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: Mr C Appleford

Weekly family communication. Friday 6th November 2026

Dear Families

As we reach the end of the first week of this half term, it is hard to believe how quickly the time has passed. Whilst the darker evenings and less favourable weather can make mornings a little more challenging, attendance remains vitally important. Our staff continue to work exceptionally hard to ensure that every child receives high-quality teaching and learning opportunities each day, making regular attendance essential to maximise success.

This commitment was evident during the half-term break, when many of our Year 11 students attended revision sessions to support their preparation for the summer examinations. Well done to all those who gave up their holiday time to attend, and a sincere thank you to our dedicated staff who volunteered their own time to plan, deliver and facilitate these valuable sessions.

Earlier this week, I also shared an update regarding school transport following a recent school transport/bus meeting. We hope that students' experiences have been more positive this week and, pleasingly, we have not received any further concerns relating to issues experienced during the first half term.

Finally, it has been a real pleasure this week to present the first Headteacher Awards as part of our enhanced rewards and recognition framework. Congratulations to Agnes in Year 7, who was recognised for her volunteering and charitable work within the local community, and Toby in Year 11, who was recognised for his leadership, initiative and support during the First House Charity Week. Both students are outstanding ambassadors for our school and have demonstrated our values of Aspiration and Mutual Respect. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and look forward to recognising many more students in the weeks ahead.





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Remembrance Day 11th November



On Wednesday, we will be commemorating Remembrance Day, honouring the courage, sacrifice and service of those who have fought and died in conflicts around the world. During Period 2, lessons will pause at 10:50am for staff to speak with students about the importance of Remembrance and why we remember the fallen. Students will then observe a two-minute silence, ending with the words: *"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today."* Students will then proceed to break at the normal time of 11:00am.



Form Captains will lay a commemorative cross on behalf of their form group as a mark of respect and remembrance. Furthermore, prefects from The Ramsey Academy, together with Mr Appleford and Mrs Price, will be attending the Halstead Remembrance Parade and St. Andrew's Church Festival, on Sunday 8th November.



Cadets on Remembrance Day

We are proud to support students who are members of the Cadet Forces by allowing them to wear their cadet uniform on Remembrance Day. Students must check with their Cadet Unit or Division beforehand, as some require permission. Please note that some units allow uniforms to be worn in school but not on public transport, so students travelling by bus may need to change on arrival. We ask that all cadet uniforms are worn correctly and to a high standard throughout the day.

Attendance and Punctuality Reminder

Our attendance guidance and procedures remain available on the school website. Please also refer to the information previously shared in RAM Weekly Communications during the last academic year regarding the procedures to follow if a student becomes unwell during the school day or upon arrival at school.

- https://www.ramseyacademy.com/Attendance/

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring students attend school regularly, arrive on time and are ready to learn each day.

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Christmas Card Competition



We are delighted to launch this year's Ramsey Academy Christmas Card Competition and would encourage all parents and carers to support their child in taking part. This year's theme is Mutual Respect at Christmas, giving students the opportunity to express our school values through a creative festive design. Entries can be hand-drawn, painted or crafted and must be A5 in size.

Six winning designs will be selected, with one chosen as The Ramsey Academy's official Christmas card, which will be sent to our local community partners. All winning designs will also be professionally produced into Christmas card packs to be sold at the Ramsey Academy Christmas Fair.

Entries should be submitted to Mrs Price (office between BG5 and BG6) by Friday 20th November. We look forward to seeing our students' creativity on display and hope as many students as possible will get involved. Good luck!

Uniform – scarves

We would like to remind families that scarves are not part of the Ramsey Academy school uniform. Recently, we have seen a small but increasing number of students wearing scarves around school and within the building as fashion accessories, rather than for warmth when travelling to and from school. Any scarf worn for warmth should be removed on arrival and safely stored in a student's school bag during the school day.

We are currently seeing scarves being worn draped around the neck throughout the day rather than being used for their intended purpose. We would therefore appreciate your support in reminding your child that scarves should not be worn around school buildings. From Monday 9 November 2026, students wearing scarves as fashion items during the school day will receive a B1 uniform breach warning. Any scarf being worn in this way will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day via reception.

