



From the Headteacher - 15 May 2026

Dear Parents

In many ways, it is hard to believe that the external examination season has arrived once again, with the return of the daily post-examination discussions as pupils leave the examination venue, sharing how each paper has gone. Overall, and without wishing to jinx anything, pupils in Year 11 and 13 have been positive about the papers so far, which is, in itself, hopefully a testament to the thoroughness of their preparation.

Last Wednesday, our Year 11 and 13 pupils had their last day of official lessons before study leave began. Year 11 pupils enjoyed a final breakfast as a year group, whilst Year 13 students also marked the occasion with our traditional Leavers' Breakfast and Awards Ceremony, providing an opportunity to reflect on their time at the School and wish each other luck for the weeks ahead. As ever, this was a fantastic morning for both pupils and staff to mark the occasion together. Once again, I would like to wish all pupils the very best as they continue with their examinations, including those in Years 10 and 12 who will also be taking external examinations in the coming weeks.

World Mental Health Awareness Week

This week, pupils from all year groups took part in our 'Random Acts of Kindness' initiative, visiting stalls outside the DT rooms and the Sixth Form Centre to write messages of thanks and appreciation to staff and fellow pupils. Organised by our fantastic team of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, the scheme has been an innovative way to recognise World Mental Health Awareness Week, helping to promote kindness and wellbeing across the School community.

The Wizard of Oz Auditions

Our next whole-school production will be *The Wizard of Oz* in November, and auditions for the key roles take place next week, on Monday and Wednesday lunchtimes. Pupils should see the [audition poster](#) for full details, and can contact Head of Drama Mrs Roberts (clr@strs.org.uk) or Head of Music Mrs Jones (pyj@strs.org.uk) if they have any questions. There will also be plenty of opportunities to take part in the show in other roles, including as part of the stage and technical crew; Mrs Jones and Mrs Roberts will make more details available in due course.

Shoebox Appeal

The School's Female Lead Society is running a [Shoebox Appeal](#) on behalf of [The Nelson Trust](#), a Gloucestershire charity which aims to support individuals affected by substance abuse and multiple unmet needs, such as domestic abuse, trauma and involvement in the legal system.

The Female Lead Society would be very grateful for donations of the following items, which can be brought into form rooms on Monday 18 May:

- Hairbrushes and hairbands
- Shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, soap
- Sanitary products
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- Socks
- Deodorant and wet wipes

Old mobile phones

Please note that, aside from old mobile phones, all items should be new and unused. Many thanks in advance for any support you can give to this appeal; we are also pleased to support The Nelson Trust with the proceeds of our free dress day today.

Lockdown Practice

Last week's lockdown practice was carried out calmly and successfully, and I would like to commend all pupils for the mature and sensible manner in which they approached it. Although we appreciate that these procedures can feel unsettling, it was important that the practice was taken seriously in order to support the School's ongoing safety planning.

Ten Tors Success

Congratulations to the team of Year 12 pupils and staff who tackled the notoriously tough Ten Tors Challenge last weekend on Dartmoor, starting and finishing at Okehampton Camp and walking over 50 miles. This challenging expedition requires extensive training and preparation, along with stamina and resilience, to complete the multiple checkpoints across the route. The event is organised by the Army's Headquarters South West, with support from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

My thanks to Mrs Rigby-Smith for organising our participation in the event, and to Mrs Atkinson for accompanying and supporting the team during the expedition.

Sport and Music

Well done also to the 1st XI Cricket Team, who last week won against Westonbirt School by nine wickets in the second round of the National Cup. I wish them the best of luck for their match against King's School Gloucester in round three, taking place this afternoon.

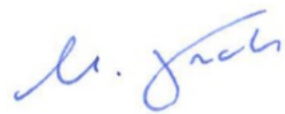
As with all sports, parents can check our [SOCS sports calendar](#) online for all the latest fixture results.

Tickets are also now on sale for our annual Summer Concert on Thursday 9 July, available via the link below. The concert is always an excellent evening as we conclude the academic year, showcasing the incredible talent that exists across the School.

[Buy tickets](#)

A reminder that we finish the first half of the summer term next Friday (22 May) at the usual time of 3.20pm. Miss Tapscott will be in touch again before the end of next week with a further pastoral update, leaving me to wish you a safe and enjoyable half-term break when it arrives.

Best wishes



Matthew Lynch

HEADTEACHER

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