



Ramsey Voice

Updates Newsletter

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Notes From the Head

Welcome to the third edition of the Ramsey Voice. Even though this half term has been only five weeks, they have been busy weeks, with much to report and celebrate. In addition to the major focus of preparing Year 11 students for their GCSE examinations which start shortly after Easter, a diverse range of activities for all students continues to take place. The 'school experience' is much greater than merely attending academic lessons; it should encourage life skills and provide opportunities for students to experience various aspects of our own and other cultures. This will allow our young people to appreciate, respect and demonstrate tolerance of different traditions, which is essential in our multi-cultural society.

Some of the activities we offer allow students to develop a greater awareness of our own culture, for example trips to London art galleries and theatres. As you will see in this newsletter, we have benefited from becoming involved in the Halstead Community Hall consultation and raising money for the Essex Air Ambulance via our Charity Week. We are delighted that a new Chinese Club has been established, allowing students to learn Mandarin Chinese and gain an insight into the traditions and customs of a culture different to our own.

It was particularly pleasing this term to see the first drama production, *Bugsy Malone*, performed at the school for 18 years. A cast and crew of over 50 students spent many hours rehearsing; learning valuable skills and developing their confidence.

By providing experiences such as these, our students will continue to develop and see there is a world of opportunities available for them. They simply need the encouragement from us, combined with their own inquisitive nature and self-confidence, to take these chances rather than worry about not succeeding.

The words of Joe Namath, a successful American Football player embody this approach;
 "When you have confidence, you can have a lot of fun.
 And when you have fun, you can do amazing things."

We want our students to have fun and do amazing things!

- Mr R James

There's No Business Like Show Business!

Applause and acclaim resounded as packed audiences enjoyed this year's production of "*Bugsy Malone*" at the Ramsey Academy, Halstead! Comedy hoodlums, live music and flashy beauties gave fabulous, accomplished performances in this bubbly musical, all topped off with guns firing gloop and "splurge" across the gangland speakeasies.

Of special note were the performances of Nathan Penfold, as a lovable Bugsy Malone; Bridget Clegg, emotionally powerful as Blousey Brown and Jack Hawes, as a cool, stylish Dandy Dan; mob boss. Freddie Marriott trod the boards on crutches, giving the role of Fat Sam Stacetto showing off glossy New York appeal with hilarious comedy timing, even after his leg op! What a trooper!

Glamorous Lauren-Mae Cooke (Tallulah) and heart-wrenching Maisie Smith (Fizzy)

really hit the heights with their musical numbers and, particularly impressive, was the work of young musicians Freya Walker, Rosie Shackell, Lily McKean, Olivia Vintner and Terry Shortt who did us proud in the live band led by music teacher, Mr Lewis-James. Huge congratulations must go to the initiative and maturity of the Year 10 students who choreographed the entire show, leading hordes of younger cast members in tireless rehearsals to stunning results.

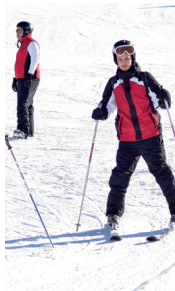
This stunning show was made possible due to the hard work of the entire cast, many of whom were making debut appearances on stage! This really enabled everyone to boost their confidence and skills. Recognition must also be given to Mrs Tyler, Mrs Gerrard, Mr Pittuck and Mr Hendry for the set, props and scenery that brought the world of 1920s New York to life. A great show, with many more to come!

- Mrs A Barnes



Ski Trip

It was a real pleasure to take a group of students away to Zauchensee, Austria for a solid week of skiing. All students were impeccably behaved and represented the school superbly. After an incredibly long coach journey, we arrived in good time to get our gear for the slopes. Some fantastic fun followed on the next 6 days, including some of our students who have never skied before, moving from the gentle nursery slopes to racing (with some control) down blacks.



On Day 4 of the trip it was fancy dress day with a vast array of costumes on the slopes, from inflatable Ninjas and Sumo Wrestlers, to Umpa Lumpas, to the usual Wally outfits. These made an appearance every day for the students that did something silly - I still think that Ramsey was unfairly represented here!

It was fantastic to see all the students make so much progress through the week and a huge thank you must be said to the instructors and the staff from Notley for allowing us to come along.

- Mr N Murray

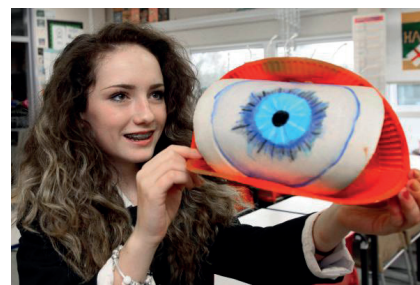
Plates and Straws

Pupils and staff at Ramsey Academy Halstead were invited to take part in a technology challenge to produce a sculpture or mobile from three paper plates and ten drinking straws.

