



RGS
WORCESTER

EXCEL

Spring 2021

AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR



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RGS Worcester International Hockey Centre Takes Shape



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The RGS Worcester Family of Schools

Leading Independent schools in Worcestershire.

Find out more about the outstanding education, incredible opportunities and lifelong memories our schools provide www.rgsw.org.uk



RGS Worcester
Upper Tything, Worcester WR1 1HP
Outstanding Education for boys and girls aged 11 - 18



RGS Dodderhill
Dodderhill Road, Droitwich Spa, WR9 0BE
Outstanding Education for boys and girls aged 2 - 11
Girls only education for 11-16 years



RGS The Grange
Grange Lane, Claines WR3 7RR
Outstanding Education for boys and girls aged 2 - 11



RGS Springfield
Britannia Square, Worcester WR1 3DL
Outstanding Education for boys and girls aged 2 - 11

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HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

THIS SPECIAL EDITION OF EXCEL FOCUSES UPON AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY AND FOR THE FOUR SCHOOLS IN THE RGS WORCESTER FAMILY. WE WANTED TO REFLECT AND RECORD ALL THAT HAS BEEN DONE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TO SUPPORT CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION FOR THE PUPILS IN ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING PERIODS IN OUR SCHOOL'S LONG AND DISTINGUISHED HISTORY.



Excel includes the extraordinary work of our teachers in providing remote learning during periods of 'lockdown'. It details the commitment to pastoral care and co-curricular activities despite the challenges of delivering these at times remotely and at times with restrictions in place in school. Included is the mass Covid-19 Testing programme which saw thousands of tests processed by our committed non-teaching staff. There is information about all that has been done to support the community through the pandemic.

While Covid-19 brought many challenges, there is an extraordinary sense of the RGSW community working together. Pupils have demonstrated resilience and determination, responding so positively to remote learning and then delighted to be back in school. Staff have gone the extra mile to support the pupils and provide continuity. Parents have supported their children's learning, parent volunteers have assisted our programme of Testing and we have received hundreds of positive comments and encouragement from parents and alumni.

The RGS Worcester Family of Schools has been recognised internationally for our Digital Learning Programme and all that has been achieved in an extraordinary year. There is much to look forward to in the future with the new International Hockey Centre and exciting plans for further developments ahead.

I would like to thank the Marketing team, especially Emma Horrocks (Editor) and Su Savage (Designer), for producing this record of an extraordinary year. Above all, thank you to our pupils, staff, parents and alumni for all that you have done, and continue to do, to support the RGS Worcester Family of Schools.

John Pitt
Headmaster



REDEFINING OUTSTANDING EDUCATION

When Covid-19 shook the world in March 2020, little did anyone know the challenges that lay ahead for education. The RGS Worcester Family of Schools already had a Digital Learning Programme and so teachers were able to adapt to remote teaching seamlessly and the Schools provided continuity of education for the pupils. As one parent commented during this challenging period, RGS was "redefining what outstanding education looks like".



Digital Learning Programme

After its launch in September 2014, the Digital Learning Programme (DLP) has gone from strength to strength. Today, every pupil from Year Five upwards comes to school with an iPad, meaning digital learning is no longer just a vision - it is now very much a reality, and embedded within life at RGS.

With school closures across the United Kingdom, everyone was forced to rethink how education is delivered and teaching remotely became a national challenge. However, thanks to the investment we had already made in technology - as a result of our Digital Learning Programme, our schools were able to switch confidently to remote learning from day one of 'lockdown', delivering a full timetable and ensuring the continuity of education for all RGS pupils.

The RGS Digital Learning Programme aims to use technology to its best in an RGS education, enhancing, but not replacing traditional teaching. Digital learning is now embedded in our Schools and teachers are provided with continuous professional training to maximise the learning experience for the pupils. RGS pupils are passionate about technology, and are informed in using technology in a measured, appropriate and safe way. For those who want to take it a step further, there is the 'Digital Leaders' programme, where in-house digital champions are upskilled and able to support their peers.

Constantly innovating, RGS is looking at Augmented Reality and Artificial Intelligence in education to create the best possible advantages for our pupils. Students leave RGS knowing how to use technology in their learning and understanding its benefits (as well as its limitations). They have a head start for university and the workplace and are ready to embrace new technologies of the future.

