



October 2020  
Issue 092

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support over this first term. I was very apprehensive about the complex plans we were forced to implement to meet the government's guidance on trying to keep our students and staff safe, and to minimise the chances of the COVID virus being transmitted in school. Our students have responded magnificently, doing all that we have asked – and doing it with a positive attitude. They really seem happy to be back in school, as do the staff.

I would also like to pay tribute to the staff in all their varied roles who have really had their whole normal routines utterly disrupted – from the catering team now providing thirteen separate services during the day, to teaching staff having to carry all their equipment around the school between zones at lesson changeover while the students largely stay put. No-one has been unaffected.

Our first attempts to deliver direct online teaching via Teams when all our Year 11 students had to self-isolate for eight school days also went well - after a few, initial teething problems. Our plan is to use Teams from now on if any groups of students have to self-isolate. Our subject departments have also worked hard to provide a much more comprehensive and detailed map of the work they are covering in lessons (available via the website), so that any individual student who has to self-isolate can keep up with the work.

There is a lot of talk in the media about “gaps in children's learning” caused by the school closures from March to July. Our assessment is that, for most Rainham Mark students, the gap is much less than the hype would make one think. Most of our students engaged well with remote learning during the lockdown, and our subject departments are confident that students doing GCSE or A level exams this year will be fully prepared by then.

I hope that you and your families stay healthy over the holiday.

Yours faithfully

Mr Moore  
**Headteacher**

### THANK YOU

At the end of the summer term or at the start of this year, we said goodbye to a few colleagues, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following longer-serving members of staff for their hard work and to wish them all the best for their various new positions. Mrs Gail Penny moved to Cornwall; Mr Adam Cairney moved to Maidstone Grammar School for Boys; Mr Rob McLaren moved to Dubai, Mrs Emma Skinner took a career break in 2019/2020 and decided to remain in sunny Spain, Mrs Zoe McComas took up a teacher training placement at CCCU, Dr Fiona Vesey took up the position as Head of Science at Fort Pitt Grammar School and Mrs Debbie Barton is now working for Kent County Council.

We were pleased to welcome back Mrs Woolley and Mrs Wakeling following their maternity leave. Mrs Wakeling resumes her position with Mr Coker and Mr O'Neill as joint 2<sup>nd</sup> in charge of English following Mr McDowell's appointment as Assistant Headteacher/Head of Sixth Form.

We then welcomed the following new members of staff from September: Miss Negus (Science); Miss Lusinski (Maths); Mr Murphy (Religion, Philosophy and Ethics); Mr Lofts (Art and Design & Technology); Mrs Howlett (Sociology & Politics), Mr Wilson (History). Mrs Wood (LSA) joined the team in October 2020.

We continue to be heavily involved in teacher training and have appointed the following School Direct trainees from September: Mr Dansie and Mr Chambers (Science); Mr Bindon (English), Miss Dodson (Art), Miss James (MFL), Mr Ross (Computing), Mr Rushton (Music), Mr Norris (Citizenship), Mr Winslade (History) and Miss Jackson (Maths).

And, finally, the following members of staff have taken up new roles within the school: Mrs Housden (Acting Head of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics); Mr Brown (Head of Year); Mr Adkins (Head of Year), Mrs Prescott (2nd i/c PE) and Mrs Jeffrey (Pastoral Support Assistant).

Mr Moore  
Headteacher

## MOBILE PHONES

After half-term, a new rule will come into force regarding mobile phone use. It is true that phones can be highly useful as a study tool, but a good deal of research also shows how they affect students' mental health and wellbeing adversely. Our Heads of Year will tell you only too keenly that far too many of the issues that arise in school are either caused or exacerbated by ill-judged use of social media or phone usage. We want school to give some respite from negative phone use, so the following will apply from 4 November when we return:

- ◆ As soon as students come through school gates, phones are switched to silent, put away en route to form rooms and then go into lockers.
- ◆ When instructed by teachers, students may use their phones to access surveys, the school newspaper The Mark, or for any other specific educative task.
- ◆ Inappropriate use of a phone in school will result in the minimum of a C1.

There are a couple of exceptions:

1. Students who need their phone for a medical reason will be permitted to have their phone on their person at all sensible times.
2. 6<sup>th</sup> formers: we ask that Y12 and 13 students do not use their phones overtly in communal areas but may use them sensibly in 6<sup>th</sup> form only spaces like the mezzanine and F3.
3. Year 11: as a privilege Y11s may use their phones sensibly before registration at 8.45am in their form room only. Any misuse or infringement will result in the privilege being withdrawn.