A range of entries were received, from chairs to animals to the more abstract. The overall aim of the challenge was to encourage our students to explore how innovative and creative they could be with everyday objects.

- Mrs J Gerrard

Photo Credit: Steve Argent



Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge! "The largest speaking competition for young people in the world"

On Friday 27 February, 30 Year 10 students were fortunate enough to be able to work with Emily Pollet, a trainer with Speakers Trust.

Students had the day off from their normal timetable and spent the day in a workshop paid for by The Jack Petchey Foundation, receiving a day's training in the skills of public speaking and effective communication from Emily, a professional trainer. The Foundation sponsors 'Jack Petchey's Speak Out Challenge!' a public speaking competition run by Speakers Trust in schools throughout London and Essex. Following the morning's training, students competed against each other in the afternoon to become The Ramsey Academy's representative in the Regional Inter-School Competition at Maltings Academy, Witham on 13th May at 6.00 p.m.



Following some very earnest, and some very amusing speeches, Mr James and Mrs Gibbs, the judges, had a very difficult job to do in choosing the winner. I am sure that you will join us in congratulating Sam Hawes who won through against very stiff opposition to become The Ramsey Academy's representative at the North Essex Regional Final, and to Sophie Ford, who came second. It genuinely was a real shame that not everyone could win!

- Ms A Williams

Earls Colne & Halstead Educational Charity

The Earls Colne & Halstead Educational Charity was formed in 1975, following the closure of the Earls Colne and Halstead Grammar Schools.

The Charity allocates grants to numerous individuals, schools and local organisations from the income that it receives from its investments. There are two types of grant available: Book Grants (normally for students attending higher education establishments) and Project Grants (available to individuals, schools and voluntary organisations operating within the a designated area).

Recent grants made to individuals have included:

- help towards the cost of purchasing a freestyle kayak
- support for attending National Youth Choir courses
- assistance with attending a World Scout Jamboree in Sweden
- help towards the cost of voluntary placements in Ghana and Sri Lanka
- start-up funding for the Duke of Edinburgh Award at The Ramsey Academy.

If you have a project or event which the Charity may be able to support please visit their website: www.ehec.org.uk for further details.



Charity Week

This term it is Diversity's turn to raise some much needed funds for our chosen charity - Essex Air Ambulance. A huge thank you must go to all the staff and students that gave up so much time and energy to help out. There was so much going on each day that we haven't yet got around to counting all the money. At the time of writing, we haven't yet had our non-uniform day which will take place on Friday 27 March. The signs are looking good for breaking the £1000 mark which would be a fabulous achievement!

There were various sporting battles between staff, as well as a girls versus boys netball match with the boys showing some skill and winning the match (I think they must have had some quiet practice time!) Each day there were cakes on sale as well as fairground activities. Cinema experiences were enjoyed with the big screen and comfy chairs. I still think the highlight of the week was the cookie auction where cookies were auctioned off to the highest bidder. A surprise addition was an impressive likeness of my face (baked by Emma Gooden) and sold to staff for £50!

So once again thank you so much for your support and to those staff and students that helped out; we couldn't have done it without you!

- Mr N Murray
Head of Diversity House



Gardening Club

The greenhouse has been a blaze of colour with our narcissi and hyacinths blooming. The month has started with earth moving and ground clearance. Joy of joys, we have won a prestigious county-wide competition and have a 28' by 14' poly tunnel on its way to us!

We submitted a proposal for a project which would benefit our community and encourage young people to take part in growing food. The winning entry (us!) gets to implement their project, receiving £500 towards the cost. Also we will receive another £100 in gardening vouchers when the project is complete. The competition was 'Use The Plot', organised by the Edible Essex Project which is part of the Rural Community Council of Essex. The poly tunnel will cost another £600 on top of the prize, so we are busy fund raising to boost our funds. We strongly believe that our gardening club should be as self-supporting as possible.

The next school newsletter should have pictures of the tunnel in full use. Our planned expansion will encourage others to join our club, and also allow us to invite our feeder primary schools to work on joint projects. I hope that our work will prove to be an asset to our town and 'Halstead In Bloom' as they compete in the 'Anglia In Bloom' competition.

Preparing our poly tunnel site has given us another project. We have dug up enough concrete and bricks to make a rather large rock garden! We are also looking to make our own hanging baskets and planters (time, energy, and wooden pallet supply permitting).

