



RGS

OUR
SOCIAL
IMPACT
REVIEW
2023

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SECTION 1

OVERVIEW

The Royal Grammar School Newcastle is a leading independent co-educational day school for students aged 7-18.

As one of the country's best performing schools, we consistently lead all northern schools in national league tables and pride ourselves on academic excellence; a high level of pastoral support; opportunities across a wide range of sports, performing arts and other co-curricular activities; and – crucially – our commitment to our community.

The foundations of our sense of social responsibility can be found in our 500 year-old history; Thomas Horsley, the original settler of RGS pledged his legacy in 1525 to create the city's first learning institution.

Half a millennium later the school continues to flourish and this ambition of social impact is front and centre to everything we do. We believe in the infinite potential of our region and are driven to raise the attainment and aspiration of young people from across the North East.

OUR AMBITION FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

WE BELIEVE in inspiring young people and equipping them to make a positive contribution to society. We promote excellence and are committed to raising aspiration and attainment across the North East. By inspiring and nurturing hearts and minds, we can give those around us the freedom to create and shape their own futures.

WE AIM to reach young people of the north, regardless of background and circumstance: from Carlisle to Stockton-upon Tees, to Berwick-upon-Tweed and back to our heartland in the city of Newcastle.

WE WORK alongside teachers from all institutions interested in curriculum innovation, collegiality and sharing methodologies; and any parent wanting to explore a range of exciting opportunities for their children.

WE COLLABORATE with further and higher education, and businesses wishing to invest in the education and training of young people in this region.

WE GALVANISE the RGS community to give back to the North East region, to support this ambition.

**WE BELIEVE TOGETHER
WE CAN DO MORE.**

HOW WE DELIVER



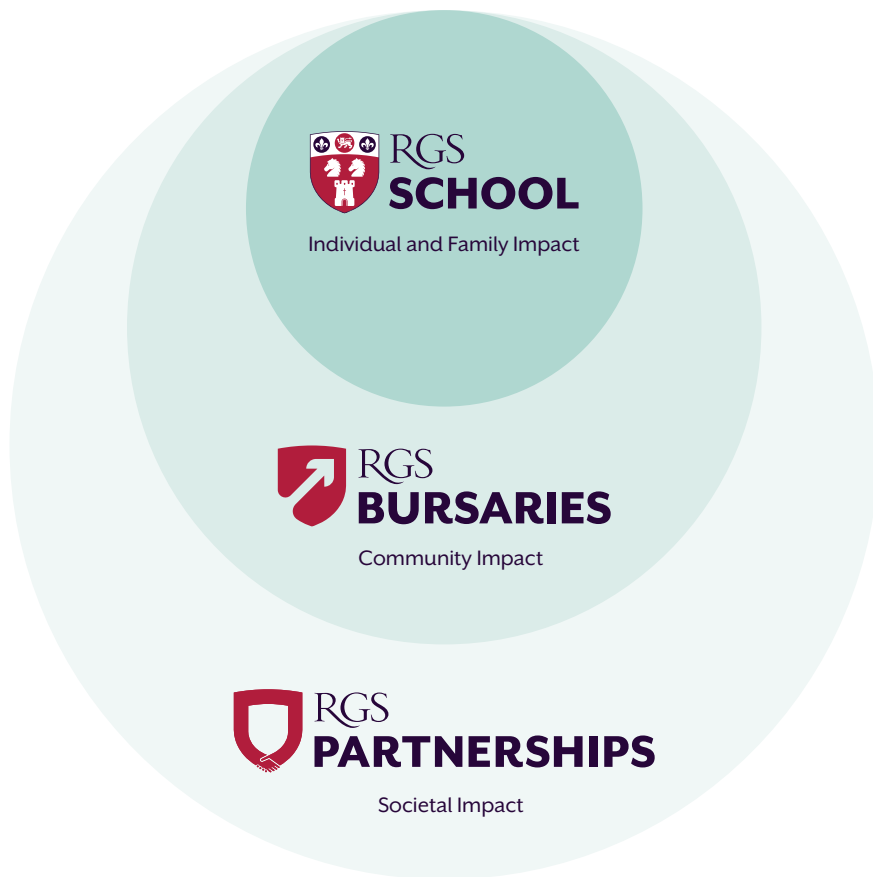
RGS School educates some 1,350 students, over 350 of whom are in the Sixth Form, one of the largest in the independent sector. We became fully co-educational 20 years ago. The school has educated over 10,000 Old Novocastrians, who have all gone out to make a positive impact on the world, many shaping the economic, cultural and societal landscape of the North East.



RGS Bursaries enable the brightest young people from across the North East to attend RGS. Strictly means-tested, our bursaries are targeted at families living in the most deprived areas of our region, typically working in essential but low paid roles. This work has already supported over 420 bursary families to date and currently 1 in 16 students in our school.



RGS Partnerships work alongside partner state schools to share teaching and learning opportunities. Curriculum development and expansion is facilitated through CPD, shared resources and the appointment of specialist RGS Partnership Teachers. This work already reaches over 7,300 young people across the North East, each year.



Our social activity is funded through the RGS family of students, current and former parents, Old Novocastrians, local philanthropists, trusts and company donors, who give voluntarily to support our critical work. These incredible donors are galvanised by our RGS Gives fundraising campaign, through which every member of the RGS community can give something back to the North East.



It's fantastic to see schools like RGS finding new ways to address issues that impact upon the schools of our region. This proves that schools can collaborate beyond geographical or sector barriers and help each other for the benefit of the North East's young people."

– Chris Zarraga, Director, Schools North East

OUR REACH IN NUMBERS



Over 7,300
plus individual students
in local state schools
benefitted from RGS
Partnerships' activities,
for a total **23,000 hours**.



76
different schools across the
region were involved in RGS
Partnerships activities.



82 (1 in 16)
students at RGS attended
on transformational means
tested RGS Bursaries.



93%
is the average bursary
awarded, focussing our
finite funds where we
can make the most
transformational difference.



1,350
students attended RGS,
which would have otherwise
cost the taxpayer an annual
c£10m if educated in the
state system.



Over 4,000
hours of volunteering were
delivered by RGS students.



Over **300** teachers received **1,500 hours** of CPD or collaborated on curriculum development.



Over **40** RGS Partnerships' projects have taken place, including STEAM, Sport, Languages, Classics, Debating, UCAS Mentoring and much more.



426 bursary students have been supported since RGS Bursaries were established in 2002.



222 different donors donated an incredible **£1.2m** in the year.



13 members of RGS staff are governors at local schools and **2** are in Director/Trustee positions.



28 local community groups and organisations accessed RGS buildings and facilities for their events and activities.





Geoffrey Stanford
Headmaster

It is arguably the most important task – and certainly the most rewarding – for a Head to reflect on the social impact of a school they have the privilege to lead so it gives me great pleasure to introduce the first ever Royal Grammar School Newcastle Social Impact Review. This covers some of the many ways in which RGS has positively and, we hope, indelibly contributed to our city, North East region and beyond.

