

**Welcome to
Rainham Mark
Grammar School**

Please note that dates and information are subject to change following DFE guidance and COVID-19 developments

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address and Telephone No:

Rainham Mark Grammar School
Pump Lane
Rainham, Gillingham
Kent, ME8 7AJ

Tel: 01634-364151 Website www.rainhammark.com Email: office@rmgs.org.uk

Absence Line: 01634-308609

*Form:

*Form Tutor:

*Form Prefect: (Please fill in after New Parents' Evening)

Normal Hours:

8.30 am – 3.20 pm (lunch 12.40 pm – 13.35 pm). **First day for Year 7 is Thursday 2 September 2021 at 9.30 am. The rest of school starts at the normal time.**

Diary Dates 2021/2022:

Term 1	*1 September – *22 October (1 September, 8 October & 22 October - INSET)
Autumn break	25 October – 29 October
Term 2	*1 November – 17 December (1 and 2 November – INSET)
Christmas break	21 December – 1 January
Term 3	4 January – 11 February
February break	14 February – 18 February
Term 4	21 February – 1 April
Spring break	4 April – 14 April (Good Friday 15 April, Easter Monday 18 April)
Term 5	19 April – 27 May (May Bank holiday 2 May)
May break	30 May – 3 June (May Bank holiday 30 May)
Term 6	6 June – 22 July
* Inset – no students in school	1 September 2021, 8 October 2021, 22 October 2021, 1 and 2 November 2021

Names of Staff you need to be familiar with:

Mr S Decker	RMET CEO
Mrs L Barker	Headteacher
Mrs E Horstrup	Deputy Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, i/c Pastoral
Mr T Watson	Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum
Mr J Shibli	Assistant Headteacher, SENCO, Teaching & Learning
Mr K Frost	Assistant Headteacher, Head of Science
Mr M McDowell	Assistant Headteacher, Head of Sixth Form
Mr A van Teutem	Associate Headteacher i/c Maths
Mrs J Mayes	Head of Year 7

A copy of this document can be found on our website www.rainhammark.com in the Parents and Students information section 'Welcome to School Booklet – September 2021'.

Additional Information

Curriculum

A summary of this year's Year 7 curriculum is available on our website at www.rainhammark.com (Home, Welcome, The Curriculum). This is subject to change for the next curriculum year.

House System

The House system is integral to everything we do at RMGS. We believe an effective house system will bring the following benefits:

- Helps to include students immediately upon joining Rainham Mark Grammar School into the whole school community;
- Builds on the sense of community and provide a vehicle for positive role models;
- Provides more opportunities for our students to take responsibility and develop leadership skills;
- Provides the opportunity for student leadership within our House system.

The House system runs alongside the form structure and consists of eight Houses. All rewards and consequences contribute positive and negative points that feed into the different House competitions. Within the RMGS House system there is a number of sub competitions, including:

Arts Award – Music, Drama and Art

Academic Award – all subjects

Sport Award – PE

Citizenship Award – any other areas that do not fall under the above

Points are tallied up at the end of the year as a result of students' achievements and prizes awarded in recognition of their success.

Examinations

Students are formally examined once a year. In Year 7, these examinations take place in the Summer Term. Individual subjects may carry out progress tests throughout the year.

Reports

In Year 7 parents will receive three reports on student progress throughout the year. Please feel free to contact the school at any time if you are concerned.

Parents' meetings

During the first term you will be invited to spend a morning with your child for their first two lessons. This is followed by coffee and a chance to chat with the Head of Year. This meeting always proves very useful.

There is an information evening in November for Year 7 parents to meet with Form Tutors to discuss how your child is settling in. Later in the school year, there is a parents' meeting when Year 7 teachers are available to discuss your child's academic progress.

In every year of the school there is a similar meeting, the emphasis changing from settling in to choice of subjects, careers, and post-18 options like university or apprenticeships.

Absence from School

By law we must keep exact registers and follow up unexplained absences. If you know of an impending absence (hospital appointment, etc), please complete this [medical appointment form](#) (on the front page of the website) so that a Medway Pupil Pass may be issued by the school office.

