



Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

Engineering Specialism within a Grammar School



From the headmaster

27 March 2015

Dear Parents

End of Spring term Newsletter 2015

I thought I would take the opportunity to write to you at the end of term to add just a little more detail to the **latest edition of the RGS News**, which is also published today. In such a short term it is remarkable to see how much is going on in the school and I am very grateful to my secretary, Mrs Hargraves, and to all the students who contributed articles to produce such an excellent record of the term. I do hope you will enjoy reading it.

In addition, **school officer interviews** have now concluded and a decision will be made early next term regarding the appointment of head girl, head boy and their deputies for next academic year 2015-16.

We have recently had a meeting with the contractors who are building **the extension to Johnson House**. I am delighted that the programme of works is on schedule and the girls are very excited about the prospect of the new build, which will enhance the facilities enormously. The expected hand-over is early July which will leave time to furnish the building for September. There will also be consequent improvements to Johnson House in terms of window and boiler replacement.

We have also had a superb number of **applications for sixth form places** for September and I am absolutely delighted by the quality of the applicants. It seems very likely that we will have a very good lower sixth next year.

I would also like to inform you that the **price of a school 'meal deal'** (any two-course meal) will have to increase from £2.20 to £2.30 from 1 April. This is only a small increase and I still believe it represents excellent value for money.

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Mrs Angela Pybus as our **new school Bursar**, who will replace Mrs Forder at the end of this academic year. Mrs Pybus is currently a Traded School Business Manager for NYCC.

There are also **teaching staff appointments to be made in biology and art** next term.

The Summer term **starts on Monday, 13 April** and very shortly afterwards the fifth and sixth form go on Study Leave. For information, the **dates for Study Leave** are as follows:

Fifth form Friday, 8 May 2015 (following leavers' assembly at 10am)

Lower Sixth Friday, 8 May 2015 at 3.55pm (no leavers' assembly)
Return for A2 teaching - Monday, 8 June 2015

Upper Sixth Friday, 22 May 2015 (following leavers' assembly at 10am)

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I am looking forward to the **Upper Sixth farewell evening at 7pm on Thursday, 21 May**, where I hope as many parents of students in the Upper Sixth will be able to join us to say farewell to them. The Upper Sixth will have their final school assembly on Friday morning, 22 May.

I am delighted that the **senior rugby 7s squad were successful in winning** the Austin Friar's rugby tournament in Carlisle. There was a very strong group of squads from the North of England and the RGS team defeated several schools, including Giggleswick, in the senior tournament and then beat Emysted's in the final cup. Tom Newby was the captain of the team and I am thrilled for all the squad, as well as for Mr Margerison and Mr Miller. They **also won the White Rose Festival 10-a-side tournament** at Otley rugby club. The **Under 14 rugby 7s team reached the final** of the prestigious St Peter's 7s tournament, defeating Bradford GS, Ampleforth, QEGS Wakefield and St Ambrose before losing to RGS Newcastle. The **Under 15 rugby team beat Wath in the semi-finals** of the Yorkshire Cup but lost in the final to Prince Henry's, Otley in a very competitive match.

The KS4 boys and girls were crowned **North Yorkshire badminton champions**, along with the KS3 boys. KS3 girls were runners-up. This is an excellent reflection on the badminton talent in school and my thanks go to Mr Willis for his support of the sport which has gone from strength to strength. Our best wishes go to all teams in the Yorkshire and Humber round. The teams are as follows: **U16 girls' team:** Tamsin Cutmore (captain), Lucy Wicks, Mary Cox and Meghan Williamson. **U16 Boys' team:** Max Morrison (captain), Mark Richardson, Charlie Thorpe and Cameron O'Donnell. **U14 boys' team:** Connor Eddleston (captain), Harry Edwards, Alex Edwards, Christian Cavell-Taylor and Henry Exley.

The **U14 netball team** acquitted themselves tremendously well in the national finals, reaching the semi-finals where they lost to Hulme School, the eventual winners. The team comprises Molly Reed, Katie Reed, Emily Reed, Amy Mackenzie, Lucy Williams, Sophie Richardson, Amelia Borchard, captain Jessica Merrin and is now the highest ranked state school in the country in this age group; an exceptional performance.

