

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

10 May 2021



Dear Parent

There is a positive case in Year 9, backed up by a PCR, which has resulted in a score of boys being asked to self-isolate. All affected families have been informed.

The news is looking very positive and I am sure we are all enjoying the re-integration of freedoms into our lives. It is not over yet, and I would urge us all within the school community to keep our distance, sanitise our hands and to remember the twice weekly Lateral Flow Testing (which I know is an unpleasant experience and does seem to be becoming less of a regular activity across the country).

As Half Term approaches, may I remind all families to take heed of the guidance, avoiding travel where possible so that our community is safe on its return.

Although the guidance may change, I am not in any rush to review the wearing of masks at this stage. Staff and students were very co-operative before compulsion and I am very keen to get through the assessments for Years 11 and 13 as well as the 'End of Year Exams' for the rest of the school, without hiccup.

Student Success

Following on from the Senior Prefect Appointments, Fraser Youens House has now appointed their own leadership group. Leo Pennant and Xavier Davies have been appointed to these roles - they are picture above with Deputy Head Boy Will Evans and Senior Prefect Ben Taylor. They are pictured above, in that order, with Jon Scourfield, Assistant Head/Head of Boarding, proudly in the background. The School will soon be appointing the new Heads of House, offering further leadership opportunities.

I was delighted to meet George Risness, Jai Singh, Jeremy Simmonds and Harry Watson to commend them on being awarded 100 or more House Points. A modest gift of an RGS pen (with iPad stylus) and a Twix was theirs! I know that a number of Year 7 boys have made the 'century' and shall look forward to seeing them soon.

Activities

The Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions have taken place this weekend. Do take a look at @RGSHWTrips for some fabulous photographs. Many thanks to the staff who have supported this over the weekend. Some boys, due to self-isolation, have been unable to participate but thanks to a supportive approach from our DofE provider, these boys will be able to complete their Bronze Expedition at a later date.

I had hoped to write a little about cricket, but rain has been stopping play. Again, Twitter to the rescue here, the Cricket staff are very good at keeping us up to speed. You may also like to take a look at our Cricket website.

The lack of a river does not seem to hinder the growth of Rowing at RGS, with the Club's starting point being 62 members. Our Easter course was oversubscribed, with 60 boys learning to row and a waiting list of 20 being offered the chance later in the term. This means that the Club will have doubled in size, to 124 enrolments, by the Summer season. Rowing is almost entirely parent funded and our boys would not get the opportunities without the efforts of the professional coaches, the Friends of Rowing Committee and Dr Wendy Goodier (whose sons both rowed but are now at university) whose sterling work holds the whole thing together.

It was a joy to pop into to a treble rehearsal (treble is a boy chorister who sings the 'tune') before School last week. Around 60 of them will form the top line in our choir of around 120 who will be singing Choral Evensong at an Oxford University chapel later in the year. It was, perhaps, a sign of the times that so few of the boys knew 'Jerusalem' before they started, though the leadership of the Director of Music made sure that was not the case for long!

Old Wycombiensiens

Saif Zaib features on our Cricket website and has just scored his maiden century. [Here](#) he is, justifiably pleased with himself. At the age of 16, Saif achieved the individual festival school record of 230 runs in a game, which formed part of his record breaking 476 runs during the 2014 RGS Cricket Festival. Northants soon offered him a three-year professional contract, and ahead of the 2015 season he shone for England's Under-17 against Pakistan U-17 in Dubai, scoring three successive half-centuries. Many congratulations!

Mark Hopwood was a student at RGS in the 1980s; he ran the Model Railway Club (now in the sidings of our memory) and was a library prefect. Passionate about railways, he secured a graduate post with (the then) British Rail. Undertaking a number of operational roles he has worked his way up to be Managing Director of Great Western Railways. He was delighted to come back to RGS and showed great interest in its future prospects.

Careers Bulletin

Do take a look at our excellent [Careers Bulletin](#) which contains lots of information for students and parents.

PA Prize Winners

A huge thank you to all those who donated to our Crowdfund. Congratulations to the prize winners – click [here](#) to view.

Finally

Years 11 and 13 have their final week of face to face teaching this week before they start study leave. It has been a very difficult time for young people, particularly in these year groups. I wish all boys a very productive study leave in preparation for assessments. Please do not hesitate to get in touch; I shall write a further tribute to leavers later in the summer.

Yours sincerely

Philip Wayne