On the first day of an illness please telephone the school. If the illness continues, you must telephone the school on a daily basis unless it is a long-term illness that you have already informed us of. We have a 24-hour absence line; the number is **01634-308609**. No further note is needed, but please keep us informed of the situation.

In our experience there is a widely held assumption that requests for absence for family holidays in term time (up to a maximum of 10 days) must be allowed automatically by the school. This is a mistaken assumption. All leave for holidays is discretionary. RMGS is generally unwilling to authorise absence for family holidays in term time and does not give blanket automatic approval to parental requests. Each case is considered on its merits and some requests for holiday absences may be authorised. In any event, parents need to make their requests in good time using the link on the school website www.rainhammark.com/absencerequest . Paper forms are available on request.

Illness at School

Sick or injured students must report to the School Office. If first aid is required we will contact you. We need emergency telephone numbers (neighbour, work place, etc.) for this reason and ask that you inform us of any changes.

Physical Education

The PE staff appreciate that occasionally a student may be well enough for school but not for vigorous exercise. A note will cover such a situation. Where a student is to be excluded from PE permanently, a medical certificate may be required. All students are given the opportunity to shower after physical exercise.

Students with Special Needs

At various points in their education, some students are identified as having Special Educational Needs. If your child is already on a Special Needs Register then you will be contacted in the Summer Term before your child starts in September and we will meet to discuss what help can be offered. Should some difficulty arise whilst at the school, then we will work with you and any other relevant agency and attempt to ensure that appropriate provision is made for your child. If you have any concerns then please contact Mrs Else, our School Inclusion Support Manager.

Music at RMGS

A wide range of opportunities and experiences are offered at RMGS, through activities both in and out of the classroom. In Key Stage 3 students study Music and experience a wide range of topics, ranging from pop music, classical music, and film music through to world music and the use of music technology. Students learn the basics of music theory through practical work and academic application. Students have the opportunity to play many different musical instruments in lesson time, including classroom percussion, recorders, keyboards, ukuleles, and guitars. They will need a descant recorder (Aulos or Yamaha are good quality makes), but not an expensive one.

The school has a wide range of extra-curricular activities and ensembles to complement the music taught in the classroom and in peripatetic instrumental lessons. Many extra-curricular activities are offered, including Big Band, Wind Band, Brass Group, Guitar Club, Jam Club and vocal groups. Ensembles are offered to reflect the needs and interests of the students. Peripatetic instrumental lessons are taught by visiting private instrumental teachers, with students receiving one lesson a week during the bulk of term time. Students are able to choose from a wide variety of instruments.

Practice rooms are available for booking at lunch time, giving the opportunity for private practising or work in small groups.

Students have the opportunity to participate in major school concerts throughout the year, and all students in Year 7 perform as a massed choir in the Christmas concert. School concerts feature students as soloists and ensemble members performing in a wide variety of styles.

Every two years the Music and Drama departments collaborate on a whole-school musical.

School Fund

The School Fund contribution is £15.00 per student, per year, and we ask parents to pay it at the beginning of each school year in September, or following the parent meeting when online SIMS Pay accounts have been set up. The school is able to claim Gift Aid on your donation and a form is enclosed which we ask you to complete if applicable. The School is indebted to its parents and for the support they have given to school activities through their donations to our School Fund. We do very much hope that you will be able to support us. To avoid unnecessary hardship or embarrassment, if you send a note to say that you cannot afford to pay we will understand and see that your child is not asked for the money.

This fund is used to support expeditions in Geography, Languages and other subjects. We can only subsidise these and parents have to be asked to pay towards the cost of each visit. (No-one will be barred from going on an education or sporting journey because the family are unable to pay. We are a school community and we would rather say that an educational activity could not take place than have the participants chosen by their ability to pay.)

Other items supported from the fund include the cost of the school homework diaries, a contribution towards running the school mini buses, anti-bullying activities, extra-curricular events and one-off payments such as additional outside seating etc.

SIMS Pay – School online payment system

We use a system known as 'SIMS Pay' which is very easy-to-use and will offer you the flexibility to make online payments whenever and wherever you like, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - safe in the knowledge that payments are secure and use the highest level of card security and that funds will reach the school safely. This is used for school meals, trips, events and books and is our preferred method of payment. You will receive an email with activation instructions from the RMGS SIMS Pay administrator as soon as we are able to generate them (usually June/July).

