business Manager



Sporting Achievements

Rugby

On Tuesday 9 October, Ramsey attended the Year 9 District Rugby competition. This year there were four teams at the event, The Ramsey Academy, The Joyce Franklin Academy, Honeywood School and Helen Romana School. All of these teams are tough competition because a lot of the players on the school team now play club level rugby on a regular basis.

Ramsey were feeling confident in the lead up to the event as extra-curricular attendance had been good and Mr Child and Mr O'Gorman were able to work on key areas to ensure we were able to compete.

Ramsey was able to field a strong team made up of Year 9 students and a few Year 8 students who played up a year group to gain more experience. The day couldn't have gone any better, with Ramsey going undefeated throughout the whole tournament and becoming the Year 9 District Rugby Champions. Some impressive attacking rugby from key players led to a number of tries but, more importantly, an outstanding defensive display shown by all the team making huge tackles and ensuring we could get the ball to the right players at the right times. Every player played his part in the team and that is why we were able to come out on top.

Football

On Wednesday 10 October, Mr O'Gorman took the Year 10 football team to Hedingham to play their second league match. This fixture is always a good one as the students know each other from outside of school playing for different local clubs, and this game certainly didn't disappoint. Ramsey didn't get off to the best of starts and by half time they were losing. After some inspirational tactical changes by Mr O'Gorman the Ramsey team were able to swing the momentum their way and get themselves back into the game. Not only were they able to get themselves back into the game but they were able to pinch a winner, beating Hedingham 5 - 4. Even Mr O'Gorman celebrated the victory and the boys are eager for their next game against Alec which is a must win to get through to the knockout stages.

Rugby

On Thursday 11 October, Ramsey attended the Year 8 District Rugby competition. There was a bigger attendance at this age group with seven teams there. There was some tough competition at this event so the Year 8s had their hands full. It was going to be a tough ask to replicate what the Year 9s did, but the students were up for the challenge. Although this year group doesn't have as many rugby players as Year 9s, this group of students are willing to work hard and as a team. This showed throughout the whole tournament as they put on a defensive masterclass only allowing three tries the whole tournament and two of the tries were against the overall winners who beat every other team by over three tries. The students worked hard all day and they had chances to score but they just couldn't be clinical enough to punish their opponents. They, however, were able to score against the top team to lose 10 - 5. Ramsey just missed out on going through to the next round and came third in their group but a great team performance and we now know exactly what we need to work on for next year. -

Mr Child and Mr O'Gorman

The Globe Theatre and Tate Modern Trip

'...the great globe itself' - Miranda, 'The Tempest' William Shakespeare.

A very excited group of Year 7 students travelled to London on Thursday 1st November to enjoy a cultural day of theatre and art on London's South Bank. The coach journey gave them the opportunity to see some of London's greatest sights and we arrived promptly at The Globe Theatre in preparation for their workshops. We split into five groups for the workshops which were taken by real actors who perform at The Globe. The tour of the theatre was first, with fascinating insights given into the history of the original Globe and its replacement, including information such as the fact that the groundlings who watched performances from The Pit were otherwise known as 'stinkards'. Students had the opportunity to perform lines from plays on The Globe stage and enjoyed an interesting backstage tour. The groups were then led by the actors to smaller rehearsal rooms where they performed workshops on 'The Tempest', learning about characters, themes and dramatic features of the play. Everyone participated very actively and got a great deal from the sessions, leaving invigorated and ready for the next adventure. We then walked as a whole group the short distance to the impressive Tate Modern building further down the South Bank. - Mrs Gibbs

Tate Modern was an amazing experience. We did not just get to look around but we had a book to fill out all around the gallery. One of our favourite pieces of art was a tower of technology. It was a tower of radios from long ago including the Roberts radio from the 1950s. We really liked this as it showed how much radios have evolved over the years. We also liked that there were quite a lot of different types of art, for instance: poetry, pastels, portraits, models and water colours. This is good because people like different types of art so there is a wide variety. Overall we had an amazing experience as it was a new subject to learn about. - Lily and Tetti Year 7



Ypres Trip

On November 1st 2018, 46 Year 9 pupils boarded a coach before dawn to make their way to the Ypres salient. The journey was extremely smooth and we made good time, allowing for a breakfast stop at the services in Folkestone before getting onto the train bound for Calais.

