

1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Coronation tree planting**

On Monday we had the honour of participating in a tree planting ceremony at Hertford Castle. The event was organised by the Mayor of Hertford and the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire. Buckingham Palace contributed money for the Lord Lieutenant to purchase a tree for planting in a prominent Hertfordshire location of his choice, and Hertford castle grounds was selected. One student from each year group, along with the Head Boy and Head Girl, represented Richard Hale and were accompanied by Mr Camm and Mrs Homan. The attendance of our staff and students at the ceremony highlighted the importance of community engagement. Such events not only strengthen the bond between the local government and its residents but also provide an opportunity for individuals to actively participate in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage. There are photos of the event on our website homepage and social media channels.

### **National Apprenticeship Week 2024**

Next week we will be celebrating NAW '24 with students across all year groups. We have a wide range of exciting and informative events planned, with a number of ex-RHS students coming back to talk about their Apprenticeship and career journeys so far. Parents play an important role in ensuring students know and explore all their post-16 and post-18 options, so we will be sending out a range of materials and guidance to parents as part of this week. We look forward to sharing with you the highlights of the week in the next Headteacher's letter.

### **Cambridge University trip**

A select group of Year 10 students drawn from those amongst our academically most able, were given the opportunity to experience life as a Cambridge University undergraduate in their recent trip to Gonville and Caius College. A highly informative and detailed overview provided by Caius' outreach officer, Mr Bowen, provided clear guidance on the path required for those aspiring to Oxbridge study, with much emphasis on the importance of super-curricular activity. With great timing, our recent launch of Hale's very own super-curricular initiative (link below) provides all Hale students with a wealth of ideas and opportunity for them to be able to tap into their individual interests. A useful question and answer session fielded by three delightful Caius undergraduates allowed our students to have their multiple questions answered, followed by lunch, College tour and Sedgwick Museum visit. By happy coincidence, their visit was well timed with four of our current Year 13s securing offers to go to Cambridge University, bringing this year's Oxbridge offers to a record-breaking total of nine. Many congratulations to those students on their success.

<https://sites.google.com/richardhale.co.uk/rhs-super-curriculum/super-curriculum/subjects>)

### **Solve for Tomorrow Competition**

Our Samsung team, participating in the Solve for Tomorrow competition, consists of Sam Mo and Dexter Rigby, both Year 12. They have recently developed a mobile app designed to

connect to smart home devices, utilising a custom AI algorithm to synchronise power consumption with renewable energy production. This innovative solution aims to reduce demand during periods of fossil fuel usage, ultimately minimising a household's carbon footprint. Due to the remarkable ingenuity displayed and the project's considerable scale and complexity, Samsung has chosen this team to advance to phase two of the competition. In this next stage, the team will collaborate with Samsung engineers and specialists across various dates to further refine and potentially bring their product to market. This presents an exceptional opportunity for the students to gain valuable industrial experience at an early stage and comprehend the development process when a company expresses interest in their product.

While the competition is intense, our team ranks among the top 12 in the nation, competing in the 16–25 age category against university students and seasoned industry programmers, all vying for the £10,000 prize. We wish Sam and Dexter success in this year's competition.

### **Reading for Pleasure Parent Forum**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> March, we will be holding a 'Reading for Pleasure' parent forum at Richard Hale. We are inviting parents from Years 7 to 9 to attend a discussion about what 'Reading for Pleasure' is and strategies to support your son to read more regularly and understand the benefits this brings. The forum will last approximately an hour and will start at 6:30pm. If you wish to attend, please complete the Google form below so we have an idea of numbers:

<https://forms.gle/6LVVEBQfa2TRkxN5A>

### **Guys and Dolls**

Students from years 10 to 13 have been busy rehearsing for this year's senior production of the classic musical Guys and Dolls. The performances are on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 7:00pm and tickets are now available to purchase through WisePay. Please come and support our older students who are acting in the cast and performing live music in the band.

### **Progress Reports**

PR1 Mock Exam reports for Year 11 will be available on the SIMS Parent App by 3.20pm on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. If you have any problems accessing the system, please email [simsparentapp@richardhale.co.uk](mailto:simsparentapp@richardhale.co.uk).

### **Non-Uniform Day**

Non-Uniform Day will take place on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and full details regarding payment and the charities being supported will be emailed to parents in the next few days.

### **Letter to Schools and Parents from the Director of Public Health**

#### **Important: Measles cases are rising in the UK**

Measles cases in the UK have been rising since November 2023. While Hertfordshire has no outbreaks at the moment, we are close to London and the West Midlands where there has been a large rise in cases. The UK Health Security Agency has declared the increase in cases of measles a national incident (19 January 2024). There is the potential for cases and

outbreaks in Hertfordshire as uptake of the Measles Vaccination (MMR) in the county is lower than recommended.

Measles is a highly infectious viral disease that can have serious and sometimes fatal consequences. Measles spreads quickly from person to person, especially in schools. Spending more than 15 minutes in direct contact with someone infected with measles is sufficient to transmit the virus. A child with measles will infect almost all unprotected children they have contact with.

Measles is spread through coughing and sneezing, close personal contact or direct contact with infected nasal or throat secretions. For more information about measles and the symptoms, see Measles - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))

Important for staff and pupils

If someone thinks they have measles they should not come into school or work for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears.

Your school could be impacted if unvaccinated staff or children contract measles. Unvaccinated individuals are at risk of contracting measles and, if identified as a close contact of someone with measles they may be asked to self-isolate for up to 21 days.

Call to action

We are urgently asking that you advise your staff and parents to be alert to signs and symptoms of measles and ask parents to check that their children are fully vaccinated. If anyone has missed one or both doses of the MMR vaccine, it is not too late to catch up. Please can you advise parents to contact their GP practice to book an appointment as soon as possible if they have missed either dose. The MMR vaccine is free on the NHS, whatever your age. Our best protection against measles is MMR vaccination and this will help stop outbreaks occurring in the community.

In addition further advice and guidance can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/689712/Measles\\_adults\\_DL\\_Leaflet\\_03\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/689712/Measles_adults_DL_Leaflet_03_.pdf)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/01/22/what-to-do-if-you-think-your-child-has-measles-and-when-to-keep-them-off-school/>

**Director of Public Health**

Ian Hawkins  
**Headteacher**

### February 2024 Calendar

Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup>	School Production
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>	School Production
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Year 11 Parents Evening
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup>	GCSE Art Gallery Visit Year 8 Careers Networking Event
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Year 8 Careers Networking Event A Level Drama – evening theatre visit
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform Day 3.20pm finish Junior Ski Trip departs, returns 24 <sup>th</sup>
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Senior Ski Trip departs, returns 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Half Term Week
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Year 11 Revision Workshops
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Year 13 Parents Evening

### March 2024 Calendar

Friday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Year 11 and 13 Photographs
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Year 12 Parents Evening
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Year 11 MFL Mock Writing Exams Week
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup>	House Music
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Year 9 /10 French Exchange to RHS to the 22 <sup>nd</sup> Year 9/10 German Exchange to RHS to 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Year 11 English Exam
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Year 7 Parents Evening
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Non-Uniform 12.30pm Finish
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday Easter Break begins

### April 2024 Calendar

Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Summer term begins
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### Weeks

Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Week 2
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Week 1
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Half Term Week
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Week 2
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Week 1
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Week 2
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Week 1
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Week 2
	Easter Break
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Week 1

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