



Sir Thomas Rich's Newsletter

ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2011

Australia 2011

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WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome several new colleagues this year. Joining our teaching staff are Ms Clune (part-time Music), Mr Stewart (Maths) and Miss Stroud (Biology). Ms Nash and Mr O'Neil will be covering lessons for absent teachers. Joining our support staff are Mrs. Sargeant (Librarian) and Mrs. Stock (Finance Assistant).

Our Year 7 comprises 112 boys who join us from 56 primary schools. In Year 12 we have a record number of 169 students, of whom 73 have joined us from 26 other secondary schools, including 51 girls. It is good to be popular and we welcome all those who have joined us. Our total number of students on roll is 867 (compared to 816 in September 2010).

We wish all our new staff and students an enjoyable and rewarding time at Rich's.

SPEECH DAY

Our annual Prize Giving and Speech Day will be held on Friday 23rd September in the School Hall at 7.30 p.m.. This is a highlight of the school year when we recognise the achievements and successes of many of our students. Prizes are awarded for academic success as well as achievements in sport, music, drama and contributions to school life over the past year. We shall be proud to welcome Professor Sir John Holman as our Guest of Honour: he was Headmaster of Watford Grammar School for Boys, then Professor of Chemical Education at the University of York, where he founded the National Science Learning Centre. In 2006 he became the government's first national director of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. In summary he has been instrumental in leading the development of scientists and engineers in the U.K..

All parents are warmly invited to join us for our evening's celebration: please ask your son or daughter to collect tickets (there is no charge) from Reception.

END OF TERM

We were delighted to welcome Kevin O'Brien from Gloucestershire County Cricket Club to our final assembly in July. Kevin made history in March this year when he scored the fastest century in World Cup history, helping Ireland to defeat England in the process. Kevin presented Colours, cups and certificates. His final presentation was our Cock House Trophy, won by Southgate who ended a run of four successive Westgate victories.



Kevin O'Brien presenting the Cock House Trophy to Southgate's Haseeb Khawar.



OBSERVERS

Congratulations to the following members of Year 13 who have been appointed to senior leadership roles. Our School Captains are Haseeb Khawar and Catherine Mace, we wish them well during the year ahead.



The post of Observer derives from the School's early years when a senior pupil assisted the Master in teaching the 20 poor boys. Our Observers this year are Scott Anderson, Michelle Locker, Luke Andrew, Thomas Goodman, Laura Meadows, Megan Trethewey, Joseph Langley and Nia Westlake.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

We were delighted to see our students achieve excellent examination results again. Well done to the students and their teachers.

A-Level

We recorded our best ever results, with our highest percentage of top grades and the highest ever average points score. 92% of results were at grade C and above, 46% at grades A and A*. The average points score per student was 442.5 (based on A*=140, A=120, B=100, etc.) We were pleased to see a significant increase in our A* grades, which were introduced last year: the proportion awarded nationally remained constant at 8% but we saw an increase from 11% to 15%.

Four fifths of our students each gained at least one A/A* grade, more than half gained two or more A/A* grades, thirteen students each gained four or more A/A* grades.

AS

The pass rate was 97%. There is no A* grade at AS-level. 80% of our grades were C and above, 57% were grades A/ B, 30% were grade A. 68% of students achieved at least one grade A each, 40% achieved two or more A grades, sixteen students each gained four or five A grades.

GCSE

We had another record-breaking year at GCSE. Every Year 11 boy achieved at least seven passes at grade C+ including English and maths. The average number of passes at grade C and above per pupil was 10.6. 64% of all entries gained grades A and A*. Eighty students each gained five or more passes at grades A and A*, thirty six each gained ten or more passes all at grades A and A*. The average points score (based on A*=58, A=52, B=46, etc.) was 530, which is equivalent to over ten grade As or nine grade A*s per student.



SIR THOMAS RICH'S PA

Quiz & Pudding Night

School Hall
Friday 11th November 2011
7pm – 10pm

The Quiz & Pudding Night is back by popular demand. It's the PA's first fundraising event of the new academic year and we want it to be a humdinger!

We hope you will support us by coming along. We can put you into a team when you arrive but ideally, why not get a few friends together and come as a ready formed team (teams will be a maximum of 6 people). Suitable for pupils to enter too.

There will be a bar and you are free to bring any nibbles / food you wish. Then of course there will be a large selection of puddings which will be served part way through the evening courtesy of the PA. As well as the main quiz expect a few extra games with spot prizes – it all makes for a good fun evening.

Tickets for the evening need to be purchased in advance and by Tuesday 1st November at the latest. Please don't leave it until the last minute, act now get the date into your diary, ring your friends and buy your tickets ASAP!

Tickets are available from the school reception and cost £5 per person. This includes quiz entry and the delicious puddings.



STRS PA Quiz & Pudding Night

I would like Tickets at £5 each (Quiz entry and pudding) and enclose the total of £.....
(Cheques made payable to STRS PA).

Your Name:

Son / Daughter's name Form

Contact details (email or telephone number)
.....

Wall of Richians



The first phase of the Wall of Richians is now in place so please go and view it when you're next at STRS. It's in the passage way by the 'cogs.'

For those parents new to the school, the aim of the Wall of Richians is to create a permanent reminder of your time at STRS and form part of the future history of our wonderful school. The Wall of Richians was an element of the Parents' Association Dining Room fundraising initiative and is something we hope to build on by re-launching the scheme at some point in the future. So if you missed the chance to buy a brick don't worry you may well get another chance soon.

Thank you to all the parents who contributed this time around by buying a brick – we hope you like the results.

Katie Panton
Chair

Uniform Shop open

Wednesday 21st September 3.00-4.00pm

Wednesday 5th October 3.00-4.00pm

Wednesday 19th October 3.00-4.00pm

Payment to be made by cash or cheques (payable to STRS PA)

If you have an urgent requirement please contact Lindy or Karen at uniform.strs@virginmedia.com



Sun, Sea and Ash

Hi my name is Beth and from Wednesday 20th July to Sunday 24th, 27 boys from year 10, 2 other boys in the same year as me (Year 12), Miss Francey, Mr Gowler and Mr Pack set out on an expedition. We were scheduled to leave at 6.30 am for Heathrow airport, flight F10451, destination 65 degrees north. We were heading to Iceland's far south west, landing at its largest airport Keflavik. This is my story of a school trip I'll always remember.

