



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Families,

Welcome Back!

Firstly, I must wish all families a belated Happy New Year (*officially the last time writing or saying this now...*) and I sincerely hope that you had a great Christmas break.

Naturally, the New Year provides an opportunity for reflection and for fresh thinking about new horizons and it has been a real privilege to lead Expectations Assemblies for students in College groups this week. I wanted to start my letter by sharing some of the key messages that I have shared with our students.

Student assemblies provide a platform for celebrating achievements and reinforcing our school values; **Respect, Succeed, Aspire**. I have to say that I have been struck by how punctual, well presented, and attentive our students have been in assemblies this week and as ever I must thank all parents for equipping them so well so that they are ready to learn when they get to school.

Key Themes

This week, I have reminded students of the fundamental importance of our school values in all that we do. Students have been reminded of the importance of respectful conduct, hard work, and aspiration.

I have reminded our students of their place in our tradition and history encapsulated by the school crest on their blazer. From the Tudor Rose to the Coat of Arms of the City of London to the Market Harborough Grammar School, I would hope that every student can articulate their own understanding of how these historical symbols represent our values of **respect, succeed, and aspire**.

I have also outlined the importance of approaching the Spring Term with energy, sustaining good study habits, and learning from key assessments. It is imperative that all students learn from these assessments so that they can make even better progress. We want our students to be able to open as many doors as possible in the future and securing excellent outcomes and qualifications forms part of that picture.

I have encouraged students to engage in the many fantastic opportunities ahead during the Spring Term and that they should look to put themselves forward in whatever they choose to do including participation in enrichment activities and in student leadership opportunities.

Behaviour and Safety

I have reiterated our expectations of behaviour and the '*red lines*' that constitute behaviour that we do not accept, as taken from our Behaviour Policy. I have also restated the school's policy on mobile phones and sanctions. At the heart of these messages there is a clear focus on the importance of respect for all.

As part of assembly routines, I have reminded all students of the names and pictures of the Safeguarding Team so that they know who to speak to if they have any worries or see something that concerns them. We have a highly experienced and diligent Safeguarding Team who do a superb job to keep our students safe.



Part of Tudor Grange Academies Trust



Robert Smyth Academy

Safeguarding

Next week, we will launch '**My Voice**' which is a system that will enable our students to report safeguarding concerns to our Safeguarding Team electronically.

To access the 'report a concern' form students can visit the **school website** and select the main **safeguarding page**, to complete the form: <https://www.robertsmyth.tgacademy.org.uk/about/safeguarding/>

Please note that this form must only be used to report a safeguarding concern. Information related to medical issues, teaching and learning matters or general concerns that relate to a member of staff, must still be reported via established processes and **not via 'My Voice'**.

It is necessary to state that any abuse of this system will not be tolerated and in the event of deliberate, inappropriate, or malicious use of this system, we will apply the Behaviour Policy. In serious cases, it may be appropriate for us to contact the Police. We hope that you will support us with this trial and that students will use this system responsibly so that we are able to give them the help that they need.

Student Leadership Pathway

One of the many themes of my assemblies this week has been my belief that we have many fantastic leaders within our school community and that every one of our students can contribute positively and be the captain of their ship. Put simply, we know that we have the most wonderful, articulate, and proactive students and we continually aspire to provide more opportunities for their personal development.

In this context, I am delighted to announce exciting new opportunities for students to harness and develop their leadership competencies and skills by joining the **Student Leadership Pathway**.

I would encourage families to discuss the **STUDENT LEADERSHIP ADVERT** (*see the end of this letter*) which has been published on Satchel One and communicated via assemblies.

Students will be able to apply for the following roles:

- **College Captain**
- **Form Representative**
- **Student Council Member**

In addition, we have started a recruitment drive for **Peer Mentors** (Year 7-11), and we have already received many stunning applications from students who will make a real difference by putting themselves forward.

Students who are successful will be provided with unique leadership opportunities including the experience of working directly with members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Principal and Governors in the further development of Robert Smyth Academy and the shaping of our school for future generations. These experiences will provide our leaders with a unique opportunity to develop their skills and a springboard for future success.