As a school we have gained recognition locally, nationally and internationally for our approach and delivery of digital learning. We continue to develop our Digital Learning Programme by working with leading schools in the UK, and now across the world, as we discuss how best to provide effective and successful continuity of education during the pandemic, helping to shape the future of education and the integration of technology.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Digital Learning Programme since 2014 - long term investment in our technology and structure
- Continuity of education - full timetable of remote lessons were delivered from day one of 'lockdown' in March 2020
- A leading school for remote teaching, acknowledged by Apple, BETT and in EdTech Vision 2025
- Apple Distinguished School - of only 535 schools globally
- Learning continued - A Level and GCSE Mock Examinations were delivered online
- 92% positive rating from parents for how we have coped with the pandemic
- 97% of teachers and 93% of pupils agreed that they had been able to continue to progress when using technology to learn remotely
- Online Parent Evenings were a resounding success!

REMOTE LEARNING THE RGS JOURNEY

APPLE DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS

Since 2017, all RGS schools are proud to be recognised as Apple Distinguished Schools - of only 535 Apple Distinguished Schools in the world. RGS has received this accolade for innovative and creative digital learning, demonstrating Apple's vision for technology in education becoming a daily reality in the classroom.

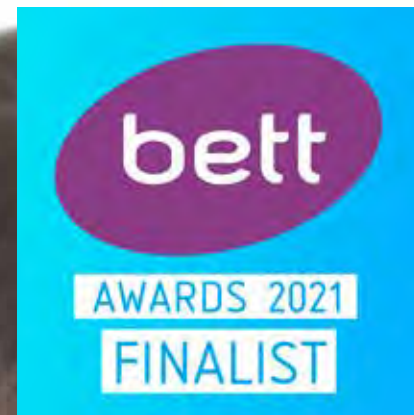
The reputation of the RGS Schools' Digital Learning Programme continues to grow, with Apple increasingly requesting to use the RGS Family of Schools as the ideal example of how to use technology in education, during these challenging times.

John Jones, Director of Innovation, and Matt Warne, Head of Computing and Digital Learning at RGS The Grange, have been asked to showcase the RGS remote learning journey to educators around the world, with invitations to present at the 'Think Ahead Global iPad Summit' in July 2020 and the 'Apple Communities Festival' in November 2020.

This reflects the strength and global recognition of the RGS Digital Learning Programme and the teaching and learning that has been achieved across our schools during this remarkable year.



BETT AWARDS 2021 INTERNATIONAL FINALISTS



The BETT Awards are prestigious international honours that celebrate high achievement, inspiring creativity and innovation that can be found throughout educational technology. The RGS Family of Schools were delighted to be selected as Finalists for BETT in recognition of the online learning provided for pupils throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Together with Eton College, we were one of only eight academic institutions in the world to be shortlisted for 'The Covid-19 Response Champions Awards - Schools & Colleges (UK & International)'.

We are so pleased to have been recognised for the continuity of education we have been able to provide.

EDTECH VISION 2025 UK RECOGNITION

RGS Worcester was the only independent school mentioned in the 'EdTech Vision 2025' report, published by the EdTech Advisory Forum. This was a 'think tank' paper provided to the Education Select Committee in Parliament, advising the Government on how to deliver effective remote learning and prepare ahead for potential future disruption.

The report celebrated RGS as a leading example of how digital learning can be deployed in schools, and specifically how the Digital Learning Programme enabled our teachers to provide interactive and engaging remote lessons during Covid-19.

To be mentioned specifically as a leading example of digital learning in the corridors of Westminster is really quite something for the RGS Family of Schools. Although we can't claim to have foreseen a global pandemic, having the Digital Learning Programme in place meant we did have an opportunity to keep learning for our 1450+ pupils alive when everyone in the UK went into 'lockdown'.

"Congratulations upon becoming finalists for The Covid-19 Response Champions Awards - Schools & Colleges (UK & International). This is a wonderful achievement in itself and well deserved. My daughter has been incredibly fortunate to have received such a wonderful education during the pandemic."

RGS WORCESTER PARENT

AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

As ever, the RGS community rose to these many challenges, ultimately responding not only to national guidelines, but going above and beyond them when we returned to school in September 2020. Throughout the Michaelmas term, the School provided safety and social distancing measures to keep the community safe during the weeks back in school.

In advance of the start of the Spring term 2021, both RGS Worcester and RGS Dodderhill quickly set up an effective 'Mass Testing' programme over the Christmas period. The Government then decided to introduce a further 'lockdown' with remote learning reintroduced for January and February 2021. Again, the four RGSW Schools switched straight to remote learning seamlessly.

When the decision was made to return to on-site learning in schools from 8 March 2021, the RGS Schools conducted almost 5,000 Covid-19 rapid lateral flow tests, in the week prior to pupils returning onsite. RGS Worcester and RGS Dodderhill were the only schools in Worcestershire ready for all pupils to return on the first day they were permitted to do so.

