



Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2023

Dear Parents,

We come to the end of another busy term and it has been lovely to welcome parents back into the building for the Guys and Dolls production, the Open Door sessions, lunchtime music concerts, the Nursery Parents Cup of Tea and the many sports fixtures.

**School Trips:** It has been wonderful to see several trips taking place this term with our Year 4 pupils enjoying a visit to Gloucester Cathedral, Year 5s going to the Commandery Museum in Worcester and the Nursery children visiting the local Primrose Vale Farm Shop to learn more about fruit and vegetables. Next term sees the return of our residential with both the Year 5 adventure trip to the PGL Centre in Liddington and the Year 6 trip to a chateau in France. These excursions return after their Covid hiatus and will be complemented by a number of other exciting day trips for other year groups.

**Year 6 Guys and Dolls production:** One of the highlights of the Spring Term is the Year 6 production and this year certainly did not disappoint. Our talented actors, dancers and singers performed to the School on Friday and Monday and then again on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for parents and visitors. It really was a fabulous, uplifting performance and each and every one of the 40 pupils on stage kept us entertained throughout the evening. Behind the scenes it was a tremendous team effort by our staff involved in music, choreography, costumes, technical, props and backdrop but I would like to thank Mr Chesworth, in particular, who directed the play brilliantly from start to finish. There are countless hours that go into putting together a show on this scale and we are all very thankful for Mr Chesworth's dedication and passion that make it all possible. We always love to see the confidence that culminates in this Year 6 performance and remember back to their first days in Nursery. Our dramatic calendar is busy again next term with the highly anticipated Nursery performance, a Prep show and the Year 3 and 4 music and drama evening. We are also looking forward to another LAMDA recital and all that the Cheltenham Festival holds in store for our young performers.

**Year 6 Destinations and Year 5 Meetings:** On the 1<sup>st</sup> March we had notification of the Year 6 state school places and they brought greater certainty for September. With a much smaller number sitting the grammar test this year we have 8 that will take up grammar school places (although 18 were offered) with 4 of those accepting places at Pate's Grammar School. This is the first time so many have turned down grammar school offers with the 10 preferring King's, Cheltenham College, Dean Close and The Cotswold School. We have 17 who will be moving on to independent schools in September with a number of those attending on scholarships. This year we had 14 scholarship offers in total. We also have 13 children going to 5 different comprehensive schools including Balcarras, Cleeve, Cotswold School, Churchdown and High School Leckhampton. This means that we have arrived at the definitive list of places and this year's cohort will be moving on to an amazing 18 different schools.

During the last few weeks, I have also been meeting with many of our Year 5 parents to discuss the range of options for their children in 2024 and will continue to do so through the Summer Term. I anticipate a return to more typical numbers sitting the grammar test from this cohort next September. We are now aware that this year's application window for applying to sit the grammar school test will open from 12 noon on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May until 12 noon on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June and that **the test will be held on Saturday 16th September 2023**. The registration form will be online and available on all of the Gloucestershire Grammar Schools websites.

**Uniform:** As we return for the Summer Term we give parents the option of either Summer or Winter uniform (on uniform days) until half term as the weather can be unpredictable. After half term everyone should be dressed in the Summer uniform. There will be a second hand uniform sale on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May from 3.15pm to 4.30pm in the Music Room in the second week of term. I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents of the need for regulation uniform and that includes black or blue hair ties for girls.

**Bursary News:** You will have received a letter from Mrs Cox last week regarding fees and terms and conditions for September 2023. If you have any questions please direct them to [bursar@richardpate.co.uk](mailto:bursar@richardpate.co.uk).

**Appointments:** We had an excellent field of candidates for Mr Wade's Year 5 and 6 Science teaching post recently and are just finalising the appointment. Mr Wade has done a brilliant job since joining us three years ago but I am very confident that the new post holder will take us from strength to strength from September.

**PTA Events:** Please keep **Saturday 20th May** free for the **PTA Coronation Summer Fair**, which promises to be an afternoon of family fun and celebration. Mrs Hall and her team of PTA volunteers are already working on some exciting plans and more details will follow soon. One exciting piece of news reminds us that The Richard Pate Summer Ball returns on Friday 9th June. Held at Pittville Pump Rooms it is a fantastic opportunity to get a year group table together and dance the night away! £75ph to include arrival drink, 3 course dinner and entertainment. Booking details will be circulated after the Easter holiday. Places are limited so start planning your table now.

