

# Headteacher's Bulletin

## March 2025 Edition

**Dear Ratton Parents/Carers,**

I hope this edition of the bulletin finds you well. As we approach the Easter holiday, I wish you and your families some quality downtime over the holiday period; the weather is certainly looking good for the next few weeks – let's hope it holds up!

### **This term at Ratton School**

The highlight of the last month for me has been attending our rewards breakfasts for students who have been awarded their Ratton Virtues badges. I have enjoyed seeing just how many of our students have 'lived the virtues' and been recognised for this. I also enjoyed seeing students wearing their badges proudly around the building. They are real role models for our school community.

March means Careers Week at Ratton School where we saw excellent work in personal development led by Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hylands. We welcomed visitors to talk with Year 9 students about their careers and held a series of assemblies to focus on the world of work and preparation for modern life. We had lots of positive feedback and comments from employers who visited us on the willingness of our students to get involved, and their mature and thoughtful attitudes. The purpose of this work is to encourage students to start to take responsibility regarding their futures, and to link effort to outcomes and then life chances.

All students in Years 9 and 10 visited the Careers Fair at East Sussex College with students from many local schools organised by Mrs. Peters. I enjoyed attending and seeing just how engaged our students were with the wide range of educational providers and employers present at the event. A great opportunity for our students to think about their futures and how their learning at school can help unlock future opportunities.

Earlier this month the whole school was involved in the big vote for our new head students. Many thanks to Matilda Jansch and Matthias Whitby, our outgoing head students, and the current Year 11 leadership team, for all of their fantastic work – I have enjoyed working with them very much. Mrs. Papagna and I had the privilege of interviewing candidates for the role, and a process included some very persuasive speeches in front of peers in assembly and an election for students and staff followed. We now have our new leadership team in Year 10 in place, well done to Eleanor Ramsden and Jack Dixon for their election as our new head students. I really look forward to seeing how they and the wider leadership team approach the role and working with them on their ideas.

I also want to thank Matilda and Grace Andrews, one of our student leadership team, for delivering an assembly on the theme of consent last week, with the help of Ms. Bryden. Matilda has used her time as Head Student to engage with the Consent Project [Schools Consent Project](#) who have visited Ratton School and delivered sessions on consent and the law to Year 11 students in their Ethics lessons. This work will continue at Ratton in the next year; a great legacy for this team of student leaders to leave for upcoming generations of Ratton students.

You'll know we regularly promote the need to read at school and through our communication home to you. This was celebrated earlier this month with students and staff dressing as their favourite characters for world book day and creating a buzz around books. Students and staff entered a contest for the best outfit – well done Mrs. Chilvers for winning the staff competition for the third time in a row! Thanks to Ms Standen our brilliant librarian for organising – we are lucky to have such an energetic advocate for the joy of reading at Ratton.

### Sporting Success

- Well done to both **Fin L-F** (#TeamYear10) and **Katy B** (#TeamYear11) who both competed in the Inter Couty Cross Country Championships this term, both placed well. Keep up the great work.
- Also, **Fin-LF** recently competed in the Ardingly English Schools Cross Country Championships, and despite only being the 1st year in his age group, he placed 2nd from the Sussex team of 8. He was 50th overall out of around 350 top county athletes. Well done.
- Well done to our **representing #TeamYear8 and #TeamYear9** learners who represented #TeamRatton in the **U14s Girls County Cup** this term. Although we did not win, their performance was a dominant one and a real showcase of talent. Great job.
- A huge well done to those **students who represented #TeamRatton at the recent local partnership Rugby Tournament at Eastbourne Rugby Football Club**. Both Ratton PE staff and ERFC coaches said what a great event it was and what a sterling effort our students put in (**SEE PRESS ARTICLE HERE** : <https://www.yourworld.net/sussex/east-sussex/eastbourne/schools/ratton-school-hosts-rugby-tournament-event-with-eastbourne-rugby-football-club-81251>).
- Well done to our **#TeamYear9 Sports Leaders** who represented school in their **local primary Hockey Event**. As ever, it was a well-attended event and one that both younger peers and local school leaders greatly enjoyed. Great job Year 9 Sports Leaders, keep up the fantastic work and a bit thank you to Miss Upton for mentoring our students through another successful sporting event locally.
- Well done to both **Ted W and Tinashe M** (both #TeamYear11) who recently played for **Eastbourne Rugby Football Club U16s** in the Worthing 10s Tournament. Both boys scored tries against the hosts Worthing in the team's second game of the day on the way to the final against Haywards Heath. The final was a closely contested game the finished 12-10 to Eastbourne with Ted lifting the cup as captain. A huge well done to them both and their team.