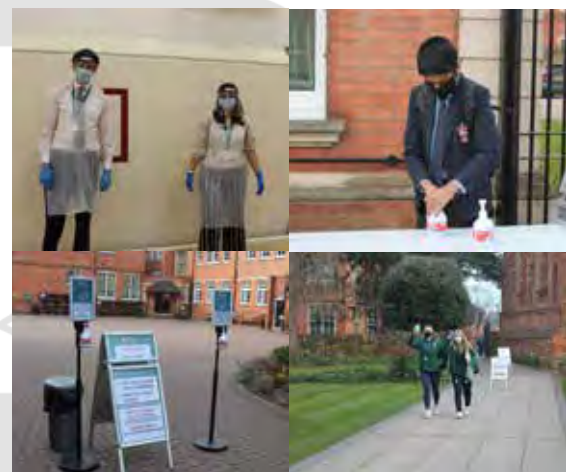
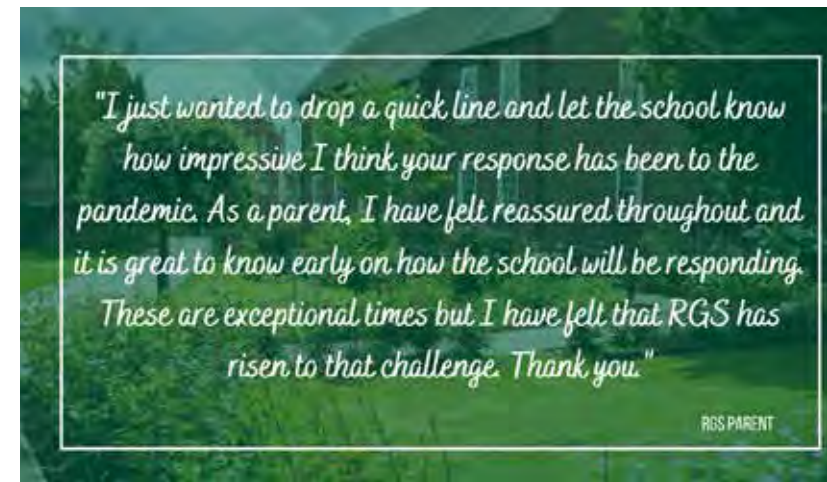
With a focus on safety, pupils returned to the RGS Schools on 8 March and enjoyed classroom teaching once again. The staff were delighted to welcome the pupils back. Senior pupils and all staff continued to be tested twice each week, reporting their results to the NHS and to RGS. The pupils experienced four weeks of school and we completed Mock Examinations for all Year Eleven and Upper Sixth pupils.

Remarkably, despite a challenging term with eight weeks of remote learning and four weeks in school, the pupils were entirely up to date academically across all Year groups.

The Admissions team has faced new challenges this year, with the need for Virtual Open Mornings, remote school tours and online meetings. We are pleased to report that we have very much enjoyed the process, finding new and innovative solutions to help introduce our friendly and welcoming school to prospective pupils and their families.

RGS Worcester has hosted three Virtual Open Mornings, which have all been a real success, with parents being very grateful for the quality time they spent with members of the academic team. Prospective new families have also enjoyed the wonderfully put together Open Morning films, introducing the School from the perspective of RGS pupils, parents, staff and alumni. The Headmaster has had many individual online meetings with prospective parents and pupils via Google Meet and Mr Houchin even toured a family based in Canada via his iPad and showed them Perrins Hall and other beautiful parts of the School!

Our Entrance Examinations were carried out virtually, although a few pupils chose to come into school to sit the papers. We were able to mark the tests and get offer letters out within a few days. This was much appreciated by parents who, this year more than ever before, were keen to have certainty over where their children would attend school in September.



OUR RESPONSE IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Staff and pupils across the School have all shown an amazing ability to adapt swiftly and effectively to the demands upon them. Our parents have also responded to requests with exceptional goodwill and support. We received numerous offers to volunteer to help with testing and consents were returned within minutes of requests being sent.

It has been a remarkable team effort and, if there is one positive from all of the uncertainty, it is the ever-growing strength of the 'RGS Family' – pupils, staff, parents and alumni working together to support one another.



PARENT POWER

High Academic Standards

Each year The Sunday Times publishes their schools guide, 'Parent Power' which identifies the 2,000 highest-achieving schools in the UK, based on a combination of A Level and GCSE results. We are delighted that RGS Worcester once again was the top performing school academically in Worcester and has been since the rankings were published in November 2019.

This achievement for RGS Worcester is testament to the hard work of pupils and outstanding teaching from staff.



The rankings for the local area in 2019 and re-published in 2020 and 2021 were as follows:



Source: The Sunday Times 'Parent Power' Survey 2021

The survey combined both A Level and GCSE results.



