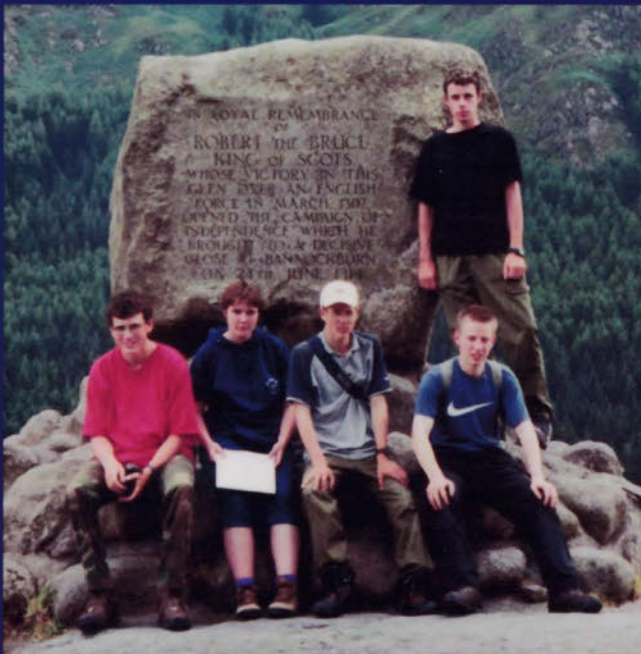




1666
Sir Thomas Rich's



Sixth Form





Welcome to
Sir Thomas Rich's

SIXTH FORM



Sixth form studies are a vital and challenging time. Our sixth form programme is carefully structured to enable the transition from GCSE to the more rigorous and demanding 'AS' and 'A' Level courses to be made comfortably, successfully and happily.

The process begins with our Open Days in October and February, then with our July induction programme, where students learn more about successful sixth form study and face a series of intellectual and physical challenges both in school and beyond. This carries on through the close pastoral and academic monitoring of the Form Tutors, Subject Teachers, Deputy Head of Sixth Form and Deputy Head. Our sixth form concentrates on 'AS' and 'A' level studies and we offer outstanding teaching expertise, alongside care for the individual.

The school has a fine record of Oxbridge and Higher Education entry and almost all of our sixth form go onto further specialist study at universities where their continued successes confirm that they are well prepared to read for degrees and to develop rewarding careers.

Studies here are academic and serious, but at the same time there is a broad curriculum with opportunities for participation at the highest level in a wide range of sporting, artistic and cultural activities. Several sessions per week are devoted to a General Studies programme and Games. The General Studies course leads, in the first instance, to 'AS' level, but it is also designed to be practical and useful: it includes a selection of modules such as computing, cooking, helping disabled youngsters, and DIY. A large number of our upper sixth students are given responsibilities as Prefects.

Above all the sixth form here offers young people an opportunity to study successfully in a well disciplined, caring and happy environment and play their full part in this long established school community.

Do come and see us, talk with our staff and sixth form students, find out more about Sir Thomas Rich's.

I L Kellie

M A Seales

Headmaster

Deputy Headmaster

First a few remarks about the school . . .

The report from the 1993 full HMI Inspection was described as one of rare quality and the 1996 Ofsted report is also excellent. The school is placed highly in the National Press lists of top schools in the country. In fact, from 1992 to 1997 inclusive, it was the highest state school in the Government tables in terms of 'A' level points per candidate for both Gloucestershire and the South West Region. In 1997 the school was ranked thirteenth in the country. In 1998 we were one of the first group of twenty-three secondary schools in England to be awarded 'Beacon School' status. The Sunday Times places Sir Thomas Rich's as top school in the country for university entry. In 2000 we successfully acquired 'Language College' status and we are rated third nationally for languages. Sir Thomas Rich's is a school of which we are justly proud.

It is not only strong academically, but also in sport. Richians have represented all the home countries and Great Britain in a wide variety of sports and it is normal to have internationals among the school student population.

