

8 July 2021

Dear Parents,

Firstly, what a performance last night. I am delighted that Gareth Southgate is receiving much of the praise for the success. He typifies all the values which we hold dear at RGS; Honesty, Integrity, Humility and Respect. It is these pillars, which we strive to instil in all our young men. You get that right and rest takes care of itself.

It is with great sadness that this is my final newsletter as Deputy Headmaster at the RGS. The Headmaster will deliver the news on both Monday and Thursday next week.

Eerily quiet

It has been quite a strange week without Year 10, 11, 12 or 13 on site. The School has felt relatively empty as many other year groups are also embarking on trips. I have been hugely impressed with our Educational Visits Team who have worked incredibly hard to try and give these students every chance to still get away. It has been a challenge and those on the trips have had to be both flexible in their preparation for the trip and adaptable in their time away.

It is peaceful within the walls of the school (that might just be relative to having two days this week looking after my 3 isolating children!), but I miss the hustle and bustle of a busy school. I like being able to greet the boys in the corridor, or pop out to a cricket fixture and maybe even join a trip for a day or two.

It is not the usual end of year and that is a great shame. However, I would like to commend the work of the "Covid Team" who have worked tirelessly over the last 18 months and will continue to do so. Indeed, it appears the Government are asking us to test all pupils on their return in September, not the "normal" return we were hoping for. We will, as ever, follow the guidance and more details will come out for September.

Staff have once again been impressed with the online engagement of those pupils in Year 10 and Year 12. We look forward to welcoming you back.

Reminder

We want to get to the end of term with as little disruption as possible. If your son is showing any covid symptoms, including, a sore throat, runny nose, headache or sickness, please do not send him into school.

New recruits

We met the new Year 7s in an online meeting last night. I really hope this is the last time we have to do such an event. I must admit, I still thoroughly enjoyed seeing the new starters, clearly excited and rightly proud to be joining the RGS in September. We finished the event with a quick Q and A with some current students and you could sense the parents thinking "I want one of them!". This year has taught us to be flexible and this was just another example of us having to adapt.

This will be the case next Tuesday with Prize Giving moving online as per last year. Please do join this event at 7.30pm by clicking on the School website (www.rgshw.com) and following the link.

Missing out

Despite our very best efforts to keep things running, students have still missed out on a number of events over the year. I hope that for those still with us next year, they will throw themselves into even more activities to make up for lost time. Staff too have missed out. The hugely anticipated staff tennis and BBQ has had to be cancelled, as has the end of term celebration. I hope these important staff bonding events return to the calendar in the future! They truly deserve them.

Many thanks

Finally, it has been a real privilege to have spent the last 14 years at the RGS. I will leave with incredible memories of staff, pupils and parents. Despite the last 18 months, I believe this to be the strongest staff (both teaching and support staff) I have had the privilege to work with. The lads have inspired and motivated me to always do my very best. They are brilliant “clients” and I will miss their humour and support. The Headmaster and his new team will no doubt continue to develop the most wonderful educational experience for your son. We cannot offer what we do without the kind and generous support that you provide. The way you guide your sons and support the School allows us to flourish. You have been great company (not just at the Bat Oar Ball!), thank you.

I first came across the school in a South West Under 18 rugby side. Twelve of the team were from RGS and I remember thinking that it must be a pretty special school. It has been better than I could ever have imagined.

With fondest regards and very best wishes for the future,

It's coming home!

Alex Wallace
Deputy Headmaster