There always has to be one who forgets their passport, delaying us by an hour, luckily time had been allowed for any such hiccups to occur. When we finally made it onto our Icelandic plane, with plenty of legroom and a personal screen to watch a film, learn a bit about Iceland or monitor the flight's progress.

Our first stop after the airport was the bridge between two continents, one minute you would be on the European plate and the next on the American plate.

Stepping onto ash for the first time, we were surrounded by nothing but open desert, solidified lava as far as the eye could see. After that short stop it was onto smelly sulphur mud pools, where we walked along wood decking above 100 degrees Celsius hot pools. Smelling nicely of sulphur we soon got on the coach again to the blue lagoon where in the pool it was 40 degrees of bright blue water. The salt made my skin feel good, however ruined my hair. I lost count of the amount of times I had to condition it to even just be able to run a brush through it! It took many days to recover.

Back at Hotel Ork, we sat down for a 3 course meal, still in daylight. The darkest I experienced over there was about dusk level. However in the winter they say that they only have daylight from about 10am till 3pm.



Day 2

Everyone was up nice and early. Today we were picked up by our 4-by-4 coach and our tour guide Gunna, who over the days taught us so much about Iceland, I feel like I could now go on master-mind and make it my specialist subject.

We set off and Gunna took us to Kerid, which is a crater lake. We walked right down into the crater where music artists have played on a pontoon, on the lake before.

A Salmon ladder waterfall, was the first of many we visited, however, in comparison to the next waterfall it was rather small. Gulfoss waterfall is one of the largest in Iceland, and I had my picture taken at the 3rd most photographed point in Iceland. We got right up close to the waterfall, on the rock edge; you could really feel the power of the water rushing down.

Next we visited the spectacular geysers. One, Strokkur, was particularly active, erupting every 7 minutes, spurting hot boiling water meters high into the air.

Thingvellir national park was originally where Iceland's parliament used to stand. Iceland was the first ever nation to have a parliament. Again there was beautiful scenery all around. We then drove around, up and down valleys to the Geocentre. This is where we watched a presentation about geothermal energy of Iceland. The Hellisheidi PowerStation (run by 17 people) provides Iceland's population of 320,000 (75% live in Iceland's capital Reykjavík) with power from the plant.

Then back at the hotel, where we enjoyed an evening swim, jumping in the pool and going up and down the slide.



Day 3

Today we were beginning to need more sleep as we had done so much, everyone was tired. However, Mr Gowler woke us all up an hour early as his phone changed back to English time. This was not the best part of the trip! We then really experienced why we needed the 4 wheel drive coach. As we drove up through a rift valley, over the river, bouncing up and down, I even banged my head on the window a few times. We drove for 2-3 hours until we stopped. We got off the coach and the mountains around were massive, the view was just amazing.

Then Gunna told us that we were crossing over a bridge to get to the other side of the river as it was too wide and quick for the coach to cross, walking up to a camp, to then walk up a mountain. The mountain was called Valahnjukir. It was a long way up, and I think I kept up with the boy's pretty well, not the last to the top! The view from the top was something else, we could see the volcano that had erupted last year, and the rest of the scenery for miles around.

After walking down the mountain, we stopped briefly for lunch, before walking up the gorge Stakkholtsgja. More walking! It was definitely well worth the purchase of my walking shoes for the terrain of Iceland.

We saw plenty of Icelandic ponies in the fields as we drove. Next was our chance to ride them. They were at about eye height, well in my case I still looked up to them slightly.

We went fast enough for me on the ponies. Apparently Icelandic ponies have 5 gears, another speed between trot and canter. I really enjoyed riding the ponies and would like to do so again.

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Day 4

Seeing rainbows from behind a waterfall is a picture, hoping to find a pot of gold. Selyandsfoss waterfall is one you can walk behind and get slightly wet spray from the water. It was a really bright sunny day, which made the waterfall look really impressive and pretty. Another wetter and even more impressive waterfall was Skogafoss which is guarded by a mountain troll. Icelandic people have lots of stories about trolls living in the mountains. All the children believe that the hay bales rolled up are marsh mallows left out for the trolls which come and eat them in the night.

We were told to walk and be young budding John Waynes as we attached crampons to our walking shoes, picking up an ice pick that would aid our glacial walk. The glacier was almost all black, covered in ash remaining from the volcano that erupted last year. This walk was really exciting; it was such a weird feeling to be walking on ice. The men leading the walk taught us about how the glacier was retreating, what it was like and how it is changing. This was also an ideal opportunity for us year 12 geographers to get up close to a glacier and see the landforms there, ready for studying glaciation in year 13.

From Ice we then went onto looking at rock, the basalt rocks on the coast of Iceland, at the southern-west most point. Although this was no time to get in the sea, as the current is so strong we would have been swept out, it was still good to see the shape of the rock. A bit further around the coast was Dyrhölney an arc formation, which was formed due to weathering.



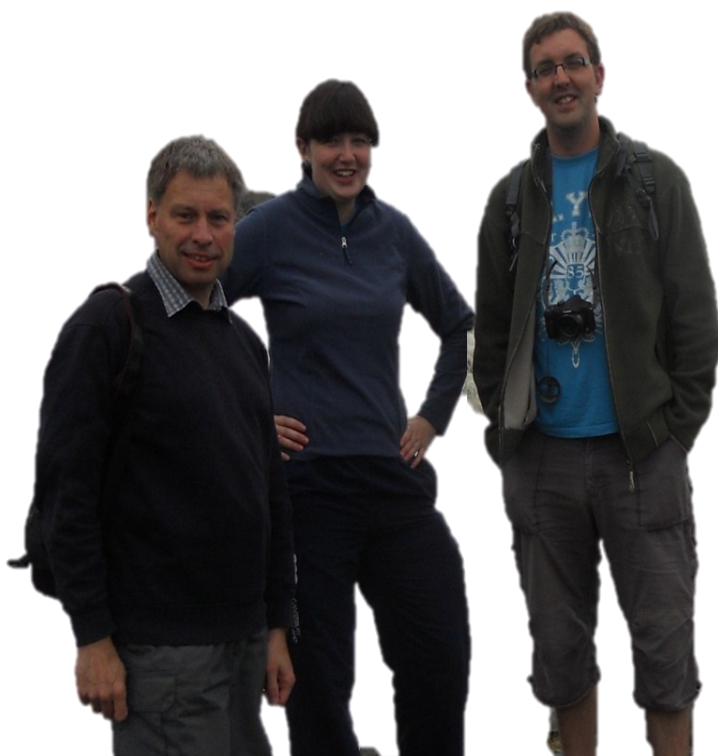


Day 5

Time to go home, I really enjoyed my trip to Iceland and I would recommend that it is a country to be visited and it should be done properly, planned and jammed packed with places to see and things to do, just like this trip. Our guide Gunna was amazing and the bus driver was certainly a good driver with Discover the World.