I speak for the entire Board of Governors and Senior Leadership Team in saying that we are singularly driven by the difference we can make, not only to the trajectory of the lives of students who attend our school but also to our broader community and wider society. Founded almost 500 years ago during Henry VIII's reign, Thomas Horsley, five-time mayor of Newcastle, endowed RGS as the City's first school; that early philanthropic gift and social vision has been a constant throughout our almost half a millennium of existence. Our social responsibility remains absolutely front and centre to us now and looking ahead.

The RGS as a school is an exciting place to learn, is forward thinking and inclusive. We believe we are uniquely placed to stretch and challenge bright young people and, consequently, we have a well-deserved reputation for academic excellence, consistently outstripping national averages. Our students deliver phenomenal nationally and internationally recognised achievements, with RGS often cited as an asset when encouraging inward investment to the North East.

The vision of the RGS is to inspire young people to make a positive difference in society and through promoting excellence we aim to raise aspirations and attainment across the region. However, we are an exceptional school in a relatively poor area of the UK. While we are convinced of the infinite potential of young people from the North East, the social mobility statistics in our region are some of the worst in the country and the challenges have been compounded by the pandemic. Too many children are missing opportunities afforded to others born elsewhere.

We believe that our model of a highly academic education ought to be available to any child who is intellectually curious, able and aspiring, and who would benefit from a fast paced and challenging curriculum through an RGS Bursary. Our bursaries create deep and generational impact for both bursary children and their families.

We also believe that RGS Partnerships, encompassing genuine collaboration with State schools, can improve the aspiration and attainment of any child, raising their access to skills and qualifications, employability, and for some, access to higher and further education.

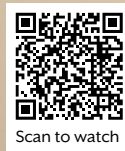
All of this inevitably benefits individual lives and the prospects for our region. As this report demonstrates, we are incredibly proud of our achievements so far, as well as being ambitious about what more the RGS can achieve.

I would like to close with a heartfelt thank you to our tremendous friends from across the entire range of our community who support our 'RGS Gives' campaign. Thank you for your role in instilling ambition, for opening doors, for changing individuals' lives for the better, for increasing the possibilities for whole families, for giving more opportunities and for raising attainment and aspiration for the benefit of the whole of the North East.

If you are inspired to support our mission or know of a school or individual who could benefit, please do get in touch.

HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

Cause & Effect – Input & Impact



“

...we are members of a corporate body, feeling an interest in each other's welfare and sympathising with each other's successes...”

– RGS 'Novocastrian' magazine, November 1885

ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWCASTLE

Budle

NORTH SEA

BURSARIES

PARTNERSHIPS

South
Charlton

Alnwick

Alnmouth

Felton

Radcliffe
Hadston

NORTHUMBERLAND
40 BURSARIES

Morpeth

Blyth

Haltwhistle

Haydon
Bridge

Hexam

Allendale
Town

**TYNE
& WEAR**
209 BURSARIES

Sunderland

Consett

Durham

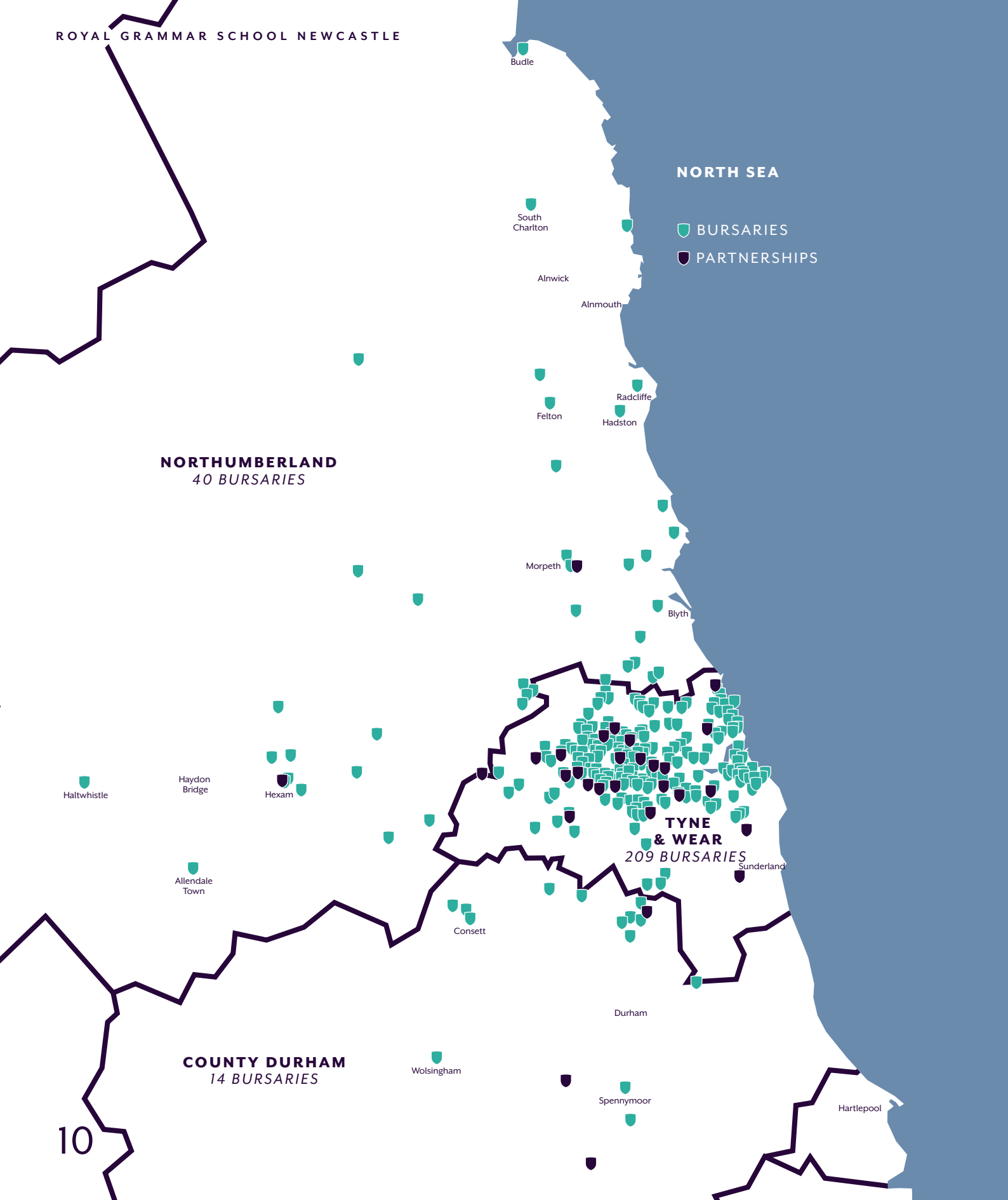
COUNTY DURHAM
14 BURSARIES

Wolsingham

Spennymoor

Hartlepool

10





We believe in the infinite potential of people in this region regardless of their postcode and are clear that RGS has a role in realising this.