Arrangements at lunchtime

Students may use our cafeteria system serving a choice of hot and cold food or can bring a packed lunch.

Students are not allowed in classrooms during the lunchtime, but can eat food in our dining hall or outside in the picnic areas. As a large school, we have a number of students who suffer from allergic reactions to some food products, hence we insist that food is not eaten in form rooms.

Cashless Catering System

The school runs a cashless catering system. This system incorporates the latest technology and eliminates the need for students to carry cash throughout the day. All students are issued with a unique tap and pay card which needs to be 'loaded' with funds. There are two options available to top up funds; online via SIMS PAY (preferred method) or using coins or notes at the single revaluation pay-point. The funds on the card can only be used for purchases at food outlets in school and not for equipment or trips.

A daily 'spend limit' of **£7.50** is programmed into the system. This can be increased or decreased for an individual student by making a written request to the school finance office. Students eligible for free school meals will have the value added to their account each day and any unspent value removed at the end of each day. Students on free school meals can make additional purchases if funds are added to their account.

Rainham Mark Grammar School Charity Fund and Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

In times of hardship (equipment, uniform and visits) parents/carers can apply for assistance. The Pastoral Support Assistant deals with applications. Please contact them if you need further information.

If you believe your child is entitled to additional funded support via the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG), please contact the Business Manager for appropriate information. Information about Free School Meals, PPG and eligibility can be found on the school website. Type 'Free School Meals' or 'PPG' in the search engine.

Free School Meals - Why Apply?

As a school, we are very keen that all students who are eligible for Free School Meals actually apply and receive their entitlement. School Meals are a great way to ensure your child is eating a healthy and well-balanced meal during the school day. Even if your child does not wish to have a school meal they will benefit from the PPG Funding once your application has been approved.

Extra funding for your child's education

If your child is eligible for free school meals, it means that the school will receive PPG funding. This is used by the school to support learners ensuring that all students can attend educational visits and receive additional help towards their studies such as revision guides, uniform, and school equipment. If you have any questions regarding PPG funding, please contact the Pupil Premium Team at (PPTeam@rmgs.org.uk).

Communication between school and home

The school's preferred method of distributing letters and information is via email and we would therefore ask that you provide a current email address on your admission form. Please remember to inform us as soon as possible, if your contact details change. If you prefer a hardcopy instead of receiving letters/communication via email, please inform the school office. Contact details we hold for you can be viewed when logged into Moodle under Contacts.

Student Planners

Every student is given a student planner in which they record their homework. The planner is also a useful means of communication between school and home; we ask parents to look at it regularly and to sign it once a week.

Visits

A number of visits are made in close connection with the syllabus and although these are subsidised, costs have to be covered by parental contributions. Please see the School Fund and RMGS Charity Fund sections. Financial help is available for students who are eligible for Pupil Premium Funding (PPG) or those experiencing financial hardship. Please write in confidence to the Headteacher if you are unable to meet the cost of a visit.

Moodle and Microsoft Teams

We use a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) called Moodle during lessons for students in Computing and other subjects. This has been very successful and is used to provide resources for the students during the course of the year. Students are able to view their timetables and reports in Moodle too. Moodle can be accessed by students both at school and at home via the internet. Training and passwords are given to the students during their first Computing lessons. If the school closes due to adverse weather conditions, work (if appropriate) can be found within their relevant subject area. Individual subject teachers will ensure students know where to look for work as some subjects use school email to set work.

Parents also have logins to Moodle. New Year 7 parents will receive their logins via email from the Moodle Administrator during the first term. This enables parents to view student reports, achievement, behaviour, timetables and attendance. This information, plus catering information can be viewed in the

app 'Edulink One' available for Android/Apple. Use your Moodle login and the school ID is rmgs. Note that reports on the app can be viewed 12 hours after being made available in Moodle.

We use Microsoft Teams at RMGS which allows for quality remote learning when necessary and flexibility in submitting homework assignments.

