



SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL

NewsREEL

February 2005

The term got off to a good start with the publication of the Secondary School Achievement and Attainment Tables by the Department for Education and Skills. I am aware of some scepticism towards such statistics and I agree that education cannot be simplistically reduced to tables of data. However it is heartening to have the school's success in this area recognised and it helps to ensure high morale. I am pleased to congratulate our staff and pupils upon the results of their hard work, whilst also appreciating the invaluable support provided by the wider school community, specifically our Governors and, of course, parents.

J. Helli



Performance tables

Measure	STR	Comparison in County (42 secondary schools)
GCSE - ave. points per pupil	521.4	Only 3 schools >515
GCSE - % 5+ at C+, '03 & '04	100%	Only 2 schools at 100%
Absence	3%	Lowest figure of all schools
KS2 to GCSE value added	1033.6	Only 2 schools >1033 (1000 is average)
KS3 to GCSE value added	1018	Only 3 schools >1017 (1000 is average)
'A' level ave. points per pupil	415.1	Only 3 schools >360

We received two letters:

- from Stephen Twigg MP, Minister of State for School Standards, congratulating us on being placed in the top 25% of schools nationally;
- from Ofsted, naming us a 'particularly successful school'.

Sir Thomas Rich's, Oakleaze, Longlevens, Gloucester, GL2 0LF.
01452 338400

Languages update

The European Theatre Company visits Widden Primary School

As part of our Community Work with Primary Schools we were able to organise for pupils from Widden Primary School this term a performance by the European Theatre Company of 'Le Pirate et La Perle'. This was a production specifically aimed at Key Stage 2 learners to enrich not only their knowledge of the French language but also French culture.

At the beginning of the play pupils are transported on board a pirate ship into the company of Francis and his bossy female captain Agathe. They are sailing to the Island of Martinique to recover the hidden pearl buried by Agathe's pirate father. The audience is captured at the beginning of the show and made to work on board cleaning, sweeping, cooking, singing and dancing. Pupils were able to interact with the cast and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

As well as having the opportunity to be immersed in the French language let us hope that the message that friendship is more valuable than material acquisitions was not lost on the young audience.



Austrian Day, 29th January

In conjunction with the ALL (Association of Language Learning) and the Austrian Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, Sir Thomas Rich's hosted an Austrian Day for teachers of German in the area. The course examined the possibilities of exploiting Austrian-based sources for use in schools at Key Stages 4 and 5. Internet sites, song and newspaper articles all came under the microscope. The theme of the day: "Youth between desire and frustration" was particularly relevant to the 'A' level syllabus although the impact of the German is perhaps lost in translation: "Jugend - zwischen Lust und Frust".

The course was led by Michaela Gigerl from Bristol University who is becoming a regular visitor to the School.



Spanish Family Course

We have been able to run this term a course for families wishing to learn Spanish. This has been most successful (due to a large extent to the expertise and enthusiasm of Miss D. Brake) and as a result the course is being extended into next term. The course takes place on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Have you planned your summer holidays?

Are you travelling abroad?

**Would you be interested in acquiring some
basic language skills before you go?**

**If so, contact Mrs Hewell on 01452 338405 or
e-mail: admin@sfrs.org.uk**



Languages Promotional Day Year 9

Year 9 pupils from STRS and Barnwood Park spent the morning engaged in activities aimed at bringing home the importance of languages in today's multi-lingual and multicultural world.

Penny Krucker, International Education Officer for Gloucestershire gave an interesting and illuminating talk on "Languages - Your Passport to the World" in which the necessity of language skills in our highly competitive global employment market and the opportunities open to young people with language skills were highlighted.

This was followed by an "Any Questions" session, expertly chaired by Mr Hearn. Pupils were able to ask a number of questions relating to languages in the job market. The panel consisted of Mr G. Croxson (G.C.H.Q. linguist), Ms V. Telford (Connexions), Mr T. Day (I.T and Telecommunications Consultancy), Sgt Butler (Army, Intelligence Corps) and Sgt Marshall (Army Careers Officer). Pupils were complimented on their questions which ranged from the general "How do languages enhance my life?" to the more specific "Will I earn more money if I can speak a foreign language?"

Finally pupils sampled a taster lesson in a different language. Indonesian, Mandarin, Italian and Swahili were all on offer.

We trust that this was an interesting morning for the pupils and that they will have learnt that languages really do open the doors of opportunity.

