

Boarding Review 2015 - 2016



Activities & Events

National Boarding Week

'My Boarding Year' by students

Photos, and much more...



Royal
Russell

Foreword by Robin Fletcher, Chief Executive of the Boarding Schools' Association

In a year where the Boarding Schools' Association (BSA) celebrated its Golden Jubilee culminating in National Boarding Week, boarders from Royal Russell School epitomised the spirit of the boarding community we value here in the UK.

The UK has the biggest boarding school market in the world with over 75,000 students and good, modern British boarding is deeply admired and widely imitated. National Boarding Week was an opportunity to celebrate why boarding is a great option for many students, increasing their confidence and independence, giving them the chance to explore and try new things and helping them to make deep friendships that will last a lifetime.

Over 100 schools took part in our celebrations, we generated in excess of 1,000 tweets, have grown the BSA Boarding Orchard to 101 trees, buried 44 time capsules, three schools reached the finals of Store Wars raising thousands of pounds for Barnardo's and we ended with week with our Big Boarding Sing - the largest ever boarding choir with Dominic Peckham.

Royal Russell boarders were not to be outdone and seized every opportunity throughout the week to promote the spirit of their boarding community.



Each boarding house joined the BSA Boarding Orchard by planting a fruit tree. Junior boarders buried a time capsule with items representing 2016 boarding life and the finals of the inter-house Boarding Bake Off final took place. Other activities including a 'House Swap' and 'Big Boarding Tea', once again highlighting the community spirit of Royal Russell boarders and the week ended with a photograph of the boarding family (students and staff).

Robin Fletcher
BSA Chief Executive

Robin Fletcher MBA MPhil was a boarder at Rugby School and is passionate about good quality, modern boarding. His career highlight is having the opportunity each day to champion and promote UK boarding schools, which remain the best in the world.

BOARDERS ACTIVITIES

Every year me and Mr Jewiss rack our brains to try and find more imaginative ways to keep the boarders busy on Sunday afternoons. This programme is an opportunity for the boarders to mix outside of their usual social circles, get a bit of culture or try something new. And it has to be better than going into Croydon on the tram, surely?



Spy Games

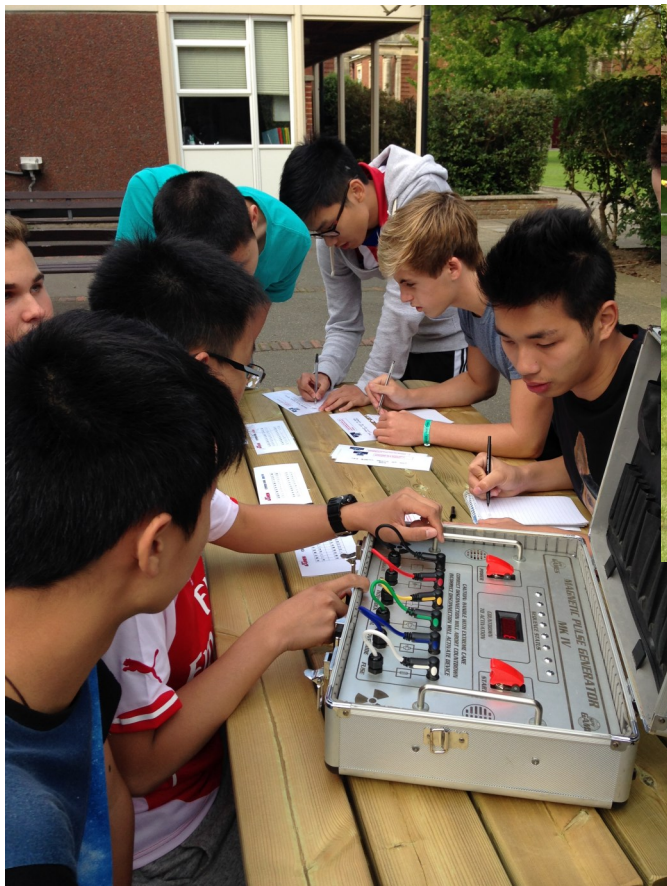
The first Sunday of term is now traditionally a day for team building activities. A chance for boarders, old and new, young and old, to work together and start to form some friendships. This year's activity was 'Spy Games' and unfortunately this meant the boarders had to think as well. On a Sunday! They had a great afternoon and worked really well in their teams solving various problems such as code breaking and working their way through pretend mine fields. As always they were very competitive with each other.



