



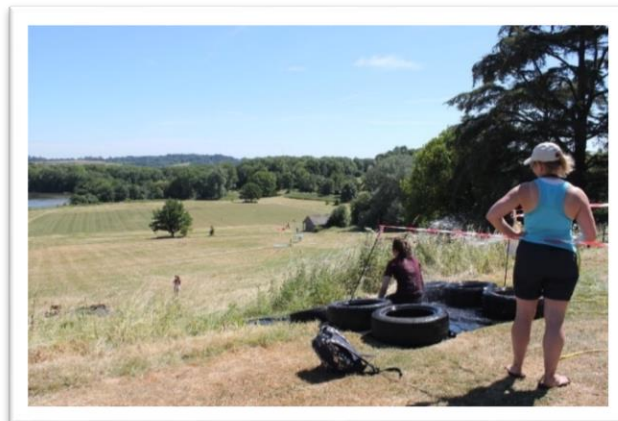
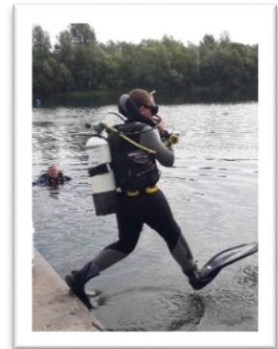
## Head's Letter – July 2018

Over the last week I have seen the school community come together to give pupils some unforgettable experiences as part of Explore Week in the Senior School and Creative Week in the Junior School. Pupils have been in the Park enjoying activities including conservation, sport, Cluedo and croquet. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful setting and pupils have clearly enjoyed their time outdoors.

Part of the week was dedicated to trips with pupils going to the Isle of Wight, Chessington, Box Hill and some attended a scuba diving course.

Year 10 have spent their week on work-related activities including entrepreneurship, design, marketing and CV writing. The Maintenance team gave up some of their time to teach Year 10 practical skills including how to wire a plug and basic plumbing.

Year 12 have spent the week on university visits and starting work on personal statements for university applications.



This has been an uplifting end to the term and it reminds me why this is such a great school.

I want this school to continue to provide a broad range of academic and co-curricular opportunities. Over the last year I have been working with the Senior Leadership Team and the School's governing bodies to produce a strategy for the School. We are in a period of great change with Brexit and changes in the curriculum so we need to have a clear plan for how we will face these challenges. At the very heart of our strategy is our school vision:

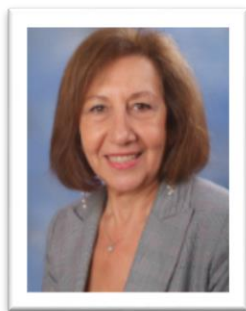
We develop impressive individuals ready to flourish  
*by*

- Providing an inclusive and all-round education
- Delivering academic progress and success
- Inspiring leadership and character

Everything we do over the next few years will help us to deliver this vision.

It is important to have the right team to do this and I am happy we have two new staff joining the Senior Leadership Team in September. Rea Mitchell joins us as Deputy Head (Academic) from Gordon's School (another state boarding school) where she was Assistant Head. Rea will continue the focus on teaching and learning to ensure pupils make the best possible academic progress. Shaun Greenwood who is currently Head of Lower School at the Hawthorns School will be joining us as Head of the Junior School. Shaun has already been to the school a number of times and I was delighted he could join us at Induction where he was able to meet new parents and pupils.

I would like to pay tribute to three of the Senior Leadership Team who will be leaving this term. Kate Ross, Deputy Head (Academic) has been an asset to this school and she leaves us in a strong position in terms of the quality of teaching and learning. Emma Glover, Assistant Head (Enhanced Learning Team) has taken us to new levels in terms of the support we provide to the pupils who most need it. I would like thank both Emma and Kate and wish them well as they take up senior positions in other schools.



Ines Salman is leaving for a well-earned retirement after 17 years of dedicated service. There have been some emotional farewells to our much-loved colleague and none more so, than those from the children. She has truly inspired junior pupils and she will be missed greatly.

This term we have had two excellent Prize Giving Ceremonies. There will be lasting memories from both these services; the warmth of feeling in the Junior Service as pupils, staff and parents bade farewell to Ines Salman; and the inspirational speaker in the Senior Service. There are so many pupils who work hard and succeed in so many ways and it is good to be able to formally recognise this each year.

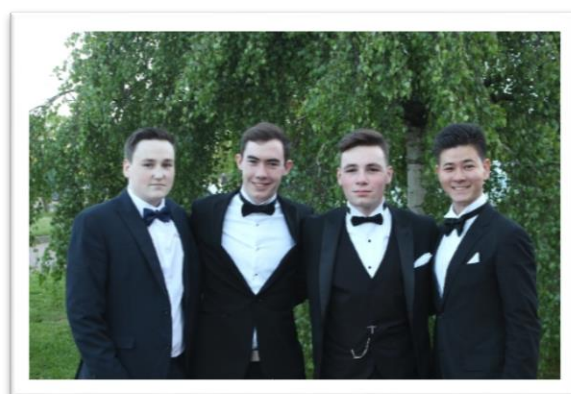
Another way we recognise achievement is through the Gatton Awards, which are for people who have particularly impressed in the way they have shown one or more of the Gatton Aims. This term we made the following awards to recipients who were put forward by pupils or by staff: Martha-Lily Turner, Lucas Sprague and Ariella Ajayi from Year 5; Yasmin Jones, Year 6; Alexander Chapman, Year 7; Holly Anderson, Year 9; Tiffany Chung and Posi Ademulegun from Year 10 and Staff members Peter Adams and Emma Glover.

It was good to see so many parents at Sports Day this year. The Junior and Senior events were an excellent showcase of the sporting talent we have at this school. My thanks to the Friends of RAAS who ran a refreshment stall providing drinks and snacks to the spectators. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Friends for all their contributions to the School including the new seating that will shortly be in place outside the Dining Room.



During May and June pupils sat external exams and I was impressed with how they maintained their focus despite the pressure that is inevitable at this time of year. I wish them every success when they receive the results in the summer.

The summer is the time of year when pupils let their hair down and mark key milestones in their school life. There was the Year 13 Prom, the Year 11 prom in Gatton Hall and the Junior end of year party. These were all lively and enjoyable events.



Work on Gatton Hall will be completed during the summer. Much of the work was ‘behind the scenes’ but we have also taken the opportunity to redecorate all the state rooms and boarding accommodation. Sixth Form boarders will be back in residence on the top two floors from September and they are looking forward to moving in.

I finished the academic year by submitting the pupils to five minutes of the Electric Light Orchestra’s “Mr Blue Sky”, which was released as a single 40 years ago this year. It is widely thought of as the best pop song of all time and I feel it is an important part of their education to hear it and it’s a fitting celebration as we head off into the summer holidays in the middle of the heat wave.

All that remains is for me to thank parents, pupils, staff and governors for your contribution to another successful year, and to wish you a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Mark Dixon  
Headmaster