Our first stop in Belgium was the Trench of Death. The Trench of Death is a preserved section of the Belgian front line trenches where pupils could get to grips with the impact of the war on the landscape as well on the participants. There were many interactive exhibits as well as the chance to walk and sometimes crawl through 1000 metres of trenches. This network of revetments, saps and dug-outs was one of the most dangerous Belgian positions on the Western Front, situated just 50 metres from a German bunker. As a result, the trench was subjected to almost constant fire from the Germans.

Our next stop was to the military hospital cemetery of Lijssenthoek. The pupils spent some time paying their respects to the fallen soldiers and Nellie Spindler, a nurse killed by shrapnel whilst treating the injured when the casualty clearing station had been tragically moved within range of the German artillery.

The trip then moved on to Bayernwald a preserved section of German trenches. Pupils were able to climb into the trenches and explore the various ammunition stores and dugouts. The area was strategically very important and overlooks many of the other cemeteries and battlefields around Ypres.

Hill 60 was our final stop before dinner. At Hill 60 pupils were able to see a huge mine crater known as the caterpillar and original pockmarked earth from the war. The site really helped pupils to understand how difficult the terrain became during the fighting.

The pupils then had a quick pit stop at the hostel to refuel before heading out to the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate. The Last Post Ceremony has taken place every evening at 8pm since 1928 except for a period during WW2. Zac Liley, Becky Woods, Aiden Pye and Callum Hall took part in the ceremony and laid a wreath with the names of every soldier who died in WW1 from Halstead. The ceremony was packed but was still a deeply moving experience made even more special by a choir.

Friday was equally busy starting with a visit to the Essex Farm cemetery where John McCrae wrote the famous poem, 'In Flanders Fields'. The pupils were also shocked to visit the grave of Rifleman Valentine Strudwick, as he was only 15 years old when he was killed after lying to the recruitment officer.

The next stop of the morning was to the German cemetery at Langemark. Langemark has a completely different feel to the British cemeteries that we visit and the graves are much more densely packed, with no individual headstones. The pupils discovered the fact that 3000 of the Germans buried there had been taken straight from school to fight in the first battle for Ypres.

The group then headed to Tyne Cot the largest British cemetery in Belgium with over 30,000 soldiers remembered there. The visitor centre at Tyne Cot displays letters and diaries belonging to the some of the soldiers and helped pupils to understand the impact of the war.

Our next visit of the trip was to the Passchendaele Memorial Museum. The museum contains the expected artefacts from the war but also has a deep underground system of trenches and dugouts to explore. Pupils were able to gain an insight into the lifestyles of soldiers at the front and really enjoyed exploring all of the various areas; the art work dedicated to men that drowned in the mud at Passchendaele was especially moving.

We finally journeyed back into Ypres town square for a spot of chocolate shopping and lunch and then embarked on our journey home.

The pupils' behaviour was fantastic throughout the trip and their conduct was a real highlight for the staff. They were interested at all of the sites and although tired by the end, really embraced the opportunity to learn on location. -Mrs Perrins



Remembrance Day Parade

On Sunday 11th November 2018, our Head Teacher, Mr James, along with our School Captains, Hannah and Lily, went along to the Remembrance Parade in Halstead. The event started in the Public Gardens and after a moving ceremony, finished with a parade through the High Street to St Andrew's Church. The girls laid wooden crosses both at the gardens and also at St Andrew's Church on behalf of our whole school community to pay respects to the fallen. The event was attended by representative staff and children from all of the Halstead schools. Hannah and Lily were great ambassadors for our school and all of the local schoolchildren at the event were a credit to their respective schools. - Mrs Keen



Shakespeare Festival

After last year's stunning success, the Ramsey Academy decided to continue to take part in the Shakespeare School Foundation's Shakespeare Schools Festival, a nation-wide event that annually inspires thousands of young people and allows them to experience performing on a public stage in front of relatives, friends and members of the public alike. For this year's event, the Ramsey Academy's performance once more took place upon the Civic Theatre stage in Chelmsford, but the Drama Club cast this time performed a half-hour rendition of 'Romeo and Juliet'.