'A great activity to help get to know the new pupils. It kick-started the year really'—Seb Au Chong

'I enjoyed the problem solving because I was good at it' - Scott Stephens





Craft Workshops

They were a hit last year, so why not do them again? 'Felt hangings' and 'Jewellery making' this time around. Again our boarders produced some quality work.

Felt Workshop



Craft Workshops

Jewellery making



'They were really creative and gave me the opportunity to develop my imagination and find inspiration'

- Valeriya Mashynets

Halloween & Bonfire night monster mash

Some want Halloween, some want fireworks and a bonfire. We decided to do it all on one night. Mrs Jeffree's spooky Halloween trail through the woods, followed by a dress up Halloween supper. Then outside for Hot Chocolate, lighting the bonfire and finally the fireworks.



'This event is fun because it's kinda spooky!' - Sofya Kudryavtseva



‘The fireworks display is very pretty’ - Mina Chae



My boarding year

Living in Oxford house this year has simply been amazing. I have enjoyed it because the system in the house is made in such a way that it combines hard work and discipline with free time and having fun. All of the house staff are very nice and friendly people and are always ready to help with anything needed. I think that Oxford is an amazing example of how a big family is supposed to live properly- there have barely been any problems between the boys throughout the whole school year and when someone needs help or assistance with anything, there is always someone who is always ready to help you. Literally all boys in the house are very friendly and many of them always make sure that everyone stays entertained, because there is always someone who jokes about something.

The system in Oxford also makes sure that there is always something for everyone to do with an endless number of house events like the opportunities to play football every Thursday on the Astro and indoor football on Saturdays. There are other sports events like House Sport which can involve all the sports that the school can offer (the list is very long). There is also the comfortable TV room for those who don't like sport or are not very good at it. It has two tv screens and two PlayStation and many games with them, but instead of playing FIFA, every two weeks there is always an opportunity for three people to see a live Crystal Palace game on their stadium.

by Philip Stoycheff, Year 9 Oxford

Bowles activity weekend

Bowles is an activity centre in Kent. Every year a group of new boarders (usually with some existing boarders who want to go back) head there with Mr Jewiss and Mr Rocca for 2 days of dry slope skiing, raft building and some very scary looking tree climbing.



'My most exciting and enjoyable year so far. I enjoyed all of the boarding activities this year' - Duc Le



SPANISH NIGHT

WE HAVE HAD SOME FANTASTIC 'THEME' NIGHTS IN THE DINING HALL IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. BUT MR BUENO, MISS CONDE AND THE CATERING TEAM REALLY OUTDID THEMSELVES BACK IN NOVEMBER. THE FOOD WAS TRULY SPECTACULAR; FANTASTIC TAPAS OF CHORIZO, TORTILLA AND OCTOPUS, WONDERFUL PAELLA AND THE MOST DELICIOUS CREMA CATALANA. THROUGHOUT THE MEAL WE WERE ENTERTAINED BY A TEAM OF FLAMENCO DANCERS AND SINGERS. AT THE END OF THE MEAL THEY GAVE THE BOARDERS A LESSON IN FLAMENCO DANCING. AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT!



SPANISH NIGHT

MENU

Tapas:

Chickpea and Spinach Soup with Pimento
Paella
Classic Tortilla
Catalan Tomato Bread
Spanish Style Salad
Serrano Ham
Chorizo in wine
Patatas Bravas
Galician Style
Octopus
Calamares/allioli

Dessert:

Crema Catalana





I'M SPANISH AND IT FELT LIKE BEING AT HOME

— ALEX BROSSA XICOY

Tower Bridge experience

A group of boarders visited the most famous bridge in the world. Not an ordinary visit however as they were allowed inside to see the Victorian Engine Rooms to learn about the inner workings of the most famous bridge in the world. They then experienced the spectacular new glass floor and stunning London views from the high-level walkways.



