

Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

Helping shape the future since 1555



From the Headmaster

26 May 2017

Dear Parents

Re: End of half-term newsletter – Summer term 2017

I hope this newsletter finds you well and I must confess that this half-term has been an incredibly short one, given the late Easter, and I know that both staff and students have been rushing around getting ready for the forthcoming examinations. The fifth form and lower-sixth are well into their examinations and the upper-sixth will start theirs in earnest after half-term.

Ofsted paid a surprise visit just before half term to inspect boarding. I am very grateful to staff, students and parents for all their support during this time. Boarding was inspected on the new framework which was introduced in April and I believe RGS was the first state boarding school inspected in this way. The outcome will be made public as soon as possible once the report has been finally checked and verified by Ofsted.

A-level results are on Thursday, 17 August and GCSE results the following Thursday, 24 August. They will be available in the library from 9am. I hope that all the hard work and preparation will pay off and I know that all students have worked hard over the last few weeks.

We had a very enjoyable farewell evening to the upper-sixth earlier this week and, for once, I could fully understand their sadness regarding leaving Ripon Grammar School since it will be my last year as well. The fifth form also organised an excellent leaving assembly and did very well.

Plans are in hand to ensure a smooth hand-over to Mr Webb, the new Headmaster, and I know that he has been into school several times already to ensure that he starts the new academic year well. I would like to wish him all the best in the rôle.

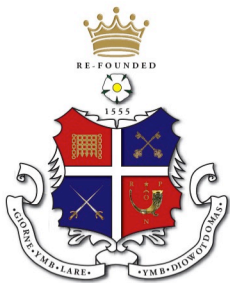
With regard to events in the coming half term, it is extremely busy with **the first form induction evening on 19 June and the open evening for prospective first years in September 2018 on 26 June.** The Local Authority are also running an evening to explain the admissions process on 29 June at 7pm which is to be held in the school hall.

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I am pleased with the current **budgetary situation** currently in school. Student numbers for September are very healthy and as a consequence the budget is looking in good shape, with around £150,000 unallocated for projects and refurbishment in school. This is clearly a different situation from many schools as I am sure you may be aware from the press, and it is a tribute to the financial management of the school. I am very grateful to Mrs Balsdon for the work she does in her role as bursar and I am pleased that Mr Webb has financial means to further develop the school.

I would like to thank parents for their response to the **proposed telecommunications mast** in the school grounds. I understand the concerns around this project and I am grateful to those who have responded to my letter earlier this term. The governors will carefully consider all the information available, both from the World Health Organisation as well as from parents and the local community, and will make a decision in the final full governing body meeting of term.

The development of the **3G pitch** is progressing smoothly and we hope that the project will go to tender in June. It is a very complex project, given the arrangement with Persimmon Homes but I am happy with the way it is progressing although it will not be delivered before I leave. The plan is to have the pitch installed in Spring next year. It will need to gain planning permission from NYCC but most parties have been consulted within school and the local community and I feel that most of the concerns have been allayed. The project itself will take around eight weeks to install and it will be floodlit. The formal planning process should occur during the summer for local residents to express their views.

The girls' toilets in **Johnson House** have just been refurbished and are now much improved. I am grateful to Mr Hogg, premises manager, for overseeing the project.

There have been some **staffing changes** recently and some internal appointments are still to be made. As soon as these are finalised I shall let you know. These shall be made towards the end of term. Congratulations are due to Mr MacMillan who has been appointed head of religious studies at Thirsk School from September so he will be leaving us to take up his new appointment. As a consequence we have advertised for a replacement and I will announce Mr MacMillan's replacement as soon as possible.

Mr Jonathen Slater is our new systems manager and is settling very well into his new role. He brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience and is in the process of formulating a development plan for ICT development within school. A further update on staffing will be given towards the end of term.

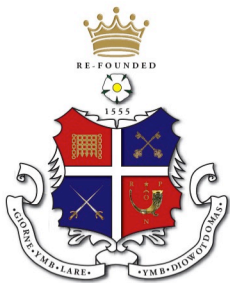
I am very grateful to the **Parents' Association** for organising the Midsummer Ball on Saturday, 24 June. The event looks as though it will be a great success given how successful ticket sales have been and I am sure it will raise a significant amount of money for the school.

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The **junior drama production** of a Midsummer Night's Dream is on 13 and 14 July and I hope that as many parents as possible will be able to support this production. It follows the Lower School Prizegiving, where our speaker will be Nick Chester, Old Riponian and Technical Director of Renault Sport Formula One Team. I am sure he will give an inspiring address. All third form parents are invited, as are parents of those first and second year students who are prize-winners.

With regard to **student news**, I was delighted that the following students received Gold certificates in the UK intermediate mathematics challenge:

Fifth form: Marcus Tomlinson (also best in school and year), Oscar Taylor, Billy Hughes, Poppy Jagger, Sean Oldham, Connor Eddleston, Solomon Feingold, Gus Smith and Joel Ho.

