



From the Headmaster

Ted Turner once commented: *"If I only had a little humility I'd be perfect..."*. An article by Josh Clancy this week highlighted the cultural differences between various countries around the world when it comes to individuals' self-promotion and self-aggrandisement. While acknowledging that he was inevitably stereotyping, he claimed that many nationalities are not in the habit of speaking the language of self-effacement. As he illustrated, *"underplaying your status in this town [Washington] is akin to smearing yourself in fresh elephant dung on your way out of the house – people may still speak to you, but it's going to be terrifyingly brief."* Those in the public eye – politicians, celebrities, and so on – are all too often self-publicists using their profile as well as channels such as social media to ensure that their achievements and movements are broadcast vociferously to all.

In stark contrast, self-deprecation has long been the British way. Josh Clancy noted that *"we cloak ourselves in the armour of irony and self-abasement to ensure that no one will ever call us anything dreadful such as pushy, ambitious or a bit keen."* This tradition of nonchalance and perceived indifference are ingrained in the British psyche. The RGS is, perhaps, guilty of further embedding this mindset. As one of our six values, within the value of *integrity*, we talk of the importance of approaching life with humour and celebrating traditional qualities such as decency, politeness, and humility.

So, are we selling our students short? Are we nurturing a culture whereby students undersell themselves or are embarrassed to reveal their true talents? In my opinion, this could not be further from the truth at the RGS. The culture of mutual respect and high achievement means that the boys are proud not only of their own achievements but equally celebrate those of their peers. We publicly acknowledge success and use this in an aspirational way to, in turn, inspire others. For me, humility is not an obstacle to progress. For me, humility is an absence of arrogance and self-entitlement, a desire to continue to reflect and improve, and, perhaps most importantly the ability to take what you do, but not yourself, too seriously and to be able to laugh at yourself. And if that means applying metaphorical elephant dung from time to time, then so be it.

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Co-curriculum: Field Day 4 saw all boys involved in a range of activities throughout the UK as well as closer to home. These included: surfing in Cornwall; a trip to Marwell Zoo; the CCF army overnight exercise on Bramshott Common; the RAF gliding at Lasham and Surrey Hills; RAF paintballing and high ropes in Cobham; RN kayaking on the River Thames; RN sailing in the Solent; climbing at Harrison's Rocks; community service at Shere Infant School; a visit for the drama group to a Celtic musical *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*; orienteering and mountain biking in the Surrey Hills; the EXAD overnight exercise staying in Tilford; a History trip to Battle Abbey and Bodiam Castle; hiking in the Box Hill area; running problem-solving sessions as part of the Kings Maths Project; water-based activities at Southwater Lake in Horsham and also Thorpe Lake; and sports coaching at Stormont House School in Hackney.

History: **Alexander Norris** (L6) is one of the winners of the Peterhouse Cambridge Vellacott History Essay Prize. The judges felt that his essay stood out for its clarity of argument, stylish prose, level of research and originality of thought. Alexander wins a prize of £75 which will be presented to him during a visit to Peterhouse College.

Physics: 47 Middle School boys participated in the Physics Challenge: 13 boys secured a Gold in the competition. This statistic is all the more impressive as that accounts for over 10% of all Gold winners from an initial entry of 2,171 entrants. Highest mark was secured by **Andrew Florescu** (5H), and this was one of the five highest marks in the country. Andrew has been invited to an awards ceremony at the Royal Society.

Quiz: In the Inter-Regional round, the RGS were drawn against Hilden Grange School from Kent. The RGS junior team comprising **Tom Postance** (captain) (2L), **James Trowbridge** (1R), **Matthew Turner** (2L) and **Zac Warham** (1L), secured a convincing result with a 690 – 320 win. The team now progress to the last eight of the competition, the National Finals at Warwick School.

Sports News

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Athletics: **Ollie Billingham** (1C) came fourth in the Surrey Schools' Combined Events Athletics Championships, against some of Surrey finest athletes in his year group.

Chess: **Rohan McCauley** (2E) won the Under 13 category overall at the East Surrey Chess Mega-final and now progresses to the Giga-final.

Cricket: In the block fixture against Hurstpierpoint, performance of the day came from the Under 15Cs which won by ten wickets. Individually, our bowlers dominated with hat-tricks by **Joe Perry** (3E) for the Under 14C team and **Alex Taylor** (4V) for the Under 15C team. In the rain-affected block fixture against Dulwich College, the senior teams impressed with victories for the Under 16A, 15A and 14A teams. The bowlers again performed well with performance of the day coming **Thaqib Haque** (4P) finishing with bowling figures of 5 for 11 for the Under 15Bs.

Football: A combined Under 16 and 17 XI beat Gordon's School 3 – 2, with a brace from **Matt Harris** (U6).

Rugby: **Alfie Johnson** (U6) has recently agreed terms with the RFU to join the 24-man Elite England 7s squad. Selectors became aware of Alfie's potential following outstanding performances for the RGS in the Surrey and National Schools 7s competitions. His impressive form has continued in recent weeks in the National Super 7s Series for top invitation side Samurai. Alfie will now live and train in Twickenham for the next twelve months, where he will hope to secure a place in the England side on the World Series. This is a remarkable achievement and an incredible opportunity.

Shooting: In the Clayton Challenge our VIII retained the trophy with a score of 514 points, comfortably beating Wellington into second place. **Luca O'Flynn** (U6) won the trophy for the top individual, scoring 68/70.

Forthcoming Events

[View the School Calendar](#)

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| Tuesday 18 June | Senior Prizegiving in Holy Trinity Church |
| Wednesday 19 June | Fifth Form Book Return Sports Day |
| Thursday 20 June | Lower Sixth Form induction morning |
| Friday 21 June | Upper Sixth Form Book Return Leavers' Ceremony in Holy Trinity Church followed by the Leavers' Ball |
| Sunday 23 June | Headmaster's XI vs. Old Guildfordians XI cricket at Bradstone Brook |
| Wednesday 26 June | Charity Ensembles Concert |