‘This is one of the most famous landmarks in London.

It was nice to see it from the inside—Philip Stoycheff



Paintballing

Back by popular demand. What can you say about this really? Boys (and it is mainly boys) just like shooting each other with paintballs.



'It was really fun and adrenaline filled' - Andrew Lister

'Just brilliant to shoot at the other boys' - Seb Au Chong

'An activity it is impossible to get bored with' - Bogdan Lica

The Matrons pages

Miss Ryan and Mrs Jeffree provide a service so integral to the running of the boarding houses that it is hard to put into words. What sort of year do they say they have had?

This has been my first year at Royal Russell. It has been a very enjoyable and interesting year. The time has flown by as does each day with lots of routine work interspersed with a variety of other one-off tasks and email requests.

As I am based solely in the girls boarding house, one of the things I particularly enjoy is sitting with the girls after school whilst they make a snack and listening to their day, whether it be an ecstatic relief at passing an exam, listening to the minute details of the latest crush or just being an ear to listen to after a bad day.

There are always plenty of school, extra-curricular activities and week end outings to keep the students busy and happy. With the mix of nationalities in the house it is great to listen to the different views and opinions, likes and dislikes but also seeing at the end of the day, how similar they can be - noodles, chocolate spread and pizza being top of the list.

After only one year of knowing the girls, I have been genuinely touched at the positive comments, thanks (and flowers!) I've received from the girls leaving permanently. I've also been very lucky to work in a team with really dedicated staff members, who importantly have a great sense of humour and intelligence, as confirmed by the results of our boarding inspection in March.

We are all looking forward to the summer holiday and then continuing this outlook into the new school year with our current pupils and new arrivals.

Miss Ryan

Highlights of the year

Having 13 very young juniors in my care balanced by some wonderful seniors who have been in boarding for many years.

The good manners and respect the boys show me. Easily reciprocated.

Christmas and all the crazy hectic demands, putting up and taking down 4 trees, organising the Snowball and all the minutiae it involves.

Organising Secret Santa in two houses and wrapping close to 100 gifts.

Different meals from around the world on Thursday nights. It has been wonderful being able to taste foodstuff that one would never normally try.

Learning how to apply for an Oyster Photo card in under 4 minutes.

Starting to travel to their countries to see where they come from, to understand their values and culture.

Meeting overseas parents, especially the mothers.

My 65th birthday...I have never felt so loved and special.

Lowlights of the year

Hospital visits to A & E for 9 hours on the first night, followed by 4 hours the next day.

Laundry, laundry, laundry and unmarked clothing!

Boys knocking on my door even when I am not on duty and all hours of the day and night. Usually for something really trivial.

Suitcases and suitcase rooms...they give me the creeps

Mrs Jeffree



My boarding year

I want to say thank-you to everyone who made my first year in RRS amazing. I have really enjoyed it. I have made so many friends who have helped me a lot at school and socially.

by Zamanbek Kozhas, Year 12 Oxford

An absolutely AMAZING year! The atmosphere in Queen's is warm, friendly and supportive. The girls are positive, funny and really understanding. I trust everyone here and people never let me down. Being a boarder has made me feel multi-cultural and confident. I find I can approach everyone and be friends with people from all over the world.

by Valeriya Mashynets, Year 12 Queen's

You will never get bored in a house full of other girls. It is great mixing with people from other countries. It really opens your eyes up to other cultures and you even end up learning new words from other languages. Boarding has really helped me to interact with people who didn't necessarily grow up the same way I did..

by Mina Chae, Year 12 Queen's

My experience as a boarder has been really good, because even though I am English and get on well with the day students, I feel like I have heard a lot of other languages and experienced a lot of different and interesting cultures.

by Andrew Lister Year 7 Cambridge

Go-Karting

Go-Karting is probably the most popular trip of the entire year. We run this trip twice to make sure everyone who wants to can go, but if we ran it every week we would have some very happy boarders.



