



Royal Grammar School

HEADMASTER'S LETTER



Dear Parent

Between the next three 'Headmaster's Letters' I will start the process of saying 'goodbye' to staff who are leaving. Rather than worry about attrition, I would always urge parents to apply the same principles as in their own profession - sorry though we are to say farewell a) retirement comes to us all, b) promotion is a good and exciting part of career progression and c) relocation often unavoidable.

VALETE

- **Jonny Duchezeau** (PE), **Oliver Todd** (PE) and **Becci Willmott** (Biology) have been graduate trainees who have been placed with us to qualify as teachers. We have enjoyed working with them and they have all added value to the departments in which they trained. Jonny, Ollie and Becci have full time posts in great schools from September.

Finding good, temporary staff (to cover prolonged illness, maternity leave etc) is a real challenge in the current market. We were very fortunate, however, to have been assisted by:

- **Hugh David** – has become fully involved with the life of the School and we are grateful for his flexibility in teaching several subjects
- **Mark Arnold** – regular teacher on our Easter Revision courses, who has taught A level Economics for a year
- **Will Gamester** – recently having completed a doctorate, Will was pleased to return to his 'old school' and cover the maternity leave in Philosophy and Ethics
- **Alan Crease** retired from RGS as a teacher of German a number of years ago and stepped in following the death of Mr Yeates.

I should also like to inform you that Mr Symington is no longer teaching at RGS. We wish him well in his future endeavours. Mr Woolliams will be teaching his classes until the end of term.

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY VISIT JUNE 2018

The ninth annual visit to Brunel University offered around 40 Year 9 boys a unique opportunity to glimpse a full range of diverse and exciting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) related careers. The day started off with team activities in which the boys designed and constructed bridges made from chocolate, with the sections 'welded' together with hot water. Each team's effort was tested under increasing load to destruction. They then programmed small robots to perform specific tasks such as travelling along a pre-determined route. After constructing and racing elastic band powered racing cars, the boys enjoyed a buffet lunch. After lunch, they visited the F1 Motor Sports workshop where some of the current students were building their own racing car, and then a flight simulator in which some of the boys took turns as pilot. The visit was completed by a brief awards ceremony in which the winning teams received prizes for their contributions in the morning team competitions of the day. There are some [photographs](#) of the event on our website.

Headmaster: Philip Wayne

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SPORTS SUCCESS UPDATE

Cricket

So far this term, RGS has competed in well over 80 Cricket matches, with the Year 7 and 8 teams reaching the county cup finals to be played this week. The Year 10 team lost in the county cup final to a strong Stowe side.

We were very pleased to host an MCC match (draw). This was particularly special this year as we were honoured to welcome Sir Gary Sobers to watch the game and to address the players and supporters after lunch. There was also the annual Duncan Moore Memorial Match - OWs v 1st XI. This week our 1st XI are at RGS Lancaster for the (six) RGS Schools' Cricket Festival.

Rowing

At the National Schools' Regatta, Ethan O'Connor and Lewis Howlett, rowing for Henley in the Championship quads, came fifth in the A final - a great result in difficult conditions as although it was sunny, there was a difficult head wind which makes it very hard for a lightweight crew. They also won the Samuel Samuels trophy in the Metropolitan Regatta. In the J16 quads, Hugo Overturf, rowing for Maidenhead Rowing Club, raced to a strong fourth in the B final, coming tenth overall. In the same event, Soren O'Connor, racing a year up in a J16 quad, came eighth overall, rowing for Henley in their B quad, while Seth O'Connor rowing for Henley A quad, won gold in the event, making them National Champions.

We are very proud of Duncan Huntley, who rowed last week at the Great Britain U16 trials, finishing third. Well done!

Tennis

This is a burgeoning sport at RGS thanks to the hard work of Mrs Woodbury and Mr Hammons. This year, we have four Year 7/8 teams and two Year 9/10 teams. This is supported by a very popular after-school coaching session attended by about 35 boys. Our most recent outing was at Wycombe Abbey in which around 30 of our boys and similar number of their girls played in a series of matches including mixed doubles. As far as I know, '30 'Love' only applied to the tennis!

CCF

Lieutenant Commander Greenhough has written about our Navy division's opportunity to stay overnight on HMS Bristol. Please click [here](#) to read the report and to see a photograph of the ship itself.

COMPUTING

Mr Travi informed me that Christopher Finn and Ibrahim Sajid reached the final of the British Informatics Olympiad at the University of Cambridge. Earlier in the year, ten Year 9 boys completed a Saturday morning, five-week intensive programming course at Brunel - our largest number ever, with very positive feedback being received by the School.

EVENTS

Mr Chernov oversees a number of events and he informed me of the following:

- 27 Year 13 boys went to CERN to see the Large Hadron Collider in April
- Four Year 8 boys won gold medals in the STEM Olympics
- 32 Year 7-10 boys and four prefects participated in Maths Battles. The boys went to three tournaments and took first place in one of them.
- Four Year 9 boys are currently involved in a six-week Engineering Masterclass. They are meeting professionals from industry and engaging in challenging hands-on activities.

FRENCH HISTORY TRIP

This annual trip to the battlefields has almost legendary status. I asked Mrs Smith, who leads the trip, to comment on its continued success - she sent me some quotes from parental letters, of which I give a taster here:

'I'm very proud that (my son) goes to a school which has strong values and one which honours its old boys and am appreciative that the teachers that accompanied the boys had lost none of their enthusiasm for making it come alive, despite having run the trip for many years.'

'My son really enjoyed all the aspects of the French History Trip. His description of the memorial service at the graveside of Frederick Youens almost made me cry.'

CHESS

Congratulations to Nakul Nataraj who has won the Southern Gigafinal of the Delancey UK School Chess Challenge. This competition is billed by the organisers as "The worlds largest chess competition". Last year, over 40,000 children from schools and clubs across the UK took part in this event. The first round is called the Megafinal, which is held in each county. Nakul had won the county championship for his age group back in May and had qualified for the Southern Gigafinal which was held over the weekend. He will now be taking part in what is called the Terafinal, where he will be facing the top three players from the midlands and the north of the UK.

Philip Wayne