

Headteacher's Bulletin

January 2025 Publication

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the January edition of the monthly bulletin. I hope you have had a good start to the new year.

This month at Ratton

Term 3 started with an INSET Day. During this day, staff worked on a range of initiatives to further develop our practice at Ratton School. A big part of the day was spent on our practice around oracy and how we can support our learners to develop their speaking skills. The training ties into the work we have been focusing on, including written literacy and challenge across the curriculum. We are seeing the quality and quantity of student talk in lessons increasing. If you'd like to know more, visit [Voice 21](#) to explore why oracy is crucial for young people's academic and social success. As parents and carers, please do continue to encourage your child to engage in conversation about their school day and what they are learning in lessons to help us develop these all-important skills.

Year 11 will start their full suite of mock GCSE exams this week. Exams will last for the two-week period, and I know there has been separate communication to Year 11 families regarding arrangements. We have been impressed with the number of Year 11 students attending intervention and tutoring sessions at all levels over the last few months to prepare for these exams. We'll be using the results to hone our approach over the next 4 months prior to the real GCSEs and focusing on the areas for development the mock results suggest. We are really pleased with how Year 11 are working with us – I've visited several Year 11 lessons this term and have been impressed with their effort and work. If you are a parent or carer of a Year 11 student, you can look at revision resources and hints and tips on the Ratton School website here: [Revision| Ratton](#)

Year 11 students also experienced mock interviews from local employers and community organisations to help them develop those all-important interview skills for college, university and employment. The feedback from employers and visitors was brilliant – they were so complimentary of our students' mature and engaged approach to this opportunity. One employer I spoke with was particularly impressed by a student he met and thoroughly enjoyed their conversation.

It was great to see so many families at our recent Year 10 parents and carers' evening. We are impressed with how the Year Group is progressing in their GCSE studies and I hope if you attended you were able to gain some insights on how you can support your child to get the best possible GCSE outcomes to unlock post-16 choices. A key message is that 'Effort' leads to good outcomes – a theme Mr Chaundy, our Teaching and Learning Lead, has been discussing in assemblies this week.

I hope that many of you were able to attend this year's school show - 'A Night at the Musicals' at the Royal Hippodrome Theatre and that you will all agree with me on what a fantastic showcase it was for the talents of both students and staff here at Ratton and at Ocklynge Junior School too. There were some knockout numbers from some of my favourite musicals there such as Hamilton and Six, as well as some old familiars from the likes of Oliver and Mary Poppins. Thank you to all staff and students involved in supporting such an enjoyable and professional show. Each year it is a challenge to reach out for more superlatives to describe the show. Well done to all who took part!

Sports Achievements

- Shout out to **Patryk P in Year 10** for another incredible swimming achievement. This time at the National Swimming Winter Competition. Check out our social media platforms for the full report. Well done Patryk.
- Well done to all of our students who represented Ratton in the Sussex Schools Cross Country event. Well done. Shout outs to both **Fin L-F in Year 10 and Katy B in Year 11** for their contributions. Fin, who placed 4th at last week's Sussex Schools Cross Country Championships at Waterhall, qualifying for The English Schools Cross Country Championships in Ardingly this March. Katy, who placed 9th at Waterhall, has qualified to race at the Inter Schools Cross Country Championships in Newbury next week. Well done to you both.
- Shout out to our **#TeamYear7 learners who represented Ratton at a local school's indoor athletics event**. All students took part in various athletic track and field indoor events and worked extremely hard. Well done to them all.
- Similarly, as above, shout out to our **#TeamYear8 learners who represented Ratton at the same event within their age group**. Well done to them all, with special mentions to: **Adam I** who won the 6-lap race, **Sienna H, Lina A, Sophie S and Mia F-S** who has to do more activities due to being 4 people down on the day, they worked exceptionally hard – well done.
- Finally, a big shout-out to our **Year 9 Sports Leaders** who ran a primary school (KS1) football tournament, where around 200 KS1/Year2 learners from local primary schools joined us for the event. As ever, they demonstrated fantastic leadership and were wonderful ambassadors for #TeamRatton. Well done to them all (*and thank you to Mrs Upton for organising with the Sports Leaders*).

Reminders around communication for the new year

For parents and carers and a polite reminder for existing families, some information and tips regarding talking about any concerns you have about your child at school are below.

It is helpful if you can:

- Keep in touch regularly with your child's tutor or year leadership team. Raise any concerns with them. Your relationship with your child's tutor and their year leadership team is important.
- Reassure your child that you will speak with the school. Talk to the school first. Then you can advise your child with a complete picture of what happened.
- Ask for an appointment to talk to teachers. If it is helpful, they may invite a senior teacher or other key staff, such as the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO).

It is not always possible for school staff to meet parents immediately – please do not expect staff to be able to do so as senior and pastoral staff are likely to already have meetings booked in for the day with parents and carers or external visitors and agencies, as well as teaching commitments. We will always be happy to book a meeting, if necessary, at the earliest mutual convenience. Give staff a chance to respond to messages about concerns before taking further action. Depending on the

nature of the concern or incident, we may need a few days to respond after investigating and gathering information.

Staff will aim to respond to emails between 8am and 5pm during weekdays and within 48 hours if your question is not urgent.

School Safety at the beginning and end of the day

We are seeing an increase in parents and carers parking on the yellow zig zag lines outside of school, particularly in the morning, to drop their children off to school. I know that Park Avenue is often very busy at peak times and sometimes the traffic is at a standstill whilst children are dropped off in front of school. **However, we are also noticing cars stopping on zig-zag lines even when traffic is light.** The lines are there to ensure safety and avoid any potential road accidents involving our children, residents and staff on duty. Please can I ask that you avoid doing so; the traffic enforcement team from Eastbourne Borough Council will be visiting periodically to support. We all need to work together to ensure the beginning and end of the school day is as safe as possible for our children.

Additionally, on this note and to minimise traffic on the school site, please can I request that you do not use the school car parks to pick up or drop off students unless your child has a medical or mobility need. Thank you to all parents and carers for your support in keeping the school site safe for all at the beginning and end of the day.

School Uniform

Thanks to parents and carers for your support with uniform. We had a visitor last week from the local authority who visits many schools in the course of their work. They remarked on how good and consistent uniform looked, as well as how calm the school felt and how well-behaved students were in lessons. We take great pride in our uniform at Ratton. If you need to order new items, visit [Ratton School \(URN-138474\) - School](#)

If you do have any cost issues around securing uniform for your child, please do contact your child's year leadership team. We will always help in any way we can – we are currently working with Eastbourne Foodbank who have donated us brand new uniform items donated by Tesco. Thanks to both organisations for their brilliant support.

Upcoming Events

Term 3 ends on Friday 14 February and term 4 starts on Monday 24 February. Good luck to all students and staff taking part in the ski trip and the New York trip over the half-term holiday. I hope all involved have an enjoyable and enriching experience.

Just a reminder that our free to all breakfast club for students continues to operate before school in Refresh every morning – the gates are open from 8.10am onwards for students to access this. It is always great to see students and staff starting the day in such a lovely way together.

Wishing you all a great weekend and rest of this term.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr. Peevers', written in a cursive style.

Mr Peevers
Headteacher