

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

19 October 2023



Dear Parent

It's the end of the first half of the Michaelmas Term and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole RGS community for their very encouraging start to the Academic Year.

BIRTHDAY BOYS

Students who are new to the school seem to be embracing life very well indeed. I have heard this already in my 'Birthday Boys' celebrations, which take place most weeks around the time of a student's 12th birthday. It is always (in the first few days of the year) a pleasure to see confidence and excitement grow as the initial nervousness ebbs away with students peering over each other's timetables, establishing the most efficient route to their next lesson, assisted by the elder and experienced guiding hand of the more senior boys.

OPEN DAYS

We have had two very busy Open Mornings, comprising an address from me and a short talk from Lucas Roberts (Year 8) and Huw Davies (Head Boy). As ever, we received many compliments about the tour guides who were courteous and knowledgeable. We will be holding a [Sixth Form Open Evening](#) on Tuesday 31 October at 7.30m.

FACT

If you have friends/neighbours quizzing you about RGS, here are some stats which may support what I hope will be your very positive (if not, then please do get in touch) experience of academic, co-curricular and pastoral provision. This may be of help if you are quizzed by parents of Year 6 students this week!

- 1435 boys, 174 staff, 70 boarders
- We are usually full from within catchment on first allocation, though some places may become available at second allocation. It is essential, therefore, to put RGS as first choice if families live beyond the High Wycombe area eg. Bledlow, Stokenchurch, GX and Beaconsfield (unless they have a son here already).
- Last year our boys achieved 77% A*-B at A level; 75% Grades 9-7 at GCSE; 18 boys went to Oxford or Cambridge; 22 boys went off to be medics, dentists or vets (MDVs).
- Our ['Welcome to Year 7'](#) page on the website will tell anyone all they need to know.

LORD LIEUTENANT'S CADET

We were very proud to learn of the appointment of Matthew Yarwood (Year 13 and member of our Senior Prefect Team) as Lord Lieutenant's Cadet. This prestigious role supports Countess Howe, the Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire in her civic and ceremonial duties, which will include royal visits to the area. CSjt Yarwood was installed in this role by Lady Howe at a Civic Reception last week. Many congratulations to him.

CCF

At the weekend, our CCF joined forces with the Royal School, Wolverhampton (where Mr Pettengel now works, hopefully the start of a great partnership between the two contingents) to hold the Initial Recruits Camp for our Year 10 students new to the CCF.

SPORT

I should like to congratulate the following sportsmen:

- Alden Collier (Yr12) – competed in the English Road Racing Association (ERRA) National Relays at Sutton Park on 7 October, achieving an 11:29 time, making him the fastest U17 man at the event (image overleaf)
- 1st XV & U15 rugby – both through to Round 3 of the National Cup
- Ayaan Khan (Yr8) – retained his title in the U13 County Squash Tournament (image overleaf)
- Seb Lescott (Yr7) – competed at the National Schools Southern Indoor Open at Hemel Hempstead - an amazing achievement for a skier who doesn't belong to a club and only skis on family holidays
- Matthew Turner and Samuel Twitchen (J17/Yr 12) have been invited to spend a weekend at the GB Rowing Team's U19 National Development Camp during half term

MUSIC

We were very pleased to welcome the Band of the Household Cavalry to RGS; our own musicians were able to observe a rehearsal and then perform with the band, conducted by our Director of Music, Mrs Jashari. An OW, Seth Blackmore, who left RGS in 2016, studied Classics at university and then joined the Army as a musician, gave an excellent talk on his journey. He is one of the 'State Trumpeters' and performed at the Coronation, amongst other events. Last night, we were treated to a superb feast of music in the Autumn Soiree, from classical to jazz, in an informal cabaret setting.

CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Sport and Music, either jointly or severally, is not for everyone. If your son is not yet involved in an activity, please do share this [link](#) with them (please see the named person in charge for further details). The list is not exhaustive as since the publication of this booklet, several new opportunities have arisen, such as the South Asian Society, the Financial Investments Society, the National Cipher Challenge (cracking and decoding ciphers) and a Kitronik (programming microbits using Python). Those who know me will know that the final two items in the list are very much 'beyond my ken' but I feel certain they will appeal to many.

LIBRARY

I once had the misfortune to play in the orchestra for a regional run of The Music Man in which 'Madam Librarian' is portrayed as a boring, pedantic person, with no sense of humour. Nothing could be further from the truth with our own School Library, which has developed significantly in recent years under the leadership of Hilary Payne. She is assisted by Library Ambassadors who are evangelical about the Library, thurifying with their literary incense wherever they go. Their first Podcast is [here](#).

ACTION YOUR POTENTIAL

We have been delighted with the parental interest and student engagement in the 'Action Your Potential' programme. If you were unable to attend the parent events, please look on the relevant Year Group page of the 'Parent Letters' part of the RGS website, where there is further information about 'Academic Evenings'. I know that the AYP team has been very impressed with your sons and that the programme itself has been helpful to students.

EVENTS

- **Friends of Rugby** - Please do support our [Sportsman's Dinner Auction](#). There are some fantastic prizes in an auction that raises money to support our Rugby Programme.
- **Wine Tasting** - Lloyds Wines, a well-known local wine merchant, is pleased to host this Christmas themed wine tasting at RGS. Anyone who has been to a Lloyds' event before will know that tasting portions are extremely generous and served with delicious snack plates containing unusual cheeses and charcuterie. At this event there will be a focus on festive wines whether it is matching to a celebration dinner or hosting a party [Lloyd's Wine Tasting Event](#).
- **Friends of Cricket** - [Curry Night](#) - with a sumptuous menu to suit all tastes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- Four Year 8 students - Haiyang Sun, Eesah Zaman, Rabi Iqbal and Daniel Mathewl achieved their Bronze Crest Awards last term and have recently received their certificates. This national award recognises over 10 hours of independent scientific planning, research, experimentation, analysis and evaluation on a topic of the students' choice.

With best wishes

Philip Wayne