

Teachers' Assembly

January 2017 – Simon King, Assistant Head

Introduction

When I first came to this school two things really stood out for me:

- 1) The amazing grounds and facilities that were here.
- 2) The hard work and dedication of the staff.

Coming from a school that did not have half these facilities, I thought it was amazing.

I am not going to talk about the grounds and facilities today though. Today I am going to talk about teachers.

When I wrote this assembly I could not figure out how I would do it. When you do an assembly there is always a message that you want to get across. I decided to ask myself some questions about teachers. I then thought about how to deliver it. I thought the best way was to tell you my responses to those question.

1) Why do teachers teach?

In my opinion, teachers decide to teach as a job for one of three reasons:

- i) Either they like teaching people or students.
- ii) They like their subject whether they are a Maths teacher, English teacher, PE teacher etc.
- iii) OR, thirdly, they like teaching, and they like their subject, so a combination of the two.

It certainly is not for the money you get paid as a teacher! Something I have always wondered when I started in this profession, is why do Maths teachers teach maths? If they are good at maths why not be an accountant? They earn more money than a teacher, with far less hassle!

Teaching is certainly not an easy option.

2) What is the role of a teacher?

There are so many opinions about the role of a teacher, so for ease I looked it up on the internet, and am just going to give you a list of some of the things I found:

- To educate students and impart knowledge
- To have a sound knowledge of the subject they teach
- To plan good lessons to mark classwork and homework giving students feedback on how they can improve
- To help guide students to learn new skills
- To manage behaviour and to give praise wherever possible.

3) What is different about teachers at the Royal Alexandra and Albert School?

They are unique. They do a different job from most teachers that work in a day school. They do everything in terms of the list I've just read out to you, BUT they do so much more.

Because we are a boarding school, their role is much bigger. Not only do they impart knowledge...they give you time.

Think of all the times you are influenced or interact with a teacher outside of the classroom.

You may play pool with a teacher in a boarding house. You may have breakfast or dinner and sit next to a teacher discussing football results, Celebrity Big Brother or just having a general chat. You are taken on trips or outings which usually involve teachers outside of their teaching timetable, in the evenings or at weekends.

Think about the other things a teacher does here outside of their main job which is to teach. The revision clubs that are set up for you, the 1 to 1 talks about school or life in general, or your troubles or issues that are worrying you.

What else do they do? When it's cold and wet and they give up their time to take you on rugby fixtures, netball, cross country etc. The music clubs, dance clubs, drama or even the other activities like Octopush, film club, cookery club or...Board Game Club...with the Headmaster!

I will never forget the time I found out about Octopush. Octopush was run by Mr Foreman. In the first few weeks of teaching it he had forgotten to collect the register from the staff room. At 4pm, he was ready to teach but knew he had to take a register or he would get into trouble with Ms Vaughan. I bumped into him as he was coming into reception to collect the register...he was wearing a wetsuit, snorkel, mask, and had flippers under his arm.

Why do teachers here do these things? The answer: Because it is important and because they care. It is important because these moments produce interaction between staff and students. It builds relationships, trust and mutual respect. It's important to take advantage of these moments because this is what makes this place unique.

4) Why am I telling you this?

I am telling you this because this is my perspective, my viewpoint. Is a teacher here to just teach? Or is it more than that? Think about it from their point of view.

Teachers are not just here to tell you off or tell you to work harder all the time. That is not what they get their enjoyment and fulfilment from.

I think sometimes teachers get seen in one light and get a rough deal. They work exceptionally hard and are dedicated to you and your learning and making a difference.

To end my assembly, I am going to let you watch a little clip of your teachers. The reason for showing you this is to prove to you that they are unique. Some had a talent for this...some did not, but more importantly, I want you to understand that teachers are human. They do have personalities, and are not robots! I also want you to see that they are more than just someone standing at the front of a classroom delivering instructions to you.

Please give them the respect they deserve.

I would like to thank the Head Boy Marquiose who helped me put this together. Just so you're aware, I was the director, and he did all the geeky bits like put it all together. Thanks Marquiose.

You can view the video [here](#).

Enjoy!