Thank you for your continued support in maintaining our high standards of uniform and presentation.

Home-School Agreement

Please see a link and reminder regarding the home school agreement.

- https://www.ramseyacademy.com/Home-School-Agreement/

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Badges



We are delighted to recognise a number of students who have received achievement badges in recognition of their exceptional contributions and accomplishments this term. It has been a privilege to see so many deserving students receive these awards and be celebrated for the positive impact they make within our school community.

Pictured here are Archie, Daisy, Lizzie and Grace, who were awarded the Representing Ramsey Award in recognition of the outstanding way they represented the school during our Open Evening. Their enthusiasm, professionalism and willingness to support prospective students and families were a credit to Ramsey Academy.

We are incredibly proud of all of our award winners and look forward to recognising many more students for their achievements throughout the year. Well done to everyone who has received an award so far. We will be awarding more badges at the end of term.



<u>Year 7</u>

Subject Ambassadors Kai G, Poppy V

Representing Ramsey Lilly-Rose F, Agnes R, Nala-Rose S; Rebecca T

<u>Year 8</u>



Subject Ambassadors Darcy C, Mazie E, Lucy G, Leo N, Bonnie S, Ciara T, Elsie W

Representing Ramsey Millie H, Bonnie S

<u>Year 9</u>

School Council Lottie A, Maisy N, Lily N, Pippa R, Cassy W

Ramsey Value of Mutual Respect Nina K

Subject Ambassadors Neve A, Lydia D, Aubrey E, Paige G, Maisie N, Martha T;

Representing Ramsey Archie B, Lizzie C, Daisy P, Grace T

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Year 10

School Council: Molli A, Lana D, Jacob H, Emmy J, Luisa L, Brandon M, Heath M, Nila P, Beau P.

Ramsey Value of Aspiration: Jack W, Luisa L, Bodhi H, Lana D, Kenna F, Beau P.

Subject Ambassadors: Molly G, Maggie B.

Representing Ramsey: Phoebe D, Safia E, Emilie H, Ruby M, Nila P, Hannah R, Emme W.

Year 11

School Council: Daisy C, Gracie-May C, Eloise D, Amber F, George M, Mia P.

Subject Ambassadors: Karin A, Ava M, Junior T.

Representing Ramsey: Karin A, Eward B, Tommy C, Gracie-May C, Amber F, Kayden H, Eva J, Reuben M, George M, Leo N, Patrick N, Esme O, James S, Avisker S, Alfie S, Darcy T, Matt T, Mim T, Toby W.

Early help offer:

At The Ramsey Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every child receives the right support at the right time. Our Early Help document explains how the school can work together with families and other services to identify any concerns early and provide support before difficulties become more serious.
Please refer to the link for our Early help offer. The Ramsey Academy - Early Help Offer

Wellbeing:

Tutor Time Wellbeing Focus. This half term, our tutor time wellbeing activities will be taken from the NHS *Better Health: Every Mind Matters* programme. These evidence-based resources are designed to help young people develop positive habits that support their mental health and wellbeing.

This week, students will be exploring the importance of connecting with others and the positive impact that strong social connections can have on both physical and mental health. Through the theme of "Having a Natter", students will learn how taking time to talk, listen, and build relationships can help reduce feelings of loneliness, improve mood, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the school community.

We encourage families to continue these conversations at home and take time this week to enjoy a chat together. Even a short conversation can make a big difference.

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Mobile phones:

If your child does not bring a phone to school, please send an email to your child's Head of Year and school office (office@ramseyacademy.com), this will allow us to discuss the next steps with you.

Year 7 & 9 Pastoral Office

We would like to inform parents and carers that the Year 7 & 9 Pastoral Offices will be relocating to a more centralised office within the main school building (Year 9) and to within supportive access area (Year 7). Please be assured that this change is purely a move of location and there will be no change to the staffing of the Year 7 or 9 pastoral teams. Students and staff have been notified of the move, and we are confident that the new location will help to improve accessibility and support for our Year 7 and 9 students.

Ypres

Year 9 visited the Ypres Salient prior to half term to enhance their understanding of WW1. After an early start they arrived at their first visit just after lunch on Monday. The first visit was to the Trench of Death, which is a preserved area of trenches used by the Belgian forces. The pupils were able to explore the kilometre network of trenches and dug outs and could see where the German frontline was- a mere 50 metres away on the other side of the canal.