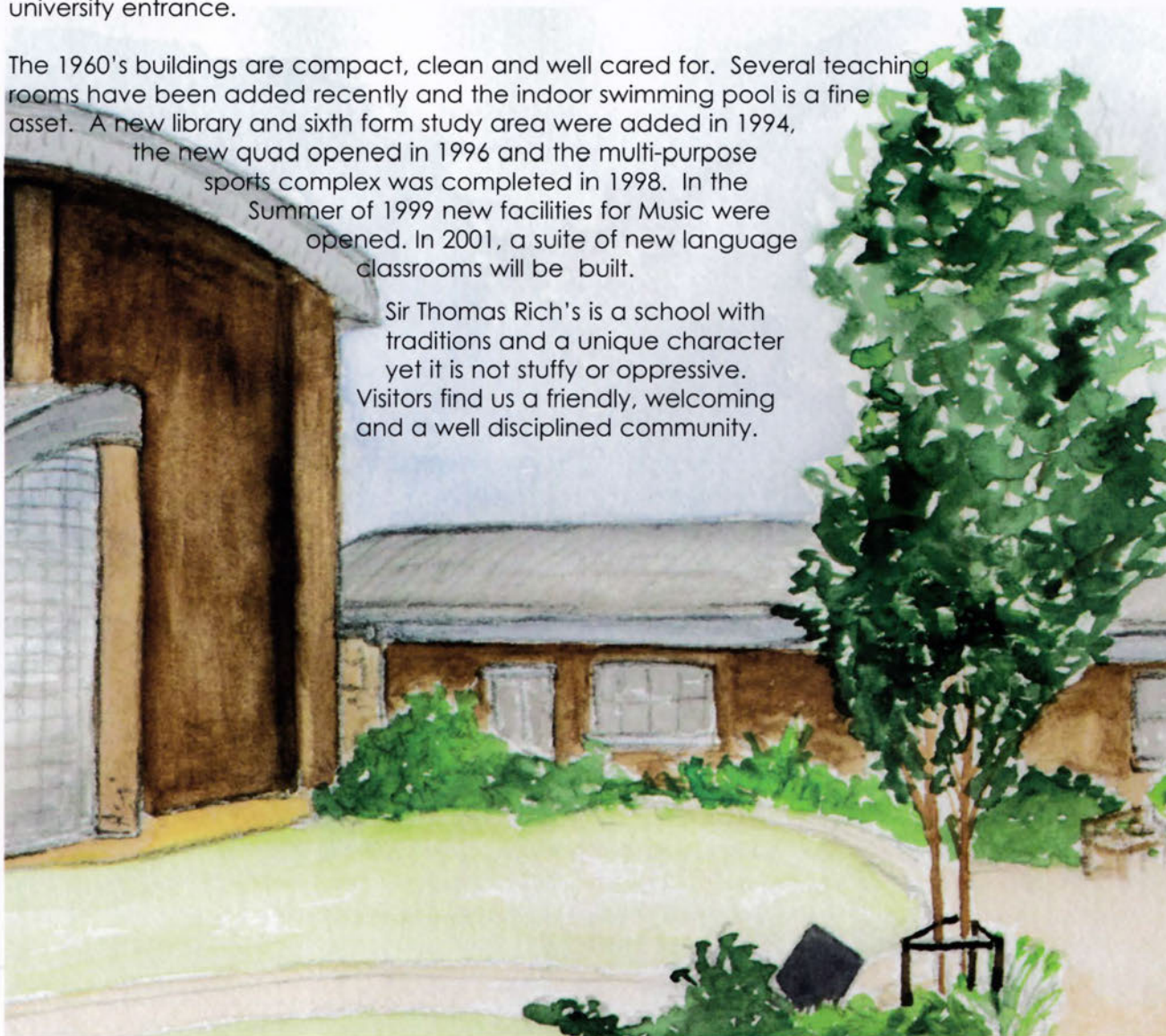
Sir Thomas Rich's traces its foundations back to 1666. In common with the other Blue Coat Hospitals, it was founded for poor boys to give them the opportunity for an education their parents could otherwise not afford and to equip them for a trade in the city. It was a well endowed school and the Rich bequest is the major component of the Gloucester United Schools' Charity which continues to benefit the four grammar schools of the city.

Sir Thomas Rich's was founded for twenty boys. We now have seven hundred and fifty-two pupils and since 1987 we have welcomed girls into the sixth form. There are thirty seven girls in the present sixth form, which is two hundred and five strong. In 1930 eight sixth formers went to university, now it is rare for a sixth former not to do so, the overwhelming majority of the upper sixth apply for university entrance.