OTRS - #12 - Final Results									
Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time	Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time
1	Femi James	17	23	20.321	6	PAVEL ST...	16	23	26.545
Avg 29.111 Last 30.490 Gap -					Avg 29.649 Last 27.656 Gap 6.224				
Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time	Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time
2	Ming Chu...	23	23	26.269	7	fedor sull...	19	22	26.850
Avg 29.404 Last 31.805 Gap 5.948					Avg 30.326 Last 32.811 Gap 6.529				
Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time	Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time
3	Danylo F...	22	23	26.372	8	David Je...	28	21	27.548
Avg 30.175 Last 32.772 Gap 6.051					Avg 30.035 Last 30.963 Gap 7.227				
Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time	Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time
4	Hristo Iv...	24	22	26.486	9	Sebastie...	18	20	28.921
Avg 31.366 Last 44.289 Gap 6.165					Avg 31.472 Last 36.652 Gap 8.600				
Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time	Pos	Racer Name	Kart	Laps	Best Time
5	Rhys Mor...	27	23	26.515	10	LEPUS LI...	15	19	29.486
Avg 28.736 Last 26.926 Gap 6.194					Avg 34.819 Last 32.239 Gap 9.165				
Coming Up Next									
OIRS									
Heat Number									
#20									
Grid Lineup									
#	Racer Name								
1	Stephen Lee								
2	Leannee Yang								
3	Quinn Ho								
4	Andrew Bower								
5	Jack Wain								
6	Michael								
7	Wes Rafter								
8	symonah vladimirov								
9	Shane Greenough								
10	BBY/Hong								
Powered By									
Top Times	Femi James	Elite - mo...	Jade Taylor	Elite - Gar...					
This Month	20.321	24.027	24.142	24.177	OLLIE SPEED				

'Feel the speed!' - Amira Tuyakbayeva

'My favourite because it was exciting' - Bobby Zheng

'This was my first time driving a car and I thought it was really cool' - Jack Zhu



Where's that come from?

A Cambridge House 'ghost' story' by Duncan Hui, Head of Boarding



I never quite understand why Cambridge House is named after a famous university, because Cambridge University has nothing to do with our house. However, location and origin of things seem to be a recurring problem in the house though. One of the phrases that I often hear is "Where's that come from?"

In my experience, "that" can refer to a person or an object and quite frequently it is the latter one being referred to. I believe unlike in Oxford or Queen's, things always go missing and magically disappear in Cambridge. To this day I still have no idea where my lemonade went. It is not a good thing that the boarders' properties get stolen, but this is not much of a problem compared to the olden days. I remember my beloved ball pen went missing in Year 10. After it was declared lost for two weeks, Mr. Piggini suddenly appeared in the morning with the register using MY PEN! For goodness' sake god knows where my pen had been but it turned up anyway. Rather interestingly, stuff appearing from nowhere is a bigger problem now. A few months ago I suddenly had an aircraft calendar stuck on my wall, which was a nice thing but weirdly no one came forward to claim responsibility. A chocolate cake also turned up in the kitchen one day, and rather unusually nobody said they bought the cake. Therefore the whole house had a surprise cake party. In December, I was helping out Mr. Bird to do the tuck shop. As I was extremely curious about the content of the dark cupboards in the store room, I looked closely and to my gladness there was a bottle of Foster beer! How nice to see that a day's hard work has been finally paid off with a pint that appeared out of nowhere, just like they do on TV. The adventure in the tuck shop did not stop there. After I had fetched an ice-cream for Vlad, I found a box of skinned potatoes in the fridge. I did not understand who would buy frozen potatoes and more importantly, why someone put that in the tuck shop?

It would seem like there is an invisible ghost roaming the corridors of Cambridge House, taking things out, guarding the items and returning them to a certain location after a certain amount of time. I still have not had the honour to meet this "ghost" yet, but it is this kind of interesting trivia that gives Cambridge its soul. I honestly cannot think of anyone would do the things I mentioned above, maybe it was one single person or maybe it was a group of persons. It is always this kind of little things that define a boarding house. In this case Cambridge House is defined by one simple question: "Where's that come from?"



The Snowball 2015

"A Winter Wonderland"

Friday 11th December
From 6pm in the Auditorium
Formal Dress

Original artwork by Bessie Sun.

This was used for invitations, posters and menus at
this year's Snowball.