The Ramsey Academy's cast not only included an amazing array of actors and their motivating director, but also had their own tech students, sometimes referred to as stage managers. This innovative touch made the cast stand out from the other companies' crew that night, but also gave students the chance to get involved with a big project even if their heart wasn't set on the stage.

Nevertheless, as the day of the performance dawned, everyone was filled with some form of nervousness as, a wise Mark Twain once said: "There are two types of speakers: Those who get nervous and those who are liars." Of course, this quote was referring to the idea of public speaking, but it can be used in various other contexts and besides, actors must publicly act and therefore are involved with public speaking in one form or another. However, no one needed to worry!

The day began with two rehearsals: one cue-to-cue rehearsal that tested the music and lighting that would be needed to enhance the performance slightly as it came to life on stage, and the dress rehearsal, which was the chance for the cast to practise their rendition on the stage in order to position themselves as best as possible for both their benefit and the audience's, or whom they were enacting the narrative. The rehearsals did appear to drag on for both the actors on stage and the assistants in the crowd/in the wings, but minus a few minimal errors, the rehearsals went rather smoothly. Everyone seemed more content with their position and any last-minute adjustments deemed necessary were made.

After the rehearsals had finished, lunch and dinner had been eaten and the afternoon spent at the Chelmsford museum had fully passed, it was back to the theatre for final warm-ups before showtime. The performance evening started with a spectacular rendition of 'The Tempest' performed by Columbus School and College, which was followed by a short break to allow staging to be rearranged in time for the second performance, which was a witty and comical performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. The interval was held after this performance, and then, the lights dimmed: it was time for the Ramsey Cast to shine!

In honour of their amazing performance which reflected the hard work, effort and time spent on this project, I would like to congratulate my fellow actors. I would also like to congratulate Alfie on his stunning work with light and sound effects and Willow for her amazing organisation working as Stage Manager and preparing everyone's costumes for the big day. Of course, a fabulous cast needs a fabulous director, so I would also like to thank Mrs Barnes for the time and work she put into this piece, as well as Mrs Fisher who equally helped to ensure the performance was the best it could be!
Tazmin
(Year 10)



SHAKESPEARE
SCHOOLS FESTIVAL

"DID MY HEART LOVE 'TILL NOW?"

Romeo & Juliet
by The Ramsey Academy
at The Civic Theatre, Chelmsford, 12/11/2018
appraised by Lindsay Lloyd

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to The Ramsey Academy for your fantastic production of Romeo & Juliet as part of the 2018 Shakespeare Schools Festival. It was a brilliant night of theatre, and I'd like to highlight just a few elements that really stood out.

What a delightful piece of ensemble acting. Everyone was focused and reacted to events on stage. I particularly enjoyed the moments of choral speaking especially in the Prologue. I thought the times when you repeated key words to emphasise their importance to the audience worked very well too. I loved the physicality of your performance with some excellent choreography throughout. I also thought your choice of music was very effective and helped the atmosphere of the piece - particularly with the party scene and the poignant final scene when the two lovers die. I really enjoyed the music and sounds you created on stage e.g. when we were in Friar Lawrence's cell or when the bells rang for Romeo and Juliet's marriage.

You told the story very clearly, particularly with your use of frozen stage pictures - whether it be Juliet's balcony, Friar Lawrence's cell or the orchard wall - you quickly and efficiently got into position and remained frozen. Your stillness was commendable because it didn't detract from the main action on stage, it enhanced it.

There were some lovely characterisations and I particularly enjoyed your inventiveness when you physically became characters in Mercutio's Queen Mab speech. The whole cast remained focused throughout and really listened which helped the audience focus on the action.

This was a creative, atmospheric and very poignant production of Romeo and Juliet from a focused cast.

