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# ROYAL ALEXANDRA & ALBERT SCHOOL



July 2016

Dear Parents

I can remember a variety of different Upper Sixth cohorts and what was so outstanding about this Summer's leavers was the way they supported and helped each other and the fact that they were a pleasure to teach and to be with. I wish them every success in the future and look forward to seeing some of them on A level results day.

My hope (*and my prediction*) is that the Year 11s will achieve the best ever results in the School's history, despite the fact that GCSEs have been getting more difficult every year recently. Again, I find it difficult to recall a year group that such a positive attitude to work.

Last Friday's School Concert showed just how talented our current Year 9 pupils are as they performed in many different small groups as well as making up the bigger ensembles which provided almost two hours of great music.

Sports Day was a wonderful and enjoyable event but that did not mean that performances on the track and in the field events were not of a very high standard. It was pleasing to see so many new school records established as well as the enthusiasm that the Lower Sixth brought to the event particularly as, in many schools, the Sixth Form do not take part in Sports Day.

A stalwart team from the Parents and Friends Association produced endless bacon/sausage sandwiches and burgers during Sports Day and then spent the Sunday afternoon doing the same at the Gatton Country Fayre. I am most grateful to them for all the work that they put in which raises money to enhance activities which might otherwise not be funded.

What with a trip to the Isle of Wight, Creative Week and the Junior School Ball last Friday, our juniors have had a very exciting end to the academic year and I am pleased to be able to announce that, for the first time ever, we have a waiting list for boarding in Rank-Weston and our Junior Boarding numbers will be a record high in September.

I cannot finish without paying tribute to Kathryn Hobbs, Deputy Head – Curriculum, who has done so much to reform our curriculum, improve our systems for tracking pupil progress and raising the quality of teaching in the School. I wish her every success as she moves on to be Head of *David Nieper Academy* in Derbyshire.

There is an Honours Board in the Dining Hall which records the names and dates of the Heads since the creation of the Royal Alexandra and Albert School and I am seventh on the list. Such a board puts things into context as each Head is just the latest in a line; indeed a very long line if you consider all the Heads of the Royal Alexandra School going back to 1760.

Gatton is a very special place and I shall miss the friendliness of the pupils and the professionalism and hard work of my teaching and non-teaching colleagues, as well as the privilege of living in this wonderful park.

I have really enjoyed the fifteen and a half years that I have been privileged to spend as Headmaster here and I welcome Mark Dixon, as he prepares to take over as Head, his wife Kerstin and their three children who will be living on site when the school re-opens in September.

With my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul D Spencer Ellis

Headmaster