Look out for us in the town park on Mayday bank holiday. We will have a stall to publicise the club.

- Mr S Pittuck - Gardening Club Leader

Chinese Club

Expanding on the cultural opportunities offered at Ramsey as part of its extra-curricular enhancement, the "Chinese Club" has begun. Hosted by Dr Rolls every Thursday afternoon after school, the Chinese Club offers Ramsey students the opportunity to partake in Mandarin Chinese language learning, as well as various cultural activities.

In the Chinese club, students will learn simple, but purposeful, phrases and other cultural opportunities. On Thursday 19 March, the club had its first visitor from the Magna Education Mandarin Training Centre, whereby students were introduced to the ancient Chinese artform of Calligraphy.

If you are interested in learning Chinese, do come along. Meetings are held in NF1 every Thursday from 3:15 - 4.00pm.

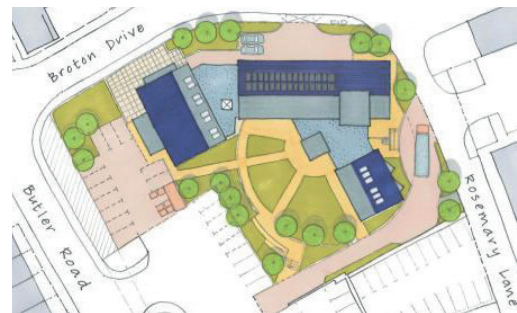
- Dr D Rolls



New Community Centre Consultation

Ramsey Academy students were the first group to see plans for the proposed Community Centre in Halstead when they attended the consultation session held at the Halstead Library on Friday 13 February. The 15 students from years 7-10 were keen to put their points of view across, when it came to discussing the design of the building with one of the trustees of the project, Mr Davis Iles, and the project's architects.

The students raised concerns about whether the ultra-modern design and colour scheme would be compatible with the more traditional buildings in the town; however they were interested to see that the latest technology would be used to make the building eco-friendly in terms of energy usage reducing negative impact on the environment. They agreed that the project would improve the area around Butler Road and would bring increased business and opportunities to Halstead.



Lewis Crow in year 10E2 reported: 'An example of one of the ideas put across by us was that the main hall should be designed with a stage and spring floors so it could be used for dance clubs and shows; also that there could be pool tables put in for use by all. For more information please see our website.'

- Mrs R Sims



National Pi Day

Friday 13th March saw the Mathematics department celebrating Pi Day early. This year was a particularly special celebration in the world of Maths. Ultimate Pi (π) day was on Saturday 14 March as, using the American calendar, at 9:26:53am on the 14 March 2015 the digits of the date and time will read 3/14/15 9:26:53. This makes up the first 10 digits of π (the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter).

To celebrate Pi Day the Mathematics department donned t-shirts with π dingbats, celebrated with a variety of activities in their lessons and also encouraged students to take part in a whole school treasure hunt.

- Mr M Everett

Ramsey Dominate for Chelsea FC

Ramsey students represented Chelsea FC 'Smash up Badminton Club' in a Premier League 4 Sport Competition at Norwich! The students travelled down on Saturday 21 March to compete against a representative side from Norwich FC. The students performed exceptionally well to win all their singles and doubles matches, thereby winning the tournament convincingly. The atmosphere and manner in which all players conducted themselves was a credit to both clubs and the schools involved.



We look forward to similar events and experiences in the future! A big thank you to Thomas Gooder from Chelsea FC and Toby Nickerson from Norwich FC for organising the event!

- Mr P Taylor



Ramsey Football Update

Since February Years 7-10 have been competing in a local school's football competition. Ramsey's group contained Maltings Academy, Alec Hunter and Notley High School. We can proudly say that our Year 10 students won all three games and comfortably topped the group. Year 7 and 8 students also progressed to the semi-finals as they finished runners up in their groups respectively. Our Year 9 football team were competitive in all matches but unfortunately did not qualify.

We are proud of how our pupils represented the school and consistently behaved well. All were sportsmanlike in winning or defeat. Good luck to Years 7, 8 and 10 who will be competing in the semi-finals in the forthcoming weeks.

- Mr G Charlton

Dates For your Diary...

March

27th - Last day before the Easter Holiday

April

13th - Return after the Easter

May

1st and 2nd - Year 10 DofE Expedition
5th GCSE Exams begin for Year 11



Calligraphy

A demonstration in the ancient art of calligraphy was the highlight of this week's 'Chinese Club'.

Students enjoyed producing traditional Chinese lettering based on a range of characters from the language.

Look out for more exciting experiences to come in our fantastic 'Chinese Club'.

- Dr D Rolls