– Geoffrey Stanford, Headteacher

“RGS is no stranger to the effervescence of community spirit. RGS Bursaries offer a depth of impact to the bursary holder and their family, affecting the trajectory of lives, often increasing social mobility across generations. RGS Partners deliver breadth of support, raising aspirations, educational attainment, skills and employability, for young people across the region.”

– John McCabe, CEO NE Chamber of Commerce

SECTION 2



 **RGS**
PARTNERSHIPS



John Smith
Director of Partnerships

It has been an exciting challenge and a huge privilege to re-launch – post pandemic lockdowns – RGS Partnerships in the wider community. In this review you will read about a diverse range of projects, from our two innovative Partnerships Teachers funded by the Reece Foundation working across some truly impactful projects in STEAM; our most recent Partnerships Teacher, a post generously funded by British Engines and which is focused on robotics teaching; to raising cultural capital in the arts; to mentoring young people in their UCAS applications; to making an impact through Sixth Form voluntary service and so much more.

I believe that we are only just realising the potential scope and power of cross-sector partnerships at local and national levels. We have also moved into our recruitment phase towards opening a North East branch of the National Maths and Physics School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) scheme, to help address the alarming local shortage of maths and physics teachers.

There are too many colleagues and partners to thank, but I hope they will recognise their incredible work – and the impact on young people's lives – in the pages that follow.

When passionate colleagues from all kinds of schools and organisations work together towards the twin goals of raising attainment and aspirations of our young people, amazing things can happen!

Our range of projects has developed following dialogue with partner schools and trials of several pilot projects. The conclusions have shaped the focus where age-appropriateness, demonstrable impact and sustained benefits to teaching and learning are all key in each one of our projects.

Given that we work with schools from Berwick to Middlesborough and everywhere in between, the geographical location and catchment area of partner schools also greatly influences their needs and directly affects the ways in which we will work together.

In addition there are some overarching challenges all schools are experiencing:

- A slowing pipeline of teachers entering the profession (particularly in STEM subjects such as computer science and physics) and the difficulty of attracting teachers, in particular to some of our very rural partner schools.
- Financial pressures caused by increased cost of living, compounded by stretched school budgets.
- The – largely post-pandemic – growth in mental health challenges amongst young people and consequently, school resources redirected to manage behaviour and wellbeing.
- The requirement to deliver personalised learning for a very wide spectrum of abilities in the classrooms, within the context of all of the above pressures.

To meet all these contextual challenges, a bespoke programme is devised with each of our partner schools which is then formalised, confirming each party's commitment.



Scan to watch

RGS PARTNERSHIPS PROJECTS EXPLAINED

FROM GOLDEN SEEDS TO PROFESSIONAL PASSPORTS

RGS PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE KEY STAGES:

KS5: UCAS Support, STEP/MAT sessions, Reading Groups, Physics Intervention Groups, Mentoring, Tutoring, EPQ collaboration...



KS4: Creative Enterprise, CREST Awards, Latin GCSE, Further Maths, 'RGS Talks'...



KS3: Sports Festivals, Language Assistant support, Bright Sparks Maths...



KS2: Digital Schoolhouse, Swimming, VS Readers, BorrowBox, Groovy Greeks, Lego League, esports, Opera Project...



Starting with Support – Golden Seeds

Research shows that raising aspirations should start in primary years – at this age we can reach a high number of students, and even the smallest interaction can plant the ‘Golden Seeds’ of inspiration. Our **100+** weekly Sixth Form voluntary readers not only support reading through 1:1 interactions but also provide positive role models for the young people they engage with. RGS Sixth Form voluntary readers this year alone reached **3,000 students** at Key Stages 1 and 2.

“The four students who come from RGS have been described as polite, good role models and being very positive with the children. I know on the first day they spoke highly about their afternoon and were amazed at the reading skills of our Y1 children.”

– Bridgewater School, Scotswood.



It is vital to target different styles of outreach at different stages in order to keep the message fresh. While it might seem absurd to talk to five-year-olds about university, that is exactly what middle class and professional households do”.

– Destination University, 2022

Igniting Life-Long Interests – Bright Sparks

At Key Stages 3 and 4, we consciously create projects that build, stretch and challenge academic understanding and skills under the banner ‘Bright Sparks’. Critical thinking and non-transactional teaching can make a real impact throughout these formative years. Our interventions are aimed at delivering students demonstrable success at GCSE examinations, the gateway straight into employment, or into further education.

“Many thanks to you and your team for today’s maths session. Our Sandhill View Academy students and staff thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and look forward to the next one!”

– Sandhill View Academy, Sunderland

“Ben was euphoric after the recent session on sequences.”

– Father from Hexham

Stretch and Challenge – Professional Passports

At Key Stage 5, we offer direct intervention to support state partner schools’ A-Level delivery, plus UCAS help and mentoring and Oxbridge support.

The work reaches a smaller number of young adults, but in more depth: another age-appropriate approach for specific impact.

“...thank you for arranging the advanced maths sessions with the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme last term. My son Ajay who attends St Mary’s Catholic School found these very useful in preparation for the Oxford MAT. I’m sure that they contributed to him being offered interviews at both Merton and Christchurch Colleges. On Tuesday he was pleased to learn that he has secured a place at Christchurch to read Computer Science and Philosophy! ... I wanted to let you know how grateful we both are for the opportunity to work with like-minded mathematicians from other schools.”

– Parent from Longbenton

“The RGS Partnership was able to secure funding that individual schools could not have secured alone, and this innovative form of recruitment meant schools across the partnership had access to specialised teaching they would not have otherwise been able to afford and might have had difficulties recruiting for on their own. This addressed issues with recruiting specialist teachers and benefitted pupils in schools across the region through an expanded curriculum and increased GCSE choices. This demonstrates how partnering together to tackle regional challenges achieves greater opportunities for all pupils than schools could provide on their own.”

– Dr Margaret Hunnaball,
The School Partnerships Alliance

RESOURCING RGS PARTNERSHIPS

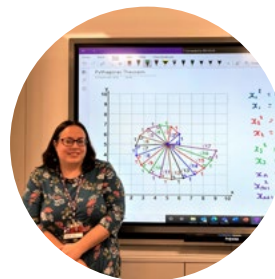
Director of Partnerships

RGS has committed long term funding for the Director of Partnerships role, which is an SLT level position and reflects the priority to deliver social impact. John Smith is RGS's former Head of Maths and works intensively with partner schools to agree projects and target outcomes, manage the often-complex logistics and personally deliver several maths initiatives, working directly with students across a range of schools. Partnership projects also draw resources from across the body of RGS teaching staff, which currently equates to two FTE RGS Teachers.

