

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2023

Dear Parents,

The Summer Term inevitably brings the most joyous events to school and it is only after the final assembly is done and everyone goes their separate ways that we are able to take stock of all that has happened and look forward to all that awaits.

We have had many fantastic highlights including the 'We are going on a Bear Hunt' Nursery production, the Prep 'Eddie the Penguin' show, the Year 3 and 4 'Bumblesnouts Saves the World' production, Prep and Junior Sports Mornings, a number of informal music concerts, the Year 6 French residential trip, the Year 5 PGL trip, day trips to Cotswold Wildlife Park, Toddington Railway, Perrygrove Railway, Caerleon Roman Villa and the Corinium Museum, to name just a few! The Year 6s also enjoyed additional end-of-RPS activities including a trip to Chedworth Roman Villa, cycling proficiency and a leadership challenge.

**Music:** The Music department has been very busy this term with a series of concerts including piano, flute and string from the Prep. Other highlights include the Years 3-5 concert, which was a great success for all musicians whether they have been learning in or out of school, and the brilliant performances in the Leavers' concert. Miss Crompton has also said that the Year 5/6 choir has been exceptionally strong this year and she hopes it will continue to be so next year! We are excited about next year's Young Voices concert which will see our Year 5 and 6 choir joining 6000 other singers in a magical musical extravaganza. We will also be celebrating the Pate's Foundation 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary which will include a joint concert with the grammar school and ourselves in July. There will be more information to follow.

**Performing Arts:** Congratulations to Emma C in Year 3 who has been awarded a place with the Junior Associates of the prestigious Royal Ballet School. Emma has dance lessons with Mrs Finch and Mrs Isherwood at school. This is a phenomenal achievement and we look forward to following her ballet journey.

**Sport:** The last few weeks of term have been filled with many internal competitions, external fixtures and other sporting events. In addition to our day-to-day lessons of cricket, tennis and athletics, we hosted our first ever girls' football tournament and took part in several cricket tournaments. Our Junior athletics team also attended the Division I Shield Cheltenham and District Schools competition at the Prince of Wales stadium and congratulations to Jess W (Year 6), Keira W (Year 3), Lottie E (Year 3), Florence B (Year 3) and Lila P (Year 3) who were awarded medals.

**Prep and Junior Sports Day:** It was brilliant to be able to hold our Prep and Junior Sports Days in (mainly!) dry conditions and we were delighted so many parents came to share in the excitement and even join in – the parents' tug-of-war was competitive (no medics or lawyers were required at the conclusion so it was a success from our perspective too)! The Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children once again enjoyed a multi activity programme and the sportsmanship was brilliant with everyone having great fun. The Junior Sports Day was another fantastic morning with all our Junior children enjoying the plethora of competitive events. Thank you to all staff who supported but particularly to Mrs Penny Lewis and Mr Edwards for organising the proceedings.

**Thank you:** I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to my amazing colleagues for the exceptional hard work and dedication shown throughout the year. It has been another tough year and I am lucky to have such a brilliant team supporting me – teaching staff, bursary and office staff, catering, cleaning and estate teams, who all work together to ensure the best education and experience for your children at RPS. I would also like to thank you, the parents and extended family, for your continued support, enthusiasm and encouragement whilst juggling your busy lives– it is always very much appreciated.

**Leavers' Concert and Final Assembly:** Our leaving Year 6s are an exceptionally gifted group of individuals and they performed brilliantly in the Leavers' Concert. I sadly was unable to be there as I was attending a memorial service for a dear friend. I am reliably informed that they delighted the audience with a number of beautiful instrumental recitals, singing solos, drama monologues and readings and a very moving whole group rendition of Bob Marley's Three Little Birds sending the important message of 'Don't Worry About a Thing' to our parents which seemed a very fitting end. As always, the Final Assembly was a long affair with so many prizes to award but the children were brilliant to sit as an audience for so long. We had an emotional farewell to our Year 6s who we know will make us proud as they move on to 18 destinations each of which are fortunate to welcome them in September. The following is a list of their next schools:

