

Ramsey Grammar School Sixth Form



Student & Family Handbook

◆ Excellence For All ◆

Welcome to Ramsey Grammar School

Becoming a Sixth Form student at Ramsey Grammar School is an important moment; the commitment is significant; the expectations considerable. As a Sixth Form student you will be engaged in demanding study and encouraged to contribute to the school's further development and to take a leading role in all aspects of the life of the school.

You will have opportunities to show leadership, to mentor and develop younger students and to take part in activities that span year groups. Each student at Ramsey Grammar School is expected to be a role model to the younger members of our School and so expectations of attitude and conduct are very high. Your Sixth Form years are important in terms of curriculum choice and you will be treated as individuals.

We are delighted that you are continuing your education at Ramsey Grammar School.

Mr S Curran

Head of Sixth Form

Mrs N Lewis

Assistant Head of Sixth Form

Your Student Handbook

This handbook contains all the basic information you will need in the Sixth Form. It has been written to help you get the best from your time with us and to understand the differences between life in main school and the Sixth Form. You will study fewer subjects, some maybe for the first time, but your studies will be in much greater detail. You will need to do much more independent learning and to help you with this you will be given study periods on your timetable and training in the study skills needed. You will have more freedom but will also have much greater responsibility for yourself.

Please read this handbook carefully with your family and make sure you understand all the information it contains. On the back page is our School and Student Contract. This document outlines the joint responsibilities we each have, to ensure you will be successful in your time here. It is a condition of acceptance into the Sixth Form at Ramsey Grammar School that students and parents / carers sign, accept and agree to abide by the conditions of this contract. We will do everything we can to fulfil our part of the contract and we expect the same from you.

Sixth Form Organisation

Head of Sixth Form

Mr S Curran

Deputy Head of Sixth Form

Mrs N Lewis

Sixth Form Life

Attendance

The school day begins at 8.50am. **Year 12 and Year 13 students are expected to be in school full time.**

Absence

Attendance to all lessons is essential for you to make progress; we expect student attendance over the year to be at least 95% although we do make allowances for long term medical problems. The Sixth Form team monitor attendance very closely, informing parents / carers of absences from sessions and making referrals upwards if patterns of absence develop. **If a student has an unplanned absence from school for any reason, the parent / carer must contact school by 9.30am.** For up to 3 days absence, you can inform your tutor of the reason and they will amend the register. A letter must be brought in for absence lasting 3 or more days. Failure to do so will result in absences being marked as unauthorised. After showing absence notes to your form tutor, it is your responsibility to deliver the note to the Attendance Officer in person. Known absence must be agreed in advance, by letter, with the Head of Sixth Form.

Teacher Absence

If your teacher is absent, please check the classroom, google drive / google classroom or Teams for work you need to complete.

Tutors and Tutorials

Your Tutor is your guide and mentor throughout the Sixth Form; they are also your first point of contact if you have any problems or concerns. They will explain to you what the best way to contact them is and discuss any issues with you within two days. Your tutor will work with you on your additional qualifications and act as your mentor.

Communication

Both your Tutors and the Sixth Form Team will communicate with you via your school email and / or google classroom, which you therefore **must check regularly** to ensure you do not miss anything important. If you have forgotten the address and / or password, please see the Assistant Head of Sixth Form.

Assemblies

The Headteacher's Assembly will take place on Wednesdays for the whole Sixth Form. Individual year group assemblies will take place on alternate weeks and will be announced in advance on the bulletin. These are vital to sharing key information and thoughts with the year groups while reinforcing our sense of community. As a result, attendance is mandatory. If you are attending collaboration lessons at another venue, it is your responsibility to ensure you are aware of any important information shared.

Paid Employment

We realise that many students want to take up some part time employment but this must be very carefully controlled and should stop when exam time approaches. No paid employment must take place in school time. If you do work, we strongly recommend you only work at weekends and for no more than five or six hours. National research has shown that on average students who work for more than 8 hours a week score a grade lower in each Advanced Level subject and students working more than 10 hours, two grades lower. (Research report 323, Policy Studies Institute)

Sixth Form Facilities

The Sixth Form is designed and equipped to allow students to reach their potential. The Common Room is available for group study and work. The Hector Duff Study Centre is a **silent** working area. There is a Sixth Form Computer Room and group study room and an area dedicated to higher education, with university prospectuses and information on university open days.

