

Dear Parents and Boarders,

I hope that everyone has enjoyed the first weeks of the academic year. The first half term has of course had its challenges, as Covid has once again managed to have an impact on many in boarding and main school. I hope that those who have had to miss any school have managed to stay on top of their work via Teams. We have managed to get in some great activities before the Autumnal weather set in this week and this finished with a Halloween extravaganza on our final night of the half term. It is lovely to see so many smiles on faces and our new Year 7 students have been very impressive in the way they have settled in.



**Boarding trip – Team building and challenges in the sunshine**

It was brilliant to arrange the pub walk last term and even more so to have a boarding trip at Longridge on the Thames, for those that attended the sun was shining and the boarders had a great day. Life should not just be about academic schoolwork and I would like to thank so many of our Sixth form students for helping to support the Boarding Activities.



**Activities at the start of term**

We have recently launched RGS Boarding Instagram account [rgshw\\_boarding](#) and will have content from both staff and boarders. Please follow us on this and our twitter feed. These have replaced our Boarding Blog and I hope that this will soon include a few pics and a story from our end of term Halloween Extraganza.



**Halloween fun at the end of half term**

I would also like to congratulate all our ‘Border of the Week’ winners who have chosen meals of the week this half term. They are Noah B, Raymond, Xavier D, Alex D, Vandan, Toby and Jonathan and they have been awarded for a huge variety of things including, helping other students settle into boarding life, RGS Musical, academic excellence,

CCF, most achievement points in house and participation and attitude on the boarding trip. Please encourage your sons to let us know about their successes both in and out of school as we would like to celebrate with them. This half term the race to win boarding merits competition is very close led by Year 8, just ahead of Year 10.

With regards to Phones, iPads and laptops. Please ensure that your son has only one phone and Ipad within boarding and we would not recommend boarders below Yr 11 having a laptop in addition to a phone and iPad as the temptation to play games and spend a lot of time online is too great. We have invested in an Oculus, as you can see below and it is great to see the boys socialising in a different way using the VR platform. Next half term we will be having a particular focus on the use of social media and online behaviours. It would be hugely helpful if parents have had a discussion with their son's regarding this. This is particularly the case for anyone using Whatsapp, Snapchat and Instagram.



**Junior Boarders enjoying a bit of virtual reality**

In terms of the pandemic you will be aware that within boarding we have moved to testing three times a week on a Sunday before return, Wednesday and Fridays. We will continue with this after half term in the hope that we may pick up any potential cases quickly and it will therefore reduce the risk of any spread and students missing more time from school. Please do continue to test on a weekend before returning to boarding.

#### **Upcoming Important Dates**

Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> Oct RGS finishes at 1500 – Boarders can be collected from 1500 onwards. FYH closes at 1900

Monday 1st Nov – FYH reopens from 1900.

Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov – RGS restarts after half term.

Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Nov Boarding Exeat – FYH closes at 1900

Sun 21<sup>st</sup> Nov Boarding reopens at 1900 after boarding exeat.

I hope you all have a great half term.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J I Scourfield'.

J I Scourfield (Assistant Head/Director of Boarding)