Grammar Schools	Independent Schools	Comprehensive Schools	Community
Pate's Grammar = 4 Sir Thomas Rich = 2 Denmark Road = 1 The Crypt = 1 (We had another 10 children offered grammar places but turned them down)	King's = 7 Cheltenham Ladies' College = 1 Cheltenham College = 3 Dean Close = 2 St Edward's = 1 Warwick Prep School = 1 International (Germany) = 1	The Cotswold School = 3 High School Leckhampton = 5 Balcarras = 3 Churchdown School = 1 Cleeve School = 1 Thomas Keble = 1	Alderman Knight = 1

**Reports:** You should all have received a copy of your child's report to conclude this year. If you have not received the report as yet it could be in the post. I have had the pleasure of reading through over 300 reports and I have been impressed with the children's progress.

**The Richard Pate Award:** We are delighted to have completed the second year of the Richard Pate Award for our Year 6s. It has been another tremendous success allowing all the children to make the most of their last year of RPS and prepare them for their next school and beyond. It was lovely to see them assisting the younger years with reading and in club activities and spending time with their mentors. The Award scheme culminated in an Awards ceremony during the Leavers' Concert and a bowling trip in recognition of all their hard work. As sad as we are to say farewell to such a brilliant group of children I am equally excited to see our current Year 5 children become our new leaders.

**Staff News:** Final assembly gave us an opportunity to say thank you and farewell to our retiring teachers. Mr Dave Wade has been teaching Year 5 and Year 6 Science for the past three years and has done an amazing job. He brought years of experience in secondary science education and a great passion for his subject and I know he has inspired a number of our children to pursue science as a subject of interest well beyond their RPS days. Mrs Betty Crowie came to join us a Teaching Assistant 17 years ago and has done a brilliant job in the Prep Department ever since. She has always been kindness personified and has enriched children's lives over a long and successful career. Finally Mrs Sue Wade enjoyed her final day of a Richard Pate career that spans nearly 40 years. Mrs Wade has been an incredible teacher who has made a significant difference to countless children's lives. She has also been a fantastic Deputy Head, our ISI Inspector, the school's Designated Safeguard Lead and so much more. We all rely hugely on the wise counsel of Mrs Wade and she will be much missed. We wish all three retirees a long and happy retirement and know all three will be regular visitors back to RPS.

In addition we have two members of staff who move on to pastures new. Mrs Sarah-Jane Enston has been a member of the Richard Pate family for 8 years working mainly as a Year 5 teacher as well as working across the Prep and Junior Departments for a time. She was also pivotal in some of our most successful girls' sports teams of the past. We wish her all the best for the next step in her professional life. Mrs Rachel Bowen has been our vocal teacher for the past two years and has done a wonderful job with some of our talented singers. She is relocating to Oxford and we wish her well in her next phase as well. Finally Mr Scott Jones who has taught Year 1 for a number of years here at RPS has decided to take a one year career break. He has been unwell since January and has decided to take time to recover fully. We wish Mr Jones the very best in his recuperation.

As sad as we are to say farewell to those members of the team we are equally excited to welcome the talented replacements who join us in September. We welcome Mrs Helen Pearce as our new Year 6 teacher who brings huge amounts of experience to the team and will act as an additional Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead. In Year 5 we are delighted to introduce Mrs Claire Kirby who joins us from St Edward's Prep School. Mrs Kirby also brings huge amounts of experience and has been driving the 11+ preparations in her current school. I am looking forward to working alongside Mrs Kirby to strengthen this aspect of our offering to help ensure we continue to help you choose the most appropriate onward destination. Ms Sobjanne Pickett takes over Year 5 and Year 6 Science and cannot wait to bring the lab to life with practical experiments. Miss Emily Cupper has already been in to get the classroom sorted to be our new Year 1 teacher. Miss Cupper is well known to us as a past pupil and comes highly recommended from her Bachelor of Education Mentors and practice placements. She will be ably supported by Mrs Laura Thomas and Miss Katherine West. We have also chosen to bolster our games staff provision and we are very excited at the addition of Lisa Birks. Mrs Birks has worked at Cheltenham Ladies' College for some time and is a highly respected netball coach as well as all the other main sports we offer. Finally we are delighted to have Mr Keith Smith join us as part of the boys' game team offering rugby as his prime sport. Mr Smith has been with us this year but is able to commit more time to us in the next academic year. This is sure to see both boys and girls sport go from strength to strength at Richard Pate.