There is no eating or drinking in the Hector Duff Study Centre and Computer Room at any time. The Common Room is fully equipped with a water fountain, basic kitchen equipment and vending machines and is to be kept tidy and clean. During lesson times students are expected to behave in a quiet, orderly manner in this area. We rely on your maturity and common sense to keep these facilities in good order. It is the responsibility of all members of the Sixth Form to ensure this happens.

Please be aware that during the exam season the Hector Duff Centre may be used for exams so you are asked to maintain silence when entering or leaving the Sixth Form area at these times.

Collaboration

A growing number of subjects are taught in collaboration with QEII High School and Castle Rushen High School. This means that students will also have access to facilities on those sites. When using these facilities, students are expected to follow the rules and regulations of those schools. There is a bus which allows students to move between the schools and we strongly advise against using your own transport.

If you are absent for a collaboration lesson, it is your responsibility to contact the teacher and catch up on missed work. You must also contact Mr Kneale on enquiries@rgs.sch.im to inform him you will not be using school provided transport. There will be a Google classroom set up specifically for our collaboration students which will provide essential information and updates.

Work Experience/Shadowing

In an increasingly more competitive world, it is becoming clear that most students benefit from gaining experience in a relevant work place. For some careers this is essential (medicine, nursing, teaching, etc.) but for others it gives students a much better chance of gaining a university place or job interview. It is advisable that all students undertake some form of work experience between Year 12 and Year 13.

Senior Prefects and Committee

There are Senior Prefect positions available in the Sixth Form. Students who wish to be considered apply for the role and are selected by the Sixth Form team and senior students. The Head Students and Deputies are selected by the vote of students and staff. Roles are allocated after an interview with the Headteacher and Head / Assistant Head of Sixth Form. Senior Prefects begin their prestigious role at the end of Year 12. Duties will include supporting staff in ensuring good behaviour around school. Senior Prefects are role models and as such, if they fall below target, they may have their responsibility removed.

Sixth Form Student Council

All students are welcome to become involved with the Sixth Form Student Council that meets regularly. Each tutor group will nominate a representative to attend these meetings. Students are able to discuss matters concerning them or put ideas forward for improvements. Minutes from these meetings are copied to the Headteacher. Issues are taken from the Year Councils to the School Council and the Head Students will represent the Sixth Form at these.

Equal Opportunities

At Ramsey Grammar School we expect everyone to treat each other with respect regardless of disability, race, gender, creed or culture. We value our students' diversity and will make every effort to ensure that your individuality is valued.

Lunch Time

At lunch time students can use the East Canteen or the West Canteen (queue to the left from 12.30pm), bring their own lunch, use the vending machines or go off site. If students go off site they are representing the school and as such must behave accordingly.

Smoking

Ramsey Grammar School is a strictly no smoking site, and any student found smoking (including the use of electronic cigarettes) will be asked to leave the school grounds and be given a detention. Associating with students from other year groups when smoking will incur further disciplinary measures.

Academic Organisation

Sixth Form Courses

Level 3 - Advanced Level

We offer a very wide range of level 3 courses in traditional A Levels and BTECs. This ensures that students with a wide variety of abilities can successfully achieve good grades and progress to higher education or employment.

The courses available to a student are dependent upon their GCSE results.

GCSE English and Mathematics

Students who have not achieved a grade C or above in GCSE English or Mathematics will be required to re-sit the qualification. **This will take place in timetabled lessons and these are a compulsory requirement for transition into year 13.**

Transition Programme

This is a year-long programme designed for those students who narrowly missed out on the required grades for Sixth Form, but who might want to pursue Level 3 qualifications in the future. Students invited to undertake this pathway will study a combination of the LIBF qualification, an AS/BTEC qualification in certain subjects and resit their Maths/English GCSE. By successfully completing this year, these students will then be able to start year 12 and choose three Level 3 qualifications. These students will be involved in all other aspects of Sixth Form life.