RGS Partnerships Teachers

In addition, The Reece Foundation has generously funded two dedicated RGS Partnerships Teachers, which has enabled us to expedite the delivery of projects with significant forward momentum and heartening success.

REECE
FOUNDATION



Maths Partnerships Teacher
Sarah Sharp
RGS:Partnership = 20:80



Physics Partnerships Teacher
Tom Williams
RGS:Partnership = 40:60

Sarah and Tom are RGS staff with commensurate ways of working, access to our professional development, curriculum and expertise.

With a light teaching commitment in RGS School, the majority of their time is spent in partner state schools. They deliver direct teaching within partner schools' timetables, support after school clubs and work with partner school teachers on curriculum development and delivery. They upskill teachers who are moving into subjects which are less familiar (for example a general science teacher required to deliver Physics lessons). The aim is for partner school teachers to gain skills, confidence and independence.



Looking Ahead

Given the success of our Reece Foundation-funded Maths and Physics Partnership Teachers, we were excited to appoint a Robotics Partnerships Teacher Dr Steve Bunce, who joined us in 2022 with thanks to funding from British Engines.

We are keen to secure yet more funds to appoint a Computer Science Partnership Teacher and with guaranteed financial input, the Partnerships Teacher model could be rolled out across all subjects.



Maths

Partnerships Teacher
Started Sept 21



Physics

Partnerships Teacher
Started April 21



Robotics

Partnerships Teacher
Started Sept 22



Computer Science

Partnerships Teacher
To be funded/appointed



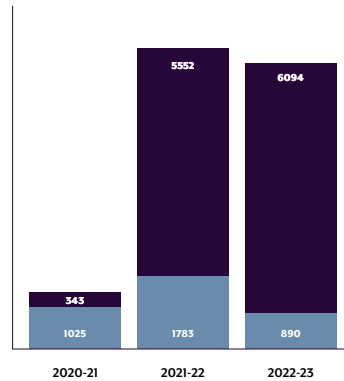
RGS PARTNERSHIPS IN NUMBERS

In this past academic year alone, around 40 Partnerships' Projects have reached over 7,300 students and 300 staff in 76 schools across the region. Over 23,000 student-hours of direct support were delivered, alongside around 1,500 teacher-hours of CPD. We have 13 members of RGS Staff as current governors at local schools, two in Director / Trustee positions and more due to start in the coming year. Assessing the numbers involved gives an idea of impact – and it is vital to remember that behind these numbers are relationships, collaborations and friendships that will endure.

“Just a quick email to say a big thank you to you, Paul the technician and the lovely sixth formers. It was a really good day out...”

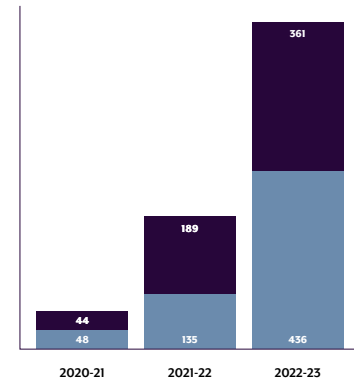
– Berwick Academy

Number of Students



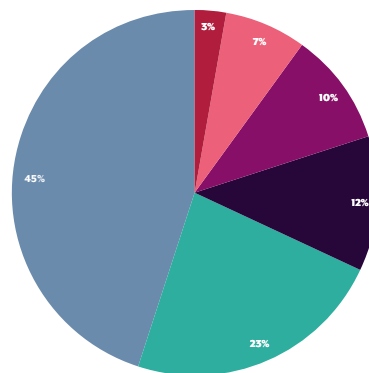
■ One-off
■ Recurring

Impact on External Staff CPD



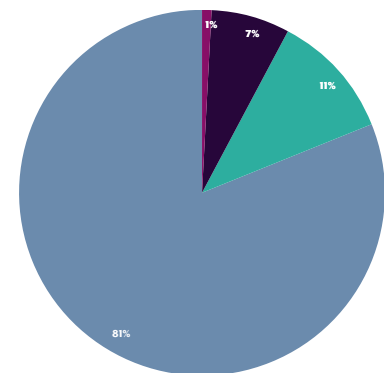
■ Staff One-off CPD
■ Staff Recurring

Projects by Type



■ Primary Reading
■ Computing
■ Maths & Physics
■ RGS Talks
■ Arts & Humanities
■ Sport

Projects by Age



■ Key Stage 2
■ Key Stage 3
■ Key Stage 4
■ Key Stage 5

Looking Ahead

In 2023 and beyond, we aim to maintain the scope of our reach but with a greater focus on recurring interactions with students, as well as a growth in CPD. We are particularly interested in projects for the future that are sustainable, scalable, target disadvantage and deliver measurable impact over time.

“

*...thank you
so much for
organising the art
students for me.
They were a super
help; the children
in the classes
they visited loved
working with them
as did the staff!*

– Westerhope Primary School, Newcastle



PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Maths

Some examples of our Maths projects



Higher Tier Maths GCSE – In West Newcastle, we have worked on a weekly basis with students in Y10 and Y11 to improve attainment through a variety of taught lessons and intervention groups. As a consequence, a number of these students were able to access Higher Tier GCSE.

AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics – In partnership with Westfield School and the Reece Foundation, we run a weekly virtual course to teach the AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics to Y10 students from seven partner state schools. We teach the same course in person at an Academy in Sunderland.

Enrichment Clubs – Twice a week we run enrichment clubs at a local Technical College for students in Y9-11. Consolidation and problem-solving then lead to exploring a wide variety of interesting and unusual topics.

University Admission Test Preparation – We have worked with the government-funded Advanced Mathematics Support Programme (AMSP) to provide weekly problem-solving sessions for Sixth Form students preparing to take university admission tests in mathematics. Students travelled from as far as Morpeth, Hexham, and across county borders from Carlisle to attend sessions at RGS.

Bright Sparks – We run half-termly Bright Sparks events for able Y9 mathematicians to explore fun Maths topics beyond the syllabus, with 12 partner schools taking part in the programme this year, averaging 60 students at each event.



Maths projects in numbers:

250
students

31
schools

93%
recurring opportunities

49%
girls and **51% boys**

2,200
hours of teaching

9
teachers taking maths CPD

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Physics

Some examples of our Physics projects

Intervention groups – In partnership with the Newcastle Futures University Technical College, we have been delivering challenging, thought-provoking real-world STEM projects for their students.



CREST Awards – Supporting students towards the British Science Association Awards, we have been helping partner school students to gain independence in applying scientific approaches to problems and challenges. We are working with Beamish Museum on a 1950s Radio Project that requires problem solving and investigation in a real-life, historical context.

Real Life Physics – At Benfield School and at Studio West Academy in Denton, we have delivered practical projects to enable students to learn through research, design, build and evaluation cycles.

