



Rainham Mark
Education Trust



RMET Community Newsletter

Volume 1 | March 2023

Inside this issue:

- Meet our Governors and Executive leaders
- Find out about what is happening in our 3 schools
- Hear about our key priorities and the trust wide projects we are running.

Welcome from the CEO

I am delighted to launch our first trust newsletter, and hope very much this is felt to be a useful way to keep our parents, carers and local community updated on, and involved in, our schools and trust news.

You will be aware it has been a period of significant transition for us as we have not only brought our 3 schools together with a new central structure, but more recently have explored the possibility of a broader merger with another trust. Through the consultation and due diligence process, we decided not to proceed with a merger at this time and instead look forward to an exciting future as we strengthen our 3 schools and continue to increase opportunities for our key stakeholders.

I hope you enjoy reading more about our current priorities, recent successes and positive news stories.

Tash Hurtado, CEO RMET

Welcome from Our Chair, Reverend Nathan Ward

My name is Nathan Ward, and as the Chair of Trustees, I am proud to be able to introduce you to our Members, Academy Committees and my fellow Trustees in this first edition of the RMET Community Newsletter.

Governance plays a crucial part in the Academy Trust, and all those within the governance framework, will ensure:

- Clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- A means of holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff and their continued professional development;
- Oversight of the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Members, Trustees and Academy Committee members for their continued commitment and dedication to ensuring our vision, which is underpinned by our Philosophy of Education, remains the focal point of our Trust.

RMET is a small family of schools with big ambitions for all those children and young people in our care. We recently agreed to invest significant resources to help support Twydall Primary School on its journey to becoming an OFSTED rated 'good' school.

We were delighted that Rainham Mark Grammar School achieved a solid 'good' judgement in its recent OFSTED visit and look forward to working with the school in driving forward to an 'outstanding' judgement.

Riverside Primary School is an OFSTED rated 'good' school with outstanding features and is increasingly oversubscribed.

I am delighted that we find RMET in such a strong position as a local community trust and I look forward to our CEO Tash Hurtado continuing to drive the momentum of school improvement across all of our schools.

Best Wishes

Nathan Ward



RMET Governance

The Trust governance structure consists of:

- Members
- Trustees
- Trustee Committees (Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and the Quality of Education Committee) as well as the Local Tier of Governance called Academy Committees

Members of RMET are the guardians of the governance within the Trust. They play a limited but crucial role in safeguarding trust governance.

The Board of Trustees is the decision-making body of the Trust and is accountable and responsible for the Trust. The Trust Board is responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the Trust.

The charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Trust. The Secretary of State for Education is the principal regulator.

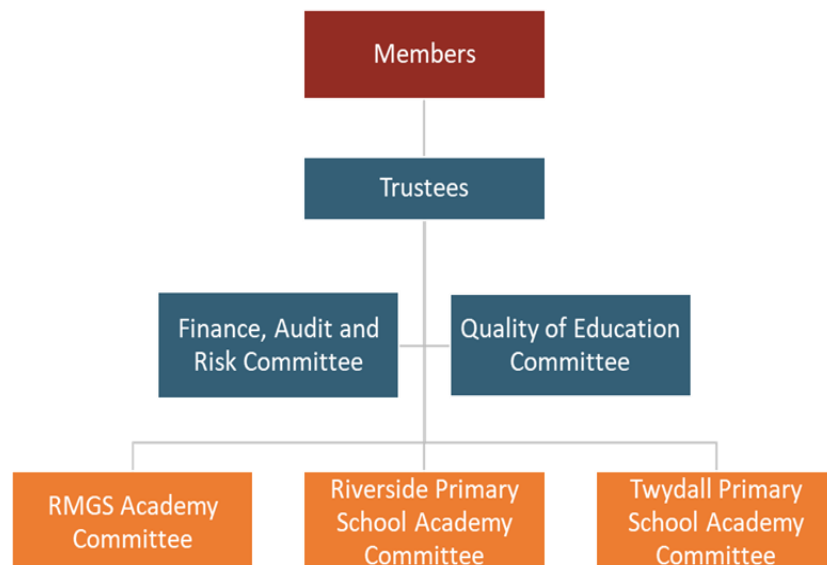
Effective Governance is based on six key features: Strategic Leadership, Accountability, People, Structures, Compliance and Evaluation.