## PE KIT

Most of the students are now in proper PE kit. After half-term, we expect to see all students in school PE – branded hoodies and tracksuits will not be allowed. In the unlikely event that students' PE kit is not warm enough for them, they will be permitted to wear their school coat, but please, no branded hoodies.

## TAG DAYS

The following form groups have won tag day and may wear their own clothes on Friday 23 October. If students have PE they may wear their own PE gear.

S7			
B8	F8	L8	R8
B9	F9	P9	R9
A10	B10	P10	S10
B11	F11	P11	R11

## YEAR 8 AND YEAR 9 TEACHING ROOMS AFTER HALF-TERM

We have bought in some portable classrooms to provide a comfortable teaching environment allowing some form groups to move out of the gyms when they arrive in mid-November. So, Year 8 and Year 9 students need to ensure they move all their belongings from their lockers – including the padlock - by Friday and move into the following rooms on 4 November.

	Aylward	Bronte	Faraday	Lovelace	Newton	Pankhurst	Rutherford	Scott
Head of Year	Dark blue	Purple	Green	Fuchsia	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light blue
8 G Adkins	B Squillaci S2	A Elkins S Prescott P1 (Upper Gym)	C Harwood P2 (Lower gym)	N Petch N5	R Wilkinson N1	S Lane N6	H Waters S Mannerson S1	H Barty A2
9 M Brown	H Cliff K1	J Kenaghan B2	I Tomkins D2	T Pearson J3	M Belver C3	P Holmes K2	J Chainey R Howlett R1	E Milne J1

8B and 8F to relocate to portable classrooms on arrival.

### Toilets:

Year 8 – Continue with 'N' Block Toilets **PLUS** Sports Hall

Year 9 – Continue with Drama toilets **PLUS** gym toilets when portable classrooms arrive.

Mrs Horstrup

Deputy Headteacher

## PARKING

We have been asked by the bus company if we could issue a plea to our parents and carers to avoid parking – even for a short time – around or opposite the end of Begonia Avenue where it joins Pump Lane. That junction is on a bus route and cars parking there make it impossible for buses to turn the corner. This appears to be a particular issue at the end of the school day.

In a similar vein, can I ask that you avoid parking across driveways and garages in Pump Lane causing inconvenience for our neighbours. Thank you.

Mr Moore  
Headteacher

## MATHS DEPARTMENT

In Mathematics this term students have been working very hard with homework tasks on HegartyMaths. As a school we have answered 92304 questions (An average of 72 per student), ranking our school 37<sup>th</sup> out of the 1816 other HegartyMaths schools in the UK. The mathematics teachers have been busy supporting students and have provided 6512 comments of feedback which makes RMGS the top HegartyMaths school for feedback in the country.

Mrs Rothery

## HERBIE'S NEWS

Hellooooo! I am so glad to see you all and welcome to all the new Year 7. We are all back to some sort of normality and I love it!! My mum and dad have been very busy over lockdown and I was always around to help out but also we had lots of play time.

I have learnt to swim and I have also completed my training with a certificate for being a "Dog Mentor".

This means I have a coat with my name on it (I look very cool) and my mum and dad are very proud. I am looking forward to getting out and about and meeting everyone this year so if you see me around give me a High Five.

Herbie



## UNICEF RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS AWARD AND DIVERSITY PROJECTS

The school is really pleased to announce that it has been awarded the Bronze level for the RRSA and is now preparing for the Silver Award. The student diversity team continues to work on projects like cultural narratives, inclusive displays, Black History Month celebrations, rewriting policies and student planners from a student rights - centred perspective and fun and creative ways to promote inclusion. The prefects are leading the students in a creative House project entitled *Together in Isolation* and we are looking forward to a display of work next term.

The pastoral team would like to thank you to all parents and carers for their continued support and wish students a restful half-term.

Please note: students return to school on Wednesday 4 November, but Friday 6 November is an INSET day so students will not be in school.