The 1960's buildings are compact, clean and well cared for. Several teaching rooms have been added recently and the indoor swimming pool is a fine asset. A new library and sixth form study area were added in 1994,

the new quad opened in 1996 and the multi-purpose sports complex was completed in 1998. In the Summer of 1999 new facilities for Music were opened. In 2001, a suite of new language classrooms will be built.

Sir Thomas Rich's is a school with traditions and a unique character yet it is not stuffy or oppressive. Visitors find us a friendly, welcoming and a well disciplined community.



Painting by 'A' level Art pupil Jonathan Spratt.

Coming from another school, will I be disadvantaged in any way?

Students join the sixth form at Sir Thomas Rich's from many schools. Currently we draw from sixteen schools and students come for a variety of reasons, some because they want a particular combination of 'A' and 'AS' level subjects, some because they need the challenge of other able minds, some because of the school's track record, some to follow other members of the family who have been Richians and some who are new to the area. We do not attempt to poach able students from other schools and we recognise the loyalty you may feel to your present school. We would, however, welcome you if you wished to join us and sincerely held the conviction that you would achieve more in the new environment. We are able to offer some special provision for Oxbridge candidates.

'Sir Thomas Rich's is a grammar School par excellence - so good in fact that it has been elevated to Beacon status.'

The Citizen 13.4.00

We begin with the induction week in July. This serves several purposes. It enables new sixth formers to meet each other and work together on challenging problems. It has a social function. We introduce you to several of the staff who will teach you, the tutors who will guide you and present members of the sixth form. Perhaps former members of your school who will spend time with you.

'Changing School has prepared me for a future move to college.'

There is then one more induction day in September, this deals with the practicalities of sixth form life. This enables you to meet other members of your form and sort out timetables and uniform.

'The girls integrate well, have opportunities to exercise responsibility and make an influential contribution to the life of the School.'

Ofsted Report 1996

We have eleven sixth form tutors who have their own ways of working with their forms. All are experienced and successful. The school is not marked by male chauvinism. Women staff teach many of the 'A' and 'AS' level courses and a good number of girls become Prefects, Observators and Vice Captains. It always takes courage to join a new school, but if you come you are likely to cope! You don't have to take this on trust. Here are the views of girls who joined Sir Thomas Rich's in 2000:

"Starting at a new school was both exciting and daunting. Tackling the harder 'A' level work, finding my way around the school and getting to know the teachers seemed quite a challenge at first, but everyone is very friendly and the atmosphere is relaxed.

With so many people and things to do, life at times can only be described as hectic. There is never a dull moment and always something to do, whether lessons, homework or one of the many clubs held at lunch time or after school. As well as Venture Scouts, the sixth form Jazz group and the rehearsals for the Christmas production 'Oliver', ballroom dancing is soon to be on my agenda. During the first half-term I've already been away on two field trips. This has helped me make loads of new friends as well as meeting some old ones."

"It was quite scary moving from an all girls school to an all boys school, but I think it has been worth it.

Everyone is friendly and they have made me feel quite welcome. There is a good atmosphere and I am enjoying school a lot more than I used to.

The teachers are all helpful and make quite a lot of effort to make you feel welcome. They are also very knowledgeable and put their ideas across well in lessons.

All in all I'm pleased I made the decision to move to Sir Thomas Rich's."

"Everyone has been very welcoming and friendly towards me. I am very glad I moved to 'Tommies'; the atmosphere is warm and friendly, everyone makes an effort to get to know you. The teachers are sympathetic about moving to a new school and there is always someone to talk to about any worries you may have. I have settled in really well and I do not regret my decision to move."



How much work will I be expected to do?

'AS' & 'A' levels require, in addition to the timetabled periods, about five hours per subject per week for private reading, writing and thinking. It is very important to plan your time allocation evenly so each subject is given adequate coverage. Some 'A' and 'AS' levels require coursework and here the work load may be greater as deadline dates are approached. So, although part time jobs may give useful employment experience and necessary income, you would be wise to limit your time commitment to a job which does not conflict with your long term priorities. **One day at the weekend which causes no conflict with school commitments should be the maximum undertaken.**

'The best performance in the West was by pupils at Sir Thomas Rich's School in Gloucester, which came eighth in the league tables of the top 123 in England and Wales.'
Western Daily Press 25.8.00

What help is given with Higher Education planning and careers guidance?