The Scheme of Delegation provides a written framework of structure for governance and provides operational clarity around the delegation of powers, those that the Trustees retain and those that have been formally delegated.

All those within governance are aware and accept the 7 principles of public life, which are known as the Nolan Principles.

Our Members are:

Hari Aggarwal
Paul Horsman
Nick Oakley
Christopher Pope



Our Trustees are:

Reverend Nathan Ward
Chair of Trustees



David Valentine

Vice Chair of Trustees
who is also a member of the
Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
and Quality of Education
Committee



Dave Brockman

Safeguarding Trustee
Trustee who is also a member of
the Finance, Audit and Risk
Committee



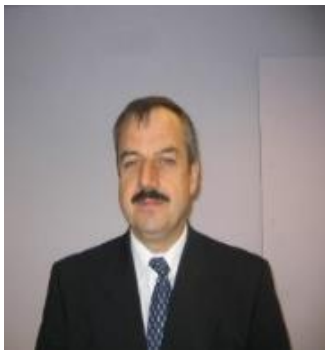
Kerry Jordan-Daus

Trustee who is also
Chair of the Quality of
Education Committee



Nigel Goodall

Trustee who is also a
member of the Quality
of Education Committee



Lee Phipps-Bartley

Trustee who is also Chair
of the Finance, Audit and
Risk Committee



Stuart Gardner

Trustee who is also a
member of the Quality
of Education Committee



For any enquiries relating to Governance, please contact our Head of Governance,
Rachelle Stevens via Rstevens@rmet.org



The Academy Committees:

RMGS:

Stephen Roe

Co-opted Academy Committee member
Chair of the Academy Committee

Linda Bourne

Co-opted Academy Committee member
Vice-Chair of the Academy Committee

Fay Fautley

Parent Elected Academy Committee member

Louise Cox

Co-opted Academy Committee member

Eve Martin

Co-opted Academy Committee member

Kalgi Shah

Co-opted Academy Committee member

Lisa Barker

Headteacher

Riverside Primary School:

Kyle Taylor

Co-opted Academy Committee member
Chair of the Academy Committee

Simon Carter

Co-opted Academy Committee member
Vice-Chair of the Academy Committee

Stuart Bourne

Co-opted Academy Committee member

Kirsty Cruttenden

Staff Elected Academy Committee member

Becky Wild

Parent Elected Academy Committee member

Helen Robson

Head of School

Twydall Primary School

Kathy Moon

Co-opted Academy Committee member
Chair of the Academy Committee

Mike Nelson

Co-opted Academy Committee member
Vice-Chair of the Academy Committee

Amy Alchin

Parent Elected Academy Committee member

Sylvia Baldwin

Co-opted Academy Committee member

Neal Purser

Staff Elected Academy Committee member

Gemma Simpson

Staff Elected Academy Committee member

Sharon Farish

Head of School



RMET core purpose, Philosophy and Values

Our core purpose:

To cultivate wisdom, character and strength in students so they can understand, celebrate and shape the world in which they live.

Our Philosophy of Education

(this is what informs our staff when we plan our curriculum, our policies and practices):

Rainham Mark Education Trust believe that education is the wise, hopeful and respectful cultivation of learning and change undertaken in the belief that we should all have the chance to share in life.

This is why we exist. This is what we do. This is who we are.

