



From the Headteacher - 20 December 2024

End of Term Events

This week we have enjoyed many festive events as a school community. On Tuesday we had a record number of students sitting down to a Christmas lunch provided by our caterers, *Aspens*; it was great to see all year groups mixing in this way, and many crackers were pulled. Several of our students and staff were also singing and playing Christmas favourites in Waitrose in Cheltenham on Tuesday lunchtime. The efforts of the Brass Band and Choir raised a fantastic £158.14 for *Teens in Crisis*, a charity which supports the well-being of hundreds of Gloucestershire young people every year. Details and photographs from both events can be found on the news feed on our website.

We also concluded the term with our whole-school assembly, which included a reminder of the messages of our very first assembly in September. This was when we recognised our fantastic GCSE and A Level results from August and looked forward to repeating the many extracurricular successes of the previous year. In September, we also discussed the importance of getting the *little things* right as a school community, including simple things such as saying good morning, holding doors open for others, wearing our uniform with pride, and looking out for each other; such small behaviours being just as important as our impressive achievements for both the reputation of ourselves and the School. During this week's assembly, we also presented a number of awards for the term, and we were treated to excellent performances from both the String Group and the Orchestra.

Last night, we enjoyed our traditional Carol Service at Holy Trinity Church in Longlevens. I received countless comments from parents, staff and students giving high praise for the Choir and Chamber Choir, who sang beautifully throughout the service. My thanks go to Mrs Jones and Mr Hinton, as well as to Reverend Rachel Forrest for all her support with the service.

House Writing Competition

The House Writing Competition was very popular this year with over 70 entries from across the School. Miss Grey and Mr Fullerton were the judges and this week we awarded prizes and certificates to:

- Tim Lai, Year 12 (First Place)
- Morgan Cerrone, Year 13 (Second Place)
- Charlotte Lai, Year 13 (Third Place)

Well done to all who took part; the winning stories will be available to read on the School website in the New Year.

School Events Next Term

Our annual Careers Fayre will take place in school on Tuesday 28 January. All students will be given the opportunity to visit the Fayre, which will be attended by multiple companies, universities and apprenticeship providers. If there are any parents who work for or run a company who would like to attend, please do contact Mrs Manning (Head of Careers) on jam@strs.org.uk. It is a great opportunity to speak to our students about your industry or profession, and our pupils really do get a lot out of the event.

Our next Sixth Form Open Evening takes place on Thursday 30 January; doors open at 5.30pm, with information talks in the main hall at 6.00pm and 7.00pm. We do encourage Year 11 students and their parents to attend as it is a great opportunity to speak to subject teachers and current members of the Sixth Form about A Level study, subject choices and destinations beyond Year 13. Further information will follow in the New Year. In the meantime, we wish Year 11 students all the very best with the trial examinations in January.

Parent Survey and School Council

Once again, thank you for taking the time to complete our recent parent survey, provided by Kirkland Rowell. We hope to be able to review the full results soon and will endeavour to provide updates on feedback and associated actions next term.

We were also very impressed with the recent School Council process, which culminated in a *Grand School Council* meeting with representatives from each Key Stage. Students were skilfully able to articulate their thoughts for suggested school improvements, whilst also understanding potential restraints and opportunity costs. Alongside the parent survey, we will also provide further updates to students on actions next term.

Sunday Times Parent Power Guide

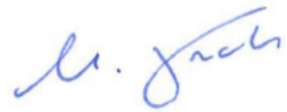
As you may have already seen, we were delighted to be recognised as one of the top three state schools in the South West by the *Sunday Times Parent Power Guide 2024*. This recognition is a testament to the continued hard work and commitment of Sir Thomas Rich's staff and students. As I commented at the time, it was great to see so many schools from across Gloucestershire featured in the guide too, something that reflects the shared vision of academic excellence across the county.

Finally

In the final assembly this week, we also reflected on all that we have achieved together since September, the headlines for which I have tried to include throughout my emails this term. However, these emails can never really do justice to the sheer volume of activities, achievements and talents that are on display each and every week in school. Whilst it has certainly been a long and busy term, I am personally very grateful for the hard work and dedication of our staff, the support and commitment from parents and our PTFA, and the guidance and expertise of our Trustees. It goes without saying that we are very fortunate to work with our fantastic students who have done us proud in a countless number of ways this term.

I look forward to seeing students and staff back in school on Tuesday 7 January and would like to take this opportunity to wish an enjoyable Christmas to those who celebrate it, and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes



Matthew Lynch

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