Valuables

Students should not bring expensive items or large sums of money to school. If this is unavoidable on a particular occasion, your child should give the valuables to the school office staff for safekeeping. Mobile phones are permitted in school but as soon as your child enters the school gates, they must be in pockets and on silent; they must not be used at any point across the school day unless direct permission has been granted by a member of staff. Year 11-13 have extra privileges with mobile phones. All valuables should be kept on your child at all times and should not be left in bags or in the pockets of coats left in the cloakroom. If you prefer, your child may leave their phone in the school office from 8.30am-3.20pm. Please note that the school does not take any responsibility for loss or damage. During PE lessons, valuables are stored securely in the PE office.

Lost Property

If a student finds any lost property, they should hand it in to the Site office or Premises Manager without delay. Unfortunately, on occasion, property goes missing in school. The most common items are coats and bags. In the vast majority of cases, the item has not gone anywhere. The owner has forgotten where they left it. Careful thought will often lead your child to the missing item.

If your child still cannot find the item, they need to check nearby; often a coat or bag will be moved by someone searching for their own missing item, or by someone mistaking your child's property for their own. For this reason, your child needs to check the quad and all the other areas of the school. The best time to do this is after school because most property has been taken home by then and it is easy for your child to see if their property is one of the few items remaining.

90% of missing property turns up within two days. 5% turns up within a week. Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, property takes longer to reappear. This is why your child must check the locations again after a day or two and why they must see the Premises Manager and check lost property more than once. If property is named the chances of it coming back to your child are extremely high. Make sure that all your child's property has been named. Property that is named almost always turns up eventually.

If your child's property has not re-surfaced after two days, your child should write a clear and full description of the lost item, including when and where they last saw it and then give this to their Form Tutor and the description of the item can be circulated in registers. **Therefore, it is important that all property must be named.**

Cycling

Students may cycle to school; we would recommend that the child has a Cycling Proficiency Certificate, although this is not a requirement. We advise our students to wear a helmet for their own safety and have suitable lights when necessary. The school provides a lockable storage facility, but cannot guarantee security, therefore each student should supply their own bike lock and ensure that the lock is always used and we suggest the bike is insured. Students should dismount once inside the school grounds.

Arrival and Collection by Car – Road Safety

Pump Lane is congested. It helps if your passenger alights well away from the main gate and please do not use the gate for turning. In winter the mixture of children, bicycles, motor bikes, cars and parents are dangerous at 8.30 am and 3.20 pm: the narrow driveway of the school is easily blocked. Do not drop off your child inside the school grounds; however, in exceptional circumstances you need to drive into school please use the one-way system – in by the top gate and out by the lower gate.

Transport

If your child uses the buses supplied by ASD Coaches it is important that they know how to get home should the bus fail to turn up. In these circumstances, they should contact you to arrange alternative arrangements to get home. The office is open until 4.30 pm if your child needs to use the phone.

School Office

The office staff meet all the visitors and help any child who calls on them. If you are visiting the School, please go to reception where one of the office staff will be pleased to help.

The Office is the clearinghouse for students' immediate problems during the working day. The office staff will do their best to help. They will put messages in to the registers, put notes into staff pigeon holes, deal with anyone who is feeling unwell, contact a parent in an emergency, advise on services available and make contacts for parents and students. They will keep safe, if necessary, prescribed medication.

They cannot take messages, lunches, or forgotten books around the school to students, though they will readily put a notice just outside the office asking anyone who sees a particular student to tell them there is something for them at the office. Real emergencies are of course a different matter.

Photographs and use of video equipment

During your child's schooling at Rainham Mark they may be photographed or videoed, for example, on a school visit or taking part in a school concert. These photos may be used for appropriate educational or publicity purposes or placed on the school's website without seeking further permission from parents. These resources may be stored electronically. A permission form is enclosed with the admissions pack.

Equipment

Many parents ask about the use of calculators in school. These are often used for science and mathematics from Year 7 and we do ask that you buy a **scientific** calculator – they are no more expensive than any other, but will last your child throughout Years 7 – 11. For consistency we would ask you to purchase a Casio calculator - we are able to offer the Casio model fx-991EX at a discount, please contact the Maths department (maths@rmgs.org.uk) if you would be interested in this offer.

