

9th October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Neal Hankinson

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that Mr Hankinson passed away at the end of last week following a period of illness. Neal has worked at Richard Hale School since 2014 as a maths teacher and in that time was also the Head of Maths during a very difficult period in COVID. Neal loved teaching and was often found here late into the afternoon working with A level students in maths club, discussing problems and working with students to find solutions. He will be sadly missed by all the members of the school community, his passion for mathematics will be remembered by all the students who were fortunate to be taught by him. Our thoughts are with his family at this time.

Warsaw, Poland Trip

On Thursday 2nd October, twenty of our Year 13 students travelled to Warsaw, Poland to explore sites relating to Poland's time under Russian rule. Students began by visiting the Palace of Culture and Science, originally named the Josef Stalin Palace of Culture and Science, to understand the enduring legacy of Soviet Communist influence in Eastern Europe, particularly in relation to the people that were once ruled over. The next day, students attended a fantastic lecture by Assistant Professor of Russian History at the Pilecki Institute Ian Garner, who provided impressive and valuable insights into Soviet policy toward different nationalities within their territory. This was followed by a workshop in which our students worked splendidly with Polish students their age on source work regarding how the Soviet Union governed different nationalities. They made Richard Hale School immensely proud with their performance.

In the afternoon, we visited a former prison for those who resisted the Soviet installed communist governments of Poland in favour of independence and sovereignty. Students showed maturity, class, and empathy to the suffering of the former prisoners, and gained insights into the impacts of dictatorships and the nature of authoritarian law enforcement. This was followed the next day by a visit to another former prison, this one under the Tsarist regime, in which students had a number of memorable experiences, which included standing in the former prison cell of Feliz Dzerzhinsky, first leader of the CHEKA, the law enforcement agency that would one day morph into the current KGB and FSB, and watching Deputy Head Lucy Gallagher perform as an "accused prisoner" by our tour guide, who, amongst other things, kicked her chair during her "interrogation". The experience was engaging to say the least!

Our final museum visit was to the National Gallery of Poland, in which students showed a fantastic understanding of the different ways Poland sought to represent itself in 19th century painting, when the country was under the Tsarist yoke. They asked intelligent questions and listened brilliantly to the in-depth tour they were provided with. Our visit concluded the next day with a birthday celebration for one of our students, who turned 18, and a last-minute visit

to an arcade specialising in pinball and past video games, which made Mr. Wolff feel incredibly old as he could actually remember when these games were new on the market.

Our students performed in superlative fashion, and made comprehensive notes during each museum visit as to how the presentations and exhibitions they encountered linked to their exam material. I could not have been prouder to lead a group on a journey across much of the width of Europe, and to introduce them to colleagues of friends of mine that gave their time to make their experience enriching. No group of students could possibly have deserved it more, and the memories and insights will be long and happy.

Reading for Pleasure

Following our recent Reading for Pleasure assemblies, we want to remind all students and parents about the immense power of consistent reading. It's not just a relaxing hobby—it is absolutely vital for academic success. As learners move through school, they need to acquire at least 3,000 new words for their vocabulary every single year. These sophisticated words cannot simply be picked up from casual chats; many require explicit learning. Reading for pleasure is the superpower that supports this! By engaging with diverse books and texts, students naturally encounter, understand, and absorb the complex vocabulary needed to excel in their studies, exams, and future careers. Encourage your child to set aside time each day to get lost in a good book—it is the single best investment they can make in their own education. Suggested reading lists can be found here:

<https://richardhale.herts.sch.uk/learning/reading-lists/>

Rugby

All Rugby fixtures for the season for all year groups can be found via the link below:

[Richard Hale School | Sports, Teams, Fixtures & Results](#)

Please Note: Venues and timings are subject to change from those listed on the link. Any updates will be communicated to all students in advance via Google Classroom and during their Games lessons.

For the latest Richard Hale sporting news and updates, please follow **@RHS_PE** on **X (formerly Twitter)**.

