



## Newsletter April 2015



Dear Parents

My letter to you this half term is one that I have known I would have to write at some point. That being the case you would think I would have prepared my words in advance, not so as I generally find anything too planned does not come across as genuine and sincere so I am going to let my thoughts and fingers flow and write to you this last time as I truly feel.

Of all the groups of 'stakeholders' that I deal with, it is the parents that have always provided me with the greatest challenge, as well as support. You are the largest group that a headteacher has to work with and hence the most diverse and with the greatest range of demands, each wanting the best for your child and not always with the interests of other children in mind. My task has always been to provide the best for each child whilst, at the same time, considering the bigger picture that includes all other pupils, staff and , at times, what I am allowed to do. I hope that the majority of you feel that I have achieved this over the past eleven years.

Being headteacher of Ralph Sadleir has been a true privilege. Previously I had worked in some of the highest achieving schools in the country as well as some of the most challenging so I believe I am well placed to say that the standards we set, and achieve, at Ralph Sadleir are up there with the very best. This was underlined only last week when I was in France with 74 year 7 pupils. Their behaviour, attitude, respect, sense of fun and interaction with each other was praised and complimented everywhere we went. Not once did we have a complaint or negative comment about them. I remarked to the other staff that when you are part of something that is so good you become accustomed to it, it becomes the norm, you take it for granted and forget how good it is. I believe that is where so many parents, pupils and staff are in their view of Ralph Sadleir. We are so used to the very best that when it slips, we complain but don't look about us to see that we are still setting standards far higher than many other schools. Thank you for helping me, the staff, the school as a whole achieve, and maintain, the standards we set as the norm for Ralph Sadleir.

Thank you to the very many of you who have sent me good wishes for the future. To be able to answer the question "What next?" is very difficult as I have not planned much yet preferring to give myself time to catch up on the backlog of jobs at home and the visits to friends and family that have been side-lined in favour of paperwork, planning and giving time to my 'school family'. It is only the latter of those that I will miss! I dare say that by this time next year I will have thrown myself into several activities but exactly what is part of the excitement I feel in retiring.

In terms of Ralph Sadleir's future, I know it is in safe hands. The changes coming to education, the local area etc are more than I feel I have the energy for; I have seen too many in the past 38 years! Fresh ideas, the energy of those younger than I am and a new way of looking at things will take the school forward. Already I am aware of the planning that is going on for next term and beyond and, as a great believer in 'The Queen is dead, long live the King!' I know the seamless cycle will continue.

For your futures, and that of your children I wish you all the very best. I hope that I have been able to help steer those futures in whatever way I can. I will follow the futures of many of the children with great interest and may have the pleasure of working with some of them when they move on to Freman College. I am sure that, at some point, I will be watching television or reading the paper or looking online and will be able to exclaim 'He /she was one of mine!'. I do hope so, and for the right reasons!

Finally, I leave with so many memories of Ralph Sadleir and everything that I have had the opportunity to be a part of here. I know that thoughts of many events, comments etc will be triggered in the future and I will be caught smiling, even laughing as the last eleven years keep me sustained into the future. Few in my profession have had the privilege of being a Ralphie and I, for one, will always be a Ralphie! Thank you all.

*Liz Hinton*

## Term Dates

### Spring Term 2015

Term ends Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 2.30pm

### Summer Term 2015

Inset Day Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April  
1<sup>st</sup> Half Term Tues 21<sup>st</sup> April – Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> May  
May Day Holiday Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May  
Half Term Break Mon 25<sup>th</sup> May – Fri 29<sup>th</sup> May  
2<sup>nd</sup> Half Term Mon 1<sup>st</sup> June – Fri 17<sup>th</sup> July  
Term ends Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July at 2.30pm

### Autumn Term 2015

Inset Day Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2015  
1<sup>st</sup> Half Term, Yr5 only Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept – Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct  
1<sup>st</sup> Half Term, All School Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Sept – Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct  
Half Term Break Mon 26<sup>th</sup> Oct – Fri 30<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Inset Day Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2015  
2<sup>nd</sup> Half Term Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov – Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Dec  
Occasional Day Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2015  
Term ends Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Dec at 2.30pm

Further term dates can be found at:

<http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/calendar/>

## Dinner Money

### Summer Term 2015

Per Day - £2.25

Per Week - £11.25

1<sup>st</sup> Half Term - £55.00

2<sup>nd</sup> Half Term - £78.75

Whole Term - £133.75

If your child is going on one of the various school trips please deduct the appropriate amount.