We believe that 'Quality Education' is the intentional facilitation of an inclusive, stimulating, equitable, safe, open minded and happy environment in which:

- Knowledge is elicited, shared, deepened and valued as a force for good.
- Opportunities are well planned to enable intellectual, emotional, social, moral, spiritual, creative, artistic and healthy physical development.
- Ambitious personal outcomes are routinely demanded, expected and achieved for all.
- Kindness, compassion and mutual respect are non-negotiable.
- We do not take lightly the responsibility to deliver this standard - it is a privilege entrusted to us, the imperative to develop each and every child that is part of our community, not merely for their own personal journey, but for the collective contribution they will make to our world. We exist for them and everything we do is focused on them.
- It is impossible to think about 'learning' without defining what knowledge and its acquisition looks and feels like in our schools, and how we create the right conditions to maximise growth.

What does 'knowledge' mean to us?

- The intertwining of character, skills and intellect.
- Personal growth of the mind leading to the development of conscience.
- The critical understanding and deep embedding of facts or concepts that are rapidly recallable through mental connectivity.
- Open mindedness that enables ideas and information to be absorbed without constraint towards a predetermined outcome.
- The process of learning through experiences and connections.
- The seeking out of 'truth' through scrutiny, intellectual curiosity and critical thinking.
- The formulation of a personal 'belief system' through an understanding of morality.



How will this look every day?

- Our students will feel an uninhibited joy of learning where happiness is redefined as a lack of ease and comfort in the learning process.
- Our students will feel invigorated by unfamiliarity, excited by challenge and motivated when understanding demands several attempts in the learning process. Thinking hurts but learning should be fun. That's why we do all that we can to support students of all ages to be resilient when things do not work out the first time.
- Our students and staff will find inspiration in each other and motivation from within.
- Intellectual curiosity will be habitual, and critical thinking natural.
- Our schools will create an immersive learning environment that encourages opportunities for imagination to flow, for creative, intellectual, expressive, and artistic talents to emerge
- We will routinely celebrate the gifts and talents of others, to appreciate culture, respect the natural beauty of our environment, and to take responsibility for our part in its preservation and sustainability.
- Our staff and students will communicate with confidence, eloquence, influence, and purpose; shaping the future through innovation and progressive thinking.
- We will cultivate depth of character – empathy, humility, social justice, moral courage, internal control, sensitivity, kindness, authenticity, perseverance, resilience, determination.
- High expectation and ambition will seamlessly underpin our daily mindset.

Our Philosophy in action:

Our 'lived' daily values provide a platform for the development and growth of the whole person, in a knowledge rich environment, where we are equally concerned for both personal and collective ambition, and where we share responsibility for global harmony.

Curiosity

Happiness

Aspiration

Respect


Articulacy

Community

Teamwork

Equality

Resilience



How can parents and carers support us in ensuring that these values are 'lived' by our children and young people all the time?





Tash Hurtado CEO

Meet the Executive Team

As CEO, Tash is responsible for both the business and financial interests of RMET, as well as educational standards in all schools. Tash is the safeguarding lead for RMET.

Tash has previously been a Headteacher and Accounting Officer in Greater London and has a wealth of experience in school improvement. Tash is also a practicing Ofsted Inspector and a Trustee of a large MAT.

Kim Wilmer, Director of Primary Education and Trust Inclusion lead

Kim is responsible for educational standards in our primary schools.

She line manages the Heads at Riverside and Twydall and provides support and challenge that enable the schools to improve quickly where needed. Kim is the Inclusion lead for the Trust having overseen specialist resourced provisions across the primary schools.

She is also the deputy safeguarding lead for the Trust.

Kim was previously the Headteacher at Riverside and was instrumental in building its many strengths and successes over a 9-year period.