The next visit was to a hospital cemetery at Lijssenthoek which has a diverse range of burials, including Chinese labourers, French, Canadian, British, Indian and even a British nurse called Nellie who was killed by shrapnel. Our final visit of the afternoon was to the German trenches at Bayernwald which housed many machine guns and prevented the British advance for many months.



After a quick pit stop at our hostel and an evening meal they headed to the Menin Gate for the Last Post Ceremony. The last post ceremony has taken place every night since the end of WW1- over 34,000 so far.



During the ceremony their was a performance from a bagpipe band and four of our pupils took part laying a wreath.

Pupils slept well and the second day went as smoothly as the first. The groups visited Essex Farm cemetery, which was a casualty clearing station and was where John Mccrae wrote the famous poem, 'In Flander's Fields'. Essex Farm is also particularly poignant as it contains the grave of 15 year old Valentine Strudwick, who had lied about his age in order to join up as he didn't want to miss an adventure. The groups also visited the German cemetery of Langemark, where 24,000 German soldiers were buried in a mass grave. The final cemetery visit was to Tyne Cot, the biggest British cemetery in Ypres. The groups then visited the fascinating Passchendaele Museum which contains a huge collection of artefacts and interactive exhibits.

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The final stop of the day was into Ypres town square where pupils were able spend some time exploring the chocolate shops and cafes before heading back to Calais.



The group were incredibly well behaved and really exemplified the Ramsey values of mutual respect and resilience. They were a real pleasure to take and this was echoed by the coach company who were incredibly complimentary about them.

Some student reviews-

- 'The trip was fun, my favourite part was probably seeing the difference between the British and German trenches.'- Leo N
- 'The trip was very interesting and I felt as though I learnt a lot from seeing the war sites. I also felt the tragedy and impact of the war, seeing the cemeteries in real life. The trenches also showed the terrible conditions.' Maya H
- 'The trip was so fun and interesting. I enjoyed spending time with my friends and seeing the things we had learnt about in real life, one of my favourite parts was the Last Post Ceremony.' Ruby F
- 'The trip was fun and interesting. We visited so many museums and memorials in quite a short amount of time. It was fun to spend time in Ypres. My favourite place we visited was Lijssenthoek because it was really impactful to see all of the graves of the people who fought. I'd definitely go on the trip again.' Alice E

Year 11 Masterclass Continues with Focus on Power and Conflict Poetry



Just before the end of half term, Year 11 students attended their second Masterclass of the term, led by Mrs Blunkell, with a focus on the Power and Conflict poetry cluster.

During the session, students were guided through effective strategies for comparing the key poems they need to know ahead of their upcoming mock examinations. Mrs Blunkell helped students explore similarities and differences in themes, language, and poetic methods, while also modelling how to structure high-quality comparative responses.

It was fantastic to see students fully engaged throughout the session, demonstrating excellent focus and enthusiasm as they developed their understanding of this important area of the GCSE English Literature course. Their commitment to improving their analytical skills will undoubtedly support them as they prepare for their mocks in the coming weeks.

We would like to thank Mrs Blunkell for delivering another highly valuable and successful Masterclass.

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Sports Update

What a fantastic start to the half term. On Tuesday, our **Year 7 football team** took part in their third fixture of the season against Maltings. After a difficult first half, the boys responded brilliantly following some honest words at half-time. They came out with renewed determination and scored their **first goal of the season**, quickly followed by a second. The improvement in attitude, effort and teamwork in the second half was excellent to see and gives us plenty to build on moving forward.

Thursday saw our **Year 9 netball team** in action. The girls worked incredibly hard against a strong opposition and produced a very positive team performance. Throughout the match they demonstrated excellent teamwork, resilience and sportsmanship, showcasing the very best of our **Ramsey Values**. Their commitment and support for one another were outstanding, and they should be extremely proud of their efforts.

