

Issue 159



From the Headmaster

The period of Easter is usually synonymous with families, with socialising and with coming together; it is also traditionally a period of hope. Although very different to our usual experience for us all, this Easter period has, in fact, still encapsulated many of these elements. It has been heart-warming, even in a time of self-isolation, how people have interacted both through the old-fashioned use of a phone, taking the time to speak to friends and family, but also to connect visually through online platforms as well as social media. It is a sign of how rapidly things change in the current climate that a few weeks ago, terms such as Zoom, Teams and Houseparty were almost unheard of!

Despite the isolation, I simply could not be more proud of how our whole community – remotely – has pulled together in so many ways: providing support for keyworkers' children; donating Personal Protective Equipment for our carers; being so imaginative and creative while also raising significant funds for the NHS in the Great RGS Bake-Off Cupcake Special; sending home-made Easter cards to residents at local care homes; and so I could go on. This spirit of support, kindness and compassion continues to genuinely touch me. As I have said before the hashtag #AlwaysPartoftheRGS has never seemed more fitting, never more apt.

We do not, however, for a second, underestimate how difficult a period this is for many families: families who have been affected deeply by COVID-19 both on a personal and financial level. We have heard from a number of families who are facing unexpected and significant reductions to their income. They are, naturally, worrying about their son's education and we are working closely with them to offer all the support we can. In this, I am extremely grateful to those parents who have very generously offered to donate next term's discount to our Hardship Fund, to assist those families struggling. If you are in a position to do so and would like to join them, you can via the following link (using the designation for Hardship Bursary):

<https://www.rgs-guildford.co.uk/support-the-rgs/donate-now>

Finally, with term about to start, I would like to thank my wonderful staff for working tirelessly over the Easter holiday. We have reflected carefully on the constructive feedback from students, parents and staff; we shall continue to endeavour to make the remote learning experience as stimulating, challenging and diverse as possible, while addressing the understandable concerns about increased screen time.

I thank you all for your continuing support and I wish you and your families all the very best in the coming weeks. I shall be in touch with you regularly throughout the course of this term.

Stay healthy, stay connected, stay positive, and stay at home #RGSTogether.