

S6 LEAVERS' CEREMONY

23 April 2020

Ian Phillips

Thanks to everyone for taking the time to read this. I will keep this relatively short as this is quite an emotional time for me. This is the last time I get to talk to you all together.

The time has flown by since you started here six years ago. I was not your Year Head back then however I feel I have always had a strong bond with you. I was the Year Head for many of your older brothers and sisters and therefore knew lots of you and your families. I was also lucky enough to spend time with many of you on our trip to New York where we had a great time (highly educational of course).

I am lucky enough to get the opportunity to write this speech and see how well you have all turned out. However, we need to acknowledge all the hard work and support provided by your previous Year Head. I therefore want to thank Miss Lewis for all the hard work she did with you in your first four years in MCHS. She did a fantastic job and deserves all our thanks. She welcomed you in and worked extremely hard to set you on the path to success you have today. She helped give you some of the confidence and respect I see in all of you. She worked hard to get to know all of you and when she visits the school I see she still has an excellent relationship with you.

I know how hard Miss Lewis worked to support you through your first set of exams as we sat across from each other regularly working late into the night ensuring everything was in place to support you. She formed great relationships with you all and as I could see gained your trust. She always made time to sit with any of you who needed some reassurance or help with issues in or out of school. With the support of Miss Lewis you went on to achieve fantastic exam results in S4.

I was initially worried how you would take the news that Miss Lewis was retiring and I would take over. However, the incredible cheer and smiles I received in that first assembly was fantastic and immediately I knew what a great year group you would be. This was October in S5 for us. This is often described as the most important year of your academic life so no pressure on me then. However, you worked incredibly hard throughout the year once again and deserved the fantastic results you achieved.

When I was thinking about this speech it was easy to think of all the work carried out by Miss Lewis. In fact, it was difficult to condense all her work into the short summary I have talked about. Then I started to think about what I have done for you.... Then I started to struggle. I was thinking – what have I done? Well what quickly came to mind was – have an absolute blast. I have had a great time with you – that's what I have done. I definitely got a fantastic deal when I started working with you. I can honestly say I have enjoyed every day working with you all.

I have found you to be mature, hardworking and generous young men and woman. I am proud of the way you conducted yourself through S5 and S6. At the end of the

Christmas dances you managed to collect a room full of food and presents for the elderly people in our area.

In S6 your participation in community based positions was outstanding

- Academic family
- Community Involvement
- Peer Mentoring
- Buddying
- Sport coaching
- Young Enterprise
- Ambassadors (the most we have ever had)
- Charities week
- Anthony Nolan Register

We often had a laugh at our assemblies but the message from me was always the same. I always told you to do your best – no one can ever ask any more from you.

Well what next?

We spent a lot of time towards the end of S6 looking at the next steps for you. Your Pupil Support teachers have been excellent at providing support for you. Whatever path you decide to take you should be confident in yourself. I will remind you what I have always said to you - do your best. If you work hard and be confident in your ability I know you will succeed in whatever it is you choose.

I want to take this chance to thank all the parents/carers for the support you have given your children and the school over the years. I really appreciate it and I have enjoyed working with you. I got to know many of you quite well over the last eighteen months and I appreciate all the kind and supportive words I have received along the way.

Back to my year group. I will really miss working with you on a daily basis. Your PLT have been excellent and have always worked hard on your behalf. They are in regular contact with me during the lockdown and always look to support you and the school. I will really miss our chats. I hope some of you decide to keep in touch as I would love to know how things are going. And I really mean this – if there is anything I can do to help you in the future you know where I am – usually at my desk for 12 hours a day.

I have loved my time as your year head and am so sorry I couldn't present this speech to you in person. I am genuinely fond of every one of you. I promise you – I will never forget the class of 2020.

Thank you for everything.

Ian Phillips – Proud Year Head of 2020