

July 2022

## Rutlish School Full Governing Body Annual Statement 2021/22

As I commented at the successful Year 11 Graduation just gone, the last time I spoke at a similar event was in June 2019 when the current Year 11 were in Year 8. They hadn't even started their GCSEs and Ms Howarth, who has now completed her third year as Headteacher, hadn't yet started at Rutlish School. In many ways, through Covid, time appeared to drag, yet on the other hand time has flown by.

2021/22 has once again been a challenging year. The pandemic, in terms of significant disruption to schooling, has now eased slightly and - thankfully - public examinations in Year 11 and Year 13 returned. Let's hope the coming academic year will see us return to something resembling full normality. With so much ongoing distraction at a Governmental level, guidance from the Department for Education and its priorities for secondary schools has been challenging, at times confusing and too often presented at the last minute.

As has already been communicated to Parents, Carers and all Staff of the School, Rutlish underwent its anticipated Ofsted Inspection in April, exactly five years since our last Inspection. The School retained its Outstanding rating, in a climate where revised and tighter criteria mean many fewer schools are being classified in this category. I can only testify to the sheer hard graft by so many stakeholders over the last 12 months to ensure that Rutlish remained an Outstanding School according to the new Ofsted criteria. I would like to thank all for their efforts during this process, from the Governing Body to Parents and Carers, students and of course our wonderful, committed Rutlish School Staff. It was a true team effort and a worthy outcome to reward us for the efforts undertaken throughout the pandemic and beyond. We can expect Ofsted to return to Rutlish within the next two years for a further Inspection.

It is also worth noting that over the last three years the School has had a completely new Senior Leadership Team, including a new Headteacher and two new Deputy Headteachers as well as a new School Business Manager and four newly-promoted permanent Assistant Headteachers.

Other positive indications that illustrate Rutlish School life is returning to normal, include: Year 8 winning the National Schools Careers Challenge in Birmingham; a 'Quality of PE and Sports Distinction award' for the PE Department; Geography field trips & Duke of Edinburgh expeditions during the last two terms; visits to theatre and museums; the House System and the CCF have hugely increased their activities, to the benefit of students' sense of belonging and working together; a variety of specialist speakers to the School on various topics such as theatre workshops on Shakespeare, PSHE topics and careers advice etc.

During the summer holidays, extensive maintenance and repair work will take place at the School and on our playing fields. New windows will be installed around the whole of the inside of the Quad. There will be a considerable uplift in appearance to other areas of the School.

Up to £200,000 will be spent on the playing fields, including an irrigation and drainage system that we hope will make year-round usage possible. Rutlish also has access to use the original School Playing Fields at Nursery Road, off Dorset Road, (adjacent to the Abbey Recreation Ground); I have made a request to the Headteacher that the School should take advantage of this facility.

As mentioned in last year's Annual Statement, our priorities this year included appointing a new Director of Sport. I am pleased to confirm that this position has been filled, with our new Director of Sport starting in September. I anticipate that this appointment will further drive competition and participation in sport across the whole School.

Over the last few months, the Governing Body has also commissioned an Estate Plan for the School, detailing the facilities which will be required over the next two to five years to provide the best opportunities for our students. This will include a whole feasibility survey, but two capital items already on the list are an all-weather Astro Turf area and more building and capacity expansion of our SEND capabilities. Sustainability will be a major consideration for all plans. More information will follow during the next academic year.

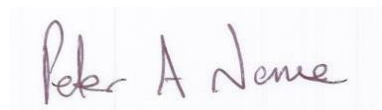
I was proud to preside over the opening of the Rutlish School Memorial Garden at the end of May in tribute to all the Rutlish Fallen who have died in battle since the School opened in 1895. This includes the 181 former boys who died in combat during the First and Second World Wars of the last century. It has been a project that I have been working on since 2013. The School also uses the Memorial Garden for wellbeing-related activities during the School day for the benefit of students and staff.

In terms of the public examination results due this August, I sincerely hope that our students get the results they deserve, and I look forward to seeing as many of our boys as possible return to RR6 for Year 12. To our Year 13 leavers: live your dreams. I wish you all the best of fortune in whatever you do. Please come back and visit from time to time. As a former Rutlish boy myself, I can assure you will always receive a warm welcome.

On behalf of the Governing Body, let me close as usual by thanking the partnership that comprises the Rutlish School community: the Parents and Carers, all of our School Staff and, of course, the students. It is a precious partnership with one overriding object: to do the very best for each and every Rutlishian.

Please enjoy your summer break until September, when we re-open our doors to 240 new students as they begin their secondary school career at Rutlish School.

Thank you



Peter A. Norrie  
Chair, Rutlish School Full Governing Body