For mathematics, your child will also require a simple geometry set containing compasses, protractor, set square and a 12"/30cm ruler. Other additional items of stationery which a student would use regularly are rounded scissors, glue stick, coloured pencils and a small foreign language dictionary. Students will need a strong bag to carry their books, preferably with straps that go across the shoulders to support the weight on their backs. The bag needs to be large enough to carry A4 size folders and textbooks, should be labelled with your child's name, and preferably be any other colour than black with an instantly recognisable design. Handbags are definitely NOT suitable, so please discourage your child from using one.

School Uniform and Appearance

- The uniform should be clearly named, clean and in good repair. It should be worn smartly and conventionally. Students who, without good reason, fail to wear the school uniform correctly may be disciplined. If temporarily unable to wear full school uniform, students must provide a dated letter of explanation from a parent or guardian. Such letters will normally receive sympathetic consideration. This does not, however, negate the Headteacher or Deputy Head's right to send a student home if they judge that the reason is unacceptable.
- Black blazer with school badge and tutor group flash
- Black trousers (not skinny fit or jeans), white shirt (not polo shirt) with clip on tie/colours tie or white reverse collar blouse
- **Or**
- Mid/dark grey skirt with white reverse collar blouse or white shirt and colours tie

- Black or dark grey socks with trousers; white socks or black tights with skirt
- Black school shoes. Trainer-style shoes are permitted but they *must* have leather/ leather-style uppers, look like school shoes and have no obvious branding. No boots, sandals or plimsolls may be worn.
- Official school V-necked pullover (grey for Years 7-9, black for Years 10 and 11). No sweatshirts, designer label pullovers or hoodie
- Calico apron – for craft
- A house flash will be issued in September. Please sew it directly above the blazer badge at the top of the pocket. (Also available from the school office or our suppliers will sew this on for you.)

* Official school pullovers are only available from *Rainham Sports* or *School Time*.

For Physical Education – all students will need the following:

- Red T-shirt with RMGS logo
- Red ¼ zip jumper with RMGS logo
- Plain black shorts/leggings/tracksuit bottoms/skort
- White short socks
- Plain black football socks
- Trainers (non-marking soles)
- PE bag
- Plain black thermal base layer (advisable).
- Shin pads & Football boots (purchase these as advised by PE staff)
- A towel (optional)
- Please provide white plimsolls for gym/dance if your child has a foot infection (not trainers), otherwise bare feet

Please mark everything with name labels.

Outer garments

Coats can be any colour but not denim, suede or leather. Scarves and gloves of any colour may be worn around the school (in cold weather), but not in lessons. Please wear your uniform neatly - shirts tucked in and top button done up. Cardigans are not school uniform. Hooded sweatshirts (“hoodies”) are not an acceptable alternative to either pullovers or outer garments in place of a coat. School bags need to be large enough to carry a number of A4 size folders and textbooks. No handbags and should not be a drawstring bag unless used for PE kit.

Jewellery and hair

The only items of jewellery to be worn in school are plain gold or silver studs (one in each ear lobe) and a watch. No rings are permitted. These items must be removed for PE and games. No body piercings are allowed or extreme hairstyles. Make-up and nail varnish/false nails, fake eyelashes or eyelash extensions are not permitted in school. Hair should be of a natural colour. Full uniform must be worn to and from school as well as in school. You should contact the school if you are in any doubt as to whether you are likely to conflict with the school values.

Admission Procedure

Before admitting a new student, the following documents contained in the 'Admission Pack' enclosed must be returned to the school office at RMGS by **Wednesday 31 March 2021**. Places must also be accepted/refused by **Wednesday 31 March 2021**.

- **Admission Form**

With your signature on the **Medical Consent** section.

- **Birth Certificate**

Either the short or long type are permissible and it will be returned when we have completed the admission entry: it takes a few days if sent by post.

- **Data checking sheet**

- **PTFA Membership Form**

(Payment to be made via our online system SIMS Pay following the parent meeting)

- **PTFA Lifetime Membership** (if applicable) - A one-off contribution of £10.00 is requested for lifetime membership for the PTFA. Payment can be made via the school's online payment system SIMS Pay.

- **Gift Aid Declaration (if applicable)**

- **GDPR Form**

Telephone numbers

If a child is injured or ill while at school, every effort is made to contact parents but it may be necessary to authorise the hospital or a doctor to go ahead at once with treatment – see Medical Consent section of the Admission Form.