The Snowball

This is the big event of the winter term. We reverted to our more traditional format this year. Drinks, photos and nibbles in the PAC (an opportunity for everyone to admire each other's outfits) was followed by a 3 course dinner in the Dining Hall. Magicians wandered around entertaining the crowds. After dinner it was the time for crowning the King, Queen, Prince and Princess of the ball. Always a raucous moment! After dinner the boarders headed back to the PAC for a disco before carriages at 10.30pm.





'I am already looking forward to the next one' - Bogdan Lica

Archery & Clay pigeon shooting

In the summer we can make use of the Royal Russell school grounds much more. The tennis courts and astro are often busy with boarders on a weekend. Archery and lazer clay pigeon shooting was also a popular option for a few hours during the exams.



My boarding year

Blood, Sweat, and SurveyMonkey.com

When people ask me to summarise my life as a boarder the urge to say dull is almost impossible to resist, but recently I've come to realise that it isn't the house that's making me bored, it's myself. In the first year of GCSE's the constant worry on any teenagers mind is homework; the teachers seem to take some sort of perverse pleasure in assigning as many projects as they can at the same time, and then getting angry at us when we're tired in lessons. In my eyes the best thing about boarding is the way in which we work, the way that we have certain forced time periods for prep. I desperately need structure in my life to be able to achieve anything, and boarding has provided an opportunity for me to do the best I can in all of my endeavours. I think most other boarders feel the same way, even if all they're achieving in prep time is a level up in League of Legends.

The boarding community loves a survey, it seems like we have to do one every other week, despite the fact that they always seem to be the same questions. What do you like about breakfast? Do you enjoy pizza on Friday? How about Lunch? The questions always seem to revolve around what we eat and the way in which we eat it, despite the fact that our opinions on food very rarely change, and our votes don't seem to change anything that's actually served. I'm probably just not noticing it.

I'm not the best author to be writing this article; this boarding year has been a whirlwind of paper and pens that flashed past me in what seemed like ten seconds. I remember unpacking, and now I'm here, which is sort of the beauty of boarding. It's like a time machine that gives you great grades without anything bad being remembered. If you're wondering about the blood in the title, I got a nasty papercut the other week and the title sounds good so it's staying, thanks for reading!

by Lucas Jones, year 10 Oxford

Christmas Parkrun

Parkrun is a national phenomenon. Every Saturday morning, across the country, thousands of runners (of all ages and abilities) head to their local park to run 5km.

Thanks to Mr McKenna Parkrun is also now a phenomenon among the Royal Russell boarders. He has encouraged and cajoled so many students, some of them initially quite reluctant runners, to catch the tram one stop down to Lloyd Park at 8.30am. Personal bests have been broken, t-shirts have been won.

On the last school Saturday before Christmas we managed to get all of the boys out of bed (and quite a few of the staff), put on a Santa hat and join in the fun. We got a fantastic reception from the regular runners as we arrived off the tram.



'Big Boarding Week'



The BSA has been the national voice of boarding in the UK for 50 years. This year has seen them celebrating their Golden Jubilee with various events. The culmination of this was National Boarding Week which ran from Monday 20th – Sunday 26th June. The Royal Russell boarders entered into the spirit with our own 'Big Boarding Week' and held a different event each day.

Monday 20th June—Tree Planting

The Boarding Orchard was launched by the BSA in 2014. It aims to be largest orchard, by distance, in the UK and involves boarding schools joining the orchard by planting fruit trees in their grounds. The trees symbolise the 'tree of knowledge' and demonstrate each school's commitment to growth and caring for the environment.

We invited some of our leaving year 13 pupils to plant three trees (one for each boarding house) in the grounds of the PAC. Something for them to leave behind as they move on to pastures new.



Tuesday 21st June — Time Capsule

Our Junior pupils (with help from Mrs Jeffree and Miss Ryan) chose items to go into a 'Time Capsule'. This has now been locked and will go on display next year in the foyer of the new boarding houses. It will not be opened until 2041! The pupils really entered into the spirit of this, putting together a scrapbook of important events from the last year and writing letters about themselves in their native languages. 2016 coins, photographs, video clips and many other things have been sealed inside.



