



### From the Headmaster

I have always believed in the importance of the eccentric and the idiosyncratic in bringing colour into all our lives and in reminding us that individuality truly enriches any community. After all, if you walk in the footprints of others, you will never make any of your own. Ambitious aspirations and being willing to follow one's own passions and dreams are characteristics which allow an already talented group of students and staff to raise the bar of achievement even higher. The self-esteem and self-confidence of each individual – stemming from the foundations of a supportive, nurturing environment – mean the boys are happy and at ease with themselves. This, in turn, allows them to express themselves, wherever their path leads them, with honesty and integrity, and with a smile on their faces.

One of the many frustrations, from an educational perspective, of the pandemic has been the seismic impact upon the co-curricular life of the School; indeed, many of those boys who joined the RGS in the last couple of years have not had the chance fully to experience the rich diversity of opportunity which is available to students through clubs and societies, co-curricular activities, and trips and expeditions. Far from being a nicety, our co-curricular programme is at the very heart of the culture of the RGS, allowing us to embed so many of our Learning Habits and School Values in hands-on and practical ways. Our programme also allows our students to pursue those areas of particular interest to them, to forge friendships and skills which will be with them for the rest of their lives.

In this light, it has been all the more pleasing to see an increasing return to normality; weekends and our recent Field Days have illustrated this well. Our commitment to this aspect of school life means we have the confidence to suspend the normal timetable weekly for Monday Period 8 and on five Field Days during the academic year. Just last week for Field Day 2 our boys were participating in a vast array of activities throughout the county and beyond: more importantly these activities catered to every personality, every interest. Boys were involved in mountain biking and paintballing, bushcraft and hiking, indoor skydiving and climbing, powerboating and kayaking, art appreciation and rock music, volunteering and sport coaching, conservation projects and Primary School tuition, stage fighting and puppetry workshops (pictured above), a trip to the Science Museum and to Cornwall for surfing and lifesaving, a Business Enterprise Day and skill-at-arms training, and so I could go on. Lunch-times, after-school and weekends have the same buzz as opportunities abound and I always take great pleasure from seeing the engagement and energy as I wander around the School and see all that's going on here at the RGS.

I would urge every single boy to make the most of every opening with which they are presented and to continue to forge their own paths through the School. Make your own footprints: we, as a community, will certainly be all the richer as a result.

## Latest News

**Environment:** **Gus Scadding** (L6) was selected to represent UKSSN (*UK Schools Sustainability Network*) at COP26. Selected from a strong field of candidates from within the Surrey Schools network, Gus was part of a select group of students who acted as the voice for UK schools, ensuring the ideas and opinions of young people around the country were heard. In addition, the RGS has teamed up with the *Guildford Living Lab*, part of the *Global Centre for Clean Air Research (GCARE)* at the University of Surrey. While the overall aim is to raise awareness of air pollution and climate change, it also provides the exciting opportunity for our students to work with real-time atmospheric data. There will be a total of six multi-sensory devices, monitoring air quality around the school premises.

**Music:** In the *Junior* section (Grades 1 – 5) of the House Piano Competition the winner was **Adrian Bahari** (1P); **Richard Clyde** (L6) and **Seb Cunningham** (2P) were commended. In the *Intermediate* section (Grades 6 – 7), the winner was **Dom Dalloz** (L6); **Can Görgüner** (1C), **Sam Millington** (1E) and **Georgie Paulson** (4B) were all commended. In the *Senior* section (Grade 8+), the winner was **Ruvin Meda** (4V); **James Dicker** (5A), **Joseph Howes** (5N), and **Andrew Kuang** (2R) were commended. Congratulations to Beckingham House which was the overall winner of the competition, with Hamonde House finishing in second place.

**Pastoral:** In the last fortnight, there have been a number of events for our students from external agencies. All boys in the Fourth and Fifth Forms attended a pastoral conference by Peter Radford from *Beyond This* who spoke with passion, insight and perspective about mental health in young people, championing a proactive, preventative approach. In addition, the Upper Sixth Form all experienced the *Safe Drive, Stay Alive* presentation, educating our young drivers to make informed and safer decisions, and to appreciate the potential and lasting consequences of their actions.

## Sports News

**Chess:** In the English Chess Federation National Schools Qualifying Round against Guildford County, a very young set of RGS teams highlighted the strength in depth throughout the School and the extraordinary talent of our junior players. With our A team having automatically qualified due to their ratings, our B, C and D teams finished in the top three positions: an outstanding achievement.

**Rugby:** Rested and recharged thanks to the half-term break, RGS teams returned to competitive action in the eagerly-anticipated block fixture against Cranleigh School. With Cranleigh in the ascendancy in the majority of games, the match of the day came from the Under 16Bs who found themselves trailing 0 – 12 after only 10 mins but fought back admirably to draw the game 26 – 26. The strength of RGS rugby was highlighted by a scintillating team performance away at Cranleigh by the Under 14Ds who won 25 – 20 thanks to tries from **Archie Attwood** (3E), **Lawrence Brooks** (3P) and **Ollie Southwell** (3P). In addition, the Under 12 teams secured a clean sweep of victories against Perins School scoring 150 points in the process! This was followed by a block fixture against Reed's School and Reading Blue Coat School. Against Reed's School, eight wins and one draw from the 11 fixtures included an assured 22 – 7 victory for the 1st XV. The junior teams dominated against Reading Blue Coat winning five and drawing two of the seven fixtures.

**Sailing:** A team of five boys competed in the BSDRA Keelboating Championship at Queen Mary Sailing Club. Having not stepped foot on a keelboat before the previous week, the boys had a steep learning curve over the course of the weekend. Nevertheless, they sailed extremely well to win one of the final races and end the event in mid-table.

**Swimming:** 33 boys represented the RGS in our second block fixture of the term, against Churcher's College, including an Under 12 team for the first time this year, alongside an A and B team at Under 13, Under 15 and Under 18 level. Despite strong opposition, the RGS won 16 out of the 30 races. 18 boys achieved their *Personal Best* times in a successful and enjoyable event.