



# FOUNDATION NEWS

RATCLIFFE COLLEGE FOUNDATION | SPRING 2023

## WELCOME

I am delighted to share with you some great news with regards to last year's fundraising which, thanks to Old Ratcliffians, parents and other friends, enabled the purchase and installation of some amazing items.

I would also love to bring your attention to our [Refectory Chair appeal](#), which allows you to have your name or the name of a loved one remembered in the Refectory as a permanent memory of your time or connection to Ratcliffe. All donations will go towards the College Bursary Fund, helping deserving students who demonstrate potential, but who cannot afford the fees to enjoy the benefits of a Ratcliffe education. This is our second chair appeal, and last time around this proved to be extremely popular. We only have 35 chairs remaining, so you need to act quickly if you wish to secure your chair.

And, *coming soon*, Class Giving (read more below) will enable your class year to sponsor a table in the Refectory.

**Mrs Louise Liston, Development Manager**

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## Learning in the open air

A brand-new outdoor classroom has now been installed and sits proudly behind the Preparatory School, adjacent to the Nursery so that it can be used by both our Early Years and Preparatory children.

This fabulous new learning space has been fitted with a renewable energy pack, wind turbine and a solar panel which means the classroom is fully self-sufficient and provides its own power.

Many thanks to the Ratcliffe College Parents' Association and a parent donor for making this eagerly anticipated project a reality. The children have really enjoyed using it.



## Climbing fun!

Our new Bouldering Wall was installed in mid-November and has taken pride of place in our Preparatory School Sports Hall. The children were so excited to use it. The Bouldering Wall allows them to experience a challenging and dynamic sport which increases their core motor skills, as well as developing muscular endurance. It also builds their collaboration skills and their ability to trust and work with others to achieve a shared goal.

Mr Faulconbridge, Head of Preparatory Sport, said "The new wall will facilitate the many adventurous and outward-bound opportunities provided across the College. Our Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) students will certainly enjoy using it as well as our wider boarding community and every student, both young and old".

We are especially grateful to Old Ratcliffians, parents and sponsors who attended and supported our Summer Ball in July 2022, which raised over half of the funding for this, with the remaining money provided by a parent donor.



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## Imagine your name etched into Ratcliffe's history

As part of this year's fundraising appeal towards much-needed Bursaries, we are launching our Refectory Chair campaign, offering you the opportunity to have your family name engraved onto one of the College's iconic Refectory chairs which are seen and used daily by students and staff, and have become woven into part of the College's history.

There are only 35 Refectory Chairs not yet engraved, and we are offering Old Ratcliffians the opportunity to sponsor one of these remaining chairs in return for a £600\* donation (or £50/month\*\*). Chairs will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

To secure your chair, please visit our [appeal page](#) and donate using our secure payment provider (Stripe).

There is an online option to submit the name you wish to have engraved, but if you have any queries, please email me directly [here](#) and I can assist you.

\*Includes Gift Aid. (£750 without Gift Aid).

\*\*This is including Gift Aid over one year.



## Proud Old Ratcliffian returns to see his engraved Refectory Chair

Old Ratcliffian, Jack McPhillips (13) returned to Ratcliffe at the end of January to see his newly engraved chair in the Refectory, which he sponsored in support of the Bursary Fund. He was delighted to bring along his sister, Amy Chiavetta and his nieces with him on his tour and was proud to revisit and reconnect with his beloved old school.

Jack was keen to show his sister the swimming pool and the Senior School, as his niece, Eliza (pictured below alongside Jack) has recently started Ratcliffe College in Reception.

Jack was so pleased to be back and welcomed the opportunity to reminisce. He also bumped into Mr Lambert, his old Geography teacher in the School corridor and very much enjoyed catching up on his school days.



## Albert's memory lives on

Albert Halsey, who founded the Children's Holiday Fund for underprivileged children is now remembered with an engraving and a plaque on the back of a Refectory chair. Albert, who sadly passed away in 2001, founded the charitable fund in 1974, which enabled children to come to Ratcliffe College in the summer holidays. These breaks were originally designed for underprivileged children from the Birmingham area, but later included children from London and Liverpool areas. They were given the opportunity to enjoy what Ratcliffe has to offer; by staying in the Boarding Houses, eating in the Refectory and participating in many activities within the School grounds, in a structured but fun manner.

Voluntary staff from all around the UK continued running the holiday club until 2019, when Covid-19 put a stop to external visitors at the College. Consequently, after a history of 45 years of summer camps at Ratcliffe, they had to pause and were never resurrected. Eventually the decision was made to fold the Fund and donate the remaining money to the College to benefit the Bursary Fund to allow future children whose families may not be able to afford it, to come and study at Ratcliffe.

Chris Tierney, Chairman and former volunteer leader of many summer camps, came and re-visited the College one more time and handed over a cheque for £1,550. He said "Having come to Ratcliffe for over 20 years myself, it was great to come back and relive some memories walking round the grounds again. It will remain a great memory for all of us who came."



## Class giving...coming soon!

Many ORs look back fondly on their time at Ratcliffe, and some choose to have regular reunions either back at the College or at their own locations. We enjoy hosting Old Ratcliffians and especially helping them to reminisce during tours of School.

The biggest 'hit' when we run our tours is taking people back to the Refectory. Seating over 1,200 students and staff on a rolling daily basis, the historical 'Ref' also hosts formal luncheons, OR re-union dinners and, of course the annual curry and quiz night for the Parents' Association. Many of the memories that remain with us are made right here and that is why we are now pleased to offer the chance for Old Ratcliffians to club together in their class year and sponsor a table.

For £2,500, we will name one of our tables with your class year. We only have 10 tables available for sponsorship. If you would like to sponsor a table for your class year, or you would like to join up with some of your classmates and do this, do please contact me as soon as possible. I will be writing to



each class over the course of the year, so please look out for my communication soon. All donations for chair or table sponsorship are directed towards the Bursary Fund, unless otherwise stated.

Just think, next time you attend one of our re-unions, you could be sitting on your own engraved chair at your very own class table!

[Get in touch now](#) if you want to secure a table... "first-come, first-served".

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## A surprise for our Ukrainian students

Our four Ukrainian students who are studying here thanks to the donations from Old Ratcliffians and parents through our Ukrainian Crisis appeal, had an extra special surprise at the end of term, when donor and Old Ratcliffian, Peter Daley (56) chose to gift them some money for Christmas. The girls were all so excited when they realised that they were also being given brand-new laptops to keep forever. One of the students wrote in her own words:

"I know words will never be enough, but I hope that the life that I will live here, I will be able to live because I was given a chance. I hope someday to convey at least half of what I want to convey with this *thank you*"

We are truly grateful to Peter, who also kindly gave some additional money which will allow us to improve some areas of Girls' Boarding – and the girls are now excitedly choosing some new items, and top of the list is a coffee machine!

The boys in boarding are now looking to spruce their common rooms up, so if you'd like to support our boys, perhaps sponsor some items to enhance their time here, please contact me at [LListon@ratcliffecollege.com](mailto:LListon@ratcliffecollege.com)



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My final thanks go to everyone who has supported our fundraising over the past year and especially to those who donate on a regular basis - without your generosity we would be unable to support some of our wonderful students and projects here at Ratcliffe. Thank you.

**Mrs Louise Liston, Development Manager**

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