### Free Daily Breakfast at school

We were pleased to see that students have been taking advantage of the national breakfast programme here at Ratton. We continue to provide free hot and cold breakfasts – hot drinks, cereal,

porridge and bagels – in Refresh from 8.15am every morning for all our students. We contribute to funding this initiative, but the majority of the cost is borne by the programme itself.

We know how hard the cost-of-living crisis is affecting our families, and so I will ask you to encourage your children to attend each morning if they need to. We know that if children are hungry, they will struggle to learn at school too, and so the breakfast programme helps us to help our children learn effectively throughout the day. Staff are also present each morning to sit down and chat with students, which makes for a lovely atmosphere and start to the day. All students are welcome to attend, and we'd love to see more students eating a good breakfast to start the day.

### **Reminders around attendance**

I'd like to continue to highlight the importance of good or better attendance for your child at school. The Department for Education this month published some research around the link between attendance and attainment (the grades children are awarded). One striking finding from the research was that children who attended school nearly every day in Year 11 (95-100% attendance) were 1.9 times more likely to achieve a grade 5 in English and Maths, than children who only attended 90-95% of the time (relating to up to two weeks off during the academic year). This means missing just 10 days of year 11 reduced the likelihood of achieving a grade 5 by 50%. The research shows that relatively fine margins in attendance can impact on the grades a child can achieve.

The good news is that attendance at Ratton School continues to remain at the national average and above the East Sussex average attendance rate for secondary schools; thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring your child attends school regularly. Please don't hesitate to contact your child's Year Team if you would like to discuss support or any issues around your child's attendance and we will help you in any way we can.

### **Reminders for the new term**

Uniform has looked good so far this term, with students looking smart and ready to learn. However, there are a couple of issues I'd like to address in this bulletin for the new term.

Please can I remind parents and carers that hoodies and unbranded jumpers are not part of school uniform. Students will receive a signature on their handbook for each occasion they are wearing a non-Ratton sweatshirt or hoodie. Can I also ask parents and carers to support us in encouraging their children not to wear joggers or tracksuit trousers under their school trousers. We have seen a small number of students do so this term and conceal items such as vapes within them. For safeguarding reasons, and in line with our uniform policy, we will ask any student wearing these items under uniform trousers to remove joggers or tracksuit trousers in a suitable location. Refusal to do so will mean that we would need to contact home and arrange for the student involved to go home and change, before readmittance to school.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind parents that we do not expect to see students using mobile phones at school; if we do, they will be confiscated and stored safely until the end of the day for students to pick up before they leave school. A significant majority of students work with us on this to keep school a safe place and free from any negative interactions on social media during the day. If a student needs to make a call home in an emergency, we can always facilitate this; if you as a

parent or carer need to contact your child, please phone via reception and we can find your child to speak with you. Thank you for your support on this.

### **Safeguarding at the beginning and end of the school day**

Please can I respectfully remind parents and carers not to park on the yellow zig zags on the road outside of school during the day. By choosing to do so, you are putting the safety of school community members at risk. Please do be respectful of staff who may request that you park elsewhere. I appreciate traffic can be very busy on Park Avenue at the beginning and end of the day, particularly in wet weather, but the safety of our students and staff must always take priority. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Upcoming Events**

We start the term on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April with the normal start to the school day at 8.35am. As I mentioned above, we have a range of revision sessions happening over the holiday for Year 11 students; please encourage your child to attend these sessions. If you are a Year 11 parent or carer, please do talk to your Year 11 child regarding revision over the holiday; I would like to thank staff who are providing opportunities for students to come in and work on site over the holiday on their revision. Please see separate communications for details regarding which curriculum areas are providing sessions.

We also look forward to welcoming our Year 8 parents and carers for our parental consultation evening on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April. Please do take the opportunity to engage face to face with teachers and bring your child for some meaningful conversations around their learning.

I hope you and your families can spend some lovely time together this holiday, thank you for your support this term, and we look forward to working with you moving into the summer term.

Best wishes,



**Mr Peever**  
**Headteacher**