Thank you to the teachers who took us, and organised the trip and I really do suggest taking the opportunity next year if it is offered. Then maybe you'll also be able to bring back your own sample of ash.

Bethanie Hamblett 12H



Design & Technology: Rocket Launch

It never fails to amaze me in my limited experience of this whole world of model rocketry how, when ringing up a member of the civil aviation authority to explain that we plan to launch a rocket up to 350m and may need a NOTAM etc that I am treated as if I am perfectly sane and this is a normal activity. So it was for our two year 10 – sorry now year 11 - students' organisation for their rocket launch at the science club last Thursday 1st September.

Lewis Downward and George Hopes gave a good presentation to the Science school with their two rockets and B & C 'motors' otherwise known as dynamite. The final launch of the smaller rocket with the more powerful C grade motor met expectations of the 350m height. It was finally recovered on the road beyond the Veale block. Lewis and George plan to now look at designing their own rockets and go for even greater heights with possible payloads and cameras on board.

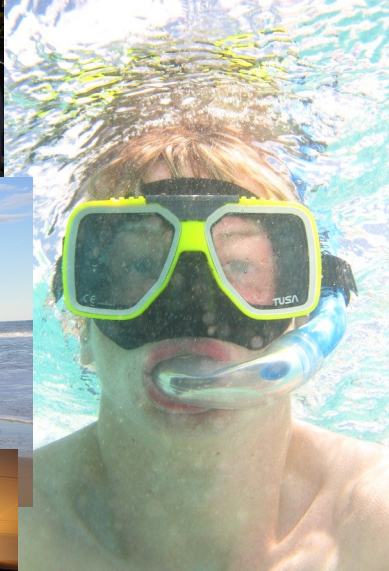
The Design & Technology department will be starting up the Technology Club shortly and hopes to acquire two redundant but workable shop mobility cars for cannibalisation for potential projects. Notices will go out to invite members.