The **U14 hockey team** were unbeaten in the area tournament and are again the Harrogate & Craven champions and the **Harrogate & Craven U13 A hockey team** played in the 7-a-side Inter Area tournament and finished 1st, winning all their games. Six of the girls in the team were from RGS: Bethan Ratcliff, Katie Reed, Jessica Hasson, Penny Baker, Harriet Strachan and Olivia Borchard.

The **Young Enterprise team won the regional round** in Harrogate and now proceed to the Yorkshire and Humber stage. The team of Josh Finkill, Yaz Ebert, Ed Lyons, Lucy Mumford, David Bates, Matt Pimley, Kaitlin Christensen and Oliver Pond designed a revision guide for students which has sold very well.

The junior **Schools Challenge team defeated** Barnard Castle and Argyle House School in a 'University Challenge' style quiz. Congratulations to the team of Jasper Wood, Molly Cushing, James Dobbs and Marcus Tomlinson; best wishes in the regional round.

Congratulations go to Lower Sixth students Anna Durkin, Issy Gould, Victoria Frost, Daniel Williams and Constance Lumsden. They were **joint winners with The Mount School in this year's Prince's Trust Challenge**. They formed an excellent entrepreneurial team selling a range of items raising a very respectable £600 for this worthwhile charity. The team would like to thank everyone who supported their fundraising efforts.

Congratulations go to **Rheanna Quinn following her week at the Igls Olympic Bobsleigh run** at Innsbruck, where she was fortunate enough to be coached by Kristan Bromley, multiple-time World Champion and four-time Olympian in Skeleton racing. She won a medal for 'The Most Improved Skeleton Racer' and a First in the 'Girls' Tray Race'

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with a presentation of a large engraved Tea Tray to keep for a year. Her article is on the school website for your information.

I thoroughly enjoyed the **school production of 'An Inspector Calls'**, a well-studied GCSE English text. There were superb performances from all the cast who excelled in creating the mystery of who exactly was Inspector Goole. Congratulations to everyone involved.

May I please request that **parents do not drive up the school drive** in the mornings to drop-off their children, nor come up the drive to pick them up at the end of the day, unless there are significant health grounds, ie your child is on crutches. The area outside the school is very busy with students and it is important that as few cars as possible come up the drive to ensure the safety of students.

The testing for Year 7 entry for September 2016 has been out to consultation since the Local Authority are keen to streamline the process and make financial savings where possible. NYCC members met recently and have deemed that there will be two tests undertaken on two successive Saturdays in September (on 19 and 26 September). The tests will be VR and NVR, as currently taken, but there will no familiarisation tests as part of the testing process. The venue for the testing will be here at RGS rather than in primary schools for in-catchment students and at Dallamires Lane for out-of-catchment students, as was the previous regime. This will be the process in future; the LA will oversee the arrangements for testing and will retain responsibility for the admission process. The school is simply acting as a testing venue and will not control admissions.

I am grateful to **Jack Baker and David Bates** for formulating the **e-safety protocol** to ensure that students can stay safe on line. They have presented this to governors and to students in assembly and I hope that their advice will be acted upon by every student in school. The protocol is on the school website and I would advise parents to read it.

It was felt that this e-safety protocol is much better written by students, who are very familiar with social networking sites. This has been issued to all students and I hope you will find it useful.

I am delighted to announce that former head girl at Ripon Grammar School, **Katharine Viner, has been appointed as the first female editor-in-chief of the Guardian Newspaper** in the 194 year history of the newspaper. She is the only female editor of a major UK national daily and is a tremendous inspiration for all the students at Ripon Grammar School; her appointment thoroughly is well-deserved.

The new school website will go live soon and I hope you will think it is a big improvement from the existing one. The main area for parents is prominent, along with 'News', 'Letters home' and 'Term dates'. Easy access to 'Parent Pay' and access to 'Sharepoint' can be found at the bottom left of the home screen. You will also notice the new school video as well as the boarding video.

Thank you for your support this term and I hope you will be able to enjoy an Easter break.

Yours sincerely



M L Pearman
Headmaster

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