The Right Decision

The right choice of course is the most important decision you have to make in the Sixth Form. Please don't rush your decision. Please think carefully about these points:

- Do you have an idea about what job or course you want to do in the future? Are there any essential subjects you must take?
- Do you know what the course will be about, especially if you have not taken it before?
- Are you sure you will enjoy the subject? If you hated it at GCSE, why will you like it now?

Most importantly

- Don't take anything just because your friends are. Your likes and dislikes are almost certainly not the same.
- Always ask questions of the teachers and especially of the Y13 students. They successfully went through this last year. Listen to advice and make your decision. If you feel you have made the wrong choice you can change course, but you do need to do this as soon as possible.

Course Change / Dropping a subject

All course changes must be discussed with a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team and the appropriate subject teachers. If we decide a change is appropriate you will be given a Course Change Form to be completed by staff and approved by a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team before any change takes place. This form must be completed and signed by Head of Sixth Form to approve the change. This also applies if you are dropping a subject but not starting another one. You will remain on class registers until it has been approved, which could affect your attendance record. No course changes should take place after **September 30th in the first year of study.**

Curriculum Entitlement

Each subject will provide you with the following:

- **Course details**
Specification and exam requirements will be given to all students at the start of the course. These will help you plan your studies and revision. These may be shared on google classroom.
- **Time lines for the year**
Showing unit start and finish times, coursework deadlines, assessment periods etc. This allows you to plan ahead, see when the busy times will be and, if you see problems with subject clashes, let the Sixth Form Leadership Team know.
- **Appropriate resources for the course**
Textbooks, past exam papers, mark schemes, library facilities and access to ICT.
- **A minimum of two assessed pieces of work per term**
These are vital pieces of work you must complete to continue with the course.
- **Negotiated deadlines for the return of work**
Agreed between teacher and student, taking notice of workload.
- **Constructive feedback on how work can be improved**
Your teacher will give you feedback on your work, clearly explaining how it can be improved. Immediately after assessment cycles all subject staff will be available for individual student mentoring, offering support and guidance.
- **Guidance on how to catch up on missed work**
If you have missed work for any reason you must discuss it with your teacher and find out what you need to do to catch up. The teacher will set you a deadline by when you must show them the completed work.
- **A file check**
Being organised is the key to success. Your teachers can check your file to see if it is well organised, and if the notes, hand-outs etc are all present and in the right place.

Student Work Commitment

Your Weekly Commitment to Your Studies is 30-40 hours

You have chosen to attend Sixth Form as you want or need to further improve your education, possibly with the aim of gaining access to Higher Education. Your studies have therefore got to be the most important thing in your school life. From past experience, we know that the main contribution to a successful Sixth Form career is how much time you spend on your studies. We believe that students should spend as much time working independently as they do in their timetabled lessons. This would see most students studying for an average of 30 - 40 hours a week in total. This is equivalent to working in a full time job and we encourage students to use the Sixth Form study areas after school until 5pm if desired.

Private Study

In the Sixth Form you will need to do a lot more independent study. To assist you with this we have provided two large study areas. You will have six lessons per subject in Year 12 and at least five lessons per subject in Year 13. In addition, you will have one PGE lesson and two senior games lessons. Two lessons are timetabled enrichment lessons where you will have the opportunity to sign up for enrichment activities to enhance your key skills and future employability. The remaining lessons are private study lessons and not "free" lessons. You may not leave school during these lessons. The only exception is if you have arranged work experience and returned the appropriate form to the Sixth Form Office. You will be registered at the beginning of your private study sessions in the student lounge in line with our fire regulations.

Progression

To move from Year 12 to Year 13, you must have passed your end of Year 12 exams and have a good record of conduct, attendance and punctuality in Year 12. For some students, these will be official AS Level exams, for other students these may be teacher set assessments. Both are equally important if you wish to continue to Year 13. BTEC students must have completed all of the first-year coursework before they will be allowed to progress on to the second year.

Students who have failed to complete Year 12 successfully may be allowed to retake Year 12, but only if they have an excellent record of conduct, attitude and attendance and after discussion with parents / carers. These students will be treated as Year 12 students.