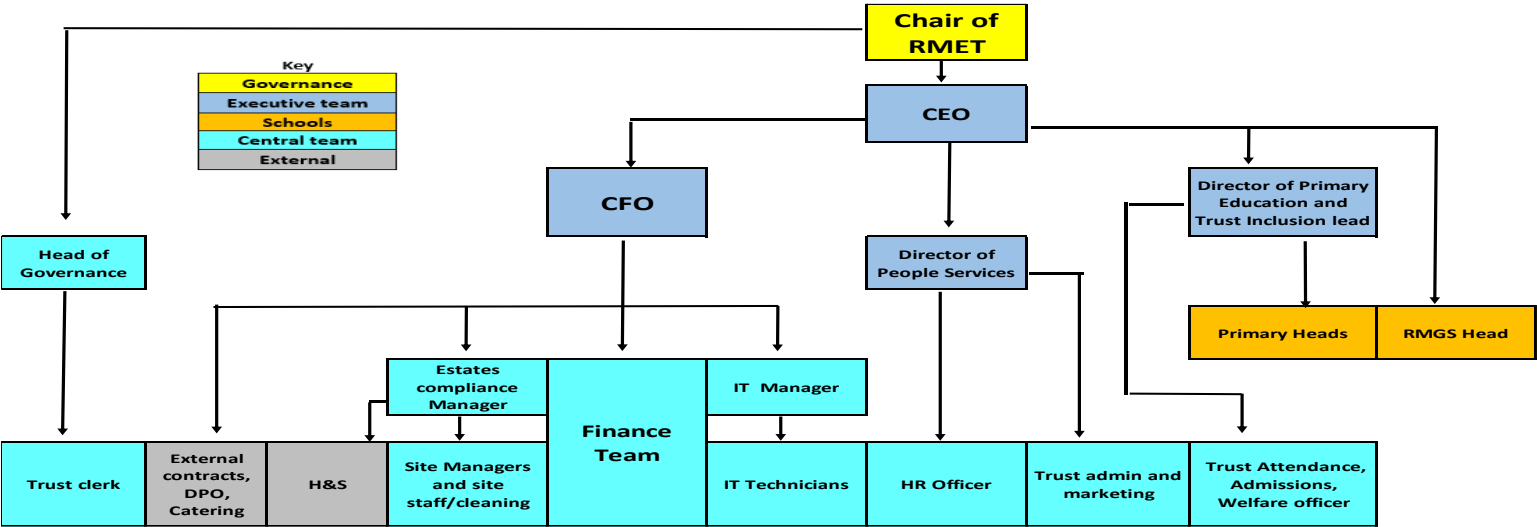


Nichol Gordon, Director of People Services

Nichol is responsible for Human resources and staff well-being at RMET.

Nichol has been with the Trust for many years, working to support pupil and staff wellbeing, alongside her role as the Business Manager.

She is now taking on a broader role in our central team.



Trust Educational Projects

One of the biggest benefits of working as part of a trust, rather than as separate schools, is the opportunity for collaboration that this offers. Sharing expertise and resources within a family of schools enables the experiences of our children and young people to be significantly enhanced.

We have at least one representative from each school and the executive team who attend collaborative hubs for:

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Inclusion

This enables us to streamline policies and procedures whilst also ensuring we keep each other well up to date on statutory changes, new initiatives and best practices.

We offer our staff a number of central professional development opportunities in order that we develop the best possible knowledge and skills that will benefit your children. We also collaborate regularly to find ways of widening the enrichment opportunities that we can offer our students. We are delighted to see many of our staff supporting each other across schools.

One of our most important projects, which we hope your children will be able to talk to you about, is 'PROUD'. This encompasses 5 layers of communication that support in the development of the whole person.

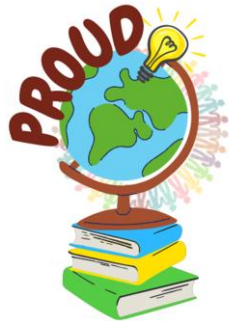
Philosophy

Readings

Orary

Understanding the world

Debating



**Our talented and creative
primary students
designed our logo!**

It is one of our key priorities to ensure that each child in our care develops the best possible communication skills, and the confidence and skills to articulate effectively. Strong communication skills help children to be successful in their studies and their future job prospects. Being able to express feelings and ideas in an appropriate way helps with emotional regulation and the ability to understand social cues, to avoid conflict. We also want our children and young people to recognise a range of means to express themselves including a strong focus on communication and expression through the arts.