### Cheques payable to

### Ralph Sadleir School

Please put the child's name and 'dinner money' on the back of cheques.

Please refer to our website to read our policy on School Dinners Bad Debt

<http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/school-dinners/>

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### **Changes to meal patterns**

A meal pattern has been set for your child.

Any changes to the pre defined patterns must be notified to the school office **before registration** otherwise you will be charged for the school meal.

Please contact the office if you have any queries.

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### Attendance

If your child is absent from school it is essential that you telephone the school before 8.45am.

If we do not hear from you, your child's absence may be marked as unauthorised.

## **FREE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATIONS**

Herts County Council is working to promote free school meals and educational benefits to make sure that as many eligible children and families as possible get the support they are entitled to.

Families are able to apply in any of the following ways:

Online: at [www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals](http://www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals).

Smartphone: using the LookingLocal app available from app stores.

Digital TV: The Community Channel – press the red button

Wii/Xbox/PS3: at [www.lookinglocal.gov.uk/hertsdirect](http://www.lookinglocal.gov.uk/hertsdirect)

Phone: 0300 123 4084

We can help you if you do not have access to the internet.



## **Ofsted Parent View**

Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about our school at any time of year. It is also a great tool to help us know which areas are working well and which can be developed further. This is a short questionnaire and will only take a few minutes of your time but provides Ofsted with valuable information about our school.

Parent View asks for your opinion on 12 aspects of your child's school, from the quality of teaching, to dealing with bullying and poor behaviour. Ofsted use the information you provide when making decisions about which schools to inspect, and when. By sharing your views, you'll be helping our school improve. You will also be able to see what other parents have said about the school. Or, if you want to, view the results for any school in England. Access via the school website or

<http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/login?destination=give-your-views>

### **Jane House – School Family Worker**

I would like to introduce myself as School Family Worker for the 11 schools within the Rib Valley Schools' Partnership for Buntingford, Puckeridge and surrounding villages. I am based at Edwinstree Middle School in Buntingford.

My role is to provide greater access to a wide range of support for children, young people, parents and families.

In the New Year I will be arranging a series of Parenting courses and Family Learning Workshops. Course details will be sent via Parent Mail.

#### **Family Lives Services over Christmas**

I would like to let you know of an excellent helpline called Families Lives. They provide support 24 hours 7 days a week and continue this service throughout the Christmas holiday period;

- Family Lives free helpline – 0808 800 2222, available 24/7 and via Skype.
- Online 1 to 1 chat with a Family Lives worker – [www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-chat](http://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-chat)
- Email - [parentsupport@familylives.org.uk](mailto:parentsupport@familylives.org.uk)
- Online community support – [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Online parenting groups – email your phone no to [ParentsSupportHerts@familylives.org.uk](mailto:ParentsSupportHerts@familylives.org.uk)

## Music Tuition at Ralph Sadleir

Every child at Ralph Sadleir has a one hour lesson of music per week. In addition to these lessons, every child has the option to enrol with Hertfordshire Music Service via the school to participate in extra music tuition.

Lessons available are: Clarinet, Flute, Saxophone, Drums, Viola, Cello, Piano/Keyboard, Guitar (electric and acoustic), Brass (Trumpet and Trombone). Singing lessons are also available.

Hertfordshire Music Service will guarantee to provide 33 lessons per year which is an average of 11 lessons per term on the required instrument. (subject to availability).

The 2015/2016 fees are £133 per term for 20 minute lessons, and £198 per term for 30 minute lessons.

The fees are payable within 30 days on receipt of a notification which the school will forward to you in the term prior to music tuition commencing. When making a new application you are requested to attach a cheque for the cost per term.

To cancel music tuition, a **full half term** written notice must be given or payment of a half terms fees in lieu of such notice must be made. Please email cancellation instructions to: [admin@ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk) An email from the school will be sent to you confirming cancellation of lessons.

