

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

3 October 2019



Dear Parent

We had a very pleasant evening organised by the Parents' Association for the parents of Year 7 and 8 boys. I was delighted to hear how well boys are settling into routines, working hard and getting involved in school life. It goes without saying that the communication between home and school is pivotal and I would remind all parents that we are here to help, should there be concerns.

I have been over to Fraser Youens, our boarding house, several times since we returned in September. We have a record number of Year 7 boarders as well as some new boys in the Sixth Form. Boarding is a huge asset to RGS and we all value this added dimension to our school life.

Assemblies

Assemblies are another important part of the RGS routine - a great start to the day. The Junior Assembly usually starts with a hymn, accompanied by our Director of Music on the mighty organ (we don't inflict this on the Middle and Senior School until Remembrance Day) followed by a topical address. We've had great talks on our Benevolent Fund (see below), an introduction to the Head Boy and Senior Prefects, the Jeans for Genes band (under the new leadership of Mr Rowe-Elliott), wellbeing and the importance of sleep. This week Mr O'Reilly has been celebrating National Poetry Day with his usual aplomb – enthralling us all with a rendition of a poem by heart.

Year 12 Team Building

We held our annual Year 12 Team building day last week. The boys had some inspirational talks and activities to encourage them to work together as a team and to take on the challenges that come their way with a positive mindset. Many of the themes for the morning were based on the growth mindset ideas set out by the winning formula of the All Blacks.

Benevolent Fund

I'd like to thank our students for their support of the Benevolent Fund in its new format. Our suggested donation of 50p per week combined with the change to one charity per half term has meant that a much more meaningful amount can be sent to charities. We have raised £2,000 so far for Jeans to Genes. A reminder that there is an option to pay £3.50 per half term, if preferred. Benevolence is, of course voluntary. Furthermore, we never wish for families to be embarrassed in the case of hardship so please do not hesitate to contact your son's tutor, in confidence, if it is not possible for your son to participate.

Open Evenings

Our open evenings were very well attended. They are, of course, staged events to promote the School, to local parents and their sons but they also serve as our own celebration of the 'best of RGS'. My thanks to all who took part, especially the speakers Kam Lambert (Head Boy), Tate Bowles and Alexander McKeon. We have our Open Mornings on Tuesday 22 and Thursday 24 October - these are smaller scale events and give prospects the opportunity to see the school in action.

OW's

We have been delighted with the response of Old Wycombiensians to our new [OW website](#). Please do encourage any OWs you know, of any age, to join so that they can stay up to date with events at their former school. We held the AGM of the OW Club last week - it was the best attended for many years. We have been very pleased to welcome back OW Chris Hocking who, after a successful West End career, is now Principal of The Arts Educational School, in London. Another OW, 90 year old Henry Sandon (Antiques Roadshow), hand wrote a beautiful letter about his time at the school and we are very much looking forward to meeting OW Mark Forrester who has enjoyed an illustrious civil service career, including serving two Prime Ministers.

A more recent leaver, Ed Biondini is supporting us in the development of a bespoke Year 12/13 programme. This programme will have the following features:

- An industry recognised coding qualification as the base level; all boys will be expected to do this
- A second tier of programmes, all industry recognised, for those boys who are interested – AI, AR, VR, ML etc.
- A third tier for those boys who are interested in app design etc.

The entire programme will be driven by the boys, such that it can be completed in their own time.

CCF Cadet Skill At Arms Meeting (CADSAAM) - Pirbright Ranges

Over the weekend of 20-22 September 2019, eight cadets from RGS attended the CADSAAM at Pirbright Ranges, Surrey. Run by the Cadet Training Team, the weekend is a competition, pitting teams from CCF Contingents all over the region against each other in a series of shooting matches. The boys shot well considering their lack of practice compared to some other teams who have had considerable experience in competition shooting. The RGS A Team reached the quarter-finals of the falling plate competition, which was a good effort considering the quality of the opposition. Thanks go to Lieutenant Mostyn and Pilot Officer Kirkham for taking the time to drive the boys there and back and spend their weekend sitting around at the back of the range.

Congratulations to:

Our Arkwright Engineering Scholars - there were only 344 awards made in the UK. We have five scholars in total: Ashvin Mahtey, Oliver Littlewood and Raaif Hadadi in Year 13 and Denny Semanaj and Rangeshh Thiyaharajhan in Year 12.

Seth O'Connor who has competed successfully as a rower in the Junior Worlds in Tokyo. The photograph above is Seth, with his (GB and Leander) coach OW James Loveday.

Events

There are many events taking place in the coming weeks - the Friends of Music Jazz Evening tonight, a Musicals Extravaganza involving West End performers, past and present, the PA Quiz night, Comedy Night, Autumn Recital and the opening of the Gym Extension (have you bought a brick yet?). The best place to find detailed information is the 'Parent Letters' [section of the website](#).

Best wishes

Philip Wayne