Our staff have launched this initiative through assemblies in the last 2 weeks, but we have been prioritising all layers of 'PROUD' into our planning since September. We will have numerous updates about this strategy in the coming months, and are particularly excited about projects for deepening enrichment opportunities, so do please engage in dialogue with your children about the importance of each area.

Tash Hurtado, CEO



News from our Primary Schools, Kim Wilmer

Site update

The children and staff at Twydall Primary School & Nursery have settled well into the reduced site, which is bringing a greater sense of community to the school. As a result of the work with the DfE in supporting the temporary site for the Maritime Trust, we successfully secured funding to move, update and refresh the school. This has included a new Early Years Unit and outside area, new interactive whiteboards in every classroom, security gates at the entrance and exit to the site, further security measures within the building, repurposing of the kitchen area for catering and new playground equipment as a replacement for the older resources that could not be moved. These are due to be installed shortly. In addition, National Grid has supported the school by installing a fantastic outside learning space with mud kitchens and bug hotels, which since being recently secured by new fencing, is ready to be used once the weather starts to improve! All of this has led to a safe and vibrant learning environment for our children and a greater sense of teamwork. It has also allowed space to develop Trust offices at the Twydall site, providing a shared space for those staff who work across more than one school.

At Riverside, FORPS (Friends of Riverside Primary School) have helped to enhance the environment by developing a fantastic sensory garden and providing specialised resources for the Starlight Room, a further calming, sensory space. Both areas have been used by the children and are much-appreciated additions to our environment. In addition, we have been planning for a number of years to extend the canteen and Breakfast and After School Club areas. As the school has grown, we have needed more space and being able to separate the hall from the eating area will mean that there will be increased access to the hall in the afternoons. Initial plans have been drawn up and we are hoping to be able to forge ahead with the project in the near future.

Inclusion

Inclusion is at the heart of what we do in the primaries and our drive is to enable all pupils to be the best they can be. With both schools being designated as resourced provisions for different aspects of SEND, we are passionate about securing the best educational outcomes for all of our children regardless of starting points, need, background or any social or emotional barrier. Riverside Primary School & Nursery has been recognised by the Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) for their inclusive practices and have held IQM Flagship status since 2019, having previously held the IQM Centre of Excellence Award and been part of IQM since 2016. We are extremely proud of this recognition and to be part of the IQM cluster groups where we can share best practice and learn from other settings around the country. As a Trust, we invest heavily in staff training to ensure that all of our staff are highly skilled and continue to build their knowledge so they can provide the most effective provision for the children in our care. The recent pandemic has had a lasting impact on families, and schools across the country are recognising increased levels of need in children, including mental health issues. As a Trust, we have been proactively researching alternative arrangements for supporting children who struggle with their mental health or have suffered trauma. We are looking to set up a nurture provision that can be



accessed by children from either school who would benefit from a more nurturing environment to support them being ready to learn effectively in the classroom. We will keep you posted with any updates. We are also keeping up to date with the Government's '[Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Improvement Plan - Right Support, Right Place, Right Time](#)' which was recently published and sets out plans for a new nationally consistent SEND and alternative provision system.

Collaboration

I have been working closely with the two leadership teams across the primary phase to ensure our schools continue to be at the heart of our communities. Whilst communication is difficult to get right all of the time, we do have Class Dojo in both schools now and offer an open-door policy for our families to come in and talk about any worries or concerns they may have. We truly value working in partnership with our parents/carers and appreciate your support and engagement in school events and your comments in school surveys.