Teacher CPD – At Berwick Academy, we have been directly supporting staff with specialisms in other areas of the curriculum, to teach Physics. This has been through face-to-face and remote provision.

Science Week Takeover – At Excelsior Academy Rainbird Primary School we supported a Science Week Takeover.

“The children have gained invaluable experience throughout this project and it has had such a positive impact... The passion and enthusiasm for their work has been great and to see the children work as a team, communicate and support one another: this is such a rarity for these children due to the life they have outside of school, so thank you!”

– Rainbird Primary School

Curriculum Development – We have collaborated with a local Primary school in reviewing and re-launching their Science Curriculum and worked with a secondary Academy on their A Level Physics provision.



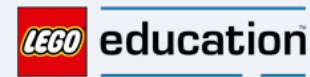
Some examples of our Computer Science projects



Digital Schoolhouse – These sessions have been running weekly, beamed into Primary classrooms around the region throughout lockdowns, and it was great to welcome students back into school for ‘in-person’ workshops. Ten schools have taken part to develop coding skills. In one session of Pac-Man game design, our Head of Computing taught four separate remote classrooms, reaching over 100 students!

E-sports – We have launched an e-sports pilot scheme with four local schools, impacting all Y5 and Y6 students, using funds from our Digital Schoolhouse work to buy devices. We also provided training for teachers involved to implement the programme. Following this successful pilot, the scheme will be offered more widely next year.

First Lego Leagues (FLL) – Our Reece Foundation- funded boxes of Lego have facilitated innovation and creativity in Primary Schools, setting up FLL co-curricular clubs in ten schools. We hosted an for FLL Junior in school, coordinated by our new Robotics Partnerships Teacher.



CyberFirst Girls – We supported four secondary schools in entering the CyberFirst Girls Competition this year and will build on our successes in CyberCenturion by offering support to schools in setting up this national cyber education initiative. As part of RGS's newly awarded Gold Cyber-First school accreditation, we will grow our cyber partnerships next year to inspire the next generation of coders, software gurus and design engineers.

Equipment Share – The loan of Lego boxes, MicroBits and perhaps most excitingly, funding the purchase of Nintendo Switches for our e-sports pilot means that local schools can power forwards with innovations in curricular and co-curricular design.



PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Computer Science

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Sport



Some examples of our Sports projects

Swim Club – This was a huge success in 21-22. Building on a pilot last year, we invited students from four of the Outer West Primary schools to RGS for blocks of five weekly sessions, delivering 400 student hours of swimming. School Centred Initial Teacher Training graduates volunteered at the sessions to learn from our swimming coaches, a truly impactful project for students and future teachers while making the most of RGS facilities.

Hockey – We facilitated the In2Hockey challenge tournament organised by School Games. RGS staff and students took refereeing duties and also helped coach the teams for this high-quality event, giving 104 young students an appetite for a sport they may not have tried before. The winners benefitted from some more bespoke coaching as an after-event celebration.

“

The [students] were a credit to your school and left our boys and girls with a great memory for a lifetime. Thank you again.”

– St Michael's RC Primary, Elswick

Some examples of our Cultural Capital projects



Borrow Box – We have worked closely with local partner primary schools where we loan a box of class readers. Resources are then added by the partner teacher, before being passed on to the next school. Students from Key Stages 1 and 2 made the most of new books and a **growing range of shared resources** from exciting, diverse authors.

GCSE Latin – With thanks to funding from Classics for All, we have worked with an Academy to offer Latin GCSE with a group of Y9 students and helped to **embed the subject as part of the school's future curriculum** offer. In addition, we have worked with two local secondary schools to upskill non-specialists to deliver Latin GCSE by joint-planning and observing lessons delivered both remotely and in person.

Art Week – At an Outer West Learning Trust Primary School, four RGS Sixth Form artists worked with students from four classes – sharing their projects while also **supporting Key Stage 2 students** in their work.

This is Creative Enterprise (TICE) – In an innovative programme in partnership with Northumbria University, we had 20 students from a partner secondary school join with RGS students for workshops and masterclasses.

Battle of the Bands – We celebrated talent in local schools, all hosted at RGS, including five partner state schools who took part in this brilliant event.

Storytelling Project – Students from Y9 Drama shared their stories in a workshop at a local First School. We also supported this school with their summer show, through technical and teacher support.

Modern Languages – RGS's Spanish Teaching Assistant spoke with students in a local state school one day a week, to help hone their skills.

Library Link – We were delighted to collect and donate 300 books to a partner secondary library.

EPQ – RGS's Head of Projects has worked closely with a local high school to develop their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) course, which launched this year with eight students.

Debating – We are supporting teachers from two partner schools to upskill their staff to create Debating Clubs. Teachers and students have joined RGS's Debating Club, to enjoy debates and gain confidence in starting their own activity. A network of North East schools competing may be formed in time: an exciting project for all involved!

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Cultural Capital

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Voluntary Service

Some examples of our Voluntary projects

One-to-One Readers – After receiving training from RGS’s Learning Support team, 100 RGS Sixth Formers were able to offer **reading support** and **positive role modelling** to the young students in 18 schools across our community: a truly mutually beneficial project.

“The students have been an absolute credit to your school. They are each assigned to a class of approximately 25 and they work 1:1 reading with the children. They will have worked with all children by the end of the term.”

– Simonside Community Primary School

“Your students are lovely and have been a great help. They have been listening to readers in Y2 and Reception. They are working with 33 children between them. After Christmas, those working in Early Years will be supporting some additional intervention with our lowest attaining children.”

– Walbottle Village Primary School



Y12 Day of Service – To celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, 180 Y12s participated in this day. The feedback was so positive from students and our partner organisations, that we hope to make this an annual fixture in the school calendar.

“Our students thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience, from start to finish. Being able to have a tour of the school and practise their English with your students was... an extremely rewarding exchange.”

– International Language Centre

Foodbank – This year, we introduced weekly volunteering into our Sixth Form Complementary Studies programme which has proved very popular: eight students volunteered at the Vinnie’s Centre in Byker weekly, providing help in the foodbank and with sorting clothing and living parcels for newly arrived asylum seekers.

RGS Art of Hope – Over 300 RGS students designed, created and sold individual 20cmx20cm canvasses. This raised over £12,000 for the RGS Bursary Campaign, the Newcastle United Foundation’s Mental Health Programme, and Homeless North East.

Holiday Clubs – Four RGS Sixth Formers volunteered during their Easter Holidays at a local holiday club for disadvantaged children.

“The children, some of whom were from vulnerable backgrounds and some challenging, had an amazing time. Without the support of these four students this may have been a different picture with such a busy club.”

– Little Angels Fun Club and Nursery

“Eight of our Sixth Formers were trained as Tutor-Befrienders by local charity Success4All, becoming mentors and tutors for disadvantaged young people in weekly after school sessions. ...all did a wonderful job as online tutor-befrienders. [Two students] joined us last April and this will be their 5th successive tuition block – an amazing contribution and achievement, I’m sure you’ll agree.”

