

## HEADMASTER'S LETTER

27 September 2018



Dear Parent

### OPEN EVENINGS

We held two very successful open evenings this week. Our boys were, as ever, great ambassadors for the School and I received much positive feedback from prospects and their families. I'd like to thank all boys who supported subject departments and who guided families on tours of the school. I had four superb Year 8 speakers this year as you can see in the photograph above and was pleased to be joined also by our Head Boy, Callum Padfield, and Head of Year 7, Mr Rose, who spoke exceedingly well to a full hall on both nights. We will be holding Open Mornings on 16 and 18 October. Please do encourage families to come along to this as it provides the opportunity to see the School operating on a normal working day.

### YEAR 7

I've had my first two rounds of 'Birthday Boys' at which I met students who are celebrating their 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. They were, to a man, confident, articulate and thoroughly enjoying the RGS experience. We are delighted with the response of Year 7 boys. In the first week I thought to myself that it was indeed a pleasure to see self-assuredness and excitement grow as nervousness ebbed away with students peering over each other's timetables establishing the most efficient route to their next lesson, assisted by the elder and more experienced guiding hand of the senior boys.

### BENEVOLENCE

We were very pleased to welcome back Roger Pantridge (Deputy Headmaster 2006-2015), representing the Sunrise Sports charity (for people with disabilities) to whom we, through our own 'branch' of Interact, headed by George Nagle, presented a cheque of £400. We were also delighted to present the Thames Valley Air Ambulance £1,500 in memory of Matthew Hitchman. In both cases, Princes Risborough Rotary Club kindly rounded up the donations to make them even more helpful. This is a good time to remind you all that we do, as a school, aim to support others less fortunate than ourselves through our weekly Benevolent Fund. We have become increasingly cashless, as the index finger on the scanner activates the 'bank of Mum and Dad', but can I ask you to remind your sons to bring a generous handful of change on a Wednesday to help some good causes.

### JEANS FOR GENES

We have Jeans for Genes Day on Friday. To kick-start the annual 'denimfest', Mr Wolton – very ably supported by the J4G Band 2018, performed 'Live forever' (Oasis, 1994) in the annual J4G assembly. We hope that all boys will wear their jeans, with the rest of the uniform as usual, having met the expectation of everyone contributing to the charity.

## WEBSITE

You will, I hope, have seen and used our new website. Having run it for a few weeks, we are now refining some of the layout and content so it may be a week or so before there is any new news. One feature, which you may find useful, is the calendar subscription. Please go to PARENTS – CALENDAR - SUBSCRIBE, which will send your chosen parts of the school calendar to your Outlook (etc) account. You can stay up to speed by following our @RGSHW twitter account.

## MUSIC

There are a number of musical events taking place during the term commencing with the Friends of Music Jazz Evening on 4 October and the Autumn Recital on 17 October. Music is a huge part of RGS. There is significant concern nationally about the dearth of music in state schools. We have a lively department with nearly 200 boys learning the piano at school. We also have six young organists, which is unheard of (though the organ itself can be very much heard!) and, equally rare, there are six double bass players. 25 musicians make up the senior strings section, 45 boys play in the wind band. As for guitar, there is such demand that we cannot accommodate everyone who wishes to learn. What we have noticed is that we have fewer and fewer boys arriving at RGS already playing an instrument. Our Year 7 scholarship scheme (funded by the Foundation) has made a start at bridging this gap, with a number of scholars learning a range of orchestral instruments. I would say to Year 7 parents, now that your son has settled in, do give the Scholarship scheme some thought. Please be in touch with the Music Department if you think your son might benefit from a year's free tuition on an instrument to get him started on his musical journey. CMA is also an important partner to RGS. Their 'Big Noise' music event involving a number of local schools, including RGS, takes place on Friday 19 October. See [CMA website](#) for further details.

## SPORT

Sport is very much underway with some excellent rugby fixtures against Millfield and St Paul's School (London); Eton Fives and Fencing have also had fixtures. Rowing continues to thrive with minibus loads of rowers heading off to the Thames on many days of the week.

## FENCING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2018

One of our Year 11 fencers, Louis Gosling, competed in the cadet (U17) sabre category at the National Fencing Championships, held in Nottingham earlier this month. Louis came through the group stages of the competition before being eliminated in the first knockout round to finish 22<sup>nd</sup> overall.

## JU JITSU

Congratulation to Jaeyen Liam who competed at the Elite Brazilian Ju Jitsu (BJJ) European Championships on 22/9 held in Wolverhampton and won a Gold medal in his division (Teen1/Grey/U65kg).

## OW DINNER

We have had a good response to our OW dinner, which takes place this Saturday. It is an annual event, which has a following amongst a number of year groups. This year, the OW Committee have kindly agreed to support the celebration of the RGS Rugby Centenary, which has attracted other groups this year. We therefore look forward to another great night at RGS in which OWs proudly share their memories of their time at the school. If you know any OWs who are not currently keeping an eye on RGS developments, please point them in the direction of our website where there is a link to the Alumni pages.

## WILKOMMEN, BIENVENUE, WELCOME (and, of course, bienvenido)

We are celebrating the European Day of Languages - of course, such is the excellence of languages at RGS that we need a week to fit it all in. We have had an assembly from Year 13 boys planning to study languages at university, a languages focus through our careers programme, and a Year 7 House competition. The School caterers have themed their offering through a continental menu. There is also a focus on the importance of language study in all junior and middle school language lessons this week.

*Philip Wayne*