

2 February 2026

## LEARN TO ROW COURSES 2026

RGS Rowing would like to invite students from **Year 8** to register for our popular **Learn to Row Course**. This provides an introduction to rowing and is our annual entry point to the Club. **Years 9** and above are welcome to apply if they missed the opportunity in Year 8.

Our main **Water Course** is at **Easter**. For those who cannot make Easter, there are some spaces on a course in the summer term. Before Easter we invite all students who would like to learn to row to come to **Land Training**. Land Training will be after school on weekdays, starting after half term until Easter. Land Training enables students to learn the rowing stroke on rowing machines (ergs), to improve their strength before they go on the water and to learn how the boats work. Attending the land training is an important part of the course so students are prepared for the water sessions.

Students wanting to row need to be competent swimmers and will need to take a **swim test**. Please encourage your child to improve their swimming in advance of the test.

The **Rowing Courses** at **Easter** take place at [Jubilee River Riverside Centre](#) near Eton. We run sessions both weeks of the Easter holiday, so there is an opportunity to fit in other activities. For those attending courses in the school summer term this will be based at our site in Marlow near Gossmore Recreation Ground. Courses are run in small groups, with a high coach to rower ratio to a high safety standard.

We ask for a donation of **£195** for the course including the land training. Payment will be requested once we have allocated spaces. We have a practical limit on spaces at the Easter course and work hard to accommodate as many students as possible. Applications received on or before Friday 13th February will be considered first.

Students who want to continue with rowing are invited to join the Club as improvers in the summer term. Students will be allocated to a regular weekly session; this could be a weekday or weekend. There will be a request for a donation (£120) for joining the improvers in the summer. You don't need to decide about this until after the course.

To sign up to the Learn to Row Course, please complete the form [HERE](#) or send the answers to the questions below to [Wendy Goodier](#) (Club Manager) by **Friday 13th February**.

1. Name of Student, year and house
2. Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s)
  - a. Email address
  - b. mobile number
3. Availability after school for Land Training, please select all possible days:  
Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday
4. About the Water Course, please select all possible courses:  
Easter week 1: 30<sup>th</sup> March – 3rd April/Easter week 2: 6th - 10th April/Summer Term Weekends
5. We know students enjoy being in friendship groups. Please tell us of any other students your child might like to learn with.
6. Anything else we should know or you would like to know:

Late applications are welcome but will be handled after the first round of allocations.

We would not like any student to be prevented from going on a trip for purely financial reasons. If your child qualifies for Pupil Premium and you would like to request support, please contact Mr Sheehan, Assistant Head ([gds@rgshw.com](mailto:gds@rgshw.com)). If you otherwise feel that the cost involved is prohibitive, please be assured that the school operates a Financial Assistance Programme and dedicated funding may be available to assist you. Please contact Mr Sheehan in strictest confidence to discuss this support. If this is a Sixth Form trip/event, please use the term bursary instead of PP (PP only for Y7-11)

Please also see the [Terms & Conditions policy](#) for CoCurricular trips, visits and events.

## **FAQs**

### *What will they learn?*

The land training will prepare students for the water sessions and mean they can get going from Day 1. Students will use ergs to learn the rowing stroke and improve their strength. The land training will prepare them to go out in “floaty boats” on the Jubilee River. Each student will be able to make progress at their own speed. At the end of the sessions they will take part in a mini-regatta including competitions to demonstrate skill and speed.

### *Do they need to be able to swim?*

Yes, capsizing can happen. Learn-to-row boats are designed to resist capsizing, so it is less common at first. We will conduct swim tests before the course begins.

### *What should they wear?*

Students need to wear layers and tight-fitting clothes. Sports kit with leggings and a training top or waterproof will be fine. It doesn't have to be RGS kit, especially as the course is over a series of days.

### *Why is the Easter Course at Jubilee River?*

The Jubilee River is over towards Eton, south of the M4 and near Slough. It is part of the flood relief scheme so has a managed flow and is sheltered from the winds. The Riverside Centre we use provides all the equipment and facilities we need.

That's a long way when you row in Marlow you might think, which is true, but we can't predict the weather or the flow of the river. Our experience is that students develop fastest this way. When they do get on the river, they are in a good place to improve. Additionally, using the Jubilee River means we are far more likely to be able to run the course.

### *Who will be coaching?*

Our team of coaches is led by George Staden (Head of Rowing) and include high-performance athletes.

### *Is transport provided?*

Parents will be required to provide transport to/from the course, however, in planning the times of the sessions we will try and co-ordinate lift shares.

### *Does rowing just take place during the summer?*

Many people are surprised to learn that rowing is a year-round sport. Competitions take place nearly every weekend across the country, with training sessions held most days both on water and land after school. When daylight allows, students are transported to and from water sessions in school minibuses.

### *My child does lots of sports, how can we fit in another one?*

Once your child is an improver, we will do our best to get to know them and their other sporting activities. We do our best to match our sessions to availability. We have students rowing who do many sports at the school and for local clubs.

### *I didn't know there was rowing at RGS?*

There has been rowing at RGS since 1954/55. Originally the Club rowed at Marlow Rowing Club but we now operate near Gossmore Recreation Ground, alongside Sir William Borlase and Great Marlow School. The Club has more than 80 students, including girls, rowing across Years 9-13 with a team of paid dedicated coaches. We have an active Friends of Rowing who organise fundraising events and support the Club at races. We will be delighted to welcome you to get involved.