



SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL

Oakleaze, Gloucester

From the Headmaster

Language Learning

Last week, I had the pleasure of attending the Year 9 French language trip to Château de la Baudonnière. The experience reminded me of the benefits of learning languages by immersing oneself in the culture of another country, and I have had plenty of positive feedback to this effect from the students who attended. This week we have welcomed overseas students for the Gloucester leg of the French and German exchange trips, and it has been good to see the Rich's host students working so hard to make their counterparts feel at home.

Slight Uniform Changes

For the September 2023 new intake, we are proposing changing the PE top from a navy shirt to a white polo shirt. The polo shirt will be worn for Games lessons in the Summer Term (from 2024) and can also be used as an alternative to the optional crested cricket whites. For existing students, the navy PE shirt will be accepted until students require a replacement or wish to purchase the new-style white polo shirt. Uniform information and PTFA contact details are available at <https://strschool.co.uk/parents/association/uniformshop>. I would like to take this opportunity to thank publicly the PTFA for the massive amount of work they do to support the school, particularly in organising uniform. They are always looking for more volunteers, so please do contact pauniformshop@strs.org.uk if you would like to get involved.

Petition to Abolish VAT on Uniforms

If you would like to sign a petition calling on the Government to scrap VAT on all school-specific uniform items, you can find it at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/633778>. VAT is charged on school uniform items deemed to be 'adult' size, which raises the cost of uniform for some parents. In practice, this means our school shirts from a 14.5 inch collar, which are typically worn by Year 8 and 9 pupils upwards, will cost 20% more than a smaller size, as will blazers from a 38 inch chest, typically worn by Year 10 and upwards.

Strike Disruptions

This week has again seen strike action affecting some pupils' journeys to school and has resulted in two consecutive days of partial closure of the School. Teachers have not taken the decision to strike lightly, but I appreciate how difficult this can be for families and I would like to thank you for your understanding and patience. I very much hope that the situation can be resolved so that further disruption is prevented.

Filming

This week a film crew and photographers have been in school to capture a typical day in the life of Sir Thomas Rich's. I have been impressed by the way students responded, with a number of pupils taking part. The director expressed his surprise at how articulate and considered the students were when talking about their experiences at Rich's; not something I was surprised about at all of course, but it is heartening to see our school through an outside lens. The results of the filming and photography will feed into updated school promotional videos, prospectus and website pages shortly.

Year 7 Squash

Congratulations to the three Year 7 students – Edmund Kulkarni, Will O'Connor and Tom Reed who played in The Cadbury Squash Tournament at Cheltenham Ladies College last Saturday. They all played well and impressed the coaches during some intense matches, with Edmund finishing in second place overall.

Founder's Week

Annually we pay tribute to our founder, Sir Thomas Rich, who bestowed the School with the gift of £6000 in 1666 to educate 20 poor boys in the city of Gloucester. We replicate this gesture each year by raising money to fund the school fees for 20 girls at our link school, PMM Girls' School, Uganda – a link that has existed for 20 years. No school in Uganda is free and secondary education typically costs families around £200 per child, per annum. With the additional cost of textbooks and equipment, this makes secondary education unattainable for many families.

During the weeks of 20-24 and 27-31 March, each tutor group will run an activity – the aim is to raise enough funds for the annual sponsorship of 20 girls' education. Pupils are asked to bring in loose change over the fortnight to participate in the activities on offer. In addition to contributing to tutor group activities, pupils can pay £1 to wear free dress on Friday 24 March and £2 to wear fancy dress on Friday 31 March. Pupils' contributions are very much appreciated. There is a form prize and trophy for the tutor group that raises the most money.

An evening with Joe Bryce and Dan Grey

I am extremely pleased that Year 13 students, Joe Bryce and Dan Gray are hosting this year's Jazz Night that will feature performance from school ensembles and soloists. Tickets will be available shortly but please do put Tuesday

28 March in your diary. I know students taking part would really welcome your support.

With best wishes for the weekend



Matthew Morgan
HEADMASTER

SIR THOMAS RICH'S

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