

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

12 July 2021



Dear Parent

I was beginning to worry last week that the wheels were coming off – we had an increase in cases and associated self-isolation resulting in many boys and staff not being in School. My thanks to Mrs Forster and Mrs Wyncoll who have given many hours at evenings and weekends to the 'track and trace' process. Parents who have had to collect their sons from trips (and in some cases returning them after a negative result) have been very cooperative and understanding of the School doing its job. Let us in the final week of school, when we should have most boys back, exercise great caution to ensure that whatever holiday plans we have are not disrupted.

VALETE

Today I say goodbye to:

Dan Pettifer who joined the School as Head of PE and, subsequently, took on the role of Director of Sport. A passionate sportsman and sports educator, I wish Dan and his family well in their relocation to Somerset where he will commence a Director of Sport role in Taunton.

Jo Holdsworth joined in 2015 as an English teacher and has been the Head of Department this year. Jo has also led our programme for trainee and newly qualified teachers – under her guidance, new entrants to the profession receive expert guidance. I wish Jo every success in her well-deserved promotion to Assistant Head at Beaconsfield High School

There will be one more round of 'goodbyes' in my Thursday letter.

PRIZEGIVING

We could not, of course, hold our usual Prize Giving ceremony this year, but we are very pleased that the recording will be 'live' on Tuesday 13 July commencing at 7.30pm. Our guest speaker is OW Fergus Walsh, the BBC Medical Editor. He had been due to come in person this year and last, but has very kindly recorded a message for us to enjoy.

ACTIVITIES

Although, as above, there have been some comings and goings, it has been very pleasing to see trips and activities running, with appropriate measures in place. If you follow the School Twitter account @RGSHW, you will see lots of photos and comments about some of the events. This includes year group residentials, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and Jazz in the Quad. A choir event should be taking place later in the week, all things being equal.

UNIFORM

After my initial clampdowns when I first arrived, the uniform and Sixth Form variations have been adhered to, resulting in students who dress with pride. Things have, unsurprisingly, slipped during the past twelve months and, if nothing else, there have been more pressing priorities. You will shortly receive the uniform regulations which cover everything from blazers to shoes. I will expect every student to be smart in September. Please pay particular attention to shoes – black for all years (never brown in town!) and not styles that in any way resemble trainers. We acknowledge the cultural sensitivities and, within reason, individuality around hairstyles, and ask that haircuts are seemly, not extreme (the interpretation of which I shall be the arbiter if necessary) in terms of length and most certainly no shaved patterns or unnatural colouring. (Any Fodenism must have been cured by September!). Thank you for your support. The key is to keep it simple, with narrow boundaries – this avoids unnecessary conversations and distractions from what teachers are here to do.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Year 12 Chemists who entered the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge. RGS students collected six Gold (top 10%), five Silver (top 29%) and thirteen Bronze awards (top 62%) in the national competition based on a challenging written paper. Over 7,200 students entered the competition.

Teachers who have completed their NQT: Dr Gillian Webb, Jim Graham, Adam Powrie, David Green. And well done to Zakiya Genders and Suzan Byrd who have had a very successful first year of their two-year induction.

Yours sincerely

Philip Wayne