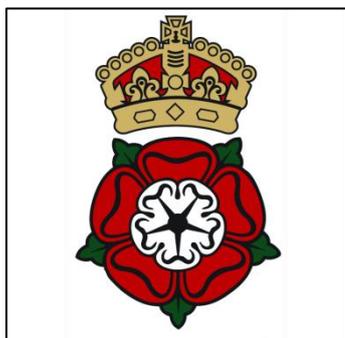


## Case Study: The Royal Grammar School, Guildford - UWS Partnership



*RGS is conducting a successful partnership with a school in the remote Ratanakiri Province of Cambodia. RGS activities have a strong expedition focus, and the school has raised over £6,000 for their partner school so far.*

- 24 boys to visit the UWS partner school in summer 2013
- Students gain new skills, initiative and confidence through project activities
- Partnership provides excellent professional development opportunities for staff

The partnership with RGS is bespoke and focuses on creating opportunities to develop life skills for students.

### **The RGS Expedition**

RGS have found that the focus on an expedition after a two year project heightens the profile of the partnership in school and ensures lasting commitment from pupils. Having committed to the project in 2011, when they were in year 10, 24 boys are going out to visit their partner school in the summer of 2013. Fundraising has been vital to this process, and each student has raised funds to cover the costs of their visit.

The fundraising focus has always been to 'sell fun': the UWS partnership is not about adults writing cheques, but enabling students to develop skills useful in their future lives.

### **Sample fundraising events:**

- Parent - Student ball
- Guildford to Paris cycle
- Student busking
- Raffles & auctions
- Supermarket Bag Packing



### **Commitment and Sustainability**

Students commit to the expedition at the start of year ten and have two years to raise funds and conduct project activities. This timespan means that engagement with the partner school goes deep, and encourages sustained connections post-expedition. Past expedition members and alumni have returned to RGS to give talks on the UWS partnership and to 'hand over the baton' to the new generation - positive role-models have inspired younger year groups and have created a legacy that sustains the project and engagement.

The UWS partnership is a whole school approach, not just the 24 expedition members, who have delivered assemblies and organised whole school events to raise awareness and understanding of the work going on in Ratanakiri province. Funds are not just raised for the expedition, but also to ensure project legacy; for teacher salaries, school improvement and maintenance, for example.

United World Schools in a registered UK charity number 1129537

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T @teamUWS



“Car park supervision, bag-packing and helping organise a disco have been the main fundraising avenues for my expedition along with tombolas and car boot sales. I have developed my communication skills - the organisation for a Cambodia disco improved my ability to explain and describe the benefits of the legacy fund. Furthermore, my teamwork skills have improved because the ethos is to fundraise as a team rather than individuals.”

Jan Thilakawardana, 15 (yr. 11).

### Student Initiative, Confidence and Drive

These activities have challenged students to use their initiative. Although the expedition is the end result, the process of fundraising and raising awareness of the work going on in Ratanakiri is central to the partnership. Teachers report that the scheme builds initiative and independence, and they have seen real developments in the pupils involved over the last year; students who found it difficult to talk to parents, or with self-assurance in a group, are now confidently arranging and running discos for 250 people, whole school assemblies and other large-scale events.



*“The UWS partnership has provided a unique opportunity for the boys to have experiences they just wouldn’t get elsewhere”*

**RGS Guildford Teacher and Project Coordinator**

### Professional Development Opportunities

As well as being beneficial for student development, the UWS partnership has provided younger staff members with valuable opportunities for professional development and to take on positions of responsibility through leading the project, chairing meetings, understanding school processes and increased contact with parents and senior staff members.

### RGS Programme Coordinators’ Top Tips:

- **Get parents on board early:** parent support has made the RGS partnership a success and partnership coordinators’ jobs easier. Maintain a constant dialogue with parents and other stakeholders, who are vital to community involvement.
- **Move activities out of school to minimise work load:** wherever possible fundraising activities should be fully student led. Participants should be encouraged to arrange community activities outside school (i.e. babysitting, bag packing, car washing and paper rounds).
- **Money for nothing:** the emphasis should be firmly on participants working to earn their contributions, rather than tin shaking.
- **Consider the age of programme participants:** certain year groups could be better equipped than others to manage the demands on them. If an expedition is being embarked upon, the two year project cycle should also be considered.
- **Build up activities:** such as training weekend treks, which make the experience more ‘real’, as well as to iron out practical considerations.