If there are any difficulties or if we have not always made ourselves as clear as we should please write or telephone the school (01634-364151) and ask to speak to the Head of Year 7 – or leave a message with the office staff.

Parents, Teachers and Friend of RMGS

We warmly welcome all new and existing members and thank you for taking the time to read this information. This friendly association is keen to recruit you so that the students at **RMGS** may continue to benefit from the funds and fun we provide. Any support you can offer will be much appreciated.

Why does RMGS need a PTFA?

- To raise additional funds for the benefit of all pupils
- To promote and support social and community interaction

Due to the global pandemic, our fundraising was much impacted during the academic year 2019-2020. However, during a 'normal year' we would hope to raise in the region of £4,000-£5,000.

What was organised in the academic year 2018/2019 and how much money was raised?

Fundraising	Income	Expenditure	Net P/L
Quiz Nov 2018	£718.00	£36.94	£681.06
Xmas Concert Dec 2018	£280.89	£32.83	£248.06
Christmas Raffle Dec 2018	£935.00	£281.40	£248.06
Murder Mystery Mar 2019	£675.70	£70.00	£653.60
Quiz Night July 2018	£460.43	£32.13	£605.70
Totals	£3070.02	£453.30	£2,436.48

What was it spent on 2018/2019?

Donation for Visualisers to film studies department	£247.50
Lockable Notice board – Geography department	£250.95
Contribution towards laptop for Drama department	£244.00
Basketballs for PE department	£300.00
Artefacts for RE department	£141.81
Books for Business studies	£28.00
My Maths Subscription	£625.00
Shakespeare Schools festival	£489.50
New Stage Drama department	£300.00
Donation for Art Damp cupboard	£300.00
Resources for MFL Library	£302.50
Biology Books	£105.77
Footballs for playground	£98.38
Donation to English department for Book Trust	£480.00
Badge Maker	£135.00
Total money spent	£4048.41

When does the committee meet?

Meetings are monthly, from 6.30pm on a Tuesday. During the pandemic, these have been held on Zoom to allow for social distancing. They typically last for approximately 1 hour. The calendar of dates is set annually.

What can I do to help?

Why not book a table for one of our events and have a great night out? There is always a raffle on the night and many prizes to be won.

Join 'Your School Lottery' and support Rainham Mark Grammar School. Tickets cost just £1 per ticket per week and 40% of all ticket sales are donated to the school. Prize Draws are held weekly on a Saturday and the results posted online. The amount of prize money depends on the number of members participating, so why not get involved? Signing up is easy, please go to:

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/rainham-mark-grammar-school>

Sign up to the 'Giving Machine'. Every time you shop online with one of the companies registered (EBay, Amazon, etc.), it generates a free donation to up to 4 charities of your choice. We are a registered charity so you might like to sign up to help raise funds at no cost to yourself.

The PTFA are constantly seeking raffle prize donations to help us raise money through ticket sales. If you have something to offer, want to promote your business, or have any interesting connections then please do get in touch.

We are a welcoming committee and always looking for new members. At our meetings you can have your say and play an important role in helping the school acquire key resources, as well as reward the students. You can raise concerns, suggest ideas and input how funds are spent.

As parents, we also realise that our time is precious. Volunteering is not about committing to endless hours of time nor regular attendance to meetings. Any way you can help, no matter how small, is greatly appreciated. We welcome contributions towards printing, raffle/draw prizes, sponsorships and running events. You can utilise your existing skills and hobbies, and most likely acquire some new ones too.

It is not all hard work; the social side of a meeting makes it pleasurable and offers a means of getting to know other fellow parents, teachers and the school. In a secondary school it is not always easy to meet other parents and make new friends, but you will find that we are a friendly and welcoming committee of like-minded individuals.

You can also follow our Facebook page 'Rainham Mark Grammar School PTFA'

Who should I contact? Email ptfa@rmgs.org.uk

PTFA £10 Lifetime Membership - A one-off contribution of £10.00 is requested for lifetime membership for the PTFA. Payment can be made via the school's online payment system SIMS Pay.