WORCESTER INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY CENTRE TAKES SHAPE



Work on the Worcester International Hockey Centre has continued during the pandemic and we can see this exciting new venture, a partnership between the RGS Worcester Family of Schools and Worcester Hockey Club, supported by Worcester City Council, really taking shape.

The Centre will provide RGS pupils the opportunity to develop their Hockey skills, combining superb facilities and outstanding coaching and, together with the Astroturf pitch at RGS The Grange, creating a superb tournament venue.

It is great to be able to look forward to pupils using what will be an incredible Hockey facility, as well as the opportunity to work with Worcester Hockey Club and the local community to promote Hockey in the region.



"The new facility will ensure that our fixture programme can be expanded and RGS Hockey teams will have the space specifically to prepare for competitive games and tournaments."

MRS LEANNE BENNETT, RGS HEAD OF HOCKEY

photos by Paul Savage Photography

RGS COMMUNITY

ALUMNA - TRAILBLAZER FOR THE OXFORD VACCINE

Former Alice Ottley pupil, Dr Andrea Collins (1990-97) has played a key part in the internationally renowned coronavirus vaccine research, leading the work in Liverpool for the Phase 3 Oxford Covid-19 Vaccine Study. Andrea works at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine as Senior Clinical Lecturer and is an Honorary Consultant in Respiratory Infection at the Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Trust. The trial Andrea worked on was the first, Phase 3 Covid-19 Vaccine Study to begin in the UK, and the pace at which the research took place was incredible, gaining international attention. Andrea has also become a spokesperson for the research of coronavirus, through various media appearances.



"I normally work in pneumonia vaccine research and things don't normally move so fast, but with a pandemic every organisation works together in the same direction, for the same purpose. We were selected as a UK site in May, so I stopped working as a frontline respiratory Consultant in Aintree Hospital in Liverpool and began recruiting other frontline health and social care workers into this study."

DR ANDREA COLLINS

SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Through the achievements of our Digital Learning Programme, RGS was pleased to be able to share our experience and good practice with others in the education community - advising on digital strategy and effective use of technology to schools such as the Bridge School in Malvern, The Windsor Academy Trust in the West Midlands and the Thomas Deacon Academy in Peterborough. We continue to offer ongoing support to any school that is considering adopting digital technology.



DONATING IPADS TO KIDDERMINSTER SCHOOL

We were pleased to be able to assist a local primary school by donating 20 iPads to help support pupils with their remote learning.

Franch Community Primary School in Kidderminster aimed initially to use the tablets for online learning for those pupils without device access and once schools re-open, for them to form part of the classroom provision. This has been an excellent opportunity for RGS to share its experience and expertise in providing remote learning.

FUNDRAISING

In November 2020, we 'Wore Something Pink' and grew 'Movember' moustaches raising both money and awareness for charities championing breast cancer and men's health. Our Lower School donated 12 large boxes of food from their Harvest Festival to give to Worcester-based Maggs Day Centre, and we supported BBC Children in Need through the whole school Mufti Day, which raised over £2,000.

Towards the end of term, Year Eight Pupils donated enough presents to fill 73 Christmas boxes for the New Hope Children's Charity, which supports children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Also in December, two van loads of donations were delivered to Worcester Foodbank.

The total fundraising across the RGS Family of Schools during the 2019-2020 academic year is in excess of £27,000. This is a fantastic achievement, and we are very grateful to everyone for their support.



CO-CURRICULAR GOES REMOTE

RGS prides itself on the Co-curricular opportunities it offers its pupils to enrich their school life. It has been incredible to see so many of our Clubs and Societies continue, via online alternatives, that encourage some much needed 'downtime', maintain connection with peers and promote enjoyment, creativity and wellbeing. Pupils have been able to continue to participate in Dance Club, Film Makers' Club, Psychology, Literacy Society, Art Club, Debating, several Book Clubs, Environment Club, Code Club, Choir, Textiles Club, CCF and Duke of Edinburgh, amongst many others.

Cooking has proved a popular pastime for RGS pupils. For those with a sweet tooth, Mrs Harkness' 'Sweet Treats' has cooked up a storm of puddings and deserts and 'Kitchen Adventures with Mrs Nicholls' has nourished pupils with a 'live' cook-along to prepare a family meal each Thursday evening.