We are continually improving our provision so that we can offer the best educational experience for the children in our care and both schools have been reviewing their curriculum to ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and children are ready for the next phase in their education. In addition, we have been looking at what makes each school's curriculum unique to them and how we build in our Trust values of '*Character*'. At Riverside, for example, we are developing essential life skills through use of the Cookery Corner and building a sense of community through Riverside Rangers, whilst at Twydall we are building in opportunities to work outside in the environment and developing oracy through the School Parliament. You will see over the rest of this academic year and into next year, how these plans will come to life, and I am sure your children will be excited by what they are learning!

All staff in the primary schools have been working closely together in order to share best practice, develop consistent approaches and share high quality resources. We have also held a number of joint training sessions, using expertise from within our schools and from other professionals. Similarly, we are looking at ways to bring the children in our primaries together with a planned joint residential activity trip for Year 6 next year, and planned sports matches and musical opportunities being developed.

We have also had the opportunity to work across primary and secondary phases through trust hubs for safeguarding, inclusion and behaviour. These termly opportunities bring together representatives from all three schools, to discuss current research or government legislation, share best practice, ensure consistency of approach where appropriate and support each other in plugging any gaps, whether that be a staff training need, using the expertise identified in one school to improve provision at another, or building a directory of trust interventions that can be drawn on by any school in the Trust.

I have been really impressed by how open and willing all staff have been to share and learn from each other, keeping our vision for all children to be at the heart of decisions we make, and looking forward to some exciting opportunities to come.



RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Classes visiting Rainham Library.



YR enjoying 'Fun, Fit and Food' after school club.



Y3 enjoyed learning about the Earth.



Nursery learning about Lunar New Year.



Great teamwork skills on show!



Y5 creating Tudor recipes in our Cookery Corner.



Bridge building in Science.



L S Lowry inspired Y6 Art.



Illustrator visits.



Safer Internet Day.



World Book Day.



Gymnastics in PE.





Outdoor learning in Maths



Designing micro-organisms in Year 6.



Sampling food from around the world in Nursery and Reception.

Twydall
Primary
School
in
pictures!



Book week activities



News from RMGS

Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) – Centre of Excellent Award

Rainham Mark Grammar School has been recognised by the Inclusion Quality Mark IQM for their work in school and have been awarded the 'Centre of Excellence Award.' We are extremely proud of this achievement and will continue to build upon the excellent practice that is already established at RMGS.

Mental Health Support – Tranquiliti

We are very aware that the pandemic has had lasting impacts upon children's mental health. As a school we have a number of different ways that we can support children's mental health such as a school counsellor, draw and talk therapy, Herbie our therapy dog and a number of Mental Health First Aid trained staff.

We are extending our provision further this year and are taking part in a national pilot. Students in Years 7 8 and 9 are part of an exciting pilot with Tranquiliti (see <https://www.tranquiliti.co/>) the creators of a wellbeing app that gets students to regularly check their own mental and physical wellbeing alongside building resilience and offering a wide range of support resources. Our students are working with the team feeding back their experiences and seeing their suggestions changing how the app is designed. They are also getting a flavour of how businesses develop products and problem-solving on a large scale.

The plan is to roll out the app for the whole school in September and to establish a culture where students accept that they are in charge of many elements of their wellbeing and that with focus and practice, they can constantly develop their mental and physical health.

Artsmark Silver Award

Over the last year a number of colleagues have been working with staff and students to develop the Arts across the curriculum. Earlier this year RMGS have been awarded the Silver Artsmark Award. The assessors noted "you are positively increasing the emphasis on arts and culture and engaging with the Arts is having tangible results on pupils and staff.... Pupils' access a consistent range of experiences with local and national artists and arts organisation in and out of school which leads to showcasing within school and the immediate community. This is supported by a credible range of qualifications at KS4/5." RMGS are delighted with this award and are now striving for the Gold Award. We look forward to working with the primary schools in the Trust to develop this work further.

