



September 2016

Dear Parents

A new academic year has begun and we welcomed 273 Year 7 pupils on Friday for their first worship in the chapel. We are very pleased to be full (and indeed three over our number) at a time when numbers in the district are still very low. We look forward to working with many new families over the next five or seven years.

We also welcome a number of new staff to Ripley this term:

Miss Kellie Morphet	Mathematics
Mr John Tailyour	Mathematics
Miss Lydia Benfold	English
Mr David Webster	English
Miss Grace Robertson	PE
Miss Lauren Ashton	Business/Food
Mr Kieran Smith	Science
Dr Louise Smethurst	Science
Miss Alex Milner	Science
Mr Matthew Ellis	History
Mrs Rosie Renyard	History
Mr Steve Martindale	DT
Mrs Julie Cressey	DT/Art
Mrs Janet Winstanley	Dance
Mr Andrew McKinnell	Director of Business and Finance
Miss Cathryn Graham	Academic Mentor
Mr Andrew Simm	Science Technician
Mrs Rachel Gill	Art Technician
Joe Osborne	Ripley Scholar
Callum Baxter	Ripley Scholar
Ben Drury	Ripley Scholar

We wish them all well during their time with us!

### Examinations

We have just emerged from a hectic few weeks of A, AS and GCSE results which I share with you now.

**GCSE:** On the new measure called "The Basics", which is the percentage of pupils achieving grades A\*-C in both English and Maths our score is 80%. The percentage achieving 5A\*-C including English and Maths was 77%, down on last year but above the target set for the school of 75%. English and Maths continued to produce superb results with both subjects scoring 87%. RE, which also taught the entire year group, achieved 86%. Top achievers were Joel Stewart with 9A\*, Sam Walters and Matthew Cole with 8A\* and Eleanor Thomas with 7A\*. I am pleased to say that all these pupils are remaining at Ripley for A level study.

**A2:** I am pleased to report that all of our students who had elected to go to university (ca 75%) were all offered places. Particular congratulations go to Anna Marshall with 4 A\* grades and Richard Dyer with 3A\* 1A grades. Anna will take up a place to study medicine at Dundee in 2017 and



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Richard will take up a place at Durham to study Physics. Jacob Connolly will study Dentistry at Liverpool. An increasing number of students are now choosing to move on to apprenticeships, one of whom, Robert Simmill, has secured a prestigious degree level apprenticeship with Jaguar Landrover. One student, Paul Helliwell, is taking up a place at a music conservatoire and Jacob Clark is taking up a Choral Scholarship at Portsmouth.

Nationally, of course, we are in a time of shifting sands in terms of examinations. As you may have heard, results are down across the country at GCSE and we now have a mixed bag of new and harder exams at GCSE and A level with linear subjects replacing modular ones. We await value added and comparative data which will give us a better idea of how we have performed.

## **Behaviour Policy (Years 7-11)**

We have, over the last term, been reviewing our Behaviour Policy to ensure it meets our current needs. As I am sure you all understand, high standards of behaviour lie at the heart of a successful school. A copy of the revised policy is attached to this newsletter. I would be very grateful if you could familiarise yourself with it. We are launching the new systems and policy this week and for the next few weeks there will be assemblies to each year group on various aspects of behaviour such as language, manners and respect. We aim to develop courteous, respectful, compassionate and hardworking young people at Ripley.

## **Other news**

Pupils on our two trips to South Africa over the summer had a great experience and did good work in some of the townships in Bloemfontein. Our summer school last week was very successful with 30 year 7 pupils attending, getting used to being at Ripley. I hope you were able to see the "10 Pieces" Proms concert at the beginning of the holidays. Our pupils formed 20% of the national choir assembled to sing the Deus Ire. It was an amazing experience for them all.

Our many building projects are in various stages of completion after a busy summer and we particularly look forward to having heating once again in October in the main building! The drive is complete and we hope to have the barrier and additional security fencing erected in the next few weeks. If you are coming to school please park on the left just inside the main gate in the new parking area and sign in at the Lodge.

The BBC team is with us again (for the last time) this week. I will let you know when the documentary is to be screened when that decision has been made by the BBC.

So, we look forward to what will no doubt be another exciting year in the life of Ripley St Thomas! Thank you for your continued support. Could I remind you that I do have a drop-in clinic on a Thursday morning from 9 30 – 11 30 if there are any urgent issues you would like to discuss.

Yours sincerely

*Liz Nicholls*

RIPLEY ST THOMAS  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



# Principal's Newsletter

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Mrs E Nicholls  
Principal