Rugby Results vs QE Barnet

1st XV - Won 50-5
2nd XV - Drew 24-24
U15 – Lost 31-40
U14A - Won 60-14
U14B - Lost 31-40
U13A – Won 8-2
U13B – Won 6-5
U13C - Lost 7-3

U12 vs Aylesbury Grammar

Played 2 Won 2.

Friday 10th October vs Hitchin School (Home)

3 x U12 matches vs Hitchin. All matches will be played at Morgan Playing Fields

Saturday 11th October vs Hitchin

U17- Home - KO 9.30am

U14AB – Away – KO 9.30am

U13AB – Away – KO 9.30am

All Saturday home fixtures will be held at Hertford RFC.

Away fixtures will be held at: Hitchin School, SG5 1JB

National Cup Fixtures.

Tuesday 14th October

2.30pm KO @ Hertford RFC

U15 vs Haberdashers' Boys' School

U18 vs St Georges School

Wednesday 15th October

6pm KO @ Hertford RFC.

U14 vs Berkhamsted.

Parents Association

The Parents Association is in need of a new Treasurer and new Chair to take over this term due to work commitments and current members no longer having a pupil at the school. If anyone is able to help with either of these roles, please contact Jess Tatlow via email on jessietatlow@gmail.com, to find out more information.

In previous years the Parents Association has successfully supported the school in many ways and we are keen for this to continue. Please use the link below to sign up if you are able to join the team especially if you would be willing to take on the role of Treasure or Chair.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfzOcW6fhZZiA5YEij5ssBoq1YKoHw7U3qJNoH6-SN7UDQWg/viewform?usp=dialog>

Ian Hawkins

Headteacher

October 2025 Calendar

Thursday 9 th	Year 7 and Year 12 Meet the Tutor Evenings
Friday 10 th	Year 12/13 Art Trip – Henry Moore
Monday 13 th	Flu Vaccinations Year 13 Mid-Term Tests

Tuesday 14 th	Year 11 Revision Workshops and Parents Presentation
Thursday 23 rd	Art Trip to Rome to 26 th Flu Vaccinations
Monday 27 th	Half Term Week

November 2025 Calendar

Monday 3 rd	Return to School
Monday 10 th	Year 12 Mid-Term Tests to the 14 th
Tuesday 11 th	Remembrance Ceremony
Wednesday 12 th	Sixth Form Open Evening
Monday 17 th	GCSE MFL Mock Writing Tests to the 21 st
Thursday 20 th	Year 13 Parents Evening
Monday 24 th	DTP/MenACWY Vaccinations
Wednesday 26 th	House Plays
Thursday 27 th	House Plays

December 2025 Calendar

Monday 1 st	Flu Vaccinations
Wednesday 3 rd	BTEC Mock Exams to 4 th Year 12/13 Economics Conference
Friday 5 th	Occasional Day – School Closed
Monday 8 th	Year 11 GCSE Mock Exams to the 18 th
Wednesday 10 th	Year 12 & 13 Further Maths Lectures, London
Thursday 11 th	Year 12 & 13 Geology – Natural History Museum Christmas Concert
Friday 12 th	Staff & Sixth Form Christmas Jumper Day
Wednesday 17 th	Christmas Lunch Year 12 Politics Parliament Visit
Thursday 18 th	Senior Presentation Evening
Friday 19 th	Founders Day & White Gloves End of Term – School finishes at 12.30
Christmas Holiday	

January 2026 Calendar

Monday 5 th	Return to School - Spring Term Begins
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Weeks

Monday 13 th Oct	Week 1
Monday 20 th Oct	Week 2
Monday 27 th Oct	Half Term Week
Monday 3 rd Nov	Week 1
Monday 10 th Nov	Week 2
Monday 17 th Nov	Week 1
Monday 24 th Nov	Week 2
Monday 1 st Dec	Week 1
Monday 8 th Dec	Week 2

Monday 15 th Dec	Week 1
Christmas Holiday	
Monday 5 th Jan	Week 2

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