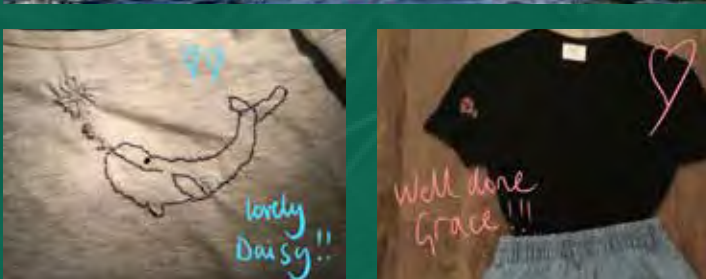
BILLINGHAM SOCIETY - ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

Named after RGS Worcester's distinguished alumnus and Physician Dr John Billingham, the Billingham Society offers pupils academic enrichment. In normal circumstances, the Society would run on-site after school, but our young Billingham members' appetite for learning has continued and online sessions have included an array of presentations, films and lectures run by experts in their field.

Topics have included 'How to Keep a Secret - the Mathematics Behind Cryptography', 'Plastic Fashion', 'Star Wars and the Magic of Myth', 'The Economic Impact of Covid-19 on the UK Economy' and 'To Bee or not to Bee: The Disappearing Bees'.

"I love cooking every Thursday with Mrs Nicholls and the other pupils, trying new recipes, all of which tasted amazing. I enjoyed learning new skills and experimenting with ingredients. My favourite was definitely the fajitas which we made in lockdown 1, they were soooo good. Cooking club was most possibly the highlight of lockdown and the best part of the day on Thursday."

RGS PUPIL



RGS WORCESTER SPORT FOR ALL - KEEPING PUPILS ACTIVE

Despite restrictions with physical contact sports and the constraints on school fixtures, our Sports Department has continued to motivate and engage pupils to remain fit and active this year.

Remote Teaching and Learning saw a range of exciting virtual opportunities in PE and Games, including core Physical Education and Games 'live' lessons, with pupils participating from living rooms and gardens across Worcestershire and beyond!

Other highlights have been the 'Daily Sports Challenges' and the RGS Virtual Winter Olympics Games which saw our PE teachers creatively replicating Winter Olympic sports using everyday household items and furniture! Challenges included: Skiing Speed Bounce Biathlon Ski Shoot with Mr Lewis - using a bucket and snowballs or socks! And the Skeleton Press Up - Bobsled style in the bath, as demonstrated by Miss Bennett.

Academic Physical Education lessons continued for GCSE, A Level and BTEC Sport lessons exploring online delivery ideas such as the Upper Sixth BTEC class, who became trained Barre instructors as part of their Unit 4 Sports Leadership.

Exciting events to inspire pupils have included Athlete Development Programme lectures, including a Netball Zoom session with Severn Stars sensation Lucy Herdman, to hear her inspirational story and take part in virtual coaching drills and skills, and a 'live' Q&A with inspirational Hockey Olympic legends and Gold medallists, Kate and Helen Richardson-Walsh.

"Fantastic #rgsvirtual provision - seamless transition to online working, full live lessons, contact with friends - and co-curricular clubs from next week. In fact the only lesson not replicated is Swimming, which we can understand! Thank you #rgsfamily"

YEAR SEVEN PARENT



ONLINE DEBATING FLOURISHES

Throughout 2020-2021, RGS Worcester debaters have continued to research, gather evidence, formulate argument and debate - the only difference being that the debates have been held online. This new platform for Debating, has proved a successful transition. RGS Worcester debaters have had a tremendous year and the most successful Debating season to date, winning the Nottingham Schools Competition as well as Silver Final at Manchester and Bronze Final at Birmingham. RGS also joined the 130 best schools from the UK and across the world, competing at the Oxford Finals Day, qualifying for the quarter-finals in 14th place whilst also achieving a place at Finals Day at Cambridge University.



CREATIVITY CONTINUES ...

Pupils' creativity has flourished this year, with creative expression arguably becoming more important than ever, in order to nurture a sense of calm and wellbeing. Despite challenges, creative solutions have been found to forge new ways of working together, and this collaboration has been a tonic for both pupils and audiences alike.

MUSICAL MASTERPIECES

The RGS community has had the pleasure of regular online concerts from our talented young musicians. Audiences enjoyed the 'November Concert Series' and popular 'Perrins Sessions', broadcast from the School's majestic Perrins Hall when possible. During times of 'lockdown' we have delighted in the weekly online concerts, with soloists performing from their homes.

Audiences were captivated and in awe of this year's filmed Carol Service. With pupils onsite during December 2020, choristers and readers recorded contributions in their Year group 'bubbles' and were suitably socially-distanced, in a festively decorated Perrins Hall. With clever editing, our singers were then joined together to create perfect harmony.

