



# RICHARD PATE

INDEPENDENT CO-ED SCHOOL 3-11  
CHELTEMHAM

Friday 17th February, 2023

Dear Parents,

We have arrived at the end of our first half of the Spring Term and the children have enjoyed a fun-filled Charity Day today. The Prep children looked brilliant in their wide variety of costumes and even some of the Juniors were inspired to dress up given the theme of Technology, Science Fiction and Fantasy. This year's assembly was taken by a roller blading minion who later went on to visit all the Prep classrooms and the Nursery. You will find some very endearing photos appearing on Instagram in the near future. The children organised and took part in a number of exciting activities to raise as much money as possible for their chosen charities: Cheltenham Animal Shelter, The Brooke Organisation (Action for Working Horses and Donkeys) and the Emergency Disasters Committee (Turkish/Syrian Earthquake). These were all put forth by the children with written explanations of why they thought the charity was worthy. At the time of going to print we have counted a record setting £1,800 which is an extraordinary amount of money to collect in change. I want to thank you for your generosity, the children for their enthusiasm and ingenuity and the staff for their endless patience and good humour!

## **Year 6 Destinations**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> March, our Year 6 children will discover their designated state school if they are pursuing that route to grammar or comprehensive schools in September. We have had a number of children seeking places at various independent schools and all have been offered places. The children have also been awarded 14 scholarships for academics, music, art, sport and performing arts. The picture will become much clearer after the 1<sup>st</sup> March but I anticipate the children could end up in 14 different schools next September and each of those schools will be incredibly lucky to have this special year group. I am continuing to work with the Year 5 children for their next steps and have been meeting with their parents to discuss the many options available to them as well.

## **Random Act of Kindness Day**

We all enjoyed our second PTA Random Act of Kindness Day here this week and there was a lovely atmosphere across the school. It was wonderful to see so many gestures of kindness and appreciation from all ages within our RPS community from teachers, colleagues, catering and cleaning staff, friends and parents.

## **Successful Open Morning**

Our recent Open Morning was a great success with 25 families coming round to see the School in action. The feedback was hugely positive and a number have already signed up for next year and beyond, with a number of others coming back for taster days. I wanted to say a huge thank you to all the Year 6 children who gave up a coveted Saturday morning to help out. They were wonderful ambassadors for our school and all the visiting parents commented on their confidence as well as the passion shown for their school. It was lovely for prospective parents to speak to current RPS pupils to get their own unique perspective.

### **Staffing Challenges**

As you will be aware, this half of term has seen our highest incidence of staff absence since Covid, for a variety of reasons. We have been without a number of teaching staff as well as some non-teaching staff but it has been to everyone's great credit that those still here have worked as a great team to keep everything functioning so well. I am hugely indebted to everyone for their efforts and wish them all a welcome break in the week ahead. We very much hope that we return from the half term holiday with a full complement of staff and an absence of the bugs doing the rounds so we are ready to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We are very excited to welcome Mr Jones and Mrs Thurston back after half term and are grateful to Mrs Finnikin and Mrs Powell who have supported so ably in their absence.

### **Sporting Success**

It has been a busy sporting half term for all our Junior children with many netball, boys' hockey and football fixtures taking place across the Junior year groups. All teams have played well and Mrs Knight and Mr Edwards have been particularly impressed by the adaptability and organisation shown by the children often playing in different teams and in different positions in these matches. The sports clubs have also been very successful with Mixed Badminton and Girls' Football proving to be very popular, brilliantly led by our Year 6 Award sports helpers. Some of the highlights of this half term include the U11 netball team recently competing in the IAPS Regionals at Rugby School where they were the winners of the plate competition, with Jess Wooddisse being awarded the impressive Player of the Tournament title. Following this, our Year 6 boys came third in the recent In2Hockey county competition at Dean Close. Looking ahead, we look forward to our U11 boys' hockey team travelling to Taunton for their IAPS Regional tournament and the U11 girls competing at the regional hockey tournament at Millfield in March having qualified as county champions last term. We wish them all luck!

### **Diary Dates**

You will have seen in the Link that we have highlighted a number of important upcoming dates for the diary. On the Wednesday after we return the Year 6 children will learn more about their schools for next year as it is National Allocation Day for secondary places. On the 10<sup>th</sup> March we will be holding our next Nursery Stay and Play session so if you have friends with younger children, please suggest they get in touch. On the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March our Year 6 parents will be invited to see our production of Guys and Dolls. The children are very excited to share their performance with you all.

### **PTA Notices**

We would like to remind you about the PTA Coronation Party that will be held here at School on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May and the PTA Summer Ball on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June. Please make a note of these dates in your diary so you can come and join us for both these events. More information to follow soon. We want to thank the PTA for all their support in our Random Acts of Kindness Day and for the lovely Junior Disco held last evening at School.

The first half of term has flown past and the second half looks even busier with a number of exciting opportunities for the children still to come. I hope you have a lovely break next week and are able to enjoy some time with your families. It has been wonderful to see your lovely children continue to grow and flourish in this half of term.

Yours sincerely,



**Robert MacDonald**  
**Headmaster**