Mrs Horstrup



## PTFA MURDER MYSTERY EVENING - MARCH 2020

Just before lockdown, members of RMGS held the annual Murder Mystery event. This year the title was Corner's Last Case and saw Mr Tomkins brutally murdered on stage in front of a large audience. It is always a fun evening for both the staff involved and the audience, who get to see staff in a completely different light. This year despite everything being against us, we were able to raise just under £400 which was fantastic!



## CAREERS NEWS

This term, I have been continuing to meet with students face to face with safety measures in place. As we share the sixth form zone, meetings for sixth formers continue to be held at my careers office in sixth form study room. However, other year group meetings are booked at a meeting place relevant to their zone. Face to face, distanced meetings can be arranged for Wednesdays and Thursdays, or I can continue to offer advice and guidance over email. Please email [sjobbins@rmgs.org.uk](mailto:sjobbins@rmgs.org.uk) should you have a query or want to arrange a careers meeting.

For Year 13 I have been focusing on personal statements and university and post 18 options choices with the deadline for applying to university looming. For Year 11, guidance has been about discussing post 16 options. Year 11s wishing to go through these options are reminded to get in touch. College and sixth form open evenings are most likely to be virtual and will begin to take place between November and January. Students interested in making an application to Mid Kent for example, are able to book onto a virtual information session for each of the subjects they are interested in, as opposed to going to an open evening as they would previously.

I have been collecting information on what the previous year 13 have gone on to do. The majority are going to university, with some going on to do degree apprenticeships for prestigious companies including BT, Amazon and Bank of England. I will be compiling a Destinations report for the school website.

The impact of Covid-19 has meant a lean towards more virtual support with more onus on virtual careers resources and work experience. I have included some links below but will look to regularly update the Moodle Careers and Employability Page with careers and virtual work experience videos and links.

<https://thestemhub.org.uk/index.php/stem-at-home> - resources for students to get involved in at home

<https://thestemhub.org.uk/index.php/ambassadors-at-work> - ambassadors stories of the roles they are in

<https://imascientist.org.uk/> online student forum

<https://icould.com/explore/> range of careers videos

<https://workexperience.hfm.co.uk/> Virtual Work experience for students interested in design

<https://bsmsoutreach.thinkific.com/courses/VWE> Brighton & Sussex Medical School Work Experience for students interested in Medicine

Miss Jobbins  
Careers and Employability Advisor

## DESTINATIONS DATA COLLECTION AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Whilst collecting Destinations information of our previous Year 13s there was praise for the staff, some of which I wanted to share. It was clear in making phone calls and sending emails to the minority who did not choose to go onto university this year that COVID-19 had a significant effect.

For these 'non university' students, more students than last year fell into the working GAP year category, with many continuing to look for higher level apprenticeships or training. In some cases students weren't able to start the opportunities they had obtained or have a delayed start date, due to COVID. Some are saving to travel, if and when they can or reapplying to university for next academic year, in the hope that the university application process and experience may be a better one. Most seemed to be motivated by their jobs, as a way forward to betterment with some considering open university distance learning degrees.

It was clear that students still keen to go onto apprenticeships had taken on board the pre COVID 19 apprenticeships support and advice offered by the school through our Amazing Apprenticeships representative. Rebekah was involved in delivering an apprenticeships information session to our Year 9s and 11s at the County Careers fair. She delivered a post 18 events session on apprenticeships for the leavers, at the end of their Year 12. This was followed by a registration and apprenticeship search workshop for those who signed up to it. We had also planned to offer a further mock assessment work shop, which was cancelled due to lock-down. Rebekah is offering a similar support package to include virtual assemblies and INSET day information talks that I will send staff the details of.

With Rebekah's support, roughly the same number of students as last year obtained apprenticeships with companies that included Amazon, Bank of England, Mercedes-Benz and the Government Civil Service. Many of these were degree apprenticeships.

### Some Kind Words:

'Many thanks for all the staff for all their dedication in helping Y through his A levels', *Parent of a Recent Leaver doing a Degree Apprenticeship.*

'We'd also like to thank all of the teachers at Rainham Mark for their help and support over the years for both T and his brother O. O is just starting the third year of his Maths degree at Warwick and achieved a First in the exams for his second year. He's considering a Masters after he completes his degree.' *Parents of a Recent Leaver joining the Marines.*

'I am currently in the same role we had discussed at a meeting one time. I never got the chance to thank you formally, but I truly appreciate the help you provided me with in Sixth Form' *Recent Leaver doing a Motor Vehicle Apprenticeship*