– Success4All

“

The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image but giving them the opportunity to create themselves.”

– Steven Spielberg, Film Director, Producer, and Screenwriter

Some examples of our Mentoring projects

Through The Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation's 'SpringForward' scheme, three members of RGS staff have mentored 'Looked After' children, supporting them through the UCAS process, both before and after application.

We offer UCAS Support to partner schools where there is need for specialist support. This year, we have helped students with UCAS applications and interview practice for Russell Group University courses in Medicine, Maths, Economics, Veterinary Science and Classics among others. We opened remote access to our preparation workshops, supporting prospective Medics from a local partner school. This intervention, at this crucial juncture will continue to have an impact in practical and far-reaching ways.

“Thanks for the update and for the sample reference- your support has been amazing ...you've been brilliant with our students.”

– North East Futures UTC

We were delighted to welcome social mobility author and campaigner, Hashi Mohammed KC, to speak at our termly 'RGS Talks' event; we streamed the talk to partner schools, with the broadcast reaching 750 students. Such talks shine a light on the lives and trajectories of a diverse range of inspiring speakers, which state school partners may not otherwise access.

“...we all understand that society could be more fair, and that one day soon we will develop a new set of attitudes, the building blocks for transformation. I hope this will inject us all with a new sense of urgency about how we teach and train people, what we expect from various institutions, and how we recruit and mentor others...”

– Mohamed, 2020

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Mentoring

SECTION 3

The logo features a white shield with a stylized 'R' and 'G' inside, followed by the text 'RGS BURSARIES' in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

RGS
BURSARIES



Scan to watch



Susan Beck
RGS Director of Development
and Communications

Our 500 year history of providing a Grammar School education for those of limited means, has allowed our former pupils – Old Novocastrians – to grow into a socially diverse, formidable body who have made their mark locally, nationally and internationally. Many of these alumni benefited from fee assistance including Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood, successor-in-command to Nelson, who ultimately led the battle of Trafalgar. Could there be a better example of a scholarship enabling an individual to influence the world in a way we recognise centuries later?

RGS's speciality is nurturing, stretching and challenging talented students through a highly academic education; we believe that this traditional Grammar School education ought to be available as an option – as it remains to be further south – as part of the North East's education system.

Our academic results speak for themselves. RGS's performance in public examinations outstrips any other school, independent or state, across the North East, indeed anywhere north of Manchester. Students go on to top universities and ultimately into professional lives which make a significant contribution to the region and countries success.

Since the phasing out of government funding 25 years ago, RGS Bursaries have opened our doors to exceptional students from less well-off backgrounds who would not otherwise be able to attend RGS. The bursaries are strictly means tested and the average award is 93% of fees, in line with our commitment to target our finite funds at students with proven academic ability from families in the most financial need.

"I was one of the last boys to get a Direct Grant place and, reflecting on this just days before my 60th birthday, I...feel RGS made a huge difference to my life. I'm certain the confidence to say 'Yes'... throughout my career as a BBC correspondent came from my time at RGS."

– Simon Willis (70-77)

RGS Bursaries are highly coveted and the competition for the limited places is fierce. We are still turning away too many exceptional students due to lack of funds, but for those who are able to secure a place, the impact is tremendous, changing the trajectory of a young person's life, and often that of generations of their family.

"The RGS is not just a school for me, it is a community I am part of and an extension of my family..."

– Bursary Student (2021)

Our bursary students search out every possible opportunity available during their time here, and each term it is a delight to see them winning national competitions; charring school clubs and societies; leading drama productions and excelling in sports. They contribute greatly to the rich life of the school and our community flourishes from the broad perspectives that can only come from a socially diverse student body.

A long-term vision for RGS Bursaries involves ambitious – but not unachievable – goals. This year saw us make even further progress towards these, with thanks to our incredible supporters. Whatever is given, the direct consequence of your support enables a child to come through the gates of Eskdale Terrace who could not have done so without help. Our donors' belief in the power of education to effect social mobility is making a clear and increasing impact.

On behalf of everyone who benefited from a bursary to date and those who will continue to benefit in the future, to our donors, I thank you.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
AND COMMUNICATIONS

An Overview

RGS BURSARIES EXPLAINED

Bursary applications come from every corner of the region, from **Hartlepool** to **Berwick-upon-Tweed**. The greatest number of applications come from:

33% West Newcastle, Benwell, Blakelaw, Elswick, Denton, Fenham, Scotswood, Westgate, Westerhope and Wingrove.

17% Gateshead, Bill Quay, Dunston, Felling, Leam Lane, Pelaw and Springwell.

13% Central and East Newcastle, Byker, Longbenton, Walker and Wallsend.

Our typical RGS bursary child will come from a family where adults in the home are working but in low paid roles. To be eligible for a 100% bursary, gross household income must be less than circa £34k, with limited material assets.

“The process starts with a leap of faith for a family... filling out that application form with a sense of hope and trepidation. The assessment that I oversee is involved, and I personally visit every potential bursary child’s home to really understand the family’s circumstances and that they understand the incredible opportunity.”

– Jan Browne, RGS Head of Bursary Support

Our bursary selection process considers:

- The candidate’s academic ability, with both bursary and fee-paying applicants experiencing the same entrance assessments.
- A two-stage, extensive financial assessment.
- A more subjective judgement about the likely impact of this opportunity on the bursary child and their broader family.

“The process is robust – we really are looking for the most wonderful young people whose families would genuinely never be able to manage the costs of an independent school like ours. We are looking for tenacious, ambitious and hard-working young people to join our team, bringing so much to our community.”

– Chris Quayle, RGS Deputy Head (Academic)

A home visit is made to shortlisted bursary applicants when the academic assessments have been completed. When the decision has been reached to offer a bursary place, information, support and induction activities for the child are all in place to make the transition as seamless as possible.





“

...the teacher inspired me so much in 15 minutes, imagine what I could do if I actually went there!”

– Sixth Form Bursary Applicant



Jan Browne
RGS Head of Bursary Support

Central to the success of our bursary programme is our Head of Bursary Support. Created within the last three years and fulfilled by Jan Browne, a former State School Primary School Deputy Head, this role has quickly become the nucleus, coordinating all the functions key to a successful bursary programme.

“Growing up, my parents made huge sacrifices to give me and my brother the best opportunities they could. Despite both working full time, they could not have considered a place at our local independent school without additional financial support. I know, personally how much it means to be awarded a bursary. My parents wanted what we all want for our children; to be happy and to access opportunities that they never had. I will forever be grateful that I had doors opened for me by the generosity of others. Having a career in education, working with the wonderful families that I meet, feels like my circumstances have come full circle and I couldn’t ask for a more rewarding role.”