Target Setting

All students will have initial target grades set for all subjects, based on GCSE results. Teachers will use these grades as a minimum acceptable level for your performance.

Assessment and Reporting

We will monitor your progress regularly, with assessment cycles throughout the year. Any areas of underachievement will be addressed through mentoring meetings with your tutor and your subject teachers. A lack of progression may mean that a student is placed on an academic report with the aim of highlighting areas in need of rapid improvement. Parental involvement in this process is key, therefore parents / carers will be notified of any ongoing concerns and the strategies put in place to address these issues.

Recording Interviews and Achievement

It is important to keep records of your achievements during Sixth Form, as these, along with your academic accomplishments, will form the basis of any application you may make for higher education or employment.

Enrichment

All students will be expected to gain extra experience through our enrichment programme. This includes undertaking Work Experience in and outside the school environment, participating in the NLAH Scheme, Junior Achievement, One World Charity Challenge, Sports Leader Award and options to study a WJEC Qualification in a language

Rewards

Everyone deserves praise for exceptional work and commitment and Post 16 students are no exception. Subject staff are expected to inform tutors of students who are working well and producing excellent pieces of work. Subject awards will be given out at our termly celebration assemblies.

Higher Education

University open days are advertised throughout the year in the Computer Room, where there is also a fully stocked prospectus library. Information will also be shared via google classrooms. Guest speakers from universities, employment agencies and specific work areas (such as accountancy, banking and engineering) are also invited to talk to our students about choices post 18. Students in Year 12 will attend a Higher Education Conference in June at Ballakermeen High School. At the end of Year 12 we run a University Trip, open to all students in Year 12. A number of universities will be visited over 4 days and there will be the opportunity to visit UCM Open Days too.

All Sixth Form Tutors are specialist tutors who can assist students in completing their UCAS, college or job applications; Tutors and the Sixth Form Team will write personalised references for each student. Training is provided to help students complete their personal statements and a calendar of deadlines is provided to ensure all applications arrive on time. All applications are made on-line.

Extra-curricular activities

Throughout the year there is a planned programme of events. Students are in charge of ensuring this aspect of Sixth Form life is a success.

Examples of some of the events you can participate in or organise are academic trips, social enrichment trips, band nights, talent shows and quiz competitions. There are also in-school sporting competitions as well as competitive sports teams that are entered in local, regional and national competitions.

As well as our musical and drama productions, which require performers, backstage and technical help, there are choirs and other opportunities for music making.

Duke of Edinburgh's Awards are also offered at all levels, further information can be obtained from Mr Radford.

Student Support

Student Advice Services

At times students can be under a great deal of pressure, both in and out of school. There are various channels of advice and support open to our Sixth Form students to help them deal with the pressures of their studies and any other issues that could arise in their lives. The first point of reference should be the Tutor or Head of Year, who will then either deal with the issue themselves or refer them to the appropriate person.

Advice and Services Open to Students

- Sixth Form Team;
- Form Tutor;
- Listening Service;
- Student Support & Services (SS&S);
- School nurse;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing professionals offering specific advice for stress and anxiety.

Academic Problems

Studying at A Level is a very different experience to that of GCSE as students are expected to apply self-discipline and be highly motivated. The major cause of students' failure is poor attendance to lessons and non-completion of set work by deadlines.

All students' assessments are analysed by the Sixth Form Team and those who fail to meet the expected standards will be offered guidance and can be given the opportunity by subject staff to complete a further assessment to demonstrate that they can successfully remain on the course. To help students, we operate a system of 'staged referrals' in Sixth Form. This process involves the student being escalated through the Sixth Form Team. Parents / carers will be advised when appropriate during this process and may be requested to attend a meeting with their son / daughter.

We will be running an A Level Mindset programme through PGE lessons. This programme will give students a variety of strategies and ideas to use when they are struggling. The programme follows the VESPA model of identifying whether the issue is with Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice or Attitude and offers a number of activities to try to work towards solving the problem. We expect students to be using these activities regularly.

