

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

7 July 2023



Dear Parent

If anything drives me up the wall (and I feel certain my colleagues would say the same) it is the well-meaning jape 'I bet you're all winding down for summer now!' I can only speak for RGS, but nothing could be further from the truth. There is an enormous amount happening and I will try and unpack these in the next couple of letters.

VALETE

We are saying 'good bye' to a number of staff this year.

I'll focus this week's tranche on 'relocations'.

Miranda Stocks has been with us for two years and has been a teacher of English. Her most recent triumph was overseeing the Corporate Journal. Miss Stocks is relocating to Dorset to take up a teaching post at Lycett Minster.

Leanna Roberts, also two years, is a teacher of Biology. We wish her well as she and her family re-locate to China where her husband is taking up a senior post in a school there.

Natalia Fernandez, Head of Spanish, is relocating to Queen Mary's Grammar School in Walsall, West Midlands. Her husband, a medic, is taking up a post in a Birmingham hospital.

Diana Bench, Mathematics, has been with us for five years. Diana also works in Boarding and supports Hockey. Not only is she relocating to Dorset, Bryanston School, but she has achieved a well-deserved promotion as Head of Mathematics.

Luke Pettengell has been with us for six years as a teacher of Chemistry, Head of Year and CCF in CCF. He has a well-deserved promotion as Head of Chemistry and Head of Outdoor Education at The Royal School, Wolverhampton (also a state boarding school). Luke will be joining his fiancé who moved up to the Midlands a couple of years ago. The school will miss his detective skills, too.

Bjorn Rose, Head of Year 7, teacher of History and stalwart of the CCF is relocating, with his family, to Spain after thirteen years of exceptional service. He will be teaching History at an independent, British school in Valencia.

As ever, we are always sorry to say 'goodbye' to colleagues and I wish them well in their new lives and roles elsewhere in the UK and abroad.

A little about Cricket this week. Other sports to follow.

Cricket has gone from strength to strength and we have been very pleased to have hosted our own MCC game and the annual Duncan Moore Memorial Trophy. In all years, there have been successes, the U14s winning the County Cup final and the U15s reaching the final, drawing with Stowe but losing on a super over. Over sixty boys in years 8 and 9 played a final Saturday of Cricket with internal fixtures. The team were praised for their magnanimity in defeat. Our First XI are currently at RGS Colchester for the RGS Cricket Festival (other than the name 'Royal Grammar School' there are no formal links, other than this festival between the schools in Colchester, Lancaster, Guildford, Newcastle and Worcester) but it is a great festival with fine cricket. We are smashing it, at the time of writing.

Craftsman's Art and Music's Measure

We've had a very creative few days. All staff and boys took part in Creative Olympics, last Thursday. This was a great opportunity for departments to work together - for example Art and Spanish made Dia de los Muertos masks, Geography and Chemistry created erupting volcanoes. I feel certain this event will become a hardy annual.

Our Artsfest weekend including an excellent display of student artwork in the Sixth Form Centre, a day of fun with craft stalls, BBQ and live music in the Quad. On the Sunday, we had the annual 'Jazz in the Quad' event, better attendance than ever with a range of jazz and musical theatre performances from our students and staff.

Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award

Duke of Edinburgh Gold Expedition was a challenging 4-day event in Snowdonia that saw 21 Year 12 boys face almost every kind of weather condition. From sunshine, to rain, to hail they trekked across all kinds of terrain from moorland to steep ground, to forest floor and culminated in a successful ascent of Mount Snowdon (1085m) on the final day.

However, in the end that was not their final challenge, as at around 8pm on Tuesday evening having undertaken all but 20 minutes of the 5hr 30min hour journey home, a tyre on the RGS minibus burst 1 mile from the Handy Cross Junction. The boys were terrific following instructions to ensure everyone was safe as they remained on the hard shoulder for around an hour, singing, keeping in good spirits and also reflecting on how they needed to show mental resilience once more in order to surpass this final challenge - something they had clearly learnt from their DofE journey over the weekend.

Medieval Day

This was an excellent day, run by the History Department for Year 7 on Wednesday in which the boys experienced Birds of Prey, Archery, Armoury, Battle of Hastings re-enactment and Medieval cookery - including the most fantastic ginger cake!

Congratulations to James Palin, who interviewed Fifa World Cup Final official, Phil Sharp, for the RGS Gazette.

[Read all about this Football Focus Exclusive here.](#)

RGS entered 10 teams into the 2023 RSC Schools' Analyst Competition last term. The teams were investigating sabotage at a baking competition and putting their Chemistry and problem-solving knowledge to the test in a highly practical series of investigations. Well done to Ibrahim, Jack and Henry who came top of the RGS teams this year.

WELCOME BACK

It was a delight to welcome back last year's Upper Sixth who came to collect their A Level certificates. Having achieved some of the best A Level results in living memory (85 % A*-B, 90 % for boarders), the boys have gone onto a range of fantastic universities and apprenticeships. Following an informal ceremony and a memorable slideshow prepared by Mrs Wallace and Will Baker (from our SLST), we very much enjoyed wine, cheese and canapes in the new Sixth Form Centre. Amongst the celebrations, we had the very poignant moment when the sister of the late Shiv Mistry, who died on holiday last year, collect his certificates marking the stellar grades which would have propelled him into Clare College, Cambridge. The spontaneous, long applause said it all.

Philip Wayne

Headmaster