**Further Investment:** It is not only human resource that we are enhancing. We are very excited to report on the next round of investment in the physical profile of the School. We have given the green light to significant investment to update and improve our security in and around the School. We will be working through the summer to begin mapping out the future changes. We have also scheduled our next lockdown rehearsal exercise for the beginning of September which is very timely given the awful event at Tewkesbury School this week. Internally, our focus will be on repairing and updating the Atrium area in the middle of the school, which will make a huge difference. We have other exciting plans in the pipeline and look forward to sharing these with you soon.

**Summer Holiday Sports Coaching:** Mr Foster is running small group and 1-2-1 hockey coaching sessions over the Summer holidays. He can offer hour slots between the following times:

WEEKS	TIMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• w/c 17th July</li> <li>• w/c 24th July</li> <li>• w/c 31st July</li> <li>• w/c 14th August</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mondays &amp; Tuesdays - 1:30-3:30</li> <li>• Wednesdays &amp; Thursdays - 9:30-3:30</li> <li>• Fridays - 12-3:30</li> </ul>

To book a place or for further information, please email Mr Foster directly [jrfosterpt@gmail.com](mailto:jrfosterpt@gmail.com) or call his mobile 07534 592367 and he will provide you with all the information.

**PTA:** I would like to thank Lisa Hall and her fabulous team for all they have done across the School this year. The fabulous Summer Coronation Party in May was thoroughly enjoyed by all and raised even more money for extras – please see the separate letter outlining what the money has been spent on. We also enjoyed the PTA funded visit by Mr Whippy which was a lovely end of year treat at breaktime for all! We say a particular thank you to Lisa Mullard who has been our fabulous PTA Treasurer for many years. Lisa finishes her time as an RPS parent this year and stands down as treasurer. Mrs Mullard and Mrs Emery-Ramon have both been cornerstones of the PTA volunteer team and we shall miss them both as they finish their time at RPS. To that end we are looking for new volunteers for the PTA and in the attached letter you can see how you can join as well!

**Diary Dates:**

You will receive the term's calendar with this newsletter – it is also available on the website. A couple of key dates to note:

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September:** Second Hand Uniform Sale 12pm- 2pm

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September:** First day of school

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September:** Individual and Sibling Photographs (full school uniform required not PE kit)

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September:** Flu Vaccinations (more details to follows)

**Uniform:** When we return in September, the children will be allowed to wear either summer or winter uniform until half term and this reflects the fact that the weather can vary widely during these Autumn months. The second hand uniform team will be running a sale on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September from 12 – 2pm. We have taken a decision to continue with the Junior Department coming dressed in Games kit for the days where they have a Games or PE lesson. If they have a club or activity on a particular day that requires games kit, they will be able to change in school. We will trial this until half term at which point we may revert back to coming in to school every day in uniform and changing for games if they need to. There will be a separate correspondence explaining which days your child will require games kit.

**School Places:** As always, we have the odd place throughout the School available, and in particular Nursery, Reception and Year 3 for September so if you have friends or colleagues who are looking for a place do let them know.

**Bursary:** The Bursary will remain open over the holidays and can be contacted on 01242-522052 or at [bursar@richardpate.co.uk](mailto:bursar@richardpate.co.uk). I will also send a copy of the letter that was sent to you with our updated fees at the end of the Spring Term. It is written by Mr Guy Bradshaw, the Chair of the Pate's Foundation and outlines a change to the Foundation that will happen at the end of August. I can reassure you that you will see no change to the School; this is simply an essential modernisation of our corporate structure.

As we look forward to the Summer break, I would like to say how much we have enjoyed working with your children this year. They continue to impress us every day with their growth and development and we are constantly reminded what a privileged role we have in their individual journeys.

To those who leave us I wish you all the very best and hope you will continue to stay in touch and let us know about the next adventure. For those returning I wish you a wonderful holiday and look forward to an exciting start to a new school year.

Yours sincerely,

*Robert MacDonald*

**Robert MacDonald**  
**Headmaster**