



From the Headmaster

Nationally, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment filled with at least anticipation and potential optimism. I have never been party political – I am not allowed to be and would not want to be; I hope that at some point in the future, education will not be a political football. Nevertheless, the recent changes in government present an opportunity for making the case for increased funding for all schools and an increased emphasis on the importance of education generally. In school too, there is a buoyancy and tangible positivity with the prospect of Mr Lynch taking the helm from September. I have no doubt that he will build an even brighter future for our school with, as ever, student well-being, scholarship and personal development at the core.

In my final assembly this week, Senior Governor Miss Wilton, Mr Lynch and the School Captain joined me on stage. I offered these final words of guidance to pupils:

Cast your net wide. Do lots of different things and meet lots of different people. Indeed, be courageous about meeting people, about having a go at something you haven't done before. It's right to have dreams and ambitions.

Tommy's should prepare you to be resilient and equip you with the grit and determination to succeed and overcome the inevitable knock-backs along the way. It's easy to feel defeated at times but view these moments as a challenge. Don't be afraid to fail. Learn from your mistakes and persevere.

As you get older, you'll get to know yourself better. Be true to yourself. 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. To borrow words from the former Archbishop of South Africa, Desmond Tutu:

Be open and available to others, be affirming of others, do not feel threatened that others are able and good, knowing that you are diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are.

The Bible reading at the Assembly from St Paul's letter to the Ephesians Chapter 6 verses 10-18 reminds us that we should stand by that in which we believe and be courageous to do the right thing. I hope and pray that the education that students receive at Rich's will equip them to do the same.

Finally

To say I will miss the entire School community – pupils, staff, alumni, parents and friends of the school – is an enormous understatement, but I hope to return for key school events when I am able. I am very much looking forward to coaching the mighty 3rd XV on the South Africa Rugby Tour and I will be back in school in August for results days and to finalise my handover to Mr Lynch, but if I have not been able to take the opportunity to say goodbye and thank you for your support in person, let me do so now. It has been a privilege and an honour to serve Sir Thomas Rich's for 17 years, first as Deputy Head from 2007 and then as Headmaster from 2013. My attachment to Tommy's is profound.

I fear I quote rather too often Maya Angelou, the renowned poet, author and civil rights activist's important words

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

So today, I would like to sign off with some more of her words of great wisdom:

"Open your eyes to the beauty around you, open your mind to the wonders of life, open your heart to those who love you, and always be true to yourself."

Garde Ta Foy.

Matthew Morgan
HEADMASTER

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