J Hewett



Leo Chaligha with Penny Krucker

Year 11 Work Experience

The switch to January work experience for Year 11 proved to be highly successful and popular. The feedback from employers was excellent and our students acquitted themselves well. The placements were numerous and varied, ranging from law firms to conservation work. *A very special thanks to all those organisations who kindly catered for our students.*

P D Lloyd

Public Speaking



Tom Chapple of Year 10, was nominated '**Best Speaker**', in the Gloucestershire round of the English Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition, and was awarded a trophy and a book token in acknowledgment of this success.

Tom was ably supported on this occasion by **Adam McNally** (chair) and **Jonathan Maxted** (questioner). Although our team did not make it through to the regional round, this is a Year 10 team, and will still be eligible to compete in next year's competition. It was evident from their performance that they have learnt much from the experience this year, and the chairman of the adjudicators commented on just how much they had improved between the district round and this round. Perhaps, therefore, we can look forward to their going forward next year with an even greater chance of success?

S Pickard

Helping with hospitality

Periodically, the School Hall is hired by organisations for meetings and other events. Sometimes there is a request for Tea/Coffee and Finger Buffet Lunches and there has been a suggestion that the PA could provide this service, as a 'fund-raising' scheme. Three people have expressed an interest so far and we really need to know whether anyone else would be interested. If the idea appeals to you, please contact



**Sali on 01452 621775 or
e.mail saligray@
business-advancement.co.uk**

Classical Civilisation Trip

To Caerleon

On 1st February a group of Sixth Formers studying Classical Civilisation took a day out to visit the Roman Legionary Fort at Caerleon, near Newport. Only three legions were stationed in Britain, and Caerleon is the only legionary fort which was not built over by later generations, so there is a lot to see. In the Roman times, Gloucester would have been much like Caerleon, though now the remains are all buried under shops and car parks.

We sat in the amphitheatre, watching Michael and Gavin playing at gladiators. "We who are about to die, salute you," the original gladiators would have said. Nothing so drastic happened on this occasion but we could sit and fantasise. We saw the Roman Baths, huge and luxurious, built to make the soldiers feel at home and also to impress the locals and keep them in their place; and the barrack blocks where the soldiers and their officers lived. At the museum we were shown round by an especially helpful and friendly guide.

An enjoyable day, but also a very useful one. Our thanks to Mr Riley for organising it.

R Brookin

Charities

Our charity this term is "Beating Bowel Cancer". However funds raised from our first Free Dress Day of term will be sent to the Asian Tsunami Appeal.

Last term we raised £1,000 for the Pied Piper Appeal. The collections at our Carol Services each raised over £100 which we donated to the churches (St. John's, Northgate and Holy Trinity) for their chosen charities.

Oxford & Cambridge



Our Upper Sixth Form students who applied to Oxford and Cambridge Universities endured their interviews at their chosen colleges in December and heard the outcomes over the Christmas period.

Congratulations to the following who received offers, dependent upon achieving top grades in their forthcoming 'A' levels:

Jack Keevill (to read Modern Foreign Languages at St. Peter's College, Oxford),
Tom Roberts (Geography at St. Catherine's, Oxford),
Daniel Whisson (Mathematics at University College, Oxford),
Sam Johnson (Engineering at Jesus, Oxford),
Jack Milton (Earth Sciences at Hertford, Oxford),
Jacob Loftus (Mathematics at Corpus Christi, Cambridge).

Sir Thomas Rich's Parents' Association Newsletter

Autumn Ball 2005

Following the success of the 2004 Inaugural Ball, we are delighted to announce the date for the 2005 Autumn Ball. Write it in your diary NOW, to ensure you don't miss it!

Saturday 15th October

CAR BOOT SALES

We held one in 2004 and it was an excellent fundraiser. Sadly there was an enormous thunderstorm at the same time, but the PA Volunteers have dried themselves off and decided to hold not one, but THREE Car Boot Sales this year!

Dates for your diary are:-

Saturday 19th March

Saturday 21st May

Saturday 9th July

All start at 2:00 pm

Clear the Clutter!!

Volunteers needed

I would like to compile a list of willing helpers whom we can call upon, occasionally, to help at specific events. No huge commitment required, just enthusiasm and the ability to donate a few hours to help the Parents' Association.

Please contact

Sali on 01452 621775.

Spring 2005

Sutton Seed Catalogue

You should have received a Sutton Seed Catalogue with this NewsReel. This is a new fundraising activity for the PA and comes under the 'C' for Catalogues in our CAD/CAM Campaign. We hope you will order something from the catalogue . . . we receive 20% commission on all sales, so 'Happy Shopping'. Please complete the 3 part Order Form, retaining the green copy for your records. Return the other 2 copies, together with your payment, to Sali Gray, c/o the school, either by pupil post, or preferably Royal Mail! **Deadline—Tuesday 1st of March**, but please start sending them as soon as possible. Orders delivered directly to you.



