

HEADMASTER'S LETTER

4 July 2024



Dear Parent

VALETE

We say goodbye to:

Mr Richard Atkin who is retiring after 21 years overall (with a short break of teaching for two years, elsewhere). A passionate mathematician and cricketer, he has been a highly respected teacher and form tutor.

Mr Phil Bastow, who, as Head of Economics, has run a most successful department supporting students to attain high grades, year-in year-out. He is also responsible for running our renowned Easter revision Courses and giving the occasional, but quite exceptional jazz piano recitals. Retiring after 24 years at RGS, Mr Bastow will, however, be returning in September on a part time basis as a classroom teacher and will continue to lead the Easter Revision Courses.

DIRECTOR OF SIXTH FORM

Mr Steve Noyes is stepping down as Director of Sixth Form from September. He has overseen exceptional Sixth Form provision at RGS and has provided first class pastoral care to students. Thank you, Mr Noyes. I am very pleased that Mr Noyes will continue as a teacher of French next year.

ARTSFEST

Last Saturday, the sun was shining on Artsfest, our annual celebration of creativity and talent at the RGS. Visitors enjoyed walking through the large art exhibition set up in the Sixth Form Centre, ranging from Year 7 ink drawings, Year 8 cardboard models and even Year 9 stop motion animations on the large screen. The exhibition included impressive work from the current GCSE and A Level students who demonstrated an extraordinary dedication to the subject. The variety and quality of work from all our students delighted and surprised those who attended. Our new Junior Arts Ambassadors encouraged creative participation with an interactive graffiti wall and even created special effects injury makeup on attendees - a real sight to see!

On the main stage, Music and English had a jam packed line up of musical and artistic talent. We were treated to poetry readings from Year 7 to Year 12, each one grabbing the attention of the audience and performing a mixture of original and celebrated work. The readings were interspersed with toe tapping performances from rock bands and several solo performances. If that wasn't enough, we were treated to classic songs such as Whitney Houston's 'I Have Nothing', from attendees competing in our very popular karaoke competition. Providing refreshment, the wonderful RGS PA kept our energy levels up with delicious barbecue food, cakes and Pimms! As Artsfest drew to a close, visitors left brimming with inspiration and immensely proud of the talent at the RGS.

POEM

I was particularly taken with a [poem](#), beautifully written and performed by George Startup. George has, very kindly, given me permission to publish it. Enjoy.

JAZZ IN THE QUAD

The sun was slightly more capricious for Jazz in the Quad on Sunday, but the chillier afternoon was more than compensated for with revellers enjoying jazz and pop items performed by a range of ensembles including the choirs, Close Harmony, Mini Close Harmony, junior and senior jazz and swing bands.

BEER AND TOUCH RUGBY FESTIVAL

We had a wonderful afternoon at the Beer and Touch Rugby Festival. After a hard fought draw, the Staff retained the trophy for the fourth year running. Many thanks to FRORGS (Friends of Rugby at RGS) for running the barbecue and bar, the staff for a well run event, players for their sportsmanship and spectators for their support and encouragement. This was, most definitely, a showcase of the RGS sporting community at its best.

CHORAL EVENSONG

I am writing this letter on the train having had the pleasure of accompanying (both the trip and by playing the organ) for our Chamber Choir who sang Choral Evensong at Birmingham Cathedral, conducted by Mr Chitham-Mosley. It was a trip down Memory Lane for both of us as Mr Chitham-Mosley was a chorister there and I played there a number of times when I lived in the area. I am so pleased that we are able to give our boys the opportunity to sing beautiful music in a great acoustic. It was, in my view, a personal best for the Choir who sang with accuracy, poise and enthusiasm.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Daniyal Hussain who competed in the U13 Foil event at The England Youth Championships (Fencing). He was the only Fencer representing RGS and, as a Year 8, was the youngest ever to do so. His first year of Fencing, he faced tough opposition from those with more experience but more than held his own. Well done!

Ben MacDougal, Year 9, who achieved Gold in his age group at the South East Open Water Swim Championships. He has qualified for Swim England National Age Group Open Water Championships

Rowers - our three Quads put in outstanding performances at the Henley Regatta with one crew narrowly missing out on the top five of the Fawley Challenge Cup by placing 6th. The other two crews were placed 14th and 26th in a strong field of 48 boats. Well done!

I was very pleased to receive news from the Office of Countess Howe, His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, that she has appointed Cadet Serjeant Luke Poulton (Y12) as Lord Lieutenants' Cadet for 2024-25. This is a great honour and I feel certain that Luke will perform his duties splendidly.

With best wishes.

Philip Wayne