

HEADMASTER'S LETTER
23 October 2024



Dear Parent

VALETE

Thanks to Mr Phil Bastow for staying on for a few weeks, following his retirement in the Summer. I am pleased that Mr Bastow will continue to run our legendary Easter Courses.

Charlie Girdler-Maslen has been a Sports Grad and has worked with us since May 2023. He has made a very valuable contribution to the Sports team and we wish him well as he pursues a career with Ealing Trailfinders.

RUGBY SUCCESS

The 38th Annual St Joseph's College National Schools Rugby Festival took place this weekend with sixteen top teams from England, Ireland and Scotland competing for the prestigious De La Salle Trophy. Only RGS was a school in the state sector. In 2023, our Senior squad reached the Trophy final, only losing out to Kirkham Grammar in the final moments of the game. This year our squad consisted of many of the same players alongside regular 1st and 2nd XV players from Year 11 and 12. Our squad arrived unbeaten this year and in flying form ready to take to the pitch against our Group 3 opponents Denstone College, QEGS Wakefield and Brighton College and finished Day One top of the group having superbly maintained their unbeaten status. Day Two kicked off at 10am with the Trophy Quarter Final game against the hosts, St Joseph's, which saw us through to the Semi Final against Wellington College, also unbeaten in the competition. A win in that game took us to the Final against newcomers and Saturday's inaugural U15 winners, St Michael's College, Dublin. Our unbeaten run sadly came to an end against formidable opponents and worthy winners, we finished the competition in second place for the second year running. When interviewed by Next Gen XV after the final our sole Year 11 team member, Malachi, summed it up perfectly, "The way that we play and the heart that we show is unmatched". We are hugely proud of the entire squad's performance and will be back at St Joseph's in 2025. RGS successes at 'St Joe's'. 1999 Champions, 2012 Plate Winners, 2021 Bowl Winners, 2023 Trophy Finalists, 2024 Trophy Finalists. The U18As play against Abingdon School on Tuesday 3 November at Beaconsfield Rugby Club.

OPEN EVENTS

We have held two Open Mornings this week for Year 6 boys who had qualified in the Buckinghamshire Secondary Transfer Test. We were delighted to see so many coming to have a look round on both days. Please do encourage families, whom you may know, to get in touch if they have any questions - we are always very pleased to be of help.

Our Sixth Form Open Evening was an incredible event. With our own Year 11 (210) we had over 700 people on site. It was super to see everyone and a good augury for our co-ed Sixth Form from 2025. I was particularly pleased to meet our current students with their families throughout the evening.

ASSEMBLIES

Our assemblies now take place in House format and we are always very pleased when students take the lead. Most recently was an inspirational talk from Henry Prince and Kobe Spencer, both prefects, who spoke about Mental Health. They were excellent role models who showed great courage and conviction in sharing their message to benefit the whole school community. It was a timely reminder that students must know that they can 'reach out' at any time to the Pastoral Team, if they need support. #tellamate

AUTUMN SOIREE

Many thanks to the Music Department for an excellent Autumn Soiree, with a range of performances from cello to organ, classical to jazz. The next event is the November Showcase, featuring a number of ensembles and our very enthusiastic massed choir. Further information is available on [Little Box Office](#).

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The student-led Afro-Caribbean Society at RGS delivered powerful assemblies this week in honour of [Black History Month](#), celebrating the achievements and stories of Black heroes and culture that have inspired and shaped history.

PARENT SURVEY

Please do take some time to complete the Parent Survey and special thanks to those who have already done so; although we regularly seek parental feedback on specific issues, it has been a couple of years since we have distributed a full parental survey. Your views are very important to us - it enables me to 'take the temperature' but also to consider areas where we might do things better. We don't rest on our laurels and, with any organisation, however proud we are of what we do, there is always room for improvement. The survey came directly via iSAMS.

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER

Many thanks to our indefatigable Parents' Association and helpers for running a splendid Year 7 and 8 Disco for our boys and students from local girls' schools. It is an important fundraiser for the PA as well as being great fun for all involved. My thanks to Miss Lawson and Mr McDonald-Smith for being a School presence, on a Saturday night.

CONGRATULATIONS

Seb Lescott, Monty Cheung, Alex Kynaston, & Luke Bell represented the School in the U14 Boys Ski Slalom at the National Schools Indoor Championships South. All four had two clear runs which is no mean feat. Seb medaled in 5th place (ski racing medals are awarded for 1st to 5th place) and the other boys all completed in under 19 seconds, each improving on their second run. For Alex and Luke, it was their first ever slalom race, so a phenomenal effort in an intimidating environment. As with the aforementioned St Joseph's Festival for Rugby, this is a predominantly independent school event with only one other state school putting out a team.

Henry Price has been awarded an army scholarship; I was very pleased to present him with his badge and certificate in a Sixth Form assembly.

ODDBALLS

Oddballs visited the RGS this week to congratulate the RGS Interact team on raising £1750 to help their cause and raise awareness of Testicular Cancer. Y12 then enjoyed an informative talk designed to raise awareness on how to recognise and respond to signs of the disease which is most commonly found in those aged 15-49.

REMEMBRANCE

Our Service of Remembrance takes place on 11 November at 10.45am (please arrive by 10.35am). Parents are welcome to attend - further information is available on [Little Box Office](#) - admission is, of course, free. It is a traditional service with readings, music and a hymn. Poppies will be on sale the first day back after half term.

With best wishes.

Philip Wayne