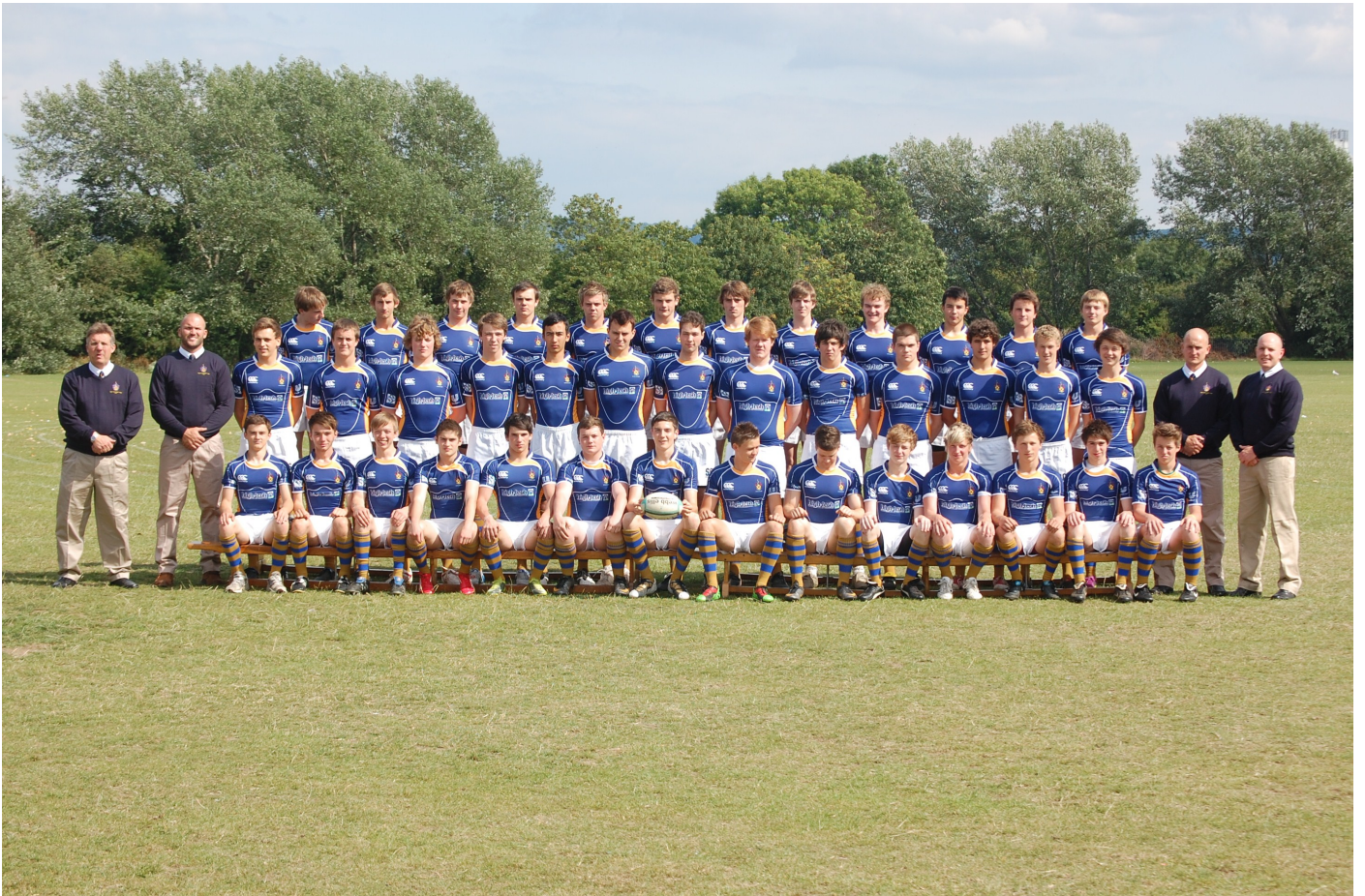
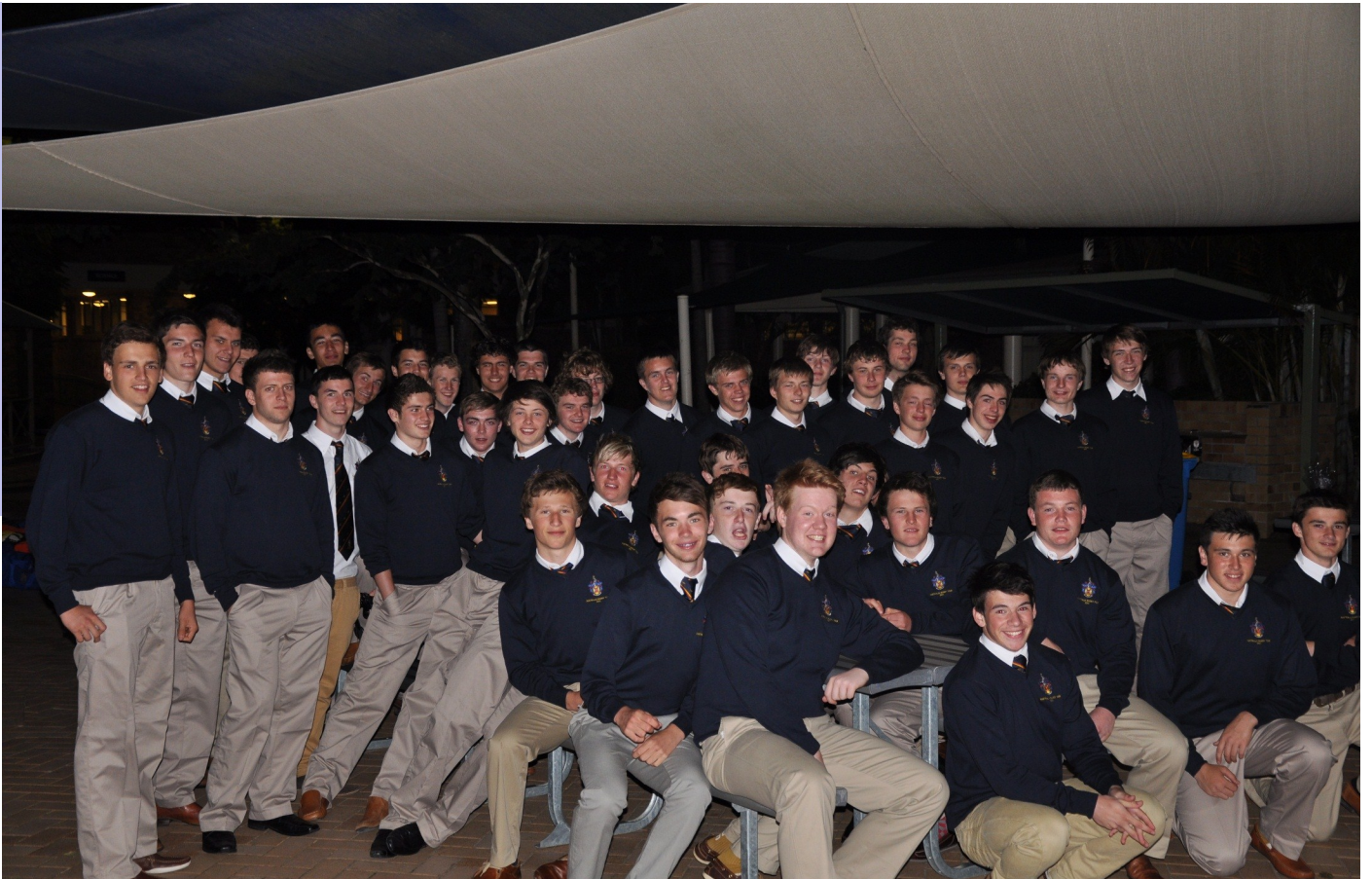


