



From the Headteacher - 14 March 2025

Dear Parents

The Sunday Times

We are incredibly proud to have been recognised as one of the 'happiest school for pupils in England and Wales', according to an analysis published by *The Sunday Times* on 9 March.

The newspaper used Ofsted Parent View data from 2020-25 for its article, with Sir Thomas Rich's scoring 99% for happiness of pupils. *The Sunday Times* wrote: "Official surveys show that 99 per cent of parents agreed, or strongly agreed, that their children were happy at the school, giving it one of the happiest ratings." The full article can be found [here](#) (behind a paywall).

It goes without saying that staff and trustees are delighted by this achievement, which covers several years. However, it also serves to reinforce the continued effort we put into all aspects of our work at the School, not least to ensure that our ethos, curriculum, guidance and support are regularly evaluated with pupil, parent and staff voice, so that we may continue to achieve the same high standards for our pupils.

Emergency Lockdown Practice – Tuesday 25 March

I would like to give you advanced notice that we intend to practice our emergency lockdown procedure on Tuesday 25 March. All pupils will be briefed in advance during tutor time so that they are fully aware that it will be happening and reminded of the protocols involved. While we do not wish to worry pupils, it will be made clear how important it is that this drill takes place to re-familiarise the school community with the procedures to follow in the unlikely event that a lockdown is required.

Spring Concert 20 March

A reminder that our Spring Concert takes place on Thursday 20 March at 6.00pm. With such a large and talented group of musicians in the School at present, the evening promises to be highly enjoyable. Tickets are on sale now, £5 for adults and £4 concessions (under 18s, students and over 65s) and can be purchased [online](#).

PTFA Quiz and Pudding Night

Tickets are also now on sale for the Parents, Teachers and Friends' Association (PTFA) Quiz and Pudding Night, taking place on Friday 21 March in the school hall. Doors open at 7.00pm and the quiz starts at 7.30pm. Teams of six members are ideal, but many teams are created on the night by individuals and couples joining together; it is a great way to meet other parents in the School. Puddings will be served half-way through, along with refreshments available throughout the evening.

Please visit the PTFA shop to purchase tickets, which are £7.50 per person. We are incredibly grateful to our PTFA for organising the event, which is consistently a very popular and highly enjoyable evening.

School Traffic and Parking

A polite reminder to please park on our tennis courts for all after-school and weekend events; we are endeavouring to publicise parking maps for each event for clarity too.

Please could I also request that parents avoid dropping their son or daughter off at the very front of the School, and to park with care if waiting to collect. It is vitally important to us that we work together with our local neighbours, with whom we share the area, to do all we can to minimise the traffic impact of our busy school community on those that live nearby.

Road Closures

Please be aware of overnight closures on Cheltenham Road, which may affect those attending School events from 17 March. Also, a full junction closure at Greyhound Gardens/Nine Elms Road is planned over the weekend of 29-30 March, which will require parents accessing the School for sports fixtures to approach via Elmsbridge Road. Further details can be obtained from the county council's [website](#).

World Book Day

We enjoyed a busy World Book Day on Thursday of last week, with many students and staff dressing up as their favourite book characters. There were some really imaginative efforts, and you can see the photos on our social media channels, along with pictures of the excellent entries in the Book Day Bakes competition. My thanks go to Miss Bond for organising and coordinating activities, to Mrs Phillips for hosting the baking competition in the Food

Technology kitchens, and to Mrs Kellaway for running the book-swap in the Learning Resource Centre (LRC).

Scholastic Book Fair 26 March – 2 April

Following on from World Book Day last week, the next Scholastic Book Fair takes place in the LRC from Wednesday 26 March to Wednesday 2 April during break and lunchtimes. Students will have the opportunity to buy books at excellent prices (many of which are cheaper than Amazon), with cash and cards accepted. The School receives 20p for every £1 spent, which is used to buy further book titles.

Founder's Fortnight

As I am sure you are aware, our Founder's Fortnight is well underway with many inventive fundraising activities having taken place this week, and more planned by form groups for next week. All funds raised go to our link school, PMM Girls' School, Uganda. This year's Founder's Fortnight ends with a free dress day on Friday 21 March, with £2 donations.

European Youth Parliament

I am pleased to announce that our debate team AIDA (AI in the Digital Age) won the Southwest Regional Final of the European Youth Parliament Debates on Wednesday, hosted here at the School; they now progress through to the National Final. We fielded two teams for the event and welcomed six other schools for a wide range of debates on topics such as Europe's ageing population, the impact of AI on businesses and employment, African development and the European incarceration rate. The quality of the debates was superb, and all teams were complimented on their knowledge, understanding and debate technique. My thanks go to Mrs Harris for everything she does to support the Debate Society and promote this prestigious event.

Debate Society takes place every Thursday lunchtime in V9, and all ages and abilities are welcome.

Chess

A huge well done to the Junior Chess A, B and C Teams who took part in a rapid play tournament at Bristol Grammar School this week. Our A Team (Alan A, Satvik J, Kshitij H and Kareem M) did incredibly well, coming 3rd out of 34 teams, only narrowly missing out on qualifying for the national finals. The teams have done brilliantly, and we look forward to seeing them go on to further success in the future.

Rugby 7s Plate Win

Our 1st VII won the Plate Completion at Mount St Mary's Rugby 7s this weekend, finishing second in the pool, playing against Lancaster Grammar School, Dane Allan's School, Gosforth Academy and Denstone College. In the Plate round robin, we won two games against Kirkham Grammar School and RGS Newcastle, which meant we were Plate winners. A great weekend away in our first 7s competition of the season; congratulations to all the players involved.

Rugby Xs Tournament Win

Congratulations also go to the Year 11 and 12 players who beat Cokethorpe School at the start of March to win the cup in the final of the Society of Heads Under 18 10s Rugby Tournament, hosted by Cokethorpe School. The Rich's 1st X came up against some tough opposition, and winning the cup marks a fantastic end to the Rugby season; well done to all the players and coaches Mr RG Williams and Mr TW Williams.

Squash National Finals


The Key Stage 3 Squash Team competed in the National Schools Championship Finals in Birmingham on Wednesday this week. The boys won their first game against Boston Spa Academy, putting them into the semi-final against Harrow School. They played brilliantly in the semi-final but unfortunately lost out to the eventual tournament winners. A special mention to Daniel S in Year 7 who, as the School's top seed, won all three of his games, including a thrilling encounter against Harrow School's top seed, where Daniel came out victorious winning 2-1. Congratulations to all the players on their achievement in getting to the final four, and my thanks go to Mr Payne and Mr Deacon for their work coaching and supporting the team.

Netball Sisters 'N' Sport Cup

I am also delighted to report that our Netball 1st VII won their Sisters 'N' Sport Cup semi-final on 4 March at home against St Edward's School, Oxford, which took them through to the final four at Loughborough yesterday. After very narrowly missing out to Sir William Perkins School in their first match, the team powered through the play-offs for third place, snatching victory from Carmel College with a tense Golden Goal to win 28-27. To reach the finals was an amazing achievement, and our players gave it their all; true Richians indeed. All the players involved, along with Mrs Brown and Mrs Lynn, should be very proud of the achievements made in Netball this year – the school community is certainly very proud of them too.

I hope you have an enjoyable weekend.

Best wishes



Matthew Lynch

HEADTEACHER

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