Sixth Form Support Card/ Mentoring log

If a student is experiencing academic or attendance issues in one or more subjects over a prolonged period of time, it may be deemed necessary for the student to be given a support card or mentoring log. Both the relevant subject teachers and the tutor would be required to sign the card in order to monitor and support the individual student. The card would be in place for an agreed period of time whilst the student focused on carrying out the required changes in their approach to studies.

Formal Warning

Formal warnings are issued when student conduct is deemed inappropriate. They may be issued for:

- Ignoring uniform rules
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Dangerous behaviour
- Prolonged attendance issues

The formal warnings follow a staged warning system which is detailed below in the Sixth Form Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Subject teacher – level 1

The subject teacher discusses issues of poor behaviour or attitude with the student. Logged on SIMS

Subject teacher – level 2

The subject teacher arranges a formal meeting with the student to discuss poor behaviour or attitude. The subject teacher informs the student's parents / carers and tutor about issues of poor behaviour or attitude. Details will be logged on SIMS. A student may be issued with a support card at this time.

Stage 1 – formal verbal warning

The student is required to attend a meeting where he or she could be issued with a formal verbal warning from the Form Tutor. Parents / carers are notified. Details will be logged on SIMS.

Stage 2 – first formal written warning

The student and their parents / carers are required to attend a meeting with the Head / Assistant Head of Year where the student is issued with a first formal written warning and a copy will be sent to parents / carers. Details will be logged on SIMS.

Stage 3 – second formal written warning

The student and their parents / carers are required to attend a meeting where the student is issued with a second formal written warning from the Head of Sixth Form. Details will be logged on SIMS.

Stage 4 – permanent exclusion

The student and their parents / carers are required to attend a meeting with the Deputy Head Teacher responsible for Sixth Form and the Head of Sixth Form to discuss permanent exclusion from the Sixth Form.

Please note that if a student's behaviour causes concern they will be dealt with at the most appropriate level i.e. progression through all stages of the behaviour policy is not necessary nor a requirement.

Sixth Form Dress Code

Ramsey Grammar School has the following dress code policy:

You are expected to be responsible in your general behaviour and appearance. It is not appropriate to lay down detailed regulations on dress, hence our Dress Code

All students should wear smart, business attire, including appropriate shoes. Coats should not be worn inside school buildings.

Sportswear, including any variation of tracksuits, trainers, shorts, polo shirts, hoodies and football shirts, should not be worn unless required for that lesson.

Logos, slogans or brand names should not be visible on clothes or shoes.

Shoulders and midribs should be covered.

Dress and skirt lengths should be longer than fingertip length when your arms are by your sides. This is also the case when combining leggings with a long top.

Denim or "jean cut" (double hemmed and / or studded) garments are not allowed.

Although ties are not compulsory all RGS Sixth Form students will be representing the school at public functions or meeting members of the public. At these times we request that ties be worn by male students.

Tattoos / Piercings:

Ramsey Grammar School Sixth Form reserves the right to ask students to cover any tattoos and remove any piercings that are unacceptable in a professional setting.

No liability will be accepted by Ramsey Grammar School for any damage to or loss of any type of jewellery that is brought into school.

We ask for parental support on this issue and request that you consider this list carefully when purchasing clothing for your son's / daughter's uniform. If Sixth Form students do not attend school in attire complying with full dress code they can be asked by staff to leave the site and correct their outfit.



School & Student Contract

You have chosen to continue your Post-16 education at Ramsey Grammar School. As a member of the Sixth Form you are a Senior Student and enjoy a range of rights and privileges. We hope that you will enjoy your time in the Sixth Form and that you will leave the school having achieved your potential and be fully prepared for the next stages of your life. This document sets out those things that you have a right to expect from the school and its staff, and also what we expect from you, in order that all students will have the opportunity to succeed.

Please sign both contracts and return the A4 copy to school.

The school will:

- provide courses and teaching facilities which are appropriate for your ability;
- have high expectations of each student and set them appropriate targets;
- ensure that assignments are set on a regular basis, marked constructively and returned promptly;
- treat each student as an individual and provide regular support and guidance;
- monitor students' progress regularly and report this progress to parents / carers;
- provide facilities for and guidance on independent study at school;
- provide guidance and preparation to support your progression beyond Sixth Form;
- inform you when staff will be absent and ensure that appropriate work is set where possible;
- provide opportunity for voluntary work and work experience.