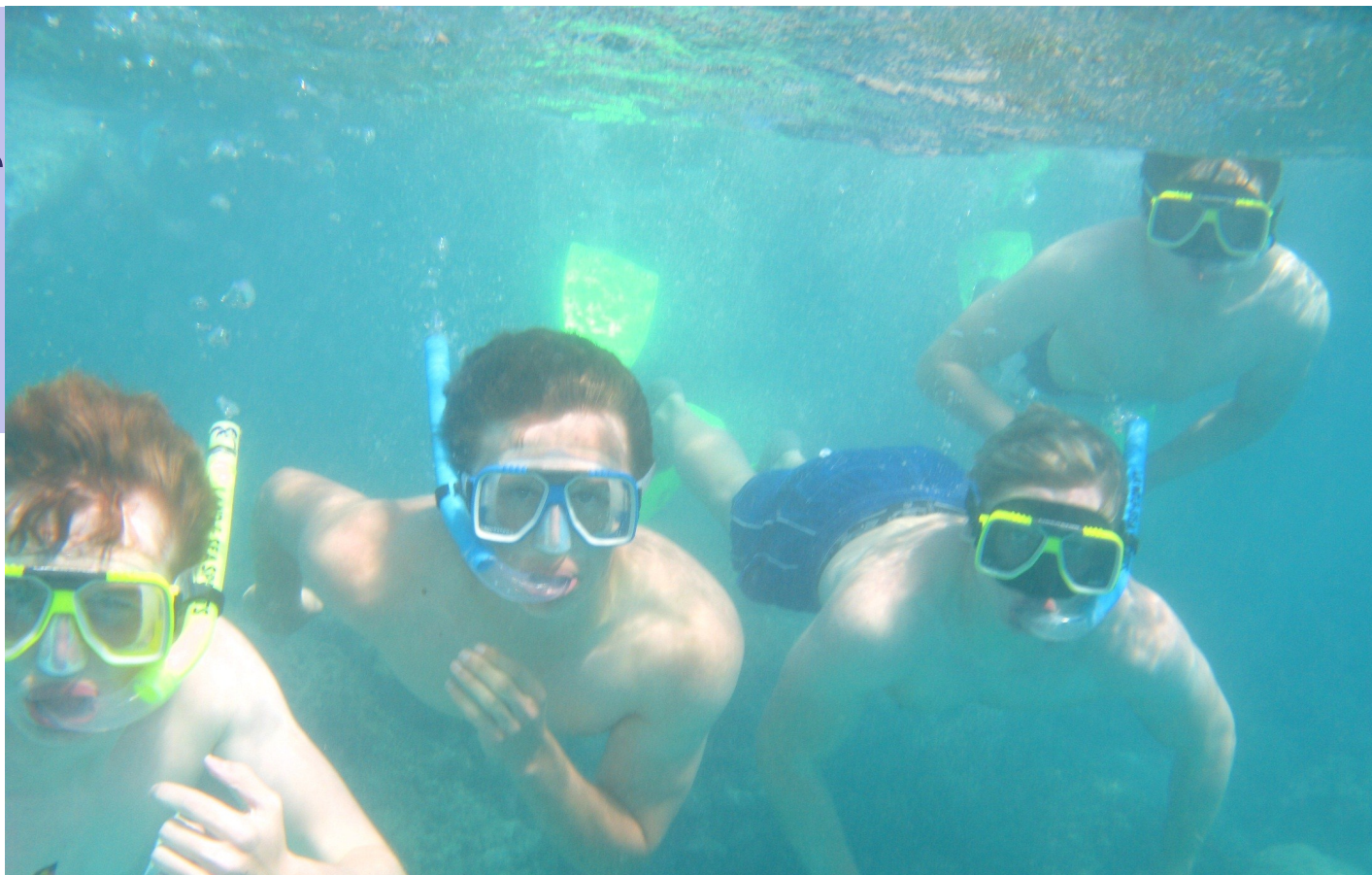
Sir Thomas Rich's School's third rugby tour of Australia set off in the very early hours of Saturday 16th July 2011. After a coach journey to Heathrow, a long wait in the airport, three flights – one to Dubai, one to Brunei and finally one to Brisbane, we eventually arrived at The Sports Super Centre on the Gold Coast. The Sports Super Centre is a fantastic facility, where we have stayed before on previous tours. There is a 50m outdoor swimming pool, indoor swimming pool, tartan running track, rubber crumb pitch, open-air weights room and volleyball courts. We arrived at the SSC at around 11 o'clock at night after travelling for over 30 hours, the perfect opportunity for the boys to head to the running track to enjoy their first training session on tour! The following day was spent at the SSC training; running through attacking patterns, defensive organisation, clearance plays and set-piece organisation and structure. The countless hours of training before we left for Australia coupled with the final preparations at the SSC paid off because the next day, Tuesday 19th July STRS 1st XV defeated Emmanuel College 35 -0 and STRS 2nd XV also defeated Emmanuel college 32- 7. Emmanuel College is an Independent Co-educational School on the Gold Coast with 1000 pupils. However, they were quickly forced onto the back foot in the 1st XV game by storming runs and intense physicality from players like Jamie Dingle, Callum Wyman, Bryn Cresswell, Matt Hughes and Charlie Isaac. These players, along with the rest of the forwards provided a platform for Charlie Scott, Oliver Young, Matt Jones, Oliver Booth and Peter Reed to score some very well worked tries. Captain Scott Anderson and Oliver Young kicked a penalty and a conversion each. In the 2nd XV game, Rich's played with tremendous spirit and courage to record a superb victory, 36-7. Tries were scored by Sammy Lee Baker x2, Luke Andrew, Declan Barnes, Tom Walsh and Mike Horwood; Will Pritchett kicked three conversions.

After a rest day at the theme park 'Dream World' we travelled into Brisbane in order to meet our hosts for the next two nights and opponents for the next game, Padua College. Padua College has a very good reputation for rugby in Brisbane; the 1st XV had just won the AIC Brisbane competition, just below the GPS structure, which probably ranked them in the top 10 schools in Queensland. The College has an impressive seated banking overlooking their 1st XV pitch with the College buildings to the side, which makes the ground appear to be in the middle of an amphitheatre. Added to this environment, the entire College missed lessons for the day in order to watch the games. The 2nd XV game was on first and the Tommies boys ran out in front of a big crowd of close to a thousand spectators. They did not disappoint, in fact, the Tommies 2nd XV were magnificent. They pressured the opponents at every opportunity forcing them into mistakes; they retained the ball well and tackled as if their lives depended on it. In a superbly brave and courageous performance, they defeated Padua College 26 – 5, with tries from Gareth Davies, Jake Fox and Tom Walsh; Will Pritchett kicked a conversion and a penalty and Luke Tonks kicked two drop goals. It was hoped that the 1st XV would be inspired by the 2nd XV's display but unfortunately against a very big powerful Padua College 1st XV they were overawed. Padua College were a very good side, they were not AIC Champions for nothing but the Tommies 1st XV allowed them too much space, they fell off tackles and did not create enough in attack. The major positive that emerged from the game was the scramble defence that prevented Padua from capitalising on their dominance. As a result, when Tom Miles scored for Tommies late in the game, the score was only 17-5. However, that was how the game ended and to add to the disappointment Tom Goodman suffered a nasty cut, which meant he would miss the next two games and Matt Hughes after two very good performances, dislocated his shoulder and was out for the rest of the tour.











The following day was spent training at Padua College, with the 2nd XV gently recovering from the previous day's exertions and the 1st XV working hard to put things right. That evening we were invited to the Padua College Annual Rugby Dinner held at Ballymore Stadium (the old Queensland Reds Stadium, which had previously hosted Wallaby international matches in years gone by). Our hosts looked after us very well and I am sure that Tommies can make Padua College feel just as welcome when they tour the UK and visit Gloucester in April next year!

