



From the Headmaster

In 1919, as one of a generation of teachers believing fervently in the value of education for its own sake, Arthur Green took over as Headmaster of the RGS. He took over at a time when the repercussions and implications of the First World War were still very much in evidence: the human cost of the previous years had made people reassess and re-evaluate in all parts of their lives. Green firmly believed that education was for life, not just for a career. He fought constantly against what he described as the popular idea that education should be judged solely by examination results; indeed, he regarded league tables as “*the deadliest of enemies of schools*”. One of the School's first duties, in his view, was to instil the values of co-operation, loyalty, and service. Experience had taught him that shared activities not only bound the School together but also stimulated the individual development of each boy. He worked hard to ensure that the School equipped boys with those qualities which mattered in life: readiness to accept responsibility, the spirit of willing service to the community, the determination to increase their efficiency in whatever branch of life they were called to work, courage to face with a grave heart and a cheerful disposition all blows that adverse fortune might bring on them. He believed that the values inherent within the work of the School should be a constant in a changing world.

The concept of a changing world clearly could not be more apt today. It is already difficult to think back to a pre-Covid world to a time where *pandemic*, *lockdown*, *R-rate*, *furlough* were not part of our daily lexicon, to a time where masks were predominantly associated with fictional superheroes. A couple of years ago at the RGS we went through a lengthy and fascinating process of consultation as we tried to articulate those values which are at the very heart of our ethos, which reflect what we fundamentally believe in, which define who we are. As Headmasters, buildings, educational trends, governments come and go with the passage of time and as we embrace change, it is all the more important that the fundamental ethos and character of a school should stand resolute.

Two years later, it is reassuring that rather than feeling outdated in the context of the current climate, our School Values could hardly be more resonant and relevant. Values such as inclusivity and tolerance, self-respect and self-esteem (in terms of physical health and mental wellbeing), independence and innovation, resilience and tenacity, kindness and humility, service and perspective, collaboration and partnership, all have a powerful connotation and, if anything, an increased significance and potency.

It was only after the publication of these new school values that I came across the thoughts of Arthur Green outlined above. It highlighted how, for all our progress and development in recent years, the RGS has remained true to its core beliefs. Green's reflections served to prove that these are, in fact, timeless qualities which have stood and, which we hope, will continue to stand the test of time.

As our school hymn – *He who would valiant be* by John Bunyan – champions, “*One here will constant be, Come wind, come weather.*” I am proud that the RGS remains constant and true to itself: long may this last.

Latest News

Charity: With over 50 charities put forward by staff and students and over 700 votes, the phenomenal engagement in this year's charities spoke volumes for the desire of the whole community to make a difference to others this year. As a result of this vote, the three nominated charities which the RGS will be supporting this year are: the *RSPCA* – carrying out vital work for those animals suffering from neglect, cruelty and abuse; *SOS* – working to support the vulnerable and to eradicate silence and stigma surrounding suicide and poor mental health; *Médecins Sans Frontières* – acting fast through medical teams to save people's lives in conflict zones, natural disasters and epidemics. We hope the whole community will join us in supporting these wonderful charities this year: the online Auction of Promises will be our major event for this term.

Congratulations to all those students who despite the challenges of lockdown have participated in a vast number of national competitions and events. Just some of the highlights are provided below:

Biology: **Edward Sharpe** (U6) won a Certificate of Commendation in the Oxford Essay Competition, organised by Exeter College. His commended essay was on the topic of antibiotics.

Chemistry: In the UK Chemistry Olympiad in which over 9,100 students participated, we achieved our best-ever results with 11 gold, 14 silver, and 11 bronze awards. **Alex Thow** (U6) was one of the top four students in the country and was duly selected to represent the UK in the international competition in which 235 students representing 60 nations competed. Alex did remarkably well in the gruelling five-hour paper and achieved a superb score of 83%; he finished 45th in the world and won a silver medal.

Economics: **Cameron Reed's** (U6) essay entitled *What is the socially efficient level of crime?* was shortlisted in the *John Locke Institute* competition from out of 3,000 entries from over 90 countries. In addition, **Jack Donnelly's** (U6) essay for the *Immerse Education* competition was highly commended and won him a partial scholarship on their economics programme. Jack was then one of four runners up in the Cambridge Society for Economic Pluralism competition with an essay in which he considered whether the Global South had been exploited by the Global North, and whether reparations were required.

English: **Ayan Chowdury** (2C) received a Commended award for his poem entitled *Homophobia* in the poetry category of the Anne Frank Creative Writing Awards.

Sports News

Cricket: With competitive fixtures returning against Hampton School individual highlights included with the bat a superb 50* from **Ollie Dargan** (5B) and 49* for **Aarush Gupta** (3C), and with the ball four wickets for **Malachy Talty** (4B) and **James Wiles** (5A). Thank you to all our Games and Grounds staff, and those behind the scenes, who have worked so hard to make a safe return to Bradstone Brook and to competitive sport possible for our boys.

Health & Safety

The health, welfare and safety of our community remain our highest priority. In *The RGS Today* which is circulated via email to students each week day, we include regular reminders to the students about the importance of protecting themselves and prioritising their health, especially while travelling to and from school and when moving around our site. Your support in reiterating these key messages would be very much appreciated. Our Covid-19 Golden Rules include a focus on (but not exclusively):

- good health;
- hand and respiratory hygiene;
- cleanliness of desks and areas used;
- good ventilation and being outside whenever possible;
- structured movement around the School;
- sensible social distancing as well as adherence to year-group bubbles and designated areas;
- strict adherence to government guidelines with regard to social distancing, the Rule of Six, the obligatory wearing of masks on public transport etc.