

## HEADMASTER'S LETTER 12 October 2020



Dear Parent

It was a pleasure to hold Year 7 assemblies last week, a couple of forms at a time. It gave me the opportunity to formally welcome the boys to the school, to remind them of our expectations, and to give the very clear message that we can, indeed, transform lives here. I told a short story, which I have used many times, about a little boy helping his father weave a carpet in a Marrakech market. The boy was simply passing back the thread, without a care in the world, but the father was very much in charge, carefully placing the needles determining which colours, and where, to create a beautiful pattern. Boys have every opportunity to be the carpet weaver and, supported by us, to create a bright future for themselves. The Deputy Headmaster, Mr Wallace, talked about honesty, integrity, respect and humility as being the values upon which our relationships are built.

Although I shall not be talking about carpet weavers, there will be a similar message to Year 13 this week. Our Year 13 students need to make the most of the extra support that is on offer this year to ensure that they can enter the 'public exam' season with confidence. Nothing should be left to chance as they prepare for their A levels and meeting their university aspirations.

Our new IT team is starting to make some progress. It remains, however, that many teachers are frustrated by the time they have been waiting to get fully 'up and running'. A reminder that Thursday 22 October is now a training day, so boys will not be required to attend school on that day. This is to replace some of the lost time from the start of term for IT training.

I always aim to maintain a 'business as usual' approach; whatever the reason for the disruption our core mission is to educate boys (as we have done for more than 450 years!). Although we have some staff self-isolating, we have thus far been able to adapt with the co-operation of staff and students. We are keeping a constant eye on guidance; Buckinghamshire Council has been offering excellent support through their Public Health department.

A reminder to all parents: do not send your sons into School if they have coughs and temperatures. Apart from the obvious risk to others in our community, it adds to existing anxieties.

We need to maintain a pragmatic balance of keeping RGS safe for its students and employees, maintaining a quality education but also planning for the future. There are few who are not having to make some sacrifices at the present time. I noted with interest the 'Earthshot Prize' created by Sir David Attenborough and The Duke of Cambridge to put back some of the 'positivity' that has been missing from the climate debate. We must remain optimistic - one day, we will be looking back at, rather than being in the midst of, a pandemic.

Congratulations to Gareth Anderson who ran along the Welsh coastal path completing 18 miles of the Virtual Marathon.

With best wishes for continued safety.

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