Copy of the RGS Sixth Form Student Contract 2021

The Sixth Form contract is to ensure that you achieve your best and act as a positive role model whilst at Ramsey Grammar School. This document should be read and signed by students and their parents / carers.

I understand the following conditions will apply and I understand that failure to abide by these could result in an appropriate sanction being applied, including being sent home:

- There will be 6x50 minute lessons per AS level subject, plus Games & PGE. These should be consolidated with at least 5 hours individual study per subject spent in personal research, reading, note-taking, reviewing what has been taught etc., in addition to set work. Full commitment is required.
- Set work is an integral part of all courses. It should be kept up to date and handed in by the deadline.
- Reaching an acceptable standard during Year 12, which will include examination results at the end of the year, is essential to ensure entry into Year 13.
- **The school day is 8.50am to 3.40pm.** A minimum of 95% attendance will be expected. Parents / carers need to contact school by 9.30am on each day of unplanned absence and students must inform their Form Tutor on return if less than 3 days. Absence of more than 3 days will require written confirmation by parent / carer, which will need to be given to the Attendance Officer. Holidays should **not** be taken during the school term. An application for planned absence should be made in writing to the Head / Assistant Head of Sixth Form no later than a week before the anticipated first day of absence.
- No student is allowed to leave the premises during the school day without permission from the Head / Assistant Head of Year. **Absence from school during study periods is not permitted.** Assemblies and registration are an essential part of every day to receive daily information, opportunities and arrangements. Medical appointments are to be made outside of the school day where possible. Driving lessons are **not** permitted during the school day.
- Students must sign in (if late) and sign out of school as required, using the books outside the Sixth Form office.
- Acceptance of, and support for, the school rules is required, including the Sixth Form dress code. Students may be sent home to rectify their uniform if it is deemed inappropriate for the school environment.
- Students agree to the Department of Education Sport & Culture and RGS IT Acceptable Use policies and must have an operational school Google account that they check regularly.
- Recent university research has shown that paid employment out of school hours can be overdone, and wipes out valuable study time and energy to the detriment of examination results. This opinion is strongly backed by our experience at RGS. Students who work too many hours cannot be sufficiently committed to their studies and will be asked to reduce their hours or rethink their careers.
- Parking on-site is **NOT** allowed for year 12 students.

You will need the active support of your parents / carers during these demanding years. Please ask them to acknowledge their awareness of this partnership by reading and signing below:

To fully support the Sixth Former, parents are expected to:

- Limit the student's number of outside work to 8 - 10 hours a week.
- Attend parents' evening/Academic Review Day.
- Take an interest and support the learning of the Sixth Former.
- Ensure that attendance is above 95% and maintain communication with school should attendance become an issue. Contact from parents is required for a period of absence over 3 days.
- Ensure that the student attends registration and assemblies.
- Be aware that students are not permitted to leave the premises during the school day without permission from the Head / Assistant Head of Year, except at lunchtime if they wish.
- Ensure that the student leaves home dressed in line with the dress code.

I acknowledge that it is my son's / daughter's responsibility to comply with the school's registration and signing in / out procedures.

From time to time Ramsey Grammar School also wishes to publicise its activities and to celebrate the success of its students within the wider community e.g. school productions, sporting events, charitable activities etc. in the following forms for which we require your consent:

- Images of students being displayed in the school building along with their name, including the electronic screens in the reception areas
- Images of students being published on the school wiki or school publications such as the RGS Mail, school brochures, calendars etc.
- Images/sound recordings of students being published in the media (newspapers, radio etc), including the media's websites as and when the occasion arises. I understand that in these situations my child's photograph may be accompanied by their full name if the media so wishes.

Please note that the school does not have control of how images, taken by the media, are published.

I give my consent **Yes/No**

Student Name	_____	Signed	_____	date	_____
Parent / Carer Name	_____	Signed	_____	date	_____
Teacher Name	_____	Signed	_____	date	_____