

9 September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the Autumn Term and the 'new normal'. It has been fantastic to see the students return to school after the lockdown period. We have been pleased with the high level of attendance and positive attitude of the vast majority of students.

Initially we would like to congratulate all the Year 11 students who received their results a few weeks ago. It was a confusing time for all involved, but we were delighted to celebrate many outstanding results, that allowed students to progress to the next stage of their education or training. Through their hard work and the support of staff and parents, the students and the school received another set of excellent results allowing us to achieve our aim of being '*an outstanding school in the heart of the community*'.

We have a number of key priorities: safety and welfare, re-engaging with learning, establishing routines and implementing the catch-up curriculum.

Our apologies for such a long letter at the start of term. Please take the time to read and discuss the contents of this letter with your child or children, as much of the content is for their safety and wellbeing.

A significant amount of time and thought has been given to the Risk Assessment and implementation of control measures based on the most recent Government guidance. The expectations have been explained to students, who have engaged positively with the new 'learning zones', 'social zones' and changes to the school day. We will continually review the procedures we have in place and update you regularly with changes.

Behaviour expectations

Students have been informed of the behaviour expectations and consequences of failure to follow them. If a student acts in any manner that may increase the risk of infection they are likely to be issued with a fixed term exclusion.

Face coverings

Based on recent events in other schools who have already asked students to self-isolate, the expectations and advice regarding face coverings will change with immediate effect in an attempt to reduce the risk of infection. The Government guidance states the wearing of face coverings is **not mandatory** but consists of a number of recommendations. Therefore, we have decided to change our advice as follows:

- We will not recommend the wearing of face coverings in classrooms, as the guidance advises against this and we feel it may hinder effective teaching. However, we also recognise that there is scope for personal choice so if teachers wish to wear PPE, they are entitled to do so. Students may wear a face covering if they choose as it may offer reassurance and a feeling of security for some.
- We highly recommend the wearing of face coverings in corridors and communal spaces, as this is where social distancing will be hardest to maintain. Staff will not be required to enforce this and there will be no sanction for any child who chooses to disregard this recommendation. This is a matter of personal choice, and, supports other measures in place to mitigate infection risks. Students will be

expected to provide their own face coverings and dispose of them safely if required in designated waste bins.

Students will be instructed in the correct use of face coverings during tutor time.

Student with COVID-19 Symptoms

Please do NOT send your child to school if they have any Covid-19 symptoms: cough, high temperature, loss of taste and smell or sickness (please see Government guidance). If you think your child has just a 'cough and cold' please engage with the Test & Trace system, obtain a free test and await the results before you allow them to come into school.

Essex has mobile testing centres along with static ones and home testing kits can be posted out to you at home. A list of the mobile testing centres is updated weekly and available on the school website.

Visitors to school

We are limiting the number of adults and visitors on the school site. Please do not come into the school office to drop off any forgotten items as we will NOT be able to take them from you.

If you need to change any contact details please e-mail office@ramseyacademy.com to avoid doing this in person.

If you need to visit the school in an emergency or to attend a pre-arranged appointment, please wait outside the Reception area to be called forward.

If you must drop or collect your child at school, please respect other parents in the area. Avoid congregating near the school entrances and waiting for excessive periods of time before the scheduled collection time.

Uniform expectations

Students should wear full school uniform as detailed on the school website <https://www.ramseyacademy.com/uniform-and-equipment> on days they do not have a PE lesson. On days that they have a PE lesson students should wear PE kit. This includes the school polo shirt, black shorts of an acceptable length or black tracksuit bottoms. Leggings can only be worn under shorts. If students do not have the school PE jersey then they may wear a plain black jumper if the weather is cold.

National Online Safety

The Ramsey Academy has now become a member of the National Online Safety community. Their mission is to make the internet a safer place for children. All staff have completed online safety training and we would like to encourage parents to do the same. If you would like to access this training or any of the many guides that are available, please use this link:

<http://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/the-ramsey-academy-halstead>

There are a range of guides for parents, for example 'What parents need to know about Xbox One', 'TikTok Online Safety guide' and '12 Smartphone online safety tips'.

Catch-up Curriculum and Remote learning

All subject areas have developed a structured catch-up programme to deliver the key concepts of learning that were missed due to the period of 'school closure'. In addition to lessons, additional 'catch-up' activities will be arranged when staff have completed assessments to evaluate the gaps in learning. The details will shortly be available on the school website.

If there are confirmed cases of Covid-19 in school and we are advised by Public Health England to self-isolate a class, year group or the whole school, we will revert to a remote learning curriculum. Specific details will be circulated at the time. However, students will be expected to follow their normal timetable and staff will deliver all lessons as planned via Microsoft Teams. Please inform your Raising Standards Leader if you may need additional resources, such as a laptop or internet access to allow your child to participate in lessons from home.

New staff

As normal at this time of year we are delighted to welcome new colleagues to the school. Joining us are Mr Collins (Subject Leader Computer Science & IT), Mrs Brett (Acting Subject Leader MFL), Mrs Jordan-Burrows (English), Miss Sparks (English), Mr Evans (MFL), Mr Wheeler (Science), Miss Rendall (Maths), Mr Davey (PE), Miss Ellis (Humanities), Miss Anthony (Art/IT), Mrs Brown (Learning Support), Mrs Bowyer (Learning Support) and Mrs Edwards (Cover Supervisor).

Contacting the school

We understand you may have many questions linked to the ever-changing situation. Please contact the school via email and a member of staff will respond to your queries within 48 hours, but ideally within 24 hours.

Through working together, we can raise aspirations and ensure all our students achieve the school motto of *'be the best you can be'*.

We look forward to working with you to ensure your child has a safe, productive and enjoyable year.

Yours faithfully



R James
CEO/Executive Headteacher



C Leys
Head of School