Students who are successful in securing a leadership role will be able to work toward the **SSAT Student Leadership Award** up to **Gold certificate** by creating a portfolio of their leadership experiences and a record of their learning. This is a very credible and well recognised qualification, and it will allow students to reflect on the progress that they have made and the key learning that they have taken from honing their leadership.



Part of Tudor Grange Academies Trust



Robert Smyth Academy

STUDENT LEADERSHIP ADVERTS

College Captains, Form Representatives, and the Student Council

- There is a position available for a boy and girl in each college to be a **College Captain**. You will need to be in Year 10 and will need to apply by letter.
- In Years 7-10, we will also be appointing **Form Representatives** for each tutor group. To be a Form Representative, you will need to write a letter of application.
- Year 7 students can also now apply to join the **Student Council** as a student leader for the first time. Applications from students in other years will also be considered.
- **All positions will be decided upon through an interview process.**

Student Leader job description

Being a student leader is a fantastic opportunity for students to represent the academy by embodying the RSA Values In Practice; **Respect, Succeed, Aspire**. As a student leader you will have the opportunity to act as a role model to other students, contribute to academy life and shape the teaching and learning that you and your peers will experience.

All the student leadership roles are ideal to illustrate your positive qualities and attributes on CVs and applications and so will benefit you in the future as well as developing you now.

The main aim of all student leadership roles will be to make the academy a better place for students to learn. Student leaders will gather views of the student body and will represent tutor groups, colleges, and the academy.

To apply you must write a letter of application outlining why you think that you would make a good student leader and an area of academy life that you are passionate about representing or improving. Outlined below are the characteristics we are looking for in a student leader, so incorporating these into your letter would be helpful. In your letter you should indicate which role you are applying for; Student Council, College Captain and/or Form rep.

Essential characteristics and experience

- Embodiment of the RSA Values In Practice
- Enthusiasm
- Positivity
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to work independently and with initiative
- A willingness to be involved with academy-based activities and events
- Involvement in at least one extracurricular activity

Process

Please write your application letter to Mr Cleary by **Friday 26th January**. You should take your letter to Student Services.

Interviews will take place in the week beginning **5th February**.

Announcement of Student Leaders – in celebration assemblies, week beginning **12th February**.

Candidates may only retain their student leadership roles if they meet common expectations for all students related to attendance, courtesy, behaviour, and hard work.



Part of Tudor Grange Academies Trust



Robert Smyth Academy

Key Dates: Spring Term

- **Tuesday 16th January:** Sixth Form Open Morning
- **Wednesday 17th January:** SEND Parent Forum (6-7pm)
- **Thursday 18th January:** Year 13 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 25th January:** Year 12 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 25th January:** Parent Forum (6-7pm)
- **Friday 26th January:** PSHE Dropdown (P1), Science Live Conference
- **Monday 29th January:** Trust Inset Day (school closed to students)
- **Thursday 1st February:** Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Saturday 3rd February:** Primary School STEM Conference
- **Wednesday 7th February:** Year 11 Raising Achievement Evening (appointment only)
- **Thursday 8th February:** Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Monday 12th February:** Year 9 Options Evening (6 – 7.30pm)

- **Monday 19th – Friday 23rd February:** FEBRUARY HALF-TERM
- **Tuesday 27th February:** PSHE Dropdown (P1)
- **Monday 4th March:** Year 11 Trial Exam Week
- **Tuesday 12th March:** Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Monday 18th March:** Year 7-9 in-class assessments begin (4-week window)
- **Thursday 21st March:** Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)

- **Monday 25th March – Friday 5th April:** EASTER HOLIDAY

Parents' Evening Dates (Summer Term)

- **Thursday 23rd May:** Year 8 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 6th June:** Year 8 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)

Teacher Training Days (Summer Term)

- **Monday 29th January**
- **Friday 28th June**

Term Dates (2024/25), as previously communicated, can be found [here](#).

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, I hope this provides all the information that you need as we start the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

D Cleary
Principal



Part of Tudor Grange Academies Trust