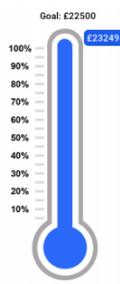


HEADMASTER'S LETTER 27 March 2021



Dear Parent

YOUR GENEROSITY - thank you

Firstly, a huge thank you to all who have continued to donate generously to RGS this year. Whether this be through 'Friends of' groups, whose funds support specific sports and music activities or the many one-off donations, your support has been greatly appreciated. The Annual Fund serves a more general but absolutely vital purpose. I cannot sufficiently thank those who give generously to this fund month after month and I shall write to individual donors towards the end of the year. It has been a pivotal part of our income this year. Then, there is the Parents' Association. A few weeks ago, the RGS PA responded to my request for school financial support with the offer to run a CrowdFund campaign. Within a fortnight, the target of £22,500 has been exceeded. This is truly magnificent and I am immensely grateful to those who have joined me in supporting this campaign. Thank you. On Sunday morning, when I am writing this letter, the stats are: £23,249 plus £5028.50 gift aid, plus a £500 business donation. This means a total of £28,777.50 will be made available to provide facilities for your sons. I have one final request, however. This has been achieved by 306 generous supporters. How fantastic would it be if I could report back later in the week, especially to those who have already given, that EVERY family had been able to donate something? A further 1,000 donations of just £10 would add, with gift aid, around £12,000 to the total, resulting in a £40,000 much needed boost to the School's finances. It is possible to [donate](#) anonymously, if that is preferred. However you have given, thank you.

As we approach the Easter break, I renew my thanks to you all for your support this term. It has been challenging all round but really good to see RGS up and running again. Attendance has been high, co-operation between home and school spot on as ever, the boys courteous, purposeful and engaged. I remain aware that this has been particularly tough for Years 11 and 13 who have been going through assessments and for staff who have had to turn their marking around very quickly.

LOOKING FORWARD

Being "of a certain age" I went for my vaccine last week - apart from a little tiredness, no ill effects fortunately. Whilst not fearing injections, I don't particularly look forward to them either. This was different - it was almost exciting to have that shot in the arm towards more normal times. Add to this, both at home and work, the events being planned together with the prospect of some warm weather in the coming days, I have huge amounts of optimism for the remainder of the school year and the next.

Trips have been a key part of the offering at RGS. You will have read last week that the Duke of Edinburgh Award is underway. We also have some UK residential experiences planned for the late Summer Term including 'Tall Ships' for Sixth Formers (a sort of modern day 'Onedin Line' experience), Survival Skills in Scotland for the upper school, beach activities for the middle school and a 'Wilderness' activity for Year 7. All run by specialists who will follow the relevant Covid restrictions, whatever they may be. Please keep an eye on comms in the coming weeks.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 31 March: Treasure Hunt
- 27 June: Jazz in the Quad
- 14/15 July (tbc): Evensong in Oxford
- 7 – 10 July: Musical
- 16 September: Sportsman's Dinner
- 16 October: Bat Oar Ball

ATTENDANCE

Although attendance remains high, we have seen a number of parents taking their boys out of School for extended visits abroad.

Whilst the School sympathises that the last year has been difficult for families split over different countries, may I please remind parents that school attendance became mandatory again from 8 March 2021, and that it is parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school. All schools are bound by very tight government guidelines and, unfortunately, travel to see family does not fall within these. These absences cannot, therefore, be authorised. We are also concerned about the current fluidity of borders, and the possibility of our students becoming stuck abroad.

I will only oblige our teaching staff to provide remote education to students who are unable to attend School because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus.

SOCIETY

We pride ourselves on being a respectful, tolerant community. I think we are all aware that, following the murder of Sarah Everard, respect for women by men has become a point of discussion. The tragedy has galvanised young people to speak openly about the impact of sexual harassment and abuse within society. We have, as parents and schools, a responsibility to educate our boys in these matters. With this in mind, I thought it important to let you know that we are already exploring this topic with our student body, to begin with via form time activity.

GOOD VALUE #buildingbackbetter

The pandemic has caused all organisations to examine their practices and to be agile in changing circumstances. Improvements we have been able to make in digital provision, 'things' we have done differently and often better, other areas which have suffered due to lack of personal contact – these have been items of discussion over the last few months. RGS must and, indeed, will come out of this stronger – we will shortly be talking to staff, boys and parents about what they value most about what RGS offers. It will be a 'tight' request, ie not a survey about what we do well/less well and what folk wish we did or didn't do, simply what they value most. This will give us the chance to prioritise effectively as we move into a new era.

HAPPY EASTER

If you celebrate it, I wish you a very Happy Easter. Following the events of Holy Week, Easter Day is a joyful day for Christians. I think everyone is looking forward to the 'secular resurrection' where life will start to get back to normal. It should do soon!

Yours sincerely

Philip Wayne