



Curriculum and Assessment

Dear Parents

I thought I would take this opportunity to write to you to outline some of the changes you will notice this year concerning our curriculum aims, assessments and reporting.

Curriculum Aims

As outlined to our new parents in the Year 7 and 12 Information Evenings at the start of term, we have refined our whole school curriculum aims. These aims are designed to ensure that our pupils develop key learning traits that seek to not only ensure they achieve highly during their time at the School but also to set them up to be lifelong learners.

Our whole school curriculum aims to equip pupils with:

- Self-Discipline – working hard without being directed; seeking support where necessary
- Thinking Skills – challenging established subject content; applying knowledge to new situations
- Resilience – responding positively to teacher feedback; preserving to overcome academic and personal difficulties
- Behaviours for Learning – being a careful listener; being well organised; understanding how to study independently
- Core Knowledge and Understanding – learning both key factual knowledge (substantive knowledge), as well as the subject-specific processes for gaining factual knowledge (disciplinary knowledge)

The initials of the above five aims are also the letters of the School's original name, Sir Thomas Rich's Blue Coat (STRBC), and the 5 letters of our Tutor Groups in Years 7 – 11. We hope, therefore, that these five aims can be easily recalled and connected with as our pupils move through the School.

Further information on our Curriculum Aims can be found here [Curriculum Aims - click here to open](#)

Order Grades

Academic departments will issue three Order Grades (progress grades) over the academic year; we have aligned these so that for most year groups these fall towards the end of a full term. By making the period these Order grades represent slightly longer, we are able to be more confident that they represent an accurate representation of learners' attainment and approach to learning with multiple assessments taking place between these grading times. We have also introduced further opportunities for colleagues to moderate and cross-check the grades before they are published so that you can be confident that the grades you receive are both meaningful and consistent.

A reminder that a detailed explanation of our Order Grades can be found at [Academic Progress • Sir Thomas Rich's School \(strschool.co.uk\)](#)

Reporting

You will continue to receive grade summaries after each Order Period which will be published through Parent Gateway. For pupils in Years 7 to 10, there will also be an opportunity once a year for subject teachers to give feedback through a Form Tutor summary about any particular concerns or areas for development. Form tutors will then provide written feedback to parents based on the information provided by subject teachers. We have found this approach to be a highly effective and efficient way of communicating areas for development to both pupils and parents.

Parents' Evenings

We believe that Parent Consultation evenings remain one of the best forms of feedback to parents, and this is why we provide three additional parental consultation evenings in addition to the one per year group recommended by the government. Surveys of parents and staff continue to indicate a preference for a mix of virtual and face-to-face evenings.

In Key Stage 3, we will continue to offer a Parental Consultation evening in each curriculum year. We will offer a face-to-face evening (held in School) for Year 9 pupils who will be in the process of deciding their GCSE options, and we will hold virtual evenings for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils.

Last year we trialled an invitational parents' consultation for Year 9 pupils and we intend to extend this evening to all Key Stage 3 pupils. Teachers will invite parents where they have a particular need to discuss pupil progress and there will be an opportunity for parents to request a meeting, particularly where they have been unable to secure an appointment at the year group evening.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) we will offer three parents' evenings spread across the two-year course with a mixture of virtual and face-to-face events.

We have planned a similar arrangement for students in Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13), again offering three parents' evenings spread across the two years with a mixture of virtual and face-to-face events.

Work sampling

This week we held the first of our regular work-sampling events and it is great to see the variety and quality of work that some of our Year 9 and Year 11 pupils have been producing. These events greatly help colleagues to monitor the quality of our curriculum provision and we are grateful to those pupils who took part. We are grateful for the support of parents in reminding pupils of the importance of keeping their work neat, tidy and well-organised, as well as engaging in RTF (responding to feedback) when teacher-assessed work is returned. Adopting these key learning behaviours will ultimately support the academic achievements of your son or daughter.

If you have any questions, please do get in touch.

Kind regards



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