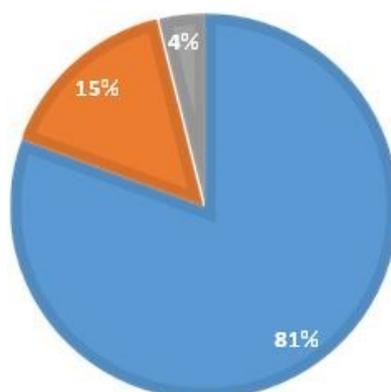
Recent leavers were given the opportunity to sign up to our alumni database <https://www.rainhammark.com/form/?pid=484&form=18> so they can be contacted to help out with any future careers events, so you may still see a few familiar faces in the near future!

Please note Student Destinations are updated on the schools website Sixth Form <https://www.rainhammark.com/page/?title=2016+Leaver+destinations&pid=555> and careers pages

Miss Jobbins  
Careers and Employability Advisor

### YEAR 13 LEAVER DESTINATIONS 2019/20

■ Higher Education   ■ Gap Year/Other   ■ Training/None Degree Apprenticeships



## YEAR GROUP STAFF CONTACTS FROM SEPTEMBER 2020

Year 7	Mrs Mayes
Year 8	Mr Adkins
Year 9	Mr Brown
Year 10	Mr Harwood
Year 11	Mr Smith
Year 12	Miss Lacey
Year 13	Mr Twizell
Year 12/13	Mr McDowell (Assistant Headteacher/Head of Sixth Form)

## KEY DATES FOR 2020-2021

Term 1	<b>Start of term:</b>  <b>Last day of term:</b> <b>Autumn Break:</b>	<b>INSET – Tuesday 1 September 2020 – No pupils in school</b> <b>Wednesday 2 September 2020</b> - Year 7 in at 9.30am, Year 12 in at 8.15am <b>Thursday 3 September 2020</b> - Rest of school in at staggered times. Friday 23 October 2020 Monday 26 October – Tuesday 3 November 2020 inclusive (INSET Days 2 and 3 November 2020 - no pupils in school expect students taking GCSE exams)
Term 2	<b>Start:</b>  <b>Last day of term:</b> <b>Christmas Break:</b>	Wednesday 4 November 2020 <b>Friday 6 November 2020 (INSET - no pupils in school)</b> <b>Monday 23 November 2020 (INSET - no pupils in school)</b> Wednesday 18 December 2020 Monday 21 December 2020 to 1 January 2021 inclusive
Term 3	<b>Start:</b> <b>Last day of term:</b> <b>February Break:</b>	Monday 4 January 2021 Friday 12 February 2021 Monday 15 February - Friday 19 February 2021 incl.
Term 4	<b>Start:</b> <b>Last day of term:</b> <b>Spring Break:</b>	Monday 22 February 2021 Thursday 1 April 2021 Monday 2 April 2021 – Friday 16 April 2021 inclusive (Good Friday 2 April 2021 & Easter Monday 5 April 2021)
Term 5	<b>Start:</b> <b>May Day Holiday:</b> <b>Last day of term:</b> <b>May Break:</b>	Monday 19 April 2021 Monday 3 May 2021 Friday 28 May 2021 Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June 2021 inclusive
Term 6	<b>Start:</b> <b>Last day of term:</b>	Monday 7 June 2021 (Week 0) Wednesday 21 July 2021
INSET - Teacher Training Days (No pupils in school these days - 5 days)		Tuesday 1 September 2020, Monday 2 November 2020, Tuesday 3 November 2020, Friday 6 November 2020 and 23 November 2020
Parents' Evenings Please note that appointments will be made during the week of the advertised Parents' Evenings via Edulink	Year 7 (with FT only) Year 7  Year 8  Year 9 + Options info Year 10 Year 11 Year 12 Year 13	2 and 3 December 2020 21 and 22 April, 27 and 28 April 2021 (Year group split between the dates) 15 and 16 March, 24 and 25 March 2021 (Year group split between the dates) 13 and 14 January 2021 17 and 18 May 2021 27 and 28 January 2021 5 and 6 July 2021 10 and 11 February 2021
Examinations	Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 Year 11 PEQ Year 12 PEQ Year 13 PEQ	7 June to 11 June 2021 16 November to 26 November 2020 7 June to 15 June 2021 11 January to 19 January 2021