



From the Headteacher - 6 September

Dear Parents

As we return for the start of the new academic year, it is a pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 and Year 12 students, as well as our returning pupils. I hope to meet many of our new parents at the upcoming Year 12 information evening on Thursday 12 September and at the Year 7 informal parents' evening on 18 September (more details will be emailed by the relevant Key Stage team).

Whilst I have sent many emails to parents in my previous role as Deputy Headteacher, it is a pleasure to send my first as Headteacher, and I look forward to continuing the tradition of regular parent updates that existed with our previous Headmaster, Matthew Morgan.

I also feel it appropriate to say something about my predecessor as we begin the new term. It goes without saying that Matthew has been a formidable figure in the School as Headmaster over the last 11 years, and he will certainly be missed by students, staff and parents. Matthew led and served Sir Thomas Rich's with passion, expert knowledge and an unfalteringly high energy. Not surprising then that many people have said there are big shoes to fill for whoever takes over from him.

Students and staff were grateful for having had several opportunities to give thanks and best wishes to Matthew before the end of the summer term, most notable of which was his final whole school assembly. In this assembly, Matthew spoke about the history of the School, from its first academic year in 1668, to the move to the current site in 1964, making this our 60th year in Longlevens. Matthew reminded the School community of our tradition of academic excellence, as well as our mission to provide students with the best possible advice and guidance to enable them to thrive in this uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world. He concluded his assembly with these words:

"Don't be afraid to fail. Learn from your mistakes and persevere. Be true to yourself and never try to be what you are not; this is a recipe for disappointment and unhappiness. Be yourself, and back yourself. Never imagine that you are too small or insignificant to make a difference."

These are words that we continue to stand by, and we wish Matthew all the very best for his new role as Head Master at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury; we also know that he will not wish to lose contact with the STRS community which continues to mean so much to him.

Whilst I have much I would like to share with parents as we move through the academic year, my clear priorities as we begin the new term are to uphold and maintain the longstanding values and ethos of the School, to continue to champion our academic and extracurricular successes, and to work with pupils, staff, parents and trustees to strike the right balance between continuing the excellent work we do at Rich's, whilst adapting where necessary for the benefit of our school community and to prepare students for the world of the future.

As mentioned, I will aim to continue sending these fortnightly email updates to parents over the year, with the occasional extra email where needed, should a matter of importance arise. Key information will be communicated to parents via email by the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Year, so please check your inbox regularly for the latest updates.

New Staff

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to all our new staff.

Sarah Tapscott joins us from Stroud High School for Girls as Deputy Headteacher – Pastoral Care and Safeguarding and is a teacher of French and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Callum Hills and Lewis Keates join us as Cover Supervisors and Sports Coaches.

Paul Brookes is our new DT and Art Technician and Tom Pilkington-Crowe is our new Teacher of Humanities subjects (Geography and Philosophy and Theology).

Alex Long joins us next week as ICT Apprentice, continuing our successful apprenticeship scheme, working closely with Gloscol.

Pastoral Care and Safeguarding

Safeguarding and the well-being of students remains at the heart of everything we do at Sir Thomas Rich's. Your child's Form Tutor is the first point of contact for day-to-day issues, and you can also contact the relevant Head of Year at any time.

Contact details for staff including, Form Tutors, Heads of Year, Heads of Department and the Safeguarding team are available at: www.strschool.co.uk/about/staff. Additionally, you can contact the school by telephoning our Reception team on 01452 338400 or email info@strs.org.uk. We also have the email DSL@strs.org.uk that you can use at any

time should you have concerns about safeguarding or extremism.

For September, we have updated our [Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy](#) in line with the latest statutory guidance from the Department for Education, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 \(KCSIE\)](#).

School Sport Booklet

Sport is an important aspect of life at Rich's, and Year 7 parents may find our booklet on arrangements for training and fixtures useful (see link below). If you have any questions at all, please do feel free to contact Rhys Williams, Director of Sport, on rgw@strs.org.uk.

[School Sport Guide](#) (PDF)

Supporting the School

As a school, we strive to offer a wide range of extracurricular opportunities and extend learning beyond the classroom through a myriad of educational trips across all year groups. We would not be able to offer students the breadth of opportunities and experiences that we do without the incredible support we receive from a number of key sources; this includes our Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association (PTFA) and our sponsors and corporate partners, who support Rich's in several ways – some financially, some by lending their time and expertise. Many of our supporters are alumni and parents of both current and former students.

We know from experience that many parents value the education their child has received at STRS extremely highly, and welcome the opportunity to support the School in a tangible way. Opportunities range from sponsoring a team (Rugby, Netball, Basketball, Cricket) to supporting our performing arts or events programmes. Support is equally welcome from individuals as it is from companies.

If you are interested in finding out more about supporting the School in this way, please find below the link to our Corporate Partnership Brochure, which will outline the different levels of support you can offer, each of which would be greatly appreciated. Our Development Director Vicki Lynn would also be very pleased to hear from you on vn@strs.org.uk.

[Corporate Partnerships Brochure](#) (PDF)

Key Dates and Events

12 September Year 12 information evening

18 September Year 7 informal parents' evening

26 September Open Day and Evening for prospective Year 7 pupils

4 October Prize Giving

18 October Non-uniform day

22 October Year 11 parents' evening

23 October End of half term (usual finish time)

4 November Start of term

13 November Year 13 parents' evening

29 November INSET day, school closed to all pupils

2 December INSET day, school closed to all pupils

12 December Year 10 parents' evening

5 December Jazz Night

13 December Non-uniform day

19 December Carol Service, Holy Trinity Church, Longlevens

20 December End of Autumn Term (12.45pm finish)

7 January Start of term

www.strschool.co.uk/parents/termdates

Lost Property

Each year, many expensive items such as shoes, trainers and coats are left in the changing rooms and classrooms after lessons, much to the frustration of parents. Labelling everything from uniform to water bottles and pencil cases really helps staff reduce the amount of lost property. Our Year 7 pupils, in particular, can be prone to leaving bags and possessions behind in classrooms as they get used to moving around the school between classes; your support with labelling items is much appreciated. Unlabelled items are placed in the lost property cupboard and after a month are donated to charity if unclaimed.

Following us on Social Media

Finally, a reminder that it is well worth following the Rich's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts if you have not done so already for general news about life at the School and pupils' achievements. We are always pleased to hear about pupils' successes outside school too – please let your child's Head of Year know of any achievements, as we would love to highlight them on our website and social media channels.

www.facebook.com/sirthomasrichsschool

www.instagram.com/sirthomasrichs

I hope that you have an enjoyable weekend, and we look forward to the start of the first full week of term next week.

Best wishes



Matthew Lynch

HEADTEACHER

SIR THOMAS RICH'S

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