



## Year 8 End of Term Update

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Dear Parents

In School, it is very much starting to feel like the Christmas holiday is very close, having had our Christmas meal last week, the School Christmas Tree arriving and having pride of place in the main hall, and our pupils are increasingly getting excited! Last week, was obviously a long week, we had our final Year group assemblies, and reminded pupils of the need to get the small things right in the final week of what has been a successful term.

We have had our final Whole School Christmas Assembly and the Carol Service, which took place at Holy Trinity Church, Longlevens where our musician performed beautifully.

### **Attendance**

As we mention regularly to pupils and at Parent Information Evenings earlier in the academic year, there is a strong correlation between high attendance and high attainment.

Our school data continues to reflect this at both GCSE and A Level. The percentage of those students getting 8 and 9 grades at GCSE, or A/A\* grades at A Level is significantly higher for those pupils whose attendance is above 90% (below 90% attendance is defined as 'persistently absent').

You may receive a letter in the future highlighting that your son is 'persistently absent'. These letters are purely for information as we are aware that there may be circumstances to explain the level of absence. However, as we continue to move through the academic year, we would appreciate your support in ensuring that all our pupils are in school as much as possible.

### **Wheeler's ePlatform**

Wheeler's ePlatform, is an inspiring digital library offering 1,000,000+ titles written by the best authors and publishers from across the globe. A new Wellbeing library is now also available.

To access Wheeler's ePlatform:

On a school computer:

Open Launchpad and search for 'Wheeler's'. You will be automatically logged in.

On your mobile/tablet:

1. Open your App Store and search for and install 'ePlatform by Wheeler's'
2. Click 'Add New Library'
3. Enter 'Sir Thomas Rich's School' and choose it from the list
4. Click 'Sign in Using Sir Thomas Rich's School'
5. Log in with your standard STRS email address and password (i.e. [pupil@my.strschool.co.uk](mailto:pupil@my.strschool.co.uk))
6. Browse or search for a book to borrow, then click the blue borrow button

### **Tutor Time Programme**

The second half of the Autumn term has been busy in tutor time with our usual round of Whole School, Head of Year and House assemblies. We look forward to our final Whole School Assembly which will be an opportunity for the School to come together to celebrate the successes of the year so far.

As part of our regular programme, pupils in Year 8 have been reading and discussing a wide variety of texts including 'Holes' by Louis Sachar and 'All That's Left In The World' by Erik J. Brown.

Further highlights from the programme include:

- School Council
- Anti-Bullying Week and Anti-bullying Ambassadors
- White Ribbon Day Fundraising
- FameLab Preparations
- Remembrance and Armistice Day

### **Extra-Curricular**

STRS musicians have sung beautifully at Evensong at Gloucester Cathedral and performed a variety of music inspired by jazz at our ever-popular Jazz Night.

Special mention must go to Jadon Chang for his wonderful piano playing at Prize giving and open days. Tin Ching Yeung for gaining a place as a harpist in the National Children's Orchestra. Raf Davis for passing grade 1 violin with a merit and Sam Dyke for his excellent work as lead treble in choir.

Jazz band, brass band and wind band, Strings and orchestra have been supported by Jadon Chang, Raf Davis and Advait Miriyala.

In Drama the Year 8s have worked on their improvisation skills and Drama Club are preparing a group piece which they intend to perform at the Cheltenham Performing Arts Festival. Special congratulations go to all the Year 8s involved in House Drama especially to Yinuo Li in 8B who was involved in Westgate's winning performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

The Year 8 A team have had a pleasing first half term, with good wins against Clifton College, Warwick and Kingswood, they also drew with Northampton last weekend and have beaten Cheltenham College twice, including a 30 – 5 win at Kingsholm. The team have been captained by Callan Wood and thanks must go to Mr Deacon for his commitment to coaching the team. The Under 13 Bs and Cs have also had good seasons to date, with notable wins against Clifton College, Pate's and Dean Close. Thanks should go to Mr Hardy and Miss Brumpton for their coaching this term.

The Year 8 basketball team have won their only fixture of the season so far against Crypt 30-26 and Owen Wood led the cross country team at the ESAA county and regional rounds. The team ran well to qualify for the regional round which is a huge achievement. The team included Daniel Stevenson, Daniel Spooner and Rajaram Biju. Members of Year 8 were also involved in the recent Benchball tournament at Severn Vale. The squad won all their games and thoroughly enjoyed the tournament. Ali Moussa, Aashman Singh and Bryson Elias swam superbly but just missed out on qualification for the National swimming relay finals. The team competed against some of the most prestigious schools in the country and finished 7<sup>th</sup> overall, just a place away from qualification.

Whilst this extra-curricular summary still does not include every achievement this term, we are delighted at our students' success, and we commend their hard work and positivity.

### **Personal Belongings**

We have reminded your son to make sure that he takes home all personal belongings at the end of term. During the holiday, site maintenance jobs and our thorough cleaning of the School are always much easier to facilitate when belongings are safely with their owner. This will also prevent any belongings left in school being displaced or disposed of during the Christmas break.

### **Inclusion Newsletter**

We are pleased to share with you our latest Inclusion Newsletter, which highlights the work taking place across the school to ensure every pupil feels valued, supported and able to thrive. In this edition, we outline recent developments, celebrate examples of inclusive practice, and signpost useful information for families. [Inclusion Newsletter](#)

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter**

On behalf of Miss Tapscott, I would like to signpost you to the latest Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletter for parents. This edition covers important topics and support regarding healthy relationships, online safety specifically sextortion and self-harm.

### **MHWP Newsletter**

### **Upcoming Dates / Events**

A brief reminder of key dates for next term:

- Term commences – Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- Ski Trip Information Evening – Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- Year 8 Parents Evening (Virtual) – Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- Careers Fayre – Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- INSET Day – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026
- Normandy Trip 2026- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026
- Non-Uniform Day – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026
- Half Term – Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026
- Founders Fortnight – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026
- Non-Uniform Day – Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026
- Spring Concert – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2026
- 80 Years of Rugby Celebration – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2026
- Easter Holiday Commences – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March (from 3:20pm)

Finally, it just leaves us to say that on behalf of all the Form Tutors and the Key Stage Team, we hope that you and

your family have a safe and enjoyable Christmas holiday.

Best wishes

Mrs Chloe Rigby-Smith (Head of Year 8)

Mr Peter Daniell (Assistant Headteacher – Head of Key Stages 3 and 4)

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