– Jan Browne, RGS Head of Bursary Support

The Head of Bursary Support is central to the coordination of a multi-faceted assessment; she supports by metaphorically (and sometimes literally) holding an applicant’s hand as they walk into assessments; working with the finance department to explore the family’s financial circumstances; and crucially, spending time in each shortlisted applicant’s home to assess how the family will maximise the opportunity.

For our target families, the misperceptions about independent education can be a significant barrier, and the Head of Bursary Support may need to invest significant time to build understanding and trust.

“Mum was guided to apply to RGS by Jimmy’s current school, who considered him academically gifted, and had heard of the bursary support available. Upon meeting ... at her home, there was sense of disbelief that this door was opening...”

– RGS Bursary Pen Portraits 2022

The final allocation of bursary places is undertaken by a broad team but all colleagues rely on the recommendations of the Head of Bursary Support who, by this point, will have a rich knowledge of all bursary candidates. Despite the annual heartbreak of losing out on a place, the intensity of involvement, coupled with Jan’s experience and compassion, means that even applicants who are unsuccessful report that the application experience is a positive one.

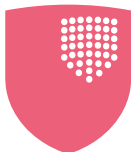
We have a bursary induction which supplements our typical new student induction; this is as much about supporting parents as it is the bursary child. The induction support is usually bespoke and can extend to uniform purchases and addressing any other barriers to joining, for example planning travel to school, supporting lunches, and home broadband. The Head of Bursary Support is a consistent pastoral contact throughout a bursary student’s whole career in the school.

“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.”

– Oscar Wilde

Delivering RGS Bursaries

BURSARIES IN NUMBERS



426

individual students have received funding from RGS Bursary provision since 2002.



93%

is the **average** bursary award.



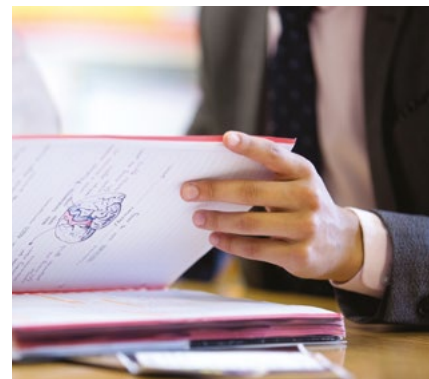
133

students competed for just eight bursary places that we had funding for in Y7.



82

Bursary students currently in the school, representing **1 in 16 students**.



Omitted here is the number of applicants who are not offered a place – and there are many of them. Julie Drummond, a former Chair of Governors, wrote in 2019 of those who

“in a sliding-door moment of fate, missed out on one of our too few, highly coveted bursary places”.

Those ‘sliding door moments’ are still happening.

RGS BURSARIES IN ACTION

“Lottie has continued to be a shining star in the RGS community.”

Unassumingly diligent, hard-working and kind, we are so lucky to have her as part of our school community. Her parents are rightfully extremely proud of Lottie and express much gratitude to the donors of the bursary campaign for encouraging her to flourish and shine. Also an amazing role model to her younger sister who, much to everyone’s delight, is due to join us from September.”

– RGS Head of Year Report

“At the beginning of Lower Sixth I began my time as a figurehead for ArchSoc. I am looking forward to using this great opportunity to expand my architectural portfolio...My first task upon taking the mantle was to undertake a live brief and interact with a client, ensuring their needs were fulfilled...”

– Bursary Student Reflection Letter 2021

“This year has been an amazing year for Danielle. She has really blossomed. Danielle loves the academic side and has achieved great things, as we can see in her report. The Academic Engagement award from Mr Stanford was just the icing on the cake in terms of her academic results.”

– Parental Reflection Letter 2021

“As a Barrister, I find myself privy to some of the most interesting and intricate aspects of our society and of individual lives. I have previously worked with the Supreme Court judicial review of employment tribunal fees and inquests investigating the role of the state in individual deaths. Where does RGS come into all of this? Well in truth, I have always had good grades and been argumentative (in a good way, I like to tell myself) but at RGS my arguments were challenged by those who were more articulate and intelligent than me...I was taught to think more broadly, to consider cultural and philosophical references and to generally expand my horizons... As a bursary holder, I know that I owe a substantial amount of my success to my time at RGS and the generosity of the donor who supported my bursary.”

– Scarlett Milligan: My Bursary Story (Old Novo 09-11)

“When we left Libya, we left everything behind, including our hopes and dreams for our children; the plan was always to just be safe, healthy and together. But for our children to have the chance to flourish and thrive is more than we thought possible. THANK YOU with all our hearts.”

– Bursary Parent

Looking Ahead

Our long-term vision is for the RGS student population to reflect the social diversity of the city of Newcastle, and for us to return to offering the option of a highly academic education, irrespective of applicants’ backgrounds across the region.

We believe that if we were a need-blind school, selecting students only on their academic merit, up to 25% of our school population could be eligible for a means-tested bursary, based on the proportion of people experiencing poverty in the North East. Our interim target is to reach 1 in 10 students and grow an enduring endowment to help sustain this, which we aim to reach through our RGS Gives fundraising campaign.

“...if this story is to continue, long term, very long term, we need to grow the fund both in terms of financial strength and the numbers of bursary students.”

– Nigel McMinn, Governor and Chair of RGS Bursary Campaign

Olha's Story



Olha's incredible story was only made possible as a direct consequence of our monthly donors' loyal support, which meant that in 2022 we had the funds to respond swiftly when we heard about this most exceptional bursary candidate, fleeing the conflict in Ukraine.

"It's hard to believe that it is almost a year since war broke in my beloved Ukraine. I am from Khmelnytskyi which is 170 miles west of Kyiv. While not on the front line, the city is still attacked by missiles and everyday life is disrupted, with daily blackouts and no electricity. My parents understandably panicked after the invasion and my mother decided to flee with me and my younger sister. My father had to stay – men cannot leave Ukraine – and he is staying to work in my family's clothing business, which has been commandeered to manufacture uniforms for the Ukrainian military.

The last thing I wanted was to leave my country. I was sad and furious, and so many young people like me felt the same. I think it was because the choice was made for me; before the war I always imagined I would travel and perhaps study abroad, ideally Stanford in the United States; now all I want to do is return and build my life in Ukraine. It's indescribably difficult to be apart.

We were able to briefly stay with friends in Germany, before finding our host family through Facebook. I quite literally opened a map of the United Kingdom and my finger fell on Sunderland, so it's a huge coincidence that the host family we were paired with were from nearby Newcastle! I Googled 'the best school in Newcastle' and of course found the Royal Grammar School.

I could not believe the second coincidence when I found the Headmaster was called Mr Stanford; I now realise that my destiny did involve Stanford, just not quite what I imagined. My host family managed to connect with RGS through LinkedIn and the rest is history.