Wednesday 22nd June — Bake-off

The first Royal Russell 'Bake-Off' was the only event open to all of the houses (day and boarding). And typically none of the boarders made the finals! But it was a fantastic event, with some amazing looking and tasting cakes made.



Thursday 23rd June—Big Boarding Tea

This was the big event of the week. Bad weather forced us into the Sixth Form café (instead of out on the quad) which was decked out in Union Jack bunting and decorated beautifully for tea. Mr Baron had put together a musical collection of British classics (everything from 'Jerusalem' to the theme from 'The Archers'). The catering team did us proud with cucumber sandwiches, scones with cream, homemade lemonade and so on. Not to mention the best 'Scotch eggs' I have ever tasted. Once stomachs were full the boarders made their way into the dining hall for Mr. McKenna's Oxford v Cambridge v Queen's races.



Friday 24th—Treasure Hunt

Setting off from Chapel quad, teams from each house set off around the school grounds searching for clues put together by Miss Davenport. It kept them busy, confused and exhausted for an hour or so. Eventually Lucas' Oxford team were first back to ring the Chapel bell as the winners.

Saturday 25th June—House Swap

Queen's House put on a romantic comedy. Cambridge House was showing Mission Impossible 4. In Oxford House the Euro 16 football ruled as Croatia took on Portugal.

Sunday 26th June—Chapel and Aerial Photo

Rev. Kirk led the final boarding Chapel service of the year. After this the remaining boarders gathered on Lime Tree Quad for an aerial photograph (with Hristo Ivanov in charge of the drone). All of the nationalities of current boarders (and boarding staff) were represented in the collection of flags.



Crystal Palace

For the last few years we have bought 3 season tickets for the boarders to see games at our local football team, Crystal Palace. As 'The Eagles' have enjoyed a few seasons in the Premier League these tickets have been pretty popular. Many thanks to Mr Endersby and Mr Tanner, both Palace fans, who have regularly given up their Saturday afternoons to take the boys (and it has been boys, girls you are more than welcome to attend next season) to Selhurst Park. Yuki, Philip, Rhys, Kris, German and others have really enjoyed the unique atmosphere at this old ground. This year was truly special as Yuki, Philip and Wynn enjoyed a trip to Wembley (with a very excited Mr Tanner) to see Crystal Palace play (and win!) in the FA Cup Semi-Final. A shame about the final, but they were never going to beat Man. United were they?



My boarding year

I am a new student this year.. When I first came I felt really nervous because I didn't know what I should be doing during the day. My English was very bad when I came to the school. I couldn't understand what the teachers were talking about. However, the teachers and students helped me a lot. I have met many friends. We play games together and eat together.

by Pak Long (Parco) Ung, Year 12 Cambridge

The boarding at Royal Russell is really good and really enjoyable. We get a lot of free time and there are loads of fun activities. There is also plenty of time for work which is good for us. Royal Russell is the best school I've had in my life. The staff are really good and look after us really well. The people, in the house and the school, are very friendly.

by Kevin Ai, Year 9 Cambridge

It has been very eventful and quick! I have learnt to accept different cultures and be close to a lot of people from other nationalities. And I have met many of my best friends here.

by Sobomate Princewell Year 12 Queen's

The most important thing in my boarding life is my friends. When I need help they are always there

by Sofya Kudryavtseva, Year 9 Queen's

Queen's House borders



Cambridge House borders



Oxford House boarders



Thorpe Park

The traditional last trip of the year. The exams were over (unless you were a Further Mathematician), the sun was shining and the boarders could spend the afternoon going on scary rides. Just don't mention the journey!



It was really exciting and definitely a good trip after the exams
to release all the pressure—Daniel Zhang

House Sport

Did you know that the Royal Russell houses (girls and boys, young and old, day and boarders) compete with each other in 17 different sports over the course of the year? All the obvious sports such as football, swimming and netball are there. But also trampolining, indoor athletics and softball and many more. Thursday nights offer a great opportunity for the boarders to get involved in all manner of sports – in a friendly and competitive atmosphere. Many thanks to the PE department for their superb organisation of these events, and also to the house sports captains who organise, coach and cheer on their teams each week. Congratulations go to Oxford who won the boys house championship this year. Queen's and Cambridge are bound to be back with a vengeance next year.