We left Brisbane a little battered and bruised, and travelled six hours by coach across the Australian countryside to Armidale. The Armidale School our next opponents are a very prestigious Independent School; the school buildings look like a replica of Cheltenham or Marlborough College, which almost seems a little out of place in the middle of the Australian countryside! TAS is a New South Wales GPS school, which means they play in the top tier NSW Championship against all the best Sydney Schools. We trained at the School when we arrived and ate dinner in the school's dining hall with all

the boarders. For the next two nights, we bedded down in rooms above the School gymnasium – which was an experience! The games against the Armidale School were very tough, the 2nd XV could not muster the same aggression and commitment they showed against Padua and unfortunately lost 45-0. In front of a big crowd again, the 1st XV ran out, knowing they needed to put in a better performance than they did in their last outing. They started the game brightly, putting together some good pieces of play. Unfortunately, TAS's superior power, aggression and physicality began to tell as the game went on. Scott Anderson suffered a very nasty head injury and a number of players were struggling with the ferocity of the contact area. To give the 1st XV credit they retained possession well and in attack they looked dangerous. Tom Miles scored a well worked try and Oliver Young kicked a penalty and a conversion. However, TAS ran out as winners 39-10.



After leaving Armidale, we travelled through the beautiful countryside of the Dorrigo National Park towards Coffs Harbour. We trained at our hosts and next opponents; Bishop Druitt School, in the afternoon and the boys met their billets and disappeared for the evening. The following day, Tuesday 26th July, the 2nd XV kicked off the day of fixtures with a very good win, defeating Druitt 41-0. The tries were scored by Will Pritchett x2, Oliver Plunkett, Jake Fox, Matt Hawkins, Ed Quinn-Savory and Jack Minns; Will Pritchett kicked three conversions. The 1st XV also recorded a comfortable victory, 50-3, with Oliver Young in particular, completely dominant. The tries came from Oliver Young x3, Oliver Booth x2, Matt Jones, Peter Reed and Tom Miles, with Oliver Young kicking five conversions. The final games of the tour took place in Sydney; we travelled down from Coffs Harbour by bus, stopping briefly in Port Macquarie. Our final opponents were St Joseph's College (or St Joey's as they are commonly known). Joey's regularly field twelve senior rugby teams, six under 16 teams, six under 15 teams, not to mention the staggering number of teams below that every Saturday. It is the former School of Wallabies such as Kurtley Beale, Luke Burgees and Matt Burke, so it was always going to be a tough test. Due to the Joey's 1st XV having an important GPS game on the Saturday, Tommies 1st XV played a combination of their 2nds and 3rds. It was an excellent game of rugby with both sides attacking at pace. Jamie Dingle was particularly impressive and with minutes remaining Tommies were 22-17 down, but were camped in the Joey's 22. Luke Andrew nearly scored to win the game but unfortunately, the score remained the same as the final whistle blew. The 2nd XV play Joey's 6th XV and in parts put some good rugby together. In attack, they looked good. However, their defence was an issue; they leaked too many tries and eventually lost the game 31-10. Gareth Davies scored Tommies only try, Will Pritchett kicked a conversion and Luke Tonks scored a drop goal. After the fixtures were completed, the boys had chance to sample the sights and sounds of Sydney. Our accommodation on the Rocks gave us the perfect view of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House. The boys went Jet Boating around the Harbour, a few actually climbed the Harbour Bridge, and some climbed the Sydney Sky Tower and went to watch the Sydney Roosters play rugby league in the NRL. The final leg of the tour was a flight to Cairns where we visited the Kuranda Rainforest, went to a wildlife sanctuary and snorkelled on the Great Barrier Reef!

I would just like to take this opportunity to thank the boys who worked so hard on tour and played some excellent rugby. There were a number of boys who really developed over the course of the three week tour and I am looking forward to watching them play this season. I am sure they gained a great deal from the tour not only

in their rugby but also in terms of cultural and social development. They were a credit to the school and were good company on such a long trip. A special thank you must go to Mr Carter for all his efforts with the enormous amount of fundraising before the tour began. I would also like to thank Mr Carter, Mr Davies and Mr Powell for all their efforts in Australia.

On the final night of the tour, before the arduous journey home, we held a final awards dinner in the Cairns Colonial Club. The award winners are below:

1st XV

Player of the Tour – **Oliver Young**

Players' Player of the Tour – **Jamie Dingle**

Most Promising Player of the Tour – **Oliver Booth**

Most Improved Player of the Tour – **Sammy Lee Baker**

Top Tourist – **Matt Hughes**

2nd XV

Player of the Tour – **Luke Tonks**

Players' Player of the Tour – **Gareth Davies**

Most Promising Player of the Tour – **Will Pritchett**

Most Improved Player of the Tour – **Douglas Bruce**

Top Tourist – **Pete Haynes**

Final Statistics

1st XV

**PLAYED 5, WON 2, LOST 3,
POINTS FOR 117.**

POINTS AGAINST 81.

TOP TRY SCORER

O. YOUNG – (5 TRIES)

= O. BOOTH – (3 TRIES)

T. MILES – (3 TRIES)

TOP POINTS SCORER

O. YOUNG – (52 POINTS)

= O. BOOTH – (15 POINTS)

T. MILES – (15 POINTS)

2nd XV

PLAYED 5, WON 3, LOST 2.

POINTS FOR 113

POINTS AGAINST 88.

TOP TRY SCORERS

= W. PRITCHETT, S. BAKER, T. WALSH, J. FOX,

G. DAVIES – (2 TRIES)

TOP POINTS SCORER

W. PRITCHETT – (29 POINTS)

R Williams





2011 STRS Trip to China

The STRS school trip to China took place between the 21st and 30th of July this Summer, and visited the three cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Suzhou.

The group was 11 students and 2 teachers strong, which gave us the luxury of all being able to cram into one hotel room for evening discussions.

At the risk of reeling off the trip's itinerary, it is worth highlighting the variation that the trip displayed over the course of nine days. Most strikingly we went from the commercialism of the Forbidden City, Summer Palace and Temple of Heaven in Beijing, to the rather noticeable poverty in the traditional town of Tongli in Suzhou, described as China's "Little Venice". Some of the other recognisable landmarks visited include the Great Wall of China, which, on a hot and humid day, led to a rather exhausting climb, compounded by the fact that scammers liked to set up on each gatehouse, selling rip off water. Others included Tianenmen Square itself, while an obligatory acrobatics show was also part of our itinerary on our 3 day stay in Beijing. They managed to fit 5 motorcyclists driving around in a metal sphere. We were taken to the Olympic stadium in intense Beijing smog, and the pictures I have of it show the two main buildings nearly unnoticeable amidst the greyness of the surroundings.