Fourth form: Euan MacArthur (also best in year), Archie Lawson, Emily Parry, Tim Durkin, Rose Cottrell, Araminta Praud, Emmi Scaife and Matthew Swinhoe.

Third form: Simeon Mitchell (also best in year), Oliver Dimpleby and Megan Bannister.

Well done also to the Junior team from the second and third year, who came second in the regional final of the Team Maths challenge. The team members were Shen Jie Yaw, Simeon Mitchell, Amy Burgess and James Arcidiacono.

Congratulations also to the following students who were awarded their senior drama colours following the excellent production of She Stoops to Conquer last term:

Lily Millington, Kirsty Arrowsmith, Patrick Moon, Katharine Chatterton, Finlay Atkinson, Harry Edwards and in particular Joshua Belward who is in the Upper Sixth and will be pursuing a career on the stage; we wish him all the best with his ambition.

Particular congratulations go to Isabella Royston who won the 90cm One Day Event at Northallerton Equestrian Centre and to Eddie Henson and Isabella Royston who came second and third respectively in the regional Area Eventing at 95cm and 105cm. Eddie has therefore qualified for the National Finals at Hickstead.

Toby Osman won the U17 boys' London mini-marathon, a superb achievement. Joseph Westgarth is to represent North Yorkshire in cricket, Ben Statham will represent Yorkshire in badminton and Hetty Simenacz is to represent North Yorkshire in hockey. Congratulations to Mena Scatchard who became Yorkshire Champion in the 3000m, a fantastic achievement.

Well done to the U13 girls' and boys' tennis teams; both teams were unbeaten in the Aegon Harrogate tournament and are in first position at this stage of the competition.

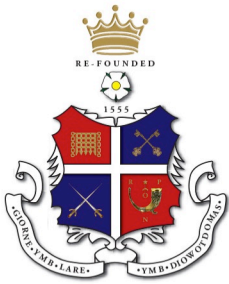
Students have competed at the English School track and field cup competition and there were some outstanding performances from Helena Da Costa, Archie Lawson, Elliot Hutchinson and Anika Schwarze-Chintapatla, to name just a few. Both the junior girls and inter-girls finished second and await the Durham area results to see if they qualify for the regional finals. The junior and inter-boys both finished in fourth position.

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Tara Schwarze-Chintapatla represented England at the World Schools Orienteering Championships in Palermo, Sicily and came 15th. This is a superb achievement as only the best from each country participated; there were competitors from as far as China, New Zealand and Europe.

We have recently received a letter from the charity 'Young Minds', thanking the school for efforts to raise £1,580 from the recent non-uniform day. The money raised will go towards providing support for young people affected by mental health problems. My thanks to the school officers for organising this initiative.

The third form enjoyed a very good week at Beverley Park, with good weather also, and their behaviour and involvement was excellent. I am grateful to the staff who accompanied them. Speaking to the students confirmed how much they enjoyed the week and benefited from it, both personally and socially.

I would like to wish all parents an enjoyable half term and hope that you will be able to enjoy some good weather, particularly over the Bank Holiday weekend. I hope to catch up with parents next half term, my final one at RGS.

Yours sincerely

M L Pearman
Headmaster

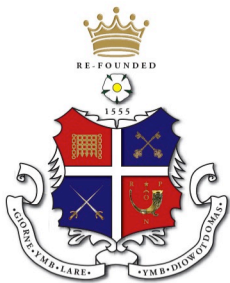
/ Forthcoming Events ...

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Forthcoming events:

Mon, 5 June	School opens after half term
w/c 5 June	First and second year exams
Mon, 19 June	New first form welcome evening
Tues, 20 June	New first form induction day
Sat, 24 June	Parents' Association Masked Summer Ball
Mon, 26 June	Open Evening – first form Sept 2018
Tues, 27 June – Thurs, 29 June	Lower Sixth to Oxford
Wed, 28 June	UCAS Convention, Lower Sixth
Fri, 30 June	Second year Geography trip to Holderness Coast
Fri, 30 June	Lower Sixth to Newcastle/Northumbria Open Day
Mon, 3 July	Sixth form induction afternoon (external students)
Tues, 4 July	Sixth form induction day (all students)
Tues, 4 July	Jazz evening and presentation of Music colours
Wed, 5 – Fri, 7 July	Lower Sixth to Cambridge
Thurs, 6 July	Sports Day
w/c 10 July	Lower Sixth Work Experience
Wed, 12 July	Lower School Prizegiving – speaker Nick Chester
Thurs, 13 July	School Closed for Staff Training (Great Yorkshire Show)
Thurs 13 July and Fri, 14 July	Junior Production of A Midsummer Night's Dream
Sat, 15 – Wed, 19 July	Choir tour
Fri, 21 July	Commemoration Service in Ripon Cathedral at 11am
Fri, 21 July	School closes at 12.30pm for Summer holidays

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