



From the Headmaster

January is traditionally a time of reflection, of setting ambitious personal challenges and goals. Despite the best of intentions, however, these resolutions rarely last throughout, let alone beyond, the month. One of the main reasons why these New Year's resolutions frequently fail is the fact that they are often both unrealistic and also focused more on outcome rather than process. 2016 was a significant year on the political stage and at a time where dramatic change seems to be the zeitgeist with high-profile public figures promising radical overhaul, perhaps a different approach is preferable as we enter 2017.

The concept of marginal improvements gained national profile when the performance director of British cycling, Sir Dave Brailsford, transformed the success of the Olympic cyclists with the notion of small incremental developments. He argued that if it was possible to make a 1% improvement in a number of areas then the cumulative effect and gains would be highly significant. As we are focusing this academic year on precision as our schoolwide learning habit so Brailsford's philosophy could hardly be more appropriate with a concern for detail, adopting a meticulous approach and a desire for refinement at the forefront of our minds.

As we embark upon a new year – a year which is likely to be characterised by significant upheaval on the national and international political stage – conservative, realistic targets may be less glamorous but, in practice, a more effective way forward. The cumulative impact of a number of small, gradual steps and striving to do each task just that little bit better: it is this approach which is likely to reap the greatest dividends for all our students in every aspect of their school life.

I wish you and your families every good wish for a happy and successful 2017.

Latest News

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Music: **Nicholas Edwards** (L6) and **Sam Jones** (5H) were runners-up in the Senior and Junior Divisions respectively of the London Organ Competition held at St Clements Dane Church in London.

Oxbridge: We are delighted that, with a number of outcomes still to be resolved, 28 boys have currently received offers from Oxbridge: 16 from Cambridge and 12 from Oxford. The School has now received 346 Oxbridge offers in the last ten years: an extraordinary achievement. All the boys who applied worked with commendable dedication and commitment and our thoughts go out to those very talented students who unfortunately just missed out on being made offers. They should take heart from the fact that a number of last year's boys used the disappointment of missing out as a springboard to successful applications this time around.

Physics: The Sixth Form scientists have again enjoyed notable success in this year's prestigious British Physics Olympiad. **Callum Spencer** (U6) and **Thomas Spackman** (U6) were both awarded Top Gold, reserved for the leading 50 applicants in the country, and they progress to the next round. In addition, RGS boys secured one Gold, three Silver and 4 Bronze awards.

Staff: We are pleased to welcome back from maternity leave Mrs Hobbs (Mathematics Department) and Mrs Newton (English Department); in addition, we are also delighted to welcome Alexander Sweet who will bring his considerable cricket and hockey expertise as Gap Year Tutor.

Trips: At the start of the holidays, 37 boys escaped the bleak, grey British weather to enjoy a week of idyllic skiing under predominantly blue skies and sunshine on the annual junior ski trip to Les Deux Alpes in France. The European Alps have had a slow start to the season: the beginners were pleased that the nursery slopes in the resort are located above 2,000m giving plentiful snow for them to learn. Those that were more proficient had excellent skiing from there up to the top of the highest ski resort glacier in Europe at 3,600m; many boys braved the challenging black run down to the valley. The terrain park was also very popular with boys who became very accomplished at jumps and slides, albeit with a few – often dramatic – falls in the process.

Sports News

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Chess: At the London Chess Classic in the major upset of the 1st round, 13 year old **Alexander Golding** (2L) held the 27 year old American Grandmaster Hrant Melkumyan to a draw with the black pieces.

Football: An excellent set of matches against the Royal Russell School resulted in honours even with a win, a draw and a loss: 12 goals were scored by the RGS in the process including a hat-trick apiece from **Edmund Milton-Seall** (L6) and **James Stacey** (L6). Another hat-trick was scored by **Devon MacMillan** (U6) in the traditional, annual fixture against the Old Guildfordians: the 1st XI won 2 – 0 while the 2nd XI lost 6 – 3 against the 2016 leavers.

Hockey: Hockey returned with the School's first ever block fixture against King Edward's School Southampton as 16 sides, from A to D level, turned out for the RGS including four Under 12 teams where a number of boys were either representing the School or playing a competitive hockey fixture for the first time. The senior teams, in particular, enjoyed notable success with wins for all six of our senior sides, including a 2 – 1 win for the 1st XI. Highlight of the day came from the 3rd XI who produced a fluent attacking performance to win 9 – 0. In the first round of the County Cup the 1st XI negotiated a tricky draw with an excellent 2 – 1 win against Reed's School to progress to the next round; likewise, the Under 14A team advanced in the competition with a 2 – 1 victory against Charterhouse School. On an individual level, **Harvey Hill** (3E) has been selected to be part of the Under 14 Hampshire hockey squad.

Forthcoming Events

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Saturday 14 January	RGS 11+ Entrance Examination
Wednesday 18 January	Instrumental Music Teacher Parents' Evening in the Old Building
Friday 20 January	Careers Convention in the Main Building
Tuesday 24 January	Young Enterprise <i>Y Factor</i> Competition in Great Hall
Wednesday 25 January	King's Lecture in the Auditorium
Thursday 26 January	First Form Parents' Evening in Great Hall