Looking ahead - New Boarding Houses

After years of planning (where will they go, what will they look like, who will move there?) work is now underway on two new boarding houses. At the moment there just a large whole in the ground where Madden Pitch used to be. But this time next year the Oxford and Cambridge boys (and residential staff) will be packing up absolutely everything, ready to move in to their new houses in September 2017. Another identical building, on the current site of Cambridge and Hollenden houses will be built soon after. For the girls. This will ultimately give us four completely new boarding houses and accommodation for 160 boarders. These architect's pictures show you what the houses, and the school site, will look like when work is complete.





My final boarding year

Now, after three years of being a boarder in Royal Russell, I am finally going to be a day student. Of that I am really excited about. There is no denying that it is hard living in the boarding community. You have teachers looking after you 24/7 and telling you what to do. And it is almost impossible to find a place where you can stay alone for long. You might also end up sharing a room with a person you might feel uncomfortable, what I actually had to experience in my first year. But fortunately for us we found a common ground that helped us become friends. And there is also no denying for me that even if I had a chance not to be a boarder, I would still like to go through all that experience. As those years have not passed without some life lessons for me. Those years taught me to respect personal space and time of others. Also the fact that I have been leaving away from my parents, meant that I had to learn how to become independent and how to manage my time. Those years have shaped my personality and prepared me for my future.

For all those who have never experienced boarding life, I can describe it as super sleepover with 40 boys which lasts for 9 months. In that time, I made friendships, met extraordinary people and learned a lot about other nationalities. That helped me to widen my horizon.

Being a boarder also comes with some cool stuff of which day students might be jealous. Your friends are always near you with and you can talk at any time (of course not during the prep or bedtime). If you have done all your homework and you have nothing else to do you can always come downstairs where you can talk to other boarders no matter their age group or nationality, everyone is accepted. And of course one of the best parts being a boarder is that you do not need to take a tram or a bus to school as you are already in there, which saves a lot of time. Being a boarder is an extraordinary experience, where every single day something new and exciting happens.

In the next September when we come back to school, I will be truly missing all of the Cambridge boarding members, even those who were making noise when I was trying to work. They have really just become a part of me. I am sad how much fun I will miss next year when I will no longer be a boarder.

I can boldly say that Cambridge house and its boarding members have become a second home and a family which I am really sad to leave.

by Roman Podkovyrin, Year 12 Cambridge

... and finally

So another boarding year is coming to an end. Personally this has been my 12th Year as Oxford Housemaster & 3rd as Head of Boarding. Some of the boarding pupils moving on have been here for as long as seven years. We wish all of our leaving pupils good luck as they move on to University, back home to continue their education or on to other schools in the UK. My thanks at this point to all of the boarding staff (Deputies, tutors, matrons, cleaners, Sports Grads) and all those other departments who enhance the boarding experience (catering staff, the Medical Centre staff, teachers, the Operations team and groundstaff). My particular thanks to Maria Slobodina & Duncan Hui for their outstanding contributions as 'Heads of Boarding' this year. On Royal Russell Day Maria and Duncan stood in front of the audience of parents, students, staff and governors and gave a short speech about boarding. Below is part of that speech, written by Maria, which explains what her time boarding at Royal Russell has meant to her.

'You have probably heard a lot of negative things about boarding. Like the fact that we have to study at certain times of the day under supervision, go to Chapel every other Sunday, say goodnight to a member of staff every day and attend mandatory meals.

Whilst all of those things are true, they do not get to the heart of what being a boarder is all about. Boarding teaches you how to cope with people you disagree with or dislike before your first job ever does. Boarding teaches you how to have a true sense of community without losing your sense of self. Boarding teaches you how to respect other people's ethnic, religious or cultural background and way of life. Even if that way of life involves your next door neighbour singing in the shower at one AM on an exam night.

Being a boarder at Royal Russell has taught me empathy and compassion better than any other life experience that I've ever had. I thank my parents for giving me this opportunity, and to all the staff and fellow pupils at Royal Russell who have contributed to this microcosm being a safe and welcoming place for us to live, love and prosper.'

Have a great summer.

Mr. Greaves