<b>Term Lesson to be Cancelled</b>	<b>The final date for lessons to take place</b>	<b>Deadline for school to receive cancellation letter</b>
<b>Autumn Term 2015</b>	23rd October 2015 18th December 2015	Fri 4th September 2015 Fri 23rd October 2015
<b>Spring Term 2016</b>	12th February 2016 1st April 2016	Fri 18th December 2015 Fri 12th February 2016
<b>Summer Term 2016</b>	26th May 2016 22nd July 2016	Fri 1st April 2016 Thurs 26th May 2016

Further details can be found on our website - <http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/music-tuition/>

## My Teen Brain – understanding teen behaviours

### From Hertfordshire County Council Childhood Support Services

Being the parent or carer of a teenager is not always easy. We can struggle to communicate, worry what our young person is doing and can be baffled by their behaviour. However, recent interesting research on the adolescent brain has given us an insight into adolescent development and enabled us to better understand this period in a young person's life.

In response to this research Hertfordshire County Council's Childhood Support Services have launched My Teen Brain. The initiative aims to highlight what happens in the teenage brain, in conjunction with experience and environment, can affect many aspects of teenage behaviours including emotions, relationships, behaviours, sleep, attitudes to risk.

Information for parents and carers is available on our dedicated website. The website is to provide practical information on all aspects of teenage development, to enable us to better understand teenage development and the role that parents play in the lives of our young people. There will also be parent workshops running, more details of which are available on the website.

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/css/teenbrainlanding/>

## **Parking**

The school works closely with our community to ensure that issues that may affect our local residents are discussed and resolved to a mutually beneficial level.

It is imperative that when parents visit our school either to drop off or pick up their children that they do so with due care and attention and do not put others at risk. They should also give consideration to our local community and park safely and in appropriate areas. It may result in parents parking a small distance away from school and walking into the school grounds to drop off or collect their children. It is important to our school that positive relations with our local community remain in place and do not diminish due to inconsiderate, dangerous parking by our parents or visitors.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015 East Herts Council launched a mobile parking enforcement service dedicated to the enforcement of yellow line 'zig-zag' restrictions outside schools. The launch of this initiative is in part a response to reports and complaints from members of the public concerning dangerous and inconsiderate parking outside schools and is in line with the Council's overall parking enforcement strategy.

**The emphasis will be on deterrence, although a Penalty Charge Notice will be issued where a parking contravention occurs.**

In addition to the above, the Police and the Civil Enforcement Officers will be making regular trips to the area at the beginning and end of the school day to monitor the situation. In addition to these visits a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be monitoring the situation and we will not hesitate to pass details of car number plates to the police and mobile parking enforcement service if we see dangerous driving or parking in the vicinity of our school.

Whilst writing, we would like to remind parents of the following:

- The speed limit in the school front car park is 5 MPH. This speed is set in the interest of the safety of pedestrians using this car park. On more than one occasion, we have seen near misses due to parents driving too quickly.
- Parents dropping off or collecting their children are **NOT** permitted to drive into or park in the school grounds unless they have prior agreement of the school.
- Even when this agreement has been made, if there are no available car parking spaces, please park outside the school grounds and walk into school to collect your child(ren).
- Calling into the school office with a query at the start or end of the school day is not an excuse for you to park in the school grounds. This is being monitored.
- Do not block cars already parked or double park your car as this is a hazard to other vehicles entering and exiting our car park and therefore could endanger our pupils when they are exiting our school.

**We have a number of mini buses and taxis that use our parking facilities and therefore in the interest of safety other vehicles should not use the car park until after 4.00 pm.**

We would also like to ask parents collecting their children to support the school in three other ways and so reinforce what we tell the pupils:

- Please use the pavements around the car park and do not take a short cut.
- Please be mindful of other pavement users and don't force them into the road.
- Please walk down to the crossing lady if you have to cross Station Road.

We appreciate your continued support in this matter.

## **Year 5 – Science Week**

Our Year 5 students enjoyed a varied Science Week earlier in March. Activities included a presentation from Mr Davies who is an Astronomer, chatting online to a group of Scientists and watching the Solar Eclipse on web feeds. Here are some thoughts from our students:

“We went on a website called ‘I’m a Scientist Get Me out of Here!’ and I asked Thomas, Thad, Emily, Adam and Steph what is the best thing about being a Scientist. Thomas replied saying “doing experiments and finding out about fossils”. I thought Steph had the most interesting job as her current project is the Big Bang Theory.”

**By Eloise.**

“I really enjoyed the space talk. Mr Davies explained that if we had a model of the earth, a model of the sun would be as big as half a football pitch.”