**Recent Successes:** We have had a huge number of activities organised this term and the children have enjoyed success across the board. Below are some of the highlights:

- **Maths:** our Year 6 pupils took part in the Primary Maths Challenge in November with seven of our pupils scoring highly enough to proceed to the recent Final. This paper was extremely challenging, putting their reasoning and problem solving skills to the test. They all did very well with one of them achieving a silver medal which ranks them against some of the finest school aged mathematicians in the country.
- **Music:** it has been another busy term in the Music department with a lovely lunchtime flute concert for parents and staff, piano and singing exams, orchestra and lots of singing with the Junior choirs all thriving. Miss Crompton has said it has been lovely to see the commitment of the children coming to practices with lots of energy and enthusiasm.
  - **Singing:** Mrs Bowen's singing students have had a very busy term with their lessons and five pupils have recently taken their exams with excellent results. A special mention to Jemima in Year 6 who achieved Distinction.
- **Drama:** Following an extremely successful couple of terms with our new LAMDA teacher, Mrs Turner, we had 38 children taking LAMDA exams earlier this term. I am delighted to

report that the children have done exceedingly well – all gaining a Merit or a Distinction. Well done to all involved!

- **Sport:** the sporting calendar has been very full this term with hockey, netball and football matches across all the Junior age groups. Some highlights include:
  - **Netball:** It has been a very busy netball season for Years 3 – 6 with some brilliant training sessions and fixtures, both home and away. The U11 girls had a phenomenal tournament at the recent IAPS Southwest regionals. After losing the first match they went undefeated for the remainder of the tournament winning the plate competition.
  - **Hockey:** Our U11 girls' hockey team enjoyed continued success competing recently in the best of the county champions in the West tournament at Millfield. They all played brilliantly finishing an impressive 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 16 schools. The U11 boys' hockey team also played well in the IAPS regional qualifiers in Taunton finishing as runners up in the plate competition after a narrow loss in the final. This completes a very busy hockey season for both the boys and the girls with a large number of fixtures across the Junior years. A huge thank you to Mr Edwards, Mrs Knight and Mr Foster for all their efforts with the school hockey this season.
  - **Cross Country:** Our team has once again seen great success with three of our boys qualifying to represent Cheltenham in the Regional Primary School Competition. Otto in Year 6 went on to represent Gloucestershire in the National Primary School Competition in Loughborough last weekend and despite exceptionally wet and muddy conditions, finished an impressive 43<sup>rd</sup> in the country. Well done to all our Year 5 and 6 runners and thank you to Mrs Lewis and Mrs Miller-Howell for co-ordinating the training and races.

### Looking forward

We are looking forward to a very full Summer Term with a busy calendar of events. I attach a list of the Clubs and Activities with this newsletter, together with a copy of the provisional Summer Term calendar which will have additional entries and sports fixtures added in time. I wanted to send it today as I appreciate how busy you all are and know that seeing the highlights as far in advance as possible is beneficial. A couple of key dates to note are:

- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April: **Year 6 French Trip briefing for parents** – 4pm
- Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May: **Second Hand Uniform Sale**
- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May: **Nursery Stay and Play** 9am – 12 noon
- Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May: **PTA Coronation Fair**
- Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June: **Nursery Stay and Play** 9am – 12 noon

## **Sincere thank you**

This term has provided us with some unique staffing challenges and I wanted to record my appreciation for your patience and understanding as parents as we have worked through those. I am also indebted to my colleagues for their tireless actions to ensure the children could continue to benefit from the high-quality education on offer at Richard Pate. Our system of year group partners ensures that joint planning benefits the whole year group when illness does occur. We have also been hugely supported by Mrs Sue Powell and Mrs Rachel Finnikin, two very experienced teachers offering cover across the school as well as others who have been covering where necessary. We are expecting most staff to return for the Summer Term but where cover is necessary we will alert you before we return for the new term. I know you will join me in wishing those staff members the quickest recovery possible.

Finally, I hope you all find time to enjoy an Easter break with your children and we look forward to welcoming you all back on Monday 24<sup>h</sup> April.

Yours sincerely,



**Robert MacDonald**  
**Headmaster**