

## **Assembly on developing skills**

### **Alex Wallace**

Good morning everyone. I'm sure for the vast majority of you today, you sprang out of bed with genuine delight that once again it's the start of a brand new week here at RGS. This was certainly the case for me when the alarm went off this morning at 6.20am. I leapt out of bed. Kissed my beautiful wife goodbye, got changed in the dark, smashed my leg on the bed, shouted "Sugar and Blast". Tiptoed downstairs in silence for my bowl of Cheerios (what else). I then jumped in my Kia Ceed estate, the Porsche boxster is at the garage again and headed off down the M40.

On my drive I started to consider my Geography lessons for the day, but I must not get too excited when driving so have to have a change of thought. I began thinking about the pressure that many of you students are under with your upcoming exams and continual tests you face. It is really tough on you and you should be commended for all the work many of you do. I started wondering if we give you a really good experience here at RGS and I genuinely think we do. Our overall aim is to surely prepare you for the next stage of your education. In the strictest sense we do this well, because we support you to get the top grades you need to continue your education.

However, I have a slight concern as to whether we are truly preparing you for the real world out there. With this in mind I asked a variety of people who work at school which skills or knowledge they feel are most important to enable them to do their job. I asked teachers, HODs, HOYs, receptionists, cover supervisors, exams officers, the bursar, canteen staff and groundsman. You may be surprised to hear that the following did not come up:

Pythagorus theory

Knowledge of the periodic table

The year Krakatoa erupted

Quadratic equations

Photosynthesis

"Excuse em moi moisture, mais ou est le Bibliotheque"

Don't misinterpret what I am saying, all of these things are very helpful to know, but it is way you have learnt them that is the important skill. I hope that in the process of your education here at RGS you are sub consciously developing all these other attributes you will need in the work place. Here is

a list of what I found out (according to people working at RGS) were most useful skills in the workplace:

- Communication skills
- Ability to think on my feet
- Motivation
- Energy
- Personality
- Able to think in adversity
- Passion
- Enthusiasm
- Ability to present
- Organisation
- Sense of Humour
- Creativity
- Compassion
- Time management
- Delegation
- Flexibility
- Technical Skill
- Charm

I look at this list and it excites me and does not surprise me, I do feel that your staff here create many opportunities to work on these skills. Whether it be in the classroom, being part of the school council, part of a rugby team, attending the Wycombe Abby Management Conference to name but a few.

I do feel all these skills or dispositions as they are sometimes referred to are vital to your future development. It is something I feel very strongly about. These skills will be revisited later in the year in more detail.

When you are sat in your lesson today, I'll bet you have the chance to work on some of these skills, I am sure you will have the opportunity to collaborate, to present, to communicate, to time manage, to demonstrate compassion, to be flexible, to show passion, enthusiasm and energy. It may not be something you have considered before but it is certainly something your teachers will have taken into account when preparing your classes. Maybe your tasks will be undertaken with even more

vigour now you know the value of them. Today and everyday at RGS it is not about the content but the skills you develop when gaining this content. That's the important part of education.