Derby Night

It was agreed, as part of our CAD/CAM Campaign, to organise a 'Derby Night', for Parents and Friends. We were hoping to run it in March, but have now set the date as Friday 10th June, to allow more planning time. However, we need HELP, please. Has anyone out there ever organised one before? If so, we would really appreciate some guidance.

Please contact Sali Gray, a.s.a.p.,

on 01452 621775 or saligray@beeb.net.

Lower Sixth History Trip to Fairford

During the reformation it was ordered by Edward VI that idolatrous symbols be removed from churches and abbeys etc. This meant that pictures of saints or statues of saints were destroyed, and also stained glass that showed pictures from the Bible, martyrs or other idols. The worship of idols was a predominantly Catholic idea, and so when Edward changed the country's faith, he needed to rid the churches of anything Catholic. He had the glass smashed and the brightly coloured, lavish churches whitewashed, to turn as far away from Catholicism as possible.



When we had finished looking at the Eastern, Western and Southern facing glass, we turned to see the North window alight with a really beautiful glow. The colours in the window shone brilliantly red, blue, purple and green, the light projecting scenes of purgatory. Our guide explained that this was the time when our lives would be weighed on a pair of scales; if we had done good deeds in our lives we would go to heaven, if we had done evil deeds we would go to hell. The scene also showed angels carrying people through the air to heaven, their features beautifully detailed and yellow and gold hues adding to their majesty. The contrast between the two colours really stood out, as did the amazing symmetry the artists of the time had managed to create.

It is surprising to think that this glass would survive, and a few theories have been passed around - the one we settled on was that Fairford was just too out of the way for the government officials to travel to, and so simply didn't waste their time getting rid of the glass in the small church.

Whatever the reason, we are glad that the glass remains, as it serves not only as a reminder of the vibrancy and colourful nature of the decoration in Catholic churches, and the loss some churches may have suffered during the reformation, but as a reminder of the skill and craftsmanship of the people of the time.

H Grist (L6)



At Fairford however, the glass survives to this day without very much need for restoration. You can see from the outside that the glass is protected by a metal mesh to stop weather damage and vandalism from the outside, but from the inside, the colour and the vibrancy of the stained glass is much as it was 500 years ago.

When you walk into the church you are immediately faced with images from the bible on the east window. The glass is coloured in yellow, green, blue, red, purple ... colours that for an average Gloucestershire peasant back in the 1500's who was illiterate and lived in a predominantly colourless world, would have no doubt seemed magical. For those peasants, the images in church educated them and the stained glass was often referred to as 'poor men's books'.

Our tour guide was highly informed, and spoke of the church and the glass with a vivacity and enthusiasm that was engaging, and he was ready to answer any questions we might have had. He gave us each a brief history of the church while we sat in the pews, and then walked us around each window in turn. He gave us the story behind each scene, which was really helpful.

Railway Society

The Railway Society have been on their travels again, this time making a day trip into the Yorkshire Pennines by train. Destination for our group of 25 was the quaint hillside village of Haworth, famous as the home of some Victorian novelists. However, it was the Victorian steam train which trundles there from Keighley which attracted us. We did not neglect the modern railway, enjoying a trip on one of the Virgin Trains' brand new tilting Pendolino trains on our return journey.

S W Pack

End of Term Sports News



We were delighted to welcome Terry Fanolua from Gloucester RFC to our final assembly of last term. Terry presented colours and half-colours for rugby and cross country as well as House rugby cups and a new trophy, the Mervyn Moody Memorial trophy for the Player of the Year (which was awarded to Kevin Ellis of our Lower Sixth). We thank Gloucester RFC for arranging for Terry to join us, we always find the rugby club most helpful and supportive.

I L Kellie

Rugby

Year 7 'A' Team

P	W	D	L	F	A
3	1	-	2	44	46

The Year 7 'A' team have played three difficult and competitive matches so far in their season.

Despite losing to Bournside (17-12) and Marling (17-10) they have shown a good determination and fighting spirit. As they have played more matches so they are beginning to play a better, more open, style of rugby and are showing promise for the future. With many difficult games to come they will need to continue to work hard to gain their victories as shown in their 22-12 defeat of Bristol Grammar School.

