

# THANK YOU

PASS IT ON

TWENTY FOR 2020



## From the Headmaster

It is always a pleasure to share good news, particularly when it celebrates collective success for our whole community.

We were founded in 1509 as a *free schole* for the benefit of bright local boys without means. I have seen, at first hand, the transformational effect of an RGS education, as have many of you. I passionately believe in making the education we offer as widely accessible as possible, firmly in keeping with our founding principles. Back in 2016, I announced our vision for the future of the RGS to be a school where every boy who earned his place could take it up, irrespective of his financial circumstances.

Today I am delighted to announce that we have achieved our first milestone on that journey, with the completion of our *Twenty for 2020* bursary campaign. You can see my full announcement [here](#). This is an extraordinary achievement of which we should all be rightly proud; I am excited about the tangible benefits which will be enjoyed as a result. It is, perhaps, too early to reflect on all that this means, but two things immediately spring to mind.

The first is about the power of collective endeavour. Staff, boys and 1,100 members of our community have joined together for this campaign. You have raised and pledged over £2.6m and secured transformational bursary places for 20 boys: boys who would not have been able to take up the RGS places they earned without your support. This says so much about who we are as a school, what we believe in and what we believe is important. That we have done this collectively – as a community – does, I think, say so much about what we can achieve when we work together for a common goal, for something good and important, for the benefit of others. This is, for me, at the heart of what we aim to nurture at the RGS. We do our best work, earn the most, learn the most and receive the most when we work together.

My second reflection is about kindness. Kindness is, to quote Dumbledore, a fellow Headmaster at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, *“a trait people never fail to undervalue”*. I mention kindness in this context for two reasons. On Friday, as we prepared to make our announcements today, I received word from a solicitor in Eastbourne. The letter informed me that the wonderful widow of an Old Guildfordian who left in 1919, had left us £1,000,000 in her will. Now this is, of course, an extraordinary act of kindness in itself and one for which we are deeply indebted. This gift came about as a result of the kindness of a member of our staff who paid particular attention, sent cards and notes, called and checked in on an elderly lady – not because it was her job or because we hoped for a gift, but because she is by nature a friendly, generous and considerate person.

Kindness is never wasted. As Winston Churchill once said,

*“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”*

Thank you for what you have given and what you continue to give to this endeavour and to every aspect of our community, a community of which I am deeply grateful and proud to be part.