At first the move was very difficult but I kept busy with online projects with my friend and raised money to provide laptops for children from schools destroyed by bombs. My sister is very grateful to have a bursary at Newcastle High School for Girls and she's happy and finding good friends. But I am passionate about Computer Science which is uniquely available at RGS. Also in Ukraine there are no girls' schools and so many of my friends are boys; so RGS feels like the very best place for me.

I am in Year 12, or Lower Sixth Form, and I am studying Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Computer Science. I am passionate about maths, but I admit I am better at Computer Science. My teachers say they are shocked at the level I am working at and that I sometimes teach them! But I can only explain that it comes naturally to me. I have won various competitions, I'm presenting a research paper at the PRIX EIFFEL global innovation meeting and I'm excited to push myself to see what else I can do. What I do know is that I wouldn't have these opportunities to excel were it not for RGS.

I have a dream that I will go back to Ukraine and be of use to my country. In the meantime I am working hard on my A-Levels, and perhaps I will try to go to Cambridge to study Computer Science, or maybe even MIT in Boston before I go home.

I am so grateful to my mum for making the decision to leave and to protect us, my incredible host family who took a leap of faith to take us in, my RGS teachers who challenge me everyday and to all of the amazing donors who enable me to come to RGS. I am a stranger to you and you will never really know how much your gift has changed my life. I will never forget, and I will also do my very best to make you proud."

SECTION 4



RGS Gives is our campaign to galvanise the whole RGS community, enabling anyone and everyone within the community to lend a hand and make a transformational difference to the lives of brilliant children, their families, and the prospects for the North East.

“the donors who funded my bursary...the kindest of strangers... led me to leave an unhappy home life and enter a world of opportunities at the RGS.”

– Spenser Gray: My Bursary Story
(Old Novo 04-11)

Anyone and everyone can help:

We need to raise £1.2m each and every year, to maintain our current number of bursary students.

Donors are able to sponsor individual RGS Bursary places from £10k a year, or even fund a piece of £10 uniform, sports kit or fund a school trip or lunch for a bursary child.

Entire RGS Partnerships Teachers can be sponsored from £50k a year, or individual projects can be delivered with £500.

Every donation, of any size, really matters.

RGS GIVES IN NUMBERS

20

years of RGS Bursaries were celebrated in **2022**.

£8.6m

raised from **1,319 individuals**, trusts and company donors.

141

regular donors collectively give **£53,421 annually**.

£687k

is the **largest** individual gift to date.

50p

is the **smallest** single gift.

£134k

was donated last year from **7 donors**.

5

volunteers have **chaired** the Bursary Campaign to date.

69

amazing individuals have told us they have pledged, or are considering, a gift in their **Will**.

£10k

is raised on **average** each year by Threadaware, selling second-hand uniform to support RGS Gives.

7

staff donate a total of **£233 monthly** via payroll giving raising £2,796 annually.

Tax

Individuals and companies are able to give tax efficiently, for example RGS may be able to claim Gift Aid, boosting donations by 25% at no extra cost.

RGS GIVES

A call to action for the whole RGS Family

We are introducing **RGS Gives**, in order to offer a wide range of ways for members of the RGS family to 'flex their philanthropic muscle' and give back to our region. Donations of any size will be put to immediate good use. Not everyone has money to give, we understand that and cheerfully make the most of the talents, interests, knowledge and stories of our wider community. Anyone and everyone can unite behind our social ambition, and personally support the RGS Gives campaign.

More details of RGS Gives, how to support and the benefits of being part of each type of giving, are all available on our website.

There are countless other ways to support RGS Gives, from supporting RGS's Fundraising Events with donations or by gifting auction items and raffle prizes; becoming a Community Fundraiser for us, donating an item of RGS history to our Archive or to one of our appeals for food items, books or stationery; or come and deliver a talk or share inspiration through our careers programme.

Please visit our website or contact us to talk more about the role you could play in furthering the colossal impact which RGS Partnerships and RGS Bursaries have had so far.

One of our bursary students recently said:
"We don't bring wealth and money to the school, but I bring hard work and will do my best."

Perhaps we could echo those sentiments.



Transformational Gift

Supporters who are able to donate a **Transformational Gift**, in a single gift or cumulative giving **over £500k**, are invited to name a part of our historical buildings in Eskdale Terrace.



Horsley Endowment Society

Any individual who pledges a gift in their Will or leaves a legacy gift, is honoured in our **Horsley Endowment Society**.



Fellows of the RGS

Fellows of the RGS all celebrate the incredible milestone of giving **£100k** or more, in a single gift or in their cumulative giving.



Bursary Benefactors

Our **Bursary Benefactors** sponsor the equivalent of one or more **transformational bursaries**, for one or more years.



Partnership Pioneers

Partnership Pioneers are recognised for their sponsorship of RGS Partnerships Teachers, or individual projects of **£10k** or more, for one or more years.



Quincentenary Club

With the 500th anniversary of RGS approaching in 2025, our **Quincentenary Club** members are honoured for one-off gifts of **£1,525** and 500 Club members are recognised for regular gifts of £50 or more, or a single gift of £500.



Deposit Donors

Our parents who are **Deposit Donors** gift to the school their child's initial **£200 deposit**.



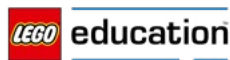
Bright Sparks

Bright Sparks status is awarded to any donor who makes a **regular gift** of any amount, as these reliable gifts ignite lifelong interests.

OUR SUPPORTERS

A huge thank you goes to all the individuals, families and organisations who generously supported RGS. Your individual contributions have directly enabled the cumulative impact outlined in this report. These include, but are not limited to:

Our RGS Partnerships Supporters



Fellows of the RGS

The Advani Family

Adam Applegarth

Catherine Cookson
Charitable Foundation

Christine and Brian Daglish

William Eden

David Farthing

The Percy Hedley 1990
Charitable Trust

Sir James Knott Trust

St Mary the Virgin Estate
Management Charity

Richard Metcalfe

James Miller

The Northern Rock Foundation

Roger Pattie

Susan and David Ratliff

Guy Readman

The Reece Foundation

The Ridley Family Charity

Brian Ritchie

Philip Snowden

Mark and Louise Squires

The Squires Foundation

Ian Stemson

Crispian Strachan

Louis Taylor

Bernard Trafford

Paul Walker

Peter and Wuliang Walker

Garfield Weston Foundation

CONTACT US


**RGS
PARTNERSHIPS**

To talk about working with us on RGS Partnerships, please contact John Smith, Director of Partnerships at j.smith@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk


**RGS
BURSARIES**

To talk more about applying for a bursary, please contact Jan Browne, Head of Bursary Support at bursaries@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk


**RGS
GIVES**

To talk more about RGS Gives, and the very many ways you can support us to change lives, please contact Susan Beck, Director of Development and Communications at s.beck@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk



“
If you want
to go far, go
together.”

– African Proverb



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RGS Newcastle Educational Trust Registered Charity Number 508285