**By Year 5 student**

“I chatted to Scientist Adam who is researching if dogs are left handed or right handed.” **By Nell.**

### **A couple of questions put to the Scientists.**

#### **1) Why aren't apes still evolving into humans?**

“Human and apes share a common ancestor. This means that millions of years ago there was a species that gave rise both to us and the apes. For instance, 6 million years ago we split from the chimpanzees and bonobos, so for the past 6 million years, the chimpanzees have taken a different evolutionary path than we have. So they have a bunch of different mutations than we do including we had two chromosomes join into one so we have less chromosomes than chimpanzees do. This is why chimpanzees cannot become humans, they don't have the right mutations. However, this also means that humans cannot evolve into chimpanzees, because we do not have the right number of chromosomes or the right mutations.” From Scientist Thaddeus.

#### **2) What was the first fossil found?**

“Tough question. Fossils have been correctly identified as fossils since the 1700s but there are many examples of fossils being used as jewellery in the Stone Age. My first fossil found was an ammonite.” From Scientist Thomas.

## **Ralph Sadleir Association – May Day Stall**

Standon May Day is on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The RSA have a double stall this year and are asking for donations from parents.

We are looking for: bottles of wine/beer/soft drinks etc, sweets, boxes of chocolates, new toys, books, Toiletries gift sets, unwanted gifts, plants.

We do ask that items are new and unopened. Please bring items in to the school office.

We also need volunteers for the day from 12pm - 4pm to cover one hour slots. If you think you would be able to offer help please contact: [rsa@ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk](mailto:rsa@ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk) or pop in to the school office and ask for Kathryn Hurren.

Thank you.

### **Louise straightens out youngsters over good posture.**

Dr. Louise Hampton, Chiropractor and owner of attend2health in Buntingford visited Ralph Sadleir School to give talks to the Year 8's about the importance of good posture and preventing back pain.

“The incidences of back pain are increasing in this country and I am passionate about trying to prevent back pain through better back health - developing good habits for adulthood.”

“As part of my talk I went through some different strengthening exercises for the spine, how to lift correctly and for the children to think about what they are carrying in their school bags.

I advised them not to sit for too long in one position and to think about their posture when on a phone or tablet.

The children were fantastic asking some really good questions and they were all keen to learn how they could potentially reduce injuries and lead a more active life.

It was a pleasure to teach such an enthusiastic group.”

### **Ralph Sadleir School's Girls Cricket Team.....**

.....were victorious in the Lady Taverners County finals on Thursday 19th March 2015, beating Beaumont, Queens and Leventhorpe schools respectively. They will progress to the Regional stage in the coming weeks being held at Leicester CC. A fabulous display from the girls saw them winning the final match with 3 overs to spare. Squad includes:

Emma L (Cpt)

Amber C

Katie B

Katie L

Jessica C

Ellie S

Alena F

Seona S

Chloe E

Heidi E

Coach - Mr Simon Morgan



### **Humanities News Page**

Is your child interested in the news but not sure where to start? Would they like to follow up on topics raised in the classroom about current affairs? Would you like to broaden their topics of conversation!?

Having an interest and awareness of current affairs gives students an enormous advantage both in their academic performance in the Humanities subjects as well as creating well rounded citizens of the future!

We are proud to announce the launch of our 'Humanities News Page'. Here you will find current news stories relevant to the subjects of History, Geography and RE. They may be linked to topics which have arisen in class discussion or just be a way to keep up to date with current affairs.

Please take a look - encourage your child to have a look and stay informed!



## Ralph Sadleir Association

The RSA have been working hard and have held two fundraising events for the school since the New Year.

The Quiz night raised £673.90 and Stars in their Eyes raised £1,024.28.

Both events were a lot of fun and extremely successful. Please give your support at the RSA May Day Stall. More details will be issued in due course.

A huge thank you to those who have given their support already. We are nearly at our target for a new mini bus, and have bigger plans after that, so keep the support coming!

If you would like to join the RSA or help out at any of our events, please email [rsa@ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk](mailto:rsa@ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk)

## Year 8 having fun making fresh Pasta!

It's important to keep the dough well floured! If you want to try it at home:

For 2-3 servings

80g of strong white flour (or 00 flour)

1 egg

Pinch of salt

You do not need a pasta machine.

Parents of Year 8 pupils can ask them to demonstrate how to make it!



## Swiss roll making by Year 7

Very healthy cake, no fat used just lots of whisking of egg and sugar using the electric whisks!

