



From the Headmaster

The town of Guildford is currently bucking a national trend which has been at the heart of heated discussion in the press and social media over the last few days. A row over single-sex education has flared up after the head of a leading independent school suggested pupils at girls-only institutions were at “a huge disadvantage” living in “a deeply unrealistic world” as they risked growing up unable to communicate with the opposite sex.

The number of single-sex schools continues to drop and yet the RGS remains proud to have offered boys-only education in the centre of Guildford for over 500 years, an education which not only allows boys to emerge with exceptional results but also to develop into confident, grounded, thoroughly decent individuals. The smooth co-existence with the neighbouring girls schools means that RGS boys get the very best of both worlds: an education tailored for boys where the teaching and support are geared specifically to the learning style of boys without gender stereotype, prejudice or distraction, while in every other way allowing the boys – with the freedom which a town-centre school affords – to enjoy healthy and normal interaction with girls in the academic, artistic, extra-curricular and social spheres.

This media storm has coincided with a week in which, if justification were required with regard to perceived disadvantages, the RGS can justifiably claim to be proud of its past, its present and its future. Our Old Guildfordians continue to flourish on the national and international stages and this week news reached us that Jack Clifford (OG11) has been included by Eddie Jones in the new-look England rugby squad for the Six Nations while Angus Goodwin (OG06) has won the prestigious Turner Prize as founder member of art, architecture and design collective *Assemble* for their work on a Liverpool housing estate. The current Upper Sixth Form has just received 38 Oxbridge offers: the second highest ever for the School and a record for the RGS for Cambridge offers with 25. The future looks equally exciting and this weekend we were delighted to welcome prospective students from Prep and Primary Schools – impressive in both number and calibre alike – who sat our 11+ entrance examinations.

There are great schools which are single-sex or co-educational, which are day or boarding, which are independent or maintained: the important thing is not, however, the label but an institution in which pupils are happy, have the scope to flourish and grow, and where they can fulfil their potential. It is in this light that we continue to be proud of all those boys who have worn, continue to wear and will wear in the future, the RGS blazer.

Latest News

[View the full news archive](#)

Biology: James Miller (3L) has won the national Cairngorms Nature Young Presenter Competition with his film about badgers. He will now get the chance to make a short nature film with BBC nature presenter Lolo Williams in the Cairngorms National Park.

Chemistry: In the national Royal Society of Chemistry competition, *Top of the Bench*, the RGS team comprising **Benjamin de la Court-Wakeling** (3P), **Peter Heylen** (3E), **Samuel Jones** (4H) and **Adam Wills** (5P) was crowned as south-east regional heat winners.

Mathematics: As one of the highest scoring runners up in the regional heats of the UK Mathematics Trust Challenge, the RGS Sixth Form team, consisting of **Joshua Cudby**, **Martin Dibb-Fuller**, **Cameron Gibson** and **James Hilditch**, has qualified for the national final.

Music: **Alistair Baumann** (L6) has gained a place in the National Youth Chamber Orchestra. He will attend a residential music course which culminates in a concert at the Royal College of Music. In addition, **Ruben Berstecher** (2C) recently won the Under 14 piano recital class in the Woking Festival. At the age of just 12, he was the youngest competitor in the class.

Oxbridge: We are delighted that 38 boys received offers from Oxbridge; 25 of these offers were from Cambridge which is a record number for the RGS. The School has now received 343 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: RGS boys made a real impact upon this year's British Physics Olympiad (BPhO). The BPhO has run for 25 years and is entered annually by over 1,600 talented young physicists. Upper Sixth Form Physics students secured eight of the top 150 awards while **James Hilditch** and **Martin Dibb-Fuller** won two of the top 50 awards. In addition, RGS boys won two silver and six bronze awards and two commendations to complete a record-breaking year for the School in this competition.

Sports News

[View the full sports results](#)

Cricket: **Joe Sheldon** (1P) has been selected for the Berkshire Under 12 full county cricket squad. He is a member of a 16-boy performance squad.

Football: The 1st XI won 6 – 3 in the annual fixture against the Old Guildfordians with two goals apiece from **James Maloney** (U6) and **Thomas Cullum** (U6).

Hockey: A convincing 4 – 0 victory for the 1st XI provided an excellent start to the term in the block fixture against Charterhouse School. Out of the 14 fixtures, RGS teams suffered only one defeat. The Under 16A team matched the 1st XI's achievements with an excellent 4 – 0 victory.

Shooting: The RGS team won the Staniforth Challenge Cup with a winning score of 781 out of 800 and beating 17 other public schools in the process. The RGS is now the current holders of the two most prestigious public school shooting trophies, the Staniforth Challenge Cup and the Country Life Cup.

Forthcoming Events

[View the School Calendar](#)

Wednesday 20 January	Instrumental Music Parents' Evening in Big School
Friday 22 January	Careers Convention in Great Hall and the Auditorium
Tuesday 26 January	Young Enterprise Y-Factor competition in Great Hall
Thursday 28 January	First Form Parents' Evening in Great Hall
Friday 29 January	Burns' Night Supper in Great Hall