Performing Shakespeare's words on a professional stage takes courage, resilience, and imagination. You and your teachers should all be incredibly proud of what you have achieved.

I hope to see The Ramsey Academy in the Festival again next year!
Lindsay Lloyd

**"THIS WAS A CREATIVE,
ATMOSPHERIC AND VERY
POIGNANT PRODUCTION
OF ROMEO AND JULIET
FROM A FOCUSED CAST."**



Information for Parents and Students

Dealing with debt 16 to 18 and need advice on work or education Help with budgeting Council tax arrears

At risk of eviction Support with mental health issues Support for Youth Training available locally

Domestic abuse Looking for work Drug & Alcohol problems

Multi Agency Centre (MAC)

Free Advice regardless of circumstances.

Monday 22nd October, Monday 3rd December
Monday 14th January, Monday 11th February

10am – 12pm Braintree District Council, Causeway House.

THE BRECK FOUNDATION

B → **BE AWARE**
Opening files, accepting emails, IM messages, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems - they may contain viruses or nasty messages.

R → **REPORT IT**
Tell your parent, or trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied.

E → **EDUCATE**
Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. Always check info with other websites, books or someone who knows. If you like chatting online - it's best to only chat to your real friends & family.

C → **COMMUNICATE**
Meeting someone you have met online can be dangerous. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time. Never meet up with them alone and always speak to a parent or carer beforehand.

K → **KEEP SAFE**
Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you are chatting or posting online. This includes your email, phone number, password, school, college and location.

The Breck Foundation is raising awareness for playing safe whilst using the internet. Breck Bednar was a 14 year old boy, from Caterham, Surrey, who loved technology and online gaming. He was groomed via the internet and sadly murdered on February 17th 2014 by someone he met online. This Foundation has been set up in his memory to help other young people to enjoy playing online, but be aware that the friends you make online are not like your real friends. "Play Virtual / Live Real"

breckfoundation.org @thebreckfound #playvirtuallivereal thebreckfoundation

Diversity Charity Week - The Breck Foundation

Once again this year, Diversity House chose to support a very worthy and impactful charity, The Breck Bednar Memorial Foundation for their charity week. The charity was set up to raise awareness of playing safe whilst on the internet.

Breck Bednar was a 14 year old boy from Caterham, Surrey who loved technology and online gaming. He was groomed via the internet and murdered on February 17th 2014 by someone he met online. More information on the Foundation along with supporting materials for adults and children can be found on their website <http://www.breckfoundation.org/>.

I would firstly like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all parents/carers and students for their participation and support in making the week a huge success. We raised a record breaking £1435.34 and could not have done it without your help.

The week started with 2 films being on offer, Tron and The Greatest Showman. Both were well attended and the singing during The Greatest Showman was fantastic to hear. Students sat back and enjoyed their lunches with the addition of popcorn and drinks.

Throughout the week Mrs Bushell and Hannah helped run The Ramsey Bake Off cooking classes, which created some lovely cakes (I had to test them to make sure) and all students said they had a fantastic time.

On the Friday, our rapid rounders game proved very popular, with many students taking part and even nominating teachers to have to run for them. Well done to all who took part. After school, the disco for year 7 and 8 danced into the night and everyone said they had a great time, especially with the finale of Baby Shark.

For some students, I am sure the Friday of Charity week felt like a lifetime, where many students undertook 'No Tech For Breck' sponsored event. This is where they had to give up their mobile phones for 24 hours, which was no easy feat for some. I was overwhelmed with the participation for this event and am happy to report all students who took part completed the challenge.

Once again, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part this year. Whether it was making cakes to sell, bringing in money to participate, or students who helped throughout the week, this would not be possible without all of your support - Mr Lugton

Sadly more people suffer at Christmas from Domestic Violence than at any other time of year. Don't suffer in silence. Contact and advice from Victim Support on either : 0333 254 4413 or <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/domestic-abuse>



Dates for your Diary:
Tuesday 18th December
last day of term.
Monday 7th January Non
Student day
Tuesday 8th January
2019 -Back to School