DRAMA

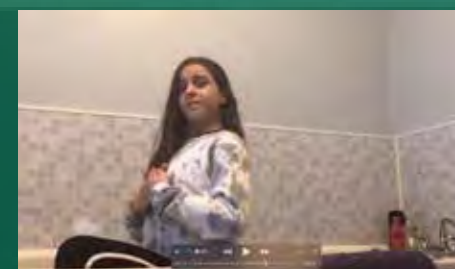
Alongside theatres throughout the country, we have missed our superb Performing Arts Centre being filled with the bustle of rehearsals and the opening night excitement of our school productions. Drama has very much continued at RGS – albeit in a slightly different way. Pupils have approached drama with originality, seizing the opportunity to maximise the creative possibilities of technology in their performance, with pupils often writing, performing, directing, filming and editing their own productions.

Pupils from Years Eight and Nine enthusiastically continued with work towards the Summer Musical - Bugsy Malone. As we moved into 'lockdown' shortly after casting the show, rehearsals seamlessly moved online, and it was decided to record scenes to create the first RGS 'streamed' school production. The final film was a terrific achievement and premiered online in March 2021, delighting audiences and families across Worcestershire and beyond with its all-action, musical energy.

In the House Drama challenge, pupils were invited to write and perform a monologue or duologue entitled 'The Crazy World of Covid.' The resulting performances were astonishing; some humorous, others sensitive and all to be celebrated for their theatrical accomplishment.

HOUSE EVENTS AT HOME

This extraordinary year did not deter pupils' determination to secure valuable points for their respective House teams. Whilst in school, we enjoyed long-standing favourites such as House Dance, House Chess, Petanque and General Knowledge quizzes. During times of remote schooling, new and exciting House challenges were set. The House Pumpkin Carving Competition resulted in some spookily, creative vegetable sculptures and the House Scrap Heap Challenge saw pupils' resourcefulness to build an eco-friendly shelter. The House Music Competition moved online and invited pupils to make a '90s music track, with the theme of 'lockdown'. Results were incredible, showcasing not only the musical performing talents, but their skills as musical arrangers, collaborators, sound engineers and filmmakers.



MUSICAL SPIRIT CONTINUES

Music is central at RGS Dodderhill and the challenging year did not dampen the musical spirit. Mrs Vinson, Director of Music continued to inspire musical creativity throughout 'lockdown' with online Music lessons, rehearsals and concerts. To commemorate Remembrance Day, the RGS Dodderhill Alumnae choir recorded a moving musical tribute 'Ode of Remembrance', and in December the School Choir provided much festive cheer with socially distanced, virtual choir performances. RGS Dodderhill girls also delighted audiences, performing alongside the Phoenix Singers in an online fundraising concert hosted by the Birmingham Symphony Hall. Progression in music studies also continued, with many pupils achieving high grades in Music examinations.

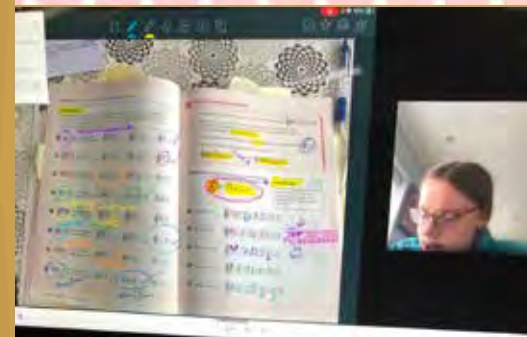


SUPPORTING YOUNG MINDS

In October, the whole school came together in support of the Young Minds charity #helloyellow, by dressing up in yellow and thinking about positivity, hope and wellbeing.

A mural designed by our Art Coordinator, Mrs Hatfield in the style of Keith Haring, stands proud in the school and is decorated with messages of positivity from pupils. One of our Senior girls reflects, "In the last year I have had some positive outcomes from lockdown, like lots of family time, relaxing time, exercise and time for fun projects like planting vegetables and flowers in the garden."

RGS Dodderhill pupils have had much fun participating in the Co-curricular challenges over the past year, with the aim of keeping our school community active, creative and engaged with activities they enjoy, as well as the prospect of winning coveted 'Lockdown Awards' for taking part!



RGS DODDERHILL BAKE OFF

Baking has also proved extremely popular, as we have seen the Catering Rooms at RGS Dodderhill swing back into life, with pupils from Years One to Eleven learning essential life skills in the kitchen. Our Senior Girls have learnt to cook budget meals, younger pupils have made cakes and even croissants have been baked as part of French lessons. Whether in school or cooking at home via online 'live' lessons, pupils' enthusiasm has been infectious and their commitment and creativity is a credit to them all.



FUN AND ADVENTURE IN NURSERY

The RGS Dodderhill Nursery opened in January 2020 and provides outstanding care for boys and girls aged 2-4 years. It provides an environment where children can learn through play and adventure, under the guidance of our nurturing staff.