Classics/History trip, 2000

A varied programme of higher education planning begins in January of the lower sixth year, progressing through the upper sixth. This includes advice on choice of course and institution, a conference in school, a visit to a higher education fair and necessary interview practice. Speakers from several universities contribute valuably to this programme. The school has a very well stocked Careers Library. Appointments may be made with our Head of Careers and with the County Careers Adviser to discuss possible careers. Some sixth formers seek employment with local companies and we maintain contacts with them. In fact, you may well be interviewed for such a job by an Old Richian.

In each of the last three years most of our upper sixth have proceeded to university. Yet our aim is not only that all who desire a university education can gain entrance to the university of their choice, but that they are successful there.

...and with entry into higher education?

The teaching will be rigorous and challenging. To quote a 1993 inspection report 'the level of teaching was of a consistently high order with highly competent professionals teaching their students in a demanding and rigorous way. Students responded well to high expectations.' The 1996 report states: "Teaching is particularly good in the sixth form."

We provide up-to-date quality text books, networked computer suites with internet access and appropriate scientific and practical equipment. We encourage self discipline in academic work by giving each student the opportunity to study in a quiet environment in the study area or library and also to work co-operatively with others in more relaxed settings.

Students at university often become disorientated in their first year because they have never developed self-discipline in study. We give positive encouragement to self-discipline.

'St Catherine's College, Oxford, has been delighted to receive a stream of talented undergraduates from Sir Thomas Rich's. It values the teaching and training that the School provides and looks forward to continuing links with the flagship of the Gloucester educational system.'
The Master



Why is the the sixth form not separate from the rest of the school?

We recognise that not all students wish to be involved with younger age groups and it is possible to concentrate almost exclusively on academic work. However, most sixth formers at Sir Thomas Rich's have benefited in their lower school days from the leadership and support given by older students. We therefore retain the sixth form Prefect system.



In selecting Prefects we canvass the opinion of staff and other Prefects. We look for students who have leadership potential, who are committed to the welfare of the members of the school, who lead by example and have gained the respect of all sectors of the school. It is an honour to be appointed a Prefect. Outstanding students are appointed as Observators - Senior Prefects. This is a tradition which goes back to the earliest days of the School's history.



Observators meet occasionally with the Headmaster and Deputy Headmaster to discuss the day-to-day running of the School. The unusually high level of responsibility given to Prefects and Observators is a feature of Sir Thomas Rich's and we provide a four day leadership training course in the Black Mountains or Wye Valley. This is designed to test and develop initiative, courage, endurance and mutual support and is a very popular event.

We appreciate the initiative shown by sixth formers in devising and organising schemes that benefit the whole school community. Recent examples include the adoption of a Year Seven form by two prefects to help junior boys through the change from primary to secondary school and to assist in

their monthly Saturday events. Speakers' Day was another innovation where a full day's programme of talks, discussions and debates on current issues was organised for the senior school. Another recent addition to sixth form activities is the Sixth Form Committee. The committee is comprised of upper and lower sixth students and holds meetings twice a month; its aim is to help create a positive environment. The purpose of the committee is to organise activities such as charity events, social events and discuss the day-to-day issues which occur within the sixth form. So if you have any other strings to your bow we would invite you to play them.

'Working with Milestone children improved my communication skills and confidence with people with a disability. It is a most enjoyable part of school life.'

Milestone School

There are around twenty clubs and societies active in the school at any one time and many rely on sixth formers for help and organisation. There are also good opportunities to develop musical and acting talents in the school productions and many music performances throughout the year.

'When you are hanging by your finger tips halfway across a waterfall, too scared to go on but too stubborn to go back, pride has to be overcome and help has to be accepted.'

View from a student on our Prefects' Leadership Course



What are the sporting opportunities?



The school runs a recreation and leisure programme on a Wednesday afternoon which is compulsory for all students. The options use on and off site facilities and aim to encourage both participation and competition. The current programme offers the following options:

Autumn and Spring Term:

Rugby, Football, Hockey, Netball, Cross-Country, Swimming, Badminton, Fitness Suite, Climbing, Skiing, Basketball.

Summer Term:

Cricket, Tennis, Athletics, Bowls, Swimming, Fitness Suite, Climbing, Golf, Badminton.