On the less conventional side, the trip involved a visit to Suzhou Foreign Language School, and an individual evening's stay in the home of a Chinese family (though a rather wealthy one at that, for Suzhou Foreign Language School is private), which involved varying activities such as being shown gigantic shopping districts and cinemas, or being taken to a traditional garden, of which there were many, to appreciate traditional Chinese culture.

Of the three cities visited, Suzhou, which is located close to Shanghai, had the greatest amount to offer personally, and our stay with the Suzhou Foreign Language School had us eating their school meals and teaching lessons to Chinese students as well as going to a ridiculously cheap pearl market and looking at a leaning tower. A Mandarin lesson was also provided, followed by a calligraphy lesson with a teacher who couldn't speak any English whatsoever. On the last day of our stay with them we did in fact have to put on a performance, which ended up being an abridged history of the school's founding, and the solemn rendition of the Tommies Psalm, rather oddly ended with people clapping along to our singing.

Notable cultural differences in China included the unstoppable urge of Chinese people to take pictures of us, and the ability to haggle on goods, which lead to us being able to buy genuine pearl necklaces for the equivalent of two pounds.

The language barrier was a problem at times, but general courtesy could help to forge understanding, and the tiny repertoire of words taught to us over the trip allowed a basic grasp of what was going on.

Our day in Shanghai involved a variety of visits to gardens, old markets and a cruise down the river, as well as a rushed visit to a city planning exhibition before a drive down winding motorways to Suzou. We had plenty of time to roam free, and after a compulsory visit to a Silk Factory had the change to buy a genuine jewelled sword and a watch that featured Chairman Mao waving as the hands ticked.

The food on the trip was rather variable, and while the Restaurants and other eateries that we attended "on the go" were an excellent example of normal Chinese cuisine – excepting the fact that some of the less appetising dishes to the European palette were skipped or altered. Worthy of note is the home business fast food restaurant in Tongli where the owner was making an equivalent to a high street fast food store from scratch on his own, and the Suzhou Foreign Language School where the rice was served in cubes accompanied by unidentifiable meats and vegetables. A trip down to the local shopping centre for a snack led to the best English speaker being pushed forward to serve us all at each restaurant we went to, and the phrase "no, mei you," which was the cashier's attempt to say "no, we don't have that". This was interpreted as "No Mayo," to some confusion, considering the venue was KFC.

China was a slightly hectic, but thoroughly enjoyable experience, and the appearance of a severe thunderstorm and a severe gale within a couple of days was near irrelevant compared to the amount of enjoyment derived from merely being in such an exciting and different nation. Signs with funny English dominate my photos taken, and various souvenirs including jade, pearls and an ocarina filled my luggage on the way home. The internet in China was censored, removing Facebook and YouTube from our reach. The only TV available was typically China's state TV, Asian Music channels and a poorly made Chinese drama glorifying Communism.

We met a whole host of friendly people in China, ranging from Lulu and Suzie, our guides in Beijing and Shanghai respectively, to our home stay partners and all the kind staff at Suzhou Foreign Language School. The experience was unforgettable, and the ability to see all aspects of contemporary Chinese culture and walk amongst a variety of Chinese settings to absorb the foreign yet easily comparable country was invaluable. The China trip is undoubtedly one of the most amazing foreign trips offered by the school and is one that I will cherish for a long time to come.

Oliver Mountjoy 13H

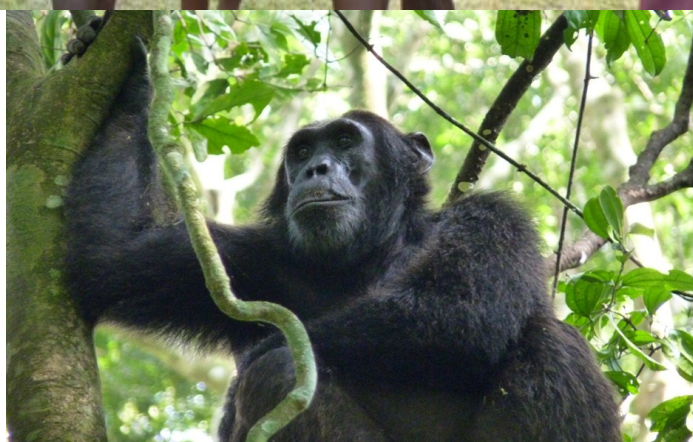


At the end of the summer term, I visited our link school, PMM School, in Uganda. I had a busy week at the school: teaching lessons on Shakespearean sonnets to PMM'S A-level English students under the shade of a mango tree, with chickens pecking at my feet; watching a fantastic display of African dancing as part of PMM's House competitions; getting involved in lower school debates; visiting the homes of our sponsored students; and seeing the sights of Jinja.

Uganda is a fascinating country and, despite the poverty, home to some of the most welcoming and generous people you can imagine. When I visited the homes of the sponsored students, they were keen to offer me a drink and welcome me into their homes. Teachers at the school went out of their way to invite me to their house for dinner and even put on a special African night on the last night.

I was very impressed with the attitude of the students at PMM. Many of the sponsored children live in abject poverty. Often the children have no bed or mattress of their own at home and revel in relative luxury of the dormitories at PMM, where over a hundred girls sleep in one room on triple bunk beds. Secondary schooling in Uganda just for one child costs about one sixth of a teacher's annual salary and so for subsistence farmers is completely unaffordable. The girls, however, are grateful for the opportunities given them by STRS' kind sponsorship. Many of the sponsored girls want to be doctors, lawyers, accountants and teachers. They all talked about wanting to put something back into their communities.