Being situated at the heart of the School, allows our Nursery children to benefit from the wider and superb facilities RGS Dodderhill School offers, along with the opportunity to gain specialist learning from the teachers onsite.

A particular highlight that Nursery children delight in, is spending time in the outdoor classroom, developing an understanding of the world around them, whether that is exploring nature in the magical Forest School area, active adventure in the playground or frolics in the snow!

Our 'Messy Mornings', promote expressive creativity and 'Music Magic' sessions explore sound, rhythm and song - all supporting the development of key areas of learning, through fun and play.



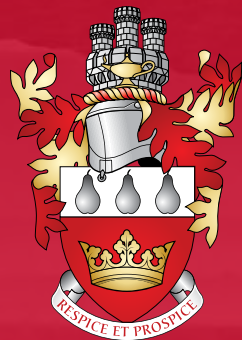
RGS DODDERHILL WELCOMES BOYS

From September 2021, RGS Dodderhill Girls School will be opening its doors to boys between the ages of two and eleven.

Mrs Sarah Atkinson, Headmistress of RGS Dodderhill shared her excitement of this latest news in the School's long history "RGS Dodderhill is such a happy school with a wealth of fantastic facilities. We already have a thriving Co-Ed Nursery on site, and I am delighted that we will be welcoming boys into our Reception Class and throughout our Prep School from September".

Girls will be able to continue at RGS Dodderhill for a girls only education from Years Seven to Eleven, before joining the RGS Worcester Sixth Form and gain the opportunity to experience a fully Co-Ed environment ahead of their journey into Further Education.





RGS THE GRANGE

MAGICAL FESTIVITIES

Despite the restrictions this year, RGS The Grange still managed to make the festive season by delighting audiences with their magical, online Nativity. Pupils from Reception to Year Two shone bright as they made use of Forest School and our wonderful grounds to act out the story of 'A Very Special Baby'. Mrs Kestley-Smith, Head of Music at RGS The Grange, worked with the children on a selection of songs and they were performed brilliantly! It was fantastic to see the children gaining such enjoyment from the opportunity to embrace a new style of creativity; peals of laughter were heard ringing throughout Forest School. As a filmed performance, families were able to enjoy the festive performance later via our online streaming platform. It was great to see these traditional festive activities taking place, and managing to make the season special at the end of what had been a challenging year for all. *(photos by David Felton Photography)*



KEEPING ACTIVE AND SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS

With the School's philosophy that 'happy children succeed', keeping pupils active, creative and engaged has been a key focus for everyone in the RGS The Grange school community over the past year.

The PE department continued to encourage pupils to keep active at home during 'lockdown' with 'live' PE lessons streamed to households across Worcestershire, whilst creative challenges set pupils' imagination flowing and online concerts heartened audiences.

When back at school during the Lent Term, pupils made the most of the 50-acre site, not only for Forest School, PE and Sports, but also the opportunity for lessons to move outside when possible, with all enjoying the open space, fresh air and sunshine! We also welcomed the sound of music filling our school once again, with the return of many musical clubs for pupils to relish; from Guitar and String Group to mixed instrument ensemble, and Choir for each year group from Years Three to Six.



'EGGCITING TIMES!'

Pupils in Year One had a very 'eggciting' surprise when a delivery of fertilised chicken eggs arrived. The children spent the afternoon placing the eggs carefully in the incubator and making sure the temperature was correct for the eggs to thrive. Some days later, excitement rose, as one of the eggs started to pip and a small crack appeared. The following day at school, our first hatchling had arrived, greeted by many excited faces peering through the glass. During phonics, egg number two cracked open and our second chick made its appearance, with three more hatching on the following days. We now have five happy hens, enjoying life in the grounds of our 50-acre site, and offering much delight and learning opportunity for all our pupils from Nursery to Year Six.

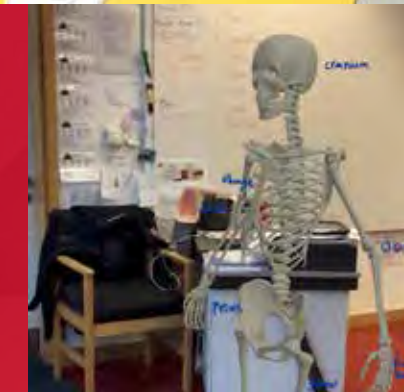


AUGMENTED REALITY SKELETONS

Pupils in Year Three at RGS The Grange were thrilled to see life-size skeletons appear in the classroom using augmented reality on their devices. The excitement was clear as pupils walked around the skeletons - in both fascination and awe at the spooky spectacle.