Eco-Club and the Rainham Anti-Idling Campaign

Our newly formed Eco-Club have been very active so far this year and are making strives to improve our understanding of the world around us and environmental issues that are everyone's concern. So far this student body have organised collection points for plastic pen recycling and encouraged the school community to use reusable mugs rather than plastic cups. Volunteers in this group have attended the Rainham Anti-Idling workshop this month.



Organisers of this event were highly impressed by the creativity of their young minds pitted against the very real environmental challenges we face in our lives and community. We are very much looking forward to our continued work with this local group of volunteers.

RMGS UK Maths Challenge Success

At the start of February, 97 students in Years 9 to 11 put their names forward to take part in the UKMT intermediate Maths Challenge.

We are delighted to share with you that our students achieved the following awards: 18 students rewarded with Gold, 23 with Silver and 29 with Bronze Certificates. Fifteen of the Gold Certificate Holders are through to the next 'Kangaroo' round. Alexander in Year 10 is through to the 'Olympiad' round after achieving 110 points.



PROUD and World Book Day

Across the Trust we have seen the launch of the Proud project. As part of our work on this project we have appointed a new Literacy and Reading Lead in the school who is developing a range of strategies to support communication skills that help to develop the whole person. Staff at RMGS have taken part in training on disciplinary literacy and how children learn to read through the use of phonics. We have introduced Accelerated Reader across Years 7 and 8 to develop further their comprehension and fluency skills. The school library has been busier than ever since September with the quiet bustle of avid readers accessing the Accelerated Reader software suite to quiz students on their favourite books. The new suite also suggests book within a range of development, encouraging students to choose more challenging texts to bolster their love of reading.

Earlier this month we had the school's first World Book Day. The day was extremely successful where we had an array of costumes throughout the school and staff body. From comic book character to autobiographic outfits, the dressing up really highlighted the diverse reading interests of the school community and their creativity in devising their costumes.





RMGS Music and Drama Production 'School of Rock'

Since September 2022 the music and drama departments have been working relentlessly with students to put on the RMGS musical this year 'School of Rock.' This has been the biggest musical to date and we are extremely proud of all the hard work that students and staff put in to this to make this such a huge success. Students have reflected on the experience post production week – please see below some highlights from their reflections:

"This has been the best experience of my whole life! Everyone was so welcoming and talented."

"The show made my confidence shine and surrounded by the best atmosphere you could never feel like you weren't accepted!"

"I absolutely loved it, it was such an exciting experience that I'll always cherish every minute of."



Student Leadership

Student Leadership is extremely important to us and supporting students to become confident and responsible citizens is part of our holistic curriculum at RMGS. We have worked hard this year to develop further opportunities for students to become leaders in the school. We have launched our school Parliament and Cabinet meetings where students are able to feedback to the Senior Leadership Team on their views on a range of different issues in the school. We are working with both our School Parliament, School Cabinet and representatives from the Diversity Team about inclusion and diversity. Following on from a recent FLAIR survey we have carried out with students and staff we are looking at ways of bringing about further and greater racial harmony in school. As part of this students in Years 7 and 8 will be having Active Bystander training in the next few weeks to help equip them with the right skills to 'challenge' unkind behaviours.

Major Sporting Achievement – Football

On Saturday 4 March the U13 girls football squad played in the final of the Kent Cup. We are really proud of our team who won the U13 Girls Medway League but missed out by a 2-1 defeat on the Kent Cup.



Coming soon

We are planning a prestigious awards event to celebrate the values, efforts, talents and achievements of our children and young people across all our schools!



And finally....

We are really excited to be launching our new websites which will go live in the next few days.

We hope you will find these much easier to navigate around to enable you quick access to key information about your child's education.

www.rmet.org

www.twydallprimary.org.uk

www.rainhammark.com

www.riverside.medway.sch.uk

We are also delighted to be launching new social media apps for the trust via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. These forums will be used to support key updates, sharing good news, exciting RMET developments and enabling us to share recruitment opportunities.

We hope these improvements to our communication channels will help all our stakeholders find access to important information to be much more readily available.

