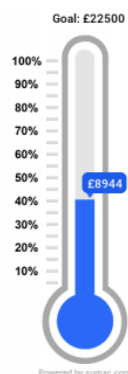


HEADMASTER'S LETTER 15 March 2021



Dear Parent

RGS PA CROWDFUND

You will have seen in the Deputy Headmaster's Thursday letter that the PA has launched a CrowdFund to raise £22500 for RGS. The School has lost a significant revenue stream due to the Coronavirus pandemic, including reduced fund-raising capacity, commercial activities and lettings. The School relies on this income to provide the breadth of opportunities for our boys for which we are renowned and which enables our students to experience an exceptional education. The money raised will be used to:

- replace outdated IT infrastructure with the latest "fit for purpose" equipment for all boys to benefit from across many subjects; and
- provide "all-weather" outdoor dining facilities for the boys to use at break and lunchtime, throughout the year

As you can see from the 'thermometer', this campaign, which was launched only two working days ago, has had a terrific start. Thank you so much to those who have, so far, donated and to the Parents' Association for taking the lead on this. I hope all parents will feel that they would like to join me in supporting this campaign. Maybe you know OWs who would wish to contribute too. There is more about the initiative [here](#).

Don't forget most gifts will benefit from 25 % gift aid; higher rate tax payers can also claim tax relief - an example from the HMRC website:

'You donate £100 (to the PA Crowdfund); they claim Gift Aid to make your donation £125. You pay 40 % tax so you can personally claim back £25.00 (£125 x 20 %).

TESTING TIMES

Many thanks to you all for being so supportive of the Lateral Flow Testing process which has helped us to get up and running (see below). My heartfelt thanks to staff, parents and other volunteers who staffed the 'field hospital' thus ensuring the process ran like clockwork throughout the week.

I am very sorry that some Year 11 boys now have to self-isolate. The scenario was that one of our students tested positive in the LFT, but negative in a following PCR test. The guidance, below in italics, is clear, but does not enable our aim to have students in school when there is no logical reason for them to be at home. I know that organisations which represent Heads are raising this with the DfE this week as it will cause widespread, unnecessary disruption. We will update parents as soon as we have any news to share on this issue.

'If a pupil or student received a supervised school-based LFD test, as part of the rapid asymptomatic testing programme, and it was positive then they and other members of their household must self-isolate. PCR testing is not advised if you have received

a positive result from an LFD test at a school or college test site. If a parent was to do this and it returned a negative result, the policy remains that the pupil or student, their close contacts, and other members of their household must still self-isolate.

As you can see, the process following a test in school is different from those you might conduct at home. We would appreciate your continuing to support the LFT process by testing your sons at home. Should your son have a positive LFD test **at home, he should book a PCR test and if this is negative, he can then come back into school.** Please communicate throughout this process with attendance@rgshw.com so that we can best support our community.

GOOD TO BE BACK

It will not surprise you to hear that staff are so looking forward to welcoming your sons back to School. Our prime concern is to ensure the School is safe and very quickly bounces back to provide the face to face educational experience that we all expect from RGS. The vast majority of boys have worked really well during this lockdown and should be proud of their achievements.

A few points:

- I am fairly confident hand-washing, sanitising and mask-wearing have become second nature and we will have high expectations of your sons in supporting us in maintaining a safe, healthy environment.
- The School has robust risk assessment processes in place - the RA is on the website, should you wish to see it.
- We will understand if your son is not in perfect uniform (outgrown items etc) though please do what you can to send him to school smartly and aim to resolve any outstanding matters as soon as is reasonable. With hairdressers and barbers still closed, I will sing my rendition of 'Barnet Fair' later on in the term!
- We have a handful of teaching staff who are identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable; they will be teaching online from home with cover staff supervising students in the classroom.
- We are aware that, for some, the return to school will bring challenges of various sorts. We are here to help, please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of help.

The most important point is that we look forward to being a vibrant community once again. We are a people organisation whose 'product' is the nurturing of able, confident and compassionate gentlemen through the work of talented and committed staff, underpinned by stellar support from home.

ASSESSMENTS

I will not go into detail about assessment processes in my letters - there are senior staff dealing with this and they will communicate regularly. I fully understand this is a tremendously stressful time for, in particular, Years 11 and 13 and that communication is key. The Bucks Grammar School Heads are working closely together, sharing good practice, but there is no 'one size fits all' and decisions are made ultimately by Heads in the interests of their own students. This means different schools may have come to a different conclusion on a particular issue, for which there is often 'no right answer'. I would also add that the coming weeks are going to be exceptionally busy for staff who are essentially being asked to do the work of the examination boards in marking huge amounts of student work in a short timeframe. I would ask you to bear this in mind when communicating with your son's teachers. Please be assured that they are all committed to supporting your son to achieve the grades he deserves.

FUTURE EVENTS

As the country comes back to life, we are quite excited about a number of planned events.

- Next Saturday, there is a nifty [FRORGS St Patrick's Day Quiz](#), timed to follow on from the Ireland v England game - let's hope we'll be in good spirits!
- The [Sushi Night](#), organised by the PA, sold out last time so this is a repeat performance.
- There is an [Easter Cricket Camp](#), with something for all years
- The Music Department are ringing up the curtain with plans for concerts, singing a service of Choral Evensong and the planned show 'In the Heights' - so rehearsals will be commencing soon.
- We are continuing for a further three weeks to run the Co-curricular Music and PE challenges – look out for comms
- Next weekend we are thrilled that 120 boys can take part in 'Covid-safe' Duke of Edinburgh Award practice sessions.
- We have [dates booked in the Autumn Term](#) for the Sportsman's Dinner (many tables sold already), the Bat Oar Ball and the Gin Evening. We hope that we shall be able to hold our Iftar later in the year, also.

With my very best wishes to you all and thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely

Philip Wayne