The School has a strong sporting reputation and is represented by the following teams:

1st & 2nd XV Rugby

1st, 2nd & 3rd XI Football

1st & 2nd XI Cricket

Cross-Country

Mixed Hockey

Netball

Swimming

Many Sixth Formers also play for the Old Richian clubs and others in the city and district.



Monitoring

We have careful monitoring of each student's progress, to ensure that students, parents and teachers are aware of how well the student is getting on. What form does this monitoring take?

- (a) There is the usual feedback in lessons and from routine homework and tests.
- (b) We set short examinations in November of Year 12, which give a good idea of the level of understanding attained at this early stage.
- (c) Every half-term teachers give grades, called Orders. Each student is given a grade for effort (from 1 to 5) and a grade for attainment (from A to E) corresponding approximately to the 'AS' or 'A2' standard of work in each subject. These Orders are posted home.
- (d) We set Trial Examinations for 'AS' in Year 12, and for 'A2' in Year 13. This is upon completion of the courses but before the external examinations. These contribute towards good final preparation.

'We are pushed hard to work and that's good.'

What happens if I cannot cope?

We have an entry requirement of five GCSEs at grade B and we prefer A grades in the chosen 'AS' level subjects. With these grades it is our experience that you are unlikely to lack the academic ability to succeed at 'AS' level.

Nevertheless there are some students who, for a variety of reasons, may face problems with their studies. Our close monitoring enables us to identify any such difficulty at an early stage and offer appropriate advice and help e.g. in essay writing or note taking or file organisation. Occasionally a change of subject may be considered.

In order to progress to 'A2' courses we expect a student to have passed their 'AS' examinations at grade D or above in at least 4 subjects, including grade D or better in those subjects to be studied in the upper sixth. Very rarely a student may lack the motivation for study at 'AS' level and we would offer help regarding alternative courses or employment, normally as an alternative to 'A2' courses.

We would emphasise that the overwhelming majority of our students settle quickly to sixth form life, enjoy their work, find study at this level interesting and rewarding and hence achieve very high standards. You will be given every support to gain good grades and thus progress, well qualified and well prepared, to university. See our results for proof!

'Sir Thomas Rich's, undoubtedly one of the finest Grammar Schools in the Country, is a caring, friendly community which fosters high academic learning and provides an excellent opportunity for all to achieve their full potential.'

**The President of
the Old Richians' Association**

Are there dress requirements?

The School has a sixth form uniform details of which you will find later in this prospectus. Originally boys wore the traditional Blue Coat uniform. This was changed in the late Nineteenth Century when blazers were introduced. As part of the Tercentenary Celebration in 1966 the school was granted its own Coat of Arms which are displayed in the school foyer. The Blazer badge worn by all sixth formers shows these arms. We think the uniform is smart and it gives the school a corporate identity.



Are there buses to the School?

Several bus routes have stops close to the school and there are school buses to and from Brockworth, Abbeymead, Upton St Leonards, Cheltenham and The Forest of Dean. Details are available from the school.

CONCLUSION

The sixth form represents the pinnacle of a student's secondary education. The intellectual demands of 'AS' and 'A' level are a challenge which students are encouraged and helped to meet. Approaches to study are less prescriptive and put greater emphasis on individual study skills and self-discipline. There is more scope for initiative. Sixth formers at Rich's are thereby prepared for the even greater independence of undergraduate study.



The Language Department's Summer production

Furthermore the sixth form's role in the greater life of the school is vital. Sixth formers are encouraged to enter into this as fully as their individual talents and capabilities allow. They are expected to contribute to the civilised atmosphere which so characterises Rich's, to set themselves the highest standard of dress, behaviour and consideration for others. In short, they play a central role in setting the tone of the school.

The pursuit of academic excellence is a key aim, almost without exception pupils leave us to go on to a course in Higher Education. The time in the sixth form must be used well to plan such a course with meticulous care. Considerable guidance for university courses and their career implications is available and should be exploited to the full. The expertise of the Head of Sixth Form, Deputy Head of Sixth Form, Careers Department, Tutors and Teachers is on hand to guide each individual through the UCAS maze. Parents and pupils are invited to make use of this help. In partnership we can ensure that the significant potential of every student is realised over the course of the two years.

The Secretary for Education and Employment congratulates Sir Thomas Rich's School, recognised in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's Annual Report as an Outstanding School.'

DfEE April 1998