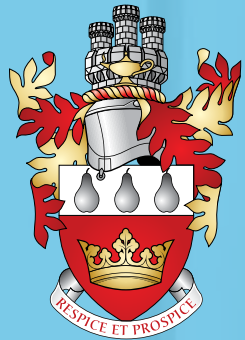
The virtual skeletons allowed pupils to look in detail and identify the different bones that form the human body. Following the interactive experience, pupils used iPads and digital pencils to draw and label diagrams, demonstrating their anatomical understanding. The lesson then continued with a practical task which involved collaboration and cooperation, to cut out and assemble a skeleton, using split pins to create moveable joints.

The same technology was used to create a virtual model of the circulatory system, visualising for pupils the effect of exercise on the human body. At RGS The Grange, this blended learning style is constantly evolving, combining the new and traditional teaching methods. When skillfully utilised, the blend can result in fast paced, engaging, interactive lessons with fantastic pupil outcomes and a lot of fun along the way!



"I wanted to thank you for the extraordinary lengths you and your team have gone to in order to make schooling for our children as 'normal' and fun as possible. The enthusiasm continues to shine through from everyone at The Grange, and I know my children could not be happier as a result."

RGS THE GRANGE - PARENT



RGS SPRINGFIELD

SPRINGFIELD STEPS BACK IN TIME

History came to life at RGS Springfield as pupils went on a time-travelling adventure, experiencing a day in the Victorian era. Year Two pupils exhibited Victorian clothing and spent the day taking on Victorian chores. Pupils scrubbed the floor, polished shoes, washed and ironed the clothes, beat the rugs and even helped the 'Housekeeper' to make their own toilet paper. As a special lunch treat, Suzanne (Springfield's fabulous school cook) made them gruel, which was declared to be "great!". By the afternoon, they had worked up an appetite for afternoon tea, and spent time with the 'Governess', developing their artistic skills, improving their needlework and creating their own Victorian style toys.



CREATIVITY LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Pupils from the age of five have the chance to explore IT at RGS Springfield, learning to code and build their confidence with technology. During the Michaelmas Term, Year One pupils had particular fun using the iPads and a digital pencil creatively, alongside an intuitive drawing app. Pupils learnt about line and colour, creating some wonderful digital artwork; autumnal leaf pictures, superhero self-portraits and Mondrian inspired designs. These digital learning tools enable our younger pupils to be expressive whilst ensuring that key areas of pencil control, letter formation and handwriting skills continue to develop.



THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

RGS Springfield is the 'Secret in the Square'. Tucked away in beautiful Britannia Square in the heart of Worcester, we are fortunate to have over two acres of green playing fields that all the children and Bumble (our School dog) can enjoy. Our school is very much 'wellies everyday' and at every opportunity we take learning outside, enjoying the positive benefits that being outdoors gives. From autumn ambles around our magical wooded Forest School area, to painting sunflowers 'al fresco', writing secret messages onto leaves, learning about raindrops in the rain, or exploring numbers on a maths treasure hunt, pupils have enjoyed lots of adventures this term, exploring and learning in the outdoor classroom.



WHAT OUR PUPILS SAY

For those children who needed to be in school or whose parents were Critical Workers, we tried to make school as fun as possible with one 'bubble' of children and a few extra treats. These were the things the children loved...

"I loved joining the Year Five disco on Friday afternoon and ate too many biscuits"

"It was much more exciting than being at home because they were people to talk to"

"Easier to have face to face lessons, the teachers were better at helping me than mum or dad"

FREDIE, JESS AND ILY AND CALER, YEAR SIX

"Playing football and games with Year Six"

"I loved doing Maths"

"I loved playing with lots of friends in school each day"

"I loved learning new topics"

AVAL, DEXTER, ANNE, KEELEIGH AND ETTA, YEAR ONE AND TWO

"We loved doing fun things on google meet, Silly hat day or silly hair day!"

"I liked that we had a group of children to be with, and we could see each other"

NAOMI AND BELLA, YEAR FIVE

"I liked that we played with the five and sixes too, my favourite games were dub the bin and tag"

"You could sit where you liked at lunch"

"Biscuits every day"

WILL, HENRY, SEB, YEAR 4





RGS
NURSERIES

These are our Nurseries



RGS Dodderhill in Droitwich Spa



RGS The Grange in Claines



RGS Springfield in Britannia Square

Laughter, friendship, exploration, discovery and wellies! These, and more, are what your child will experience at our RGS Nurseries. Our three Nurseries are located within the RGS Family of Schools, which allows our Nursery children to enjoy the benefits of utilising the fantastic on-site facilities and resources.

Visit rgsw.org.uk/Nurseries to find out more or email nurseries@rgsw.org.uk