I J Gallagher

House Competitions

Southgate won their **Junior House Rugby** events in each of Years 8, 9 and 10 and so were overall victors from N. E. W. The **Senior House Rugby** 10s competition was won by Eastgate from W. N and S. Northgate won the **Junior House Swimming** event early this term: school records were broken in the Year 10 breaststroke x 4 and the butterfly x 2 (both by Rob Payne) and the Year 10 medley relay (by Westgate's team).

I L Kellie

PA/OR Association

Swimming Session

The PA, in conjunction with the Old Richlans' Association, run a swimming session in the school pool for current parents and members of the Old Richlans on a Friday evening from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. They are seeking the support of a lifeguard for the session and currently pay £12 to the lifeguard.

If you feel you could help could you please let the Bursar (01452 338432) have your details to pass on to the PA.

e-mail: admin@strs.org.uk

Lower Sixth Art Trip

London

On January 10th, the AS Level Art groups travelled to London, to visit the 'South Kensington' group of museums, namely the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum and the V & A.

The purpose of the visit was to enable the students to gather information in the form of first-hand studies and critical studies for their second coursework unit, based on the theme of 'Close-ups'.

Some of the students had chosen to look at man-made objects, and so they headed off to the Science Museum to capture close-up detailed images of machinery, technology or crystal structures. Others had selected natural forms as the focus of their study and so went off to the Natural History Museum. Here they found plentiful examples of animal exhibits, although there was a surprising lack of plants and flowers on show. Luckily, the Victoria and Albert Museum contained a range of cultural artefacts from around the globe, many of which were

decorated with floral or plant-based decorations. As a result, everyone was able to find something of use for their study, with the bonus of a chance to look around each of the museum shops.

All three museums have extensive and informative websites, which allowed the visit to be planned beforehand and this went some way to preventing the students having to wander through large sections of the museums searching for relevant examples.

Once again, therefore, the capital provided the Art Department with a good day out, this time away from the familiar art galleries and to top it off, the journeys in and out were free from the usual traffic jams. Another successful venture completed.

R J Lockey



SPRING TERM 2005

Mon 14 – Fri 18 February
Mon 21 – Fri 25 February
Tues 22 February
Mon 28 February
Tues 1 March
Tues 1 March
Mon 7 March
Wed 9 March
Mon 14 – Fri 18 March

Sat 19 March
Wed 23 March

Thurs 24 March
Fri 25 March – Fri 8 April

Mon 11 April
Mon 11 – Fri 15 April
Tues 12 April
Mon 18 April
Mon 18 April
Mon 2 May
Tues 3 – Fri 6 May
Mon 16 May – Fri 10 June
Sat 21 May

Mon 30 May – Fri 3 June
Mon 23 May – Mon 27 June
Sat 16 June
Mon 13 June – Fri 1 July
Wed 15 June
Thurs 23 – Weds 29 June
Thurs 30 June
Sat 2 July
Mon 4 to Fri 8 July
Thurs 7 July
Sat 16 July
Fri 22 July

Half-Term Holiday
Trial A2 examinations (Upper Sixth)
PA - Meeting 7:00 pm.
STAFF TRAINING DAY (non-attendance for pupils)
Year 9 Parents' Consultation Evening, 6:00-9:00 pm.
PA - Last date for Seed orders
Year 7 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5:00-8:00 pm.
Nearly New Uniform, 6:30 – 8.00 pm.
Founder's Week
(fund raising for PMM School, Uganda)
PA - Car Boot Sale, 2:00 pm.
Lower Sixth Parents' Consultation Evening,
5:00-8:00 pm.
Term ends, 12:45 pm.
Easter Holidays

Start of term, 8:40 am.
Trial AS examinations (Lower Sixth)
Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5:00-8:00 pm.
Lower Sixth & Parents, H.E. evening, 7:30 pm.
Nearly New Uniform Sale, 6:30-7:30 pm.
Bank Holiday
SATs examinations (Year 9)
'AS' examinations (Lower Sixth)
PA - Car Boot Sale, 2:00 pm.
Half-Term Holiday
GCSE examinations (Year 11)
PA - Derby Night
'A2' examinations (Upper Sixth)
Sports Evening, 6:30 pm.
School examinations (Years 7-10)
STAFF TRAINING DAY (non-attendance for pupils)
Nearly New Uniform Sale, 10:00-noon
Sixth Form Induction Week
'New Year 7' Induction Day
PA - Car Boot Sale, 2:00 pm
Term ends, 12:45 pm.

SUMMER TERM 2005