



From the Headmaster

Schools are in a constant state of change as innovation, fashion and reform cause institutions continually to develop and evolve. As Roy Blatchford highlights in his book *The Restless School* a successful school is one which is secure in its systems, values and successes, yet is simultaneously seeking to improve. This spirit encapsulates the RGS ethos. It is undoubtedly a healthy culture where we regularly review practice to ensure we are providing the very best education for each individual student. This, however, coupled with the pace and intensity of modern life means that opportunities to pause and reflect are increasingly few and far between. In this context, therefore, traditions which endure the test of time and which are resistant to change are all the more precious.

For the best part of twenty years, each Thursday morning assembly has included a *Thought for the Day* which is delivered by – predominantly – a member of the Upper Sixth Form on the theme of the week: a message which has been interweaved into the readings and hymns. This term alone the themes include friendship, hope, social responsibility, dignity and courage, to name but a few. The boys are given free rein to reflect in any manner which they choose, thereby producing original, diverse, insightful and frequently topical interpretations of the theme which may have a religious or secular approach. The quality of these talks is remarkable and I am always astonished by the maturity and sophistication of their musings. Such opportunities for public speaking in front of a large audience have innate value in themselves but also for many of the boys in assembly this may be one of the very few times in their week where they have the opportunity for peace and reflection, without the temptation and distraction of technology! We must never underestimate the importance of such moments of contemplation and in this light I have every confidence that this is one tradition which is set to last for many years to come.

For your interest, a transcript of each *Thought for the Day* is posted weekly on the website in the *Daily Life* section of *School Life* or you can access them by clicking [here](#). I would warmly recommend them, when – and if – you can find a few minutes for yourself.

Latest News

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King's Lecture: The School was delighted to welcome eminent Old Guildfordian Dr David Flood, Director of Music at Canterbury Cathedral. Interviewed by our Director of Music, Peter White, David provided an honest and intriguing insight into his time at the RGS, his experiences at St John's College Oxford, and then his professional career taking him from Canterbury to Lincoln and back to Canterbury Cathedral. Interspersed by pieces of music chosen by David, the audience was taken on an emotive musical journey and felt privileged to have had an insight into the career of such an impressive and unassuming individual.

Oxbridge: With all the decisions now resolved, we are delighted that 30 students have received offers (12 Oxford and 18 Cambridge). RGS students have now received 350 Oxbridge offers in the last ten years.

Quiz: In the National Schools Quiz Challenge, the RGS team of **George Glover** (U6), **Harry Johnson** (4P), **William Klintworth** (U6) and **Alexander Norris** (4V) made quick progress through three regional rounds of the National Schools Challenge general knowledge quiz competition to reach the Regional Final.

Science and Engineering: Upper Sixth Form students **Rory Hyatt** and **Oliver Platt** have advanced to the final of the prestigious *Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineers Competition*. They will showcase their CREST Gold projects to more than 70,000 people in the Big Bang Fair, held in the Birmingham NEC. This is the sixth consecutive year that RGS boys have made the final. In addition, **Joshua Cudby** (U6) was one of the top 55 students out of 3,010 participants in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge and won a Roentgenium Award: a crystal trophy (featuring a 3dz² atomic orbital).

Young Enterprise: The RGS was delighted to host *The Y Factor*, the regional competition. With ten businesses entering and an array of VIPs in attendance, it was a vibrant event. The competition was judged on two categories: the first assessed the businesses as a whole including finance, innovation and presentation; the second, the highlight of the evening, was the e-advertising competition. RGS company *GoBillou* swept the board with their multi-lingual cookbook, taking first place in both competitions. RGS team *Zenith* took second place in both categories with their excellent revision guides.

Sports News

[View the full sports results](#)

Chess: All three senior teams recorded convincing wins against Reigate and Sutton Grammar Schools.

Cross-Country: In the light of the Surrey School County Championships seven RGS boys have been selected to run for Surrey. **Oliver Hurdle** (L6) took bronze in the highly competitive senior boys race.

Fencing: In the Surrey Youth Fencing Championship, RGS fencers enjoyed notable success. In the Under 18 Épée, **Christopher Gooding** (U6) won silver; in the Under 16 Épée **Kenny Okoroafor** (5V) won gold to be crowned County Champion; in the Under 14 Foil **Matthew Williams** (4P) won bronze; in the Under 14 Foil **Leo Kamstra** (2C) secured bronze; and finally in the Under 12 Foil **Zed Law** (1E) also achieved bronze.

Hockey: The last fortnight has been dominated by frost and postponements; however a few matches did survive the weather. Highlights included a tight draw for the 1st XI against Tonbridge School and three wins and a draw for the Under 12 teams against Churcher's College, scoring 16 goals in the process.

Ice Hockey: **William Lawson** (3L), already captain of the Guildford Under 15 team and also part of the South West of England side, has been now selected for the Under 15 England team for the 2016 – 17 season.

Shooting: The RGS enjoyed a comfortable victory against Bradfield College by 702 points to 675.

Swimming: RGS boys competed in both the Guildford District Schools Swimming Championships, in which the RGS finished third overall, and the Surrey Secondary Schools Individual Championships with notable success. **Max Windle** (2P) has been selected to represent the South East Schools Division at the National Swimming Championships.

Forthcoming Events

[View the School Calendar](#)

Monday 30 January	Lower Sixth Oxbridge Admissions Seminar in the Auditorium
Tuesday 31 January	Third Form Parents' Evening in Great Hall
Wednesday 1 February	Senior Musician of the Year in the Rehearsal Room
Monday 6 February	Battlefield Parental Briefing in Great Hall
Wednesday 8 February	Senior Drama Production: <i>Another Country</i> (for three nights)