



### From the Headmaster

I mourn the demise of daydreaming. Individuals have daydreamed for thousands of years and yet, these days, spare moments are all too often filled with smartphones and other devices – scrolling through social media, watching video clips, responding to emails – leaving little time for our minds simply to wander. Indeed, smartphone users allegedly check their device every six and a half minutes, approximately 150 times a day. Silence and reflection are replaced with a cacophony of communication; solitude is replaced with obsessive on-line interaction.

There are precious few opportunities to press pause and just reflect, and so over the next few days, I urge every single one of you to pick up a book. Reading inspires empathy and perspective; it boosts imagination and creativity; it provides exposure to new ideas; it allows access to others' emotions, motivations and aspirations; it develops critical thinking; it provides escapism and is proven to reduce stress and increase wellbeing. If you're still not convinced, studies have shown that active readers are likely to have incomes five times higher than those who spend little or no time reading!

So, after a very intense, successful and enjoyable half term, I would like to thank the students and staff for their committed approach to all aspects of school life and I hope over half term you find time to relax and read for pleasure. As Joseph Addison stated, "Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."

### Latest News

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**CREST:** Following his research as part of a CREST project, **Ciaran O'Toole** (U6) has been invited to speak at the Annual Conference of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. This takes place in Glasgow and Ciaran will take his place among some very eminent academics as he delivers a talk entitled *Bone mineral density in children and adolescents with cystic fibrosis, should we be doing less monitoring?*

**Literature:** Six young wizards were involved in the 2018 Harry Potter Book Night in *The Leaky Cauldron*, also known as *Waterstones*, on Guildford High Street. Although being beaten by a team of adult muggles in an epic quiz, the RGS did win First Prize for the best dressed team, with **Caleb Blackwell** (1C) being awarded top honours for his costume; special mention was made of his impressive beard.

**Music:** The final of the RGS Musician of the Year proved to be an exquisite evening of music which had the appreciative audience captivated from start to finish. The Upper Sixth Form finalists – **Ciaran O'Toole** (piano), **Matthew Sargent** (counter-tenor), **Roshan Patel** (clarinet), **Nicholas Edwards** (piano), **Yousuf Mirza** (tenor) and **Joshua Powell** (oboe) – performed a programme which was refined, sophisticated and engaging in equal measure but all with the same exacting standards of musicianship. After much deliberation, the adjudicator Neville Creed, renowned Chorus Master and conductor of the London Philharmonic Choir, awarded *The Steynor Prize* to Joshua for his expressive performance on oboe.

**Music:** Cellist **Alexander Acomb** (U6) has been awarded a Distinction in his recent ARSM Diploma.

**Olympiad:** In the Biology Olympiad, RGS Sixth Form students were awarded four gold medals – **Daniel Cheetham, Miles Dawson, Max Fornasiero** and **Jack Xia** – and six silver medals, which equates to the top 7% and 11% respectively in the country.

**Quiz:** The Junior Schools Challenge quiz team of **Ferdy Al-Qassab** (2R), **Joshua McGillivray** (2P), **Thomas Postance** (1L) and **Matthew Turner** (1L) made a winning start to this year's competition as they beat ACS Cobham 740 – 250 in the regional round.

## Sports News

[View the full sports results](#)

**Chess:** Following cup matches, the chess teams returned to league action against Wilson's School. The 1st team won 5 – 1, the 2nd team lost 1½ – 4½, while the 3rd team won 11 – 1.

**Fencing:** RGS fencers flourished at the Surrey Championships. In the Under 12 Foil **Rishikesh Mistry** (1L) won silver; in the Under 14 Foil **Freddie Edgecliffe-Johnson** (3S) won silver; in the Under 14 Épée **Leo Kamstra** (3E) secured gold to become the new County Champion; in the Under 16 Épée **Freddie Cliffe** (4A) won bronze; and in the Under 19 Épée **Kit Edgecliffe-Johnson** (L6) and **Kenny Okoroafor** (L6) both won bronze.

**Football:** Highlight of the recent set of matches was a clean sweep of wins against Box Hill School including a 5 – 1 win for the 1st XI and 4 – 0 victory for the 2nd XI.

**Hockey:** Against St George's College Weybridge, RGS teams emerged with eleven victories and two draws including a 2 – 1 win for the 1st XI and, score-line of the day, a 12 – 0 win for the Under 13D team. Against Trinity School Croydon, the 1st XI continued their recent form with a 4 – 0 win and the 2nd XI recorded a convincing and memorable 7 – 0 victory. In the cup, the 1st XI, Under 16s and Under 14s have all progressed to the next round of the Regional and National Cup competitions respectively. An astonishing 105 competitive fixtures have been played so far this term by RGS teams. On an individual level, **Edward Ferguson** (L6) was part of the Guildford Hockey Club Under 18 team which won the Super 6s National Indoor Championships.

**Shooting:** Against Cambridge University, comprising three Old Guildfordians, our VIII produced its best performance of the season so far to beat the university by 1532 points to 1526, firing two 10-bull cards each. Top scorers were **Alfie Hellings** (U6) and **Thomas Randell** (5P) who both scored 194/200.

**Speed Skating:** **Theo Collins** (3S) will be representing Great Britain in Finland in a Long Track Speed Skating match between Sweden, Finland, Norway and a combined team of Great Britain and Denmark.

**Swimming:** In the Guildford and District Swimming the RGS finished in second place overall. Notable individual performances included **Tommi Nebuloni** (2P) who came first in the Under 13 Individual Medley and **Joseph Perry** (2E) who was first in the Under 13 50-metres Freestyle.

**Taekwondo:** **Dimitri Perricos** (5H) won gold in his sparring category at the English Open Championships.

**Tennis:** **Jamie Diack** (1P) was part of the Under 12 Great Britain team which competed in the Tennis Europe Winter Cup. They won the qualifying tournament in Austria to progress to the finals in the Czech Republic.

## Forthcoming Events

[View the School Calendar](#)

Monday 19 February	Upper Sixth Form A Level Mock Examinations begin
Friday 23 February	Upper Sixth Form A Level Mock Examinations finish
Wednesday 28 February	Fifth Form Parents' Evening in Great Hall and the John Brown Building
Thursday 1 March	Parents' Information Evening for the Junior Normandy trip



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