



From the Headmaster

I have often spoken of how highly I regard not only the students and staff at the RGS but also our extended community comprising parents, governors, Old Guildfordians and supporters of the School. Many of our buildings date back over 500 years and yet it is not the bricks and mortar but the individuals who inhabit the walls who make this such a special community. The RGS has faced many challenges during its history and it is especially during these times of difficulty that one appreciates its true colours.

Worry is not irrational. It is important to be worried about one's family and it is sensible to be worried for oneself. In times of crisis, however, calmly sharing our concerns, speaking, and chatting – the very essence of the concept of community – are critical. Our natural instinct is to come together, to seek solace in company and raise our spirits with humour; that will, however, not be physically possible for a while. I simply could not be more proud of how our whole community has pulled together in so many ways: the dedication and commitment; the maturity and composure; the support and kindness. It is this compassion which has touched me most: the words of support; the bonds of friendship; the genuine kindness shown by individuals towards each other; and the sense of solidarity. Our hash tag of #AlwaysPartoftheRGS has never seemed more fitting, has never seemed more apt.

We are, however, going to have to adapt while being calm and creating a new sense of normality wherever possible: acknowledging the problem and dealing with it in an efficient and selfless manner. The 21st century demands young people to be flexible and to find solutions, to be independent and motivated, to think outside the box and to respond positively to challenges. This period of remote learning will have its challenges but it also provides a gilt-edged opportunity for us to refine each and every one of these skills and for our students to emerge stronger, better and more confident at the end of the process. They will need your support and your guidance as parents; we as a school will do everything we can to deliver the very best education we can. I am so proud of my staff who have responded so extraordinarily to this new approach to education. A week or two ago, Teams was a concept which was synonymous with *Match of the Day* or the *Six Nations*; today, I can assure you that remote learning is its only connotation!

I do not for a second underestimate how challenging and uncertain the foreseeable future is but I also have no doubt that as a united community we have the best chance of enduring this period. The School Hymn, *To Be a Pilgrim*, champions the strength and courage required in times of adversity and provides reassurance that nothing can daunt our spirit. I can assure you that, indeed, nothing will daunt our spirit.

I thank you all for your continuing support and I reiterate to you what I said to the boys last week: stay healthy, stay connected, stay positive #AlwaysPartoftheRGS.