A huge well done to all students who have represented the academy this week. Thank you to the staff who have supported fixtures and training sessions. We look forward to another busy and successful week ahead. Next week's school sports fixtures and events:

- **Monday** – Year 8 **5-a-side Football Tournament** (Away at Rickstones Academy).
- **Wednesday** – **District Cross Country Championships** during the school day.
- **Thursday** – **Year 8 5-a-side Football Tournament**.

Mr Farrelly

Free School Meals

Please refer to email communications regarding the important change to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility which came into effect on the 1st September 2026. Thank you to those who have already submitted your application. Where eligibility is confirmed, the school has been notified, and our systems have been updated.

If your child received Free School Meals last academic year and you have not yet re-applied, their eligibility will now have ended. We therefore strongly encourage all families in receipt of Universal Credit (that have not done so already) to check eligibility online as soon as possible. Navigate to the - The Ramsey Academy - Pupil Premium webpage and scroll to the bottom of this page to find the link to check your eligibility (graphic below to support).

If you have any questions or require assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our data manager kaskew@ramseyacademy.com.

https://www.ramseyacademy.com/Pupil-Premium/



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Private Fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if they have a disability) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative for 28 days or more. This arrangement is made privately, without the involvement of the local authority. **Why is Awareness Important?** Many people, including professionals working with children, are unaware of the legal requirement to notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements. This lack of awareness can mean that children are not receiving the support and safeguarding they may need. If you are aware of any arrangements or currently support these arrangements, then please do contact Mrs Howkins so we can support at bhowkins@ramseyacademy.com

Free Support for Parents and Carers – Essex County Council (ACL Essex)

This November, ACL Essex (Essex County Council) is running some more free online courses for parents and carers, offering practical advice and support around some of the challenges families can face.



The sessions cover a variety of topics and may be useful for families looking for practical strategies, reassurance, or a better understanding of their child's needs.
A few highlights include:

- Support Your Child to Attend & Enjoy School: for parents and carers whose child may be finding school attendance challenging, struggling with transitions, or feeling anxious about going to school.
- How to Communicate & Connect with Your Teen: for parents and carers looking to strengthen communication, build positive relationships, and better understand their teenager's thoughts and feelings.
- Zones of Regulation: for families whose child finds it difficult to recognise, understand, or manage their emotions and responses in everyday situations.

All courses are free and delivered online, making them easy to access from home.

Support for families of SEND students

Essex SEND Local Offer Roadshow Sunday 15th November 9.30am - 12pm

Pop Essex, 5–7 Bocking End, Braintree, CM7 9AE (No Cost)

- **Support & Information:** Access guidance on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for children and young people aged 0 to 25.
- **Professionals:** Connect with representatives from education, health, and social care teams.
- **Local Networks:** Discover school support, parent/carer support groups, and local activities.

SPACE

SPACE supports parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. How SPACE can support you
SPACE offers free one to one support, online group sessions, signposting to community events, podcasts and more.

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Lockdown Drill

During the summer term, we carried out a lockdown drill as part of our wider safety procedures, similar to the fire alarm practices we routinely undertake. All UK schools are required to have plans in place for emergency situations and to manage critical incidents.

It is important that we periodically practise these procedures to ensure they are well understood and effective. We recognise that the idea of a lockdown drill may feel unsettling for some students and families, especially for year 7 students who will experience this here for the first time.

We therefore want to share this information in advance and outline how we will support students throughout the process which supported a smooth practice drill prior to the summer:

- Staff will again receive a refresher on our lockdown procedures and expectations.
- Students will be informed in advance that a drill will take place during this term, and the process will be carefully explained to them.
- Some identified students will receive additional support, guidance, or social stories where appropriate.
- On the day of the drill, we will email families to let you know that it will take place at some point during the school day.
- Additional support will be in place for specific students, including key staff working alongside them during the drill where needed.
- We will confirm with families once the drill has been completed.

We hope that by sharing this information early in advance of December when the drill will be planned for, and by putting careful support in place, we can carry out this important practice in a way that is both sensitive and reassuring. Our priority is always to keep students safe while ensuring that our procedures are clear, well understood, and effective.

Careers

Please access our careers Padlet for up-to-date information, advice and guidance
https://padlet.com/alex2536/ramsey-careers-newsletter-polnaluaxwpqmtl

I hope you all have a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

Mr. C Appleford
Headteacher

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