It was amazing to see some of the sights of this country: the sprawl of Kampala with its tiny roadside stalls, selling everything from goats to sofas; the men trying to cycle with half a banana tree on their push-bikes; the women in their brightly coloured costumes carrying milk in cans on their heads; the babies strapped to women's backs with their tiny feet poking out; the might of the Nile at Murchison Falls; and the fantastic wildlife, from human



sized Malibu storks to lions ripping apart an antelope. I am planning to run a school trip to Uganda at the end of this academic year, as I believe it would be worthwhile to offer our students the opportunity to experience the sights of Uganda for themselves. Ask your child to look out for notices in their tutor groups, if they are interested in going.

C Palk

Gloucestershire County Tennis Tournament



Four of our students competed in the tournament and they are to be congratulated for their success.
 Matthew Bennion – Losing U16 singles finalist, but won the doubles competition.

SamTullett – Won the U14 singles tournament and was runner up with his partner, Chris Bell, in the doubles

Joel Price – Lost the final of the U12 tournament but won the doubles competition.

Best wishes to Matthew Bennion, Sam Tullett, Chris Bell, Dominic James and Jay Singhera as they embark on the knockout stages of the Aegon Cup with an away match v Hereford Cathedral School. The date is yet to be decided.

"The Armed Man, must be feared; Everywhere it has been decreed that every man should arm himself With an Iron coat of mail."

Anon, c1450-1463

"Ring out the thousand wars of old. Ring in the thousand years of peace."

Alfred Lord Tennyson 1850



GCS
Sing Saturdays

Karl Jenkins'

The Armed Man: A Mass For Peace

Saturday 1st October 2011

10:00am - 12:15pm (doors open 9:30am)

The School Hall, Sir Thomas Rich's School,
Oakleaze, Gloucester, GL2 0LF

Come and have some fun singing this popular, modern piece
under the expert guidance of Adrian Partington, Director of
Music at Gloucester Cathedral and Musical Director of GCS.
Music will be provided on the day as will refreshments.

Tickets

Students and under 25s: Free

Parents and teachers: £10

These will be allocated on a first come, first served basis so:

Sir Thomas Rich's students
please see Mr Passey

Other students and under 25s
please e-mail singsaturdays@gloucesterchoral.com

Parents and teachers
please visit www.gloucesterchoral.com/programme/sing-saturdays/
or telephone 01242 691190

Closing Date for applications is Friday 23rd September 2011

We look forward to seeing you!

Gloucester Choral Society is a registered charity: 900118. www.gloucesterchoral.com

GCS
GLoucester ChOral Society

SIR THOMAS RICH'S SPORTS CENTRE

Oakleaze, Longlevens, Gloucester GL2 0LF 01452 338439



GLOUCESTER RUGBY
 Land Rover Premiership Cup
 Sunday 02 October 2011
 Under 11's & under 12's
 At Sir Thomas Rich's School
 Contact Dave Barley for more info
 davebarley@gloucesterrugby.co.uk
 07545828080



OCTOBER HALF TERM ACTIVITIES 2011

COURSE	LEVEL	DATE	TIME	COST/CONTACT
Art Academy	4-12yrs	24-28 Oct	10.30-15.30	07505 243745 artacademyglos@yahoo.co.uk
Midland Soccer Coaching	4-13yrs	24 - 26 Oct	10.00-15.00	07962 382460
Rugby Skills	5-11yrs	27 & 28 Oct	10.00-15.00	01452 338439
Isporta	4-12yrs	24 - 28 Oct	08.30-16.30	07801801922 enquiries@isporta.co.uk



PARTY TIME !!!

Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre can offer a clean, safe and exciting experience of your choice from a pool party to a range of indoor sporting activities.
 Call Tony or Luke for further details on:
 01452 338439



Can you help us?

We are looking for parents who can help Sir Thomas Rich's School in any of the following ways:

- Year 11 Mock Interviews
- Work & Career related Presentations
- Work Experience Placements
- Work and Industry based visits
- Business and Enterprise Workshops events

If you feel you can help Sir Thomas Rich's in any of the above areas, please email us with your contact details and a brief outline of how you can assist us at pdl@strs.org.uk.

Many thanks

Peter Lloyd
 Head of Careers & Work Experience Co-ordinator

CALENDAR

2011

Friday 23 September
 Monday 26, Tuesday 27 September
 Tuesday 27 September
 Tuesday 11 October
 Monday 24 – Friday 28 October
 Monday 31 Oct – Friday 4 November
 Monday 21 November
Friday 2 December
 Friday 16 December

Speech Day, 7.30 p.m.
 Open Days
 Open Evening, 6.00 p.m.
 Informal Year 7 Parents' Evening, 7.00 p.m.
 Half-term holidays
 Year 12 examinations
 Year 12 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
INSET Day
 Term ends, 12.45 p.m.

2012

Tuesday 3 January
 Monday 9 – Friday 13 January
 Thursday 12 January
 Tuesday 17 January
 Thursday 26 January
 Tuesday 31 January
 Wednesday 8 February
Monday 13 – Friday 17 February
 Monday 20 – Friday 24 February
Monday 27 February
 Monday 5 March
 Monday 5 – Friday 9 March
 Monday 12 – Friday 16 March
 Wednesday 28 March
 Friday 30 March

Term starts, 8.40 a.m.
 Year 11 work experience
 Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
 Year 9 Parents, Options Evening, 7.00 p.m.
 Sixth Form Open Evening, 7.15 p.m.
 Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
 Year 9 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
Half-term holidays
 Year 10 examinations
INSET Day
 Year 7 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
 Founder's Week
 Trial AS exams (Year 12)
 Year 13 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
 Term ends, 12.45 p.m.

Monday 16 April
 Monday 16 – Friday 20 April
Monday 7 May
Monday 4 – Friday 8 June
 Tuesday 19 June
 Friday 22 – Thursday 28 June
Friday 29 June
 Monday 2 – Friday 6 July
 Thursday 5 July
 Thursday 19 July

Term starts, 8.40 a.m.
 Trial A2 exams (Year 13)
Bank holiday
Half-term holidays
 Year 10 Parents' Consultation Evening, 5.00 p.m.
 Years 7, 8, 9 end-of-Year examinations
INSET Day
 Sixth Form Induction Week
 Sports Evening, 6.30 p.m.
 Term ends, 12.45 p.m.

AS & A-Level results
 GCSE results

Thursday 16 August
 Thursday 23 August