

## Tributes from alumni for Richard Furlong Brown



All those who have sent tributes for Richard have expressed their sadness and along with the comments below, send their sincere condolences.

***“Fergie Brown was one of my house masters at Ashton along with Works & Leds back in the 1980’s.***

***He was a brilliant housemaster striking the right balance between authority but also able to turn the odd blind eye when teenagers behaved like teenagers!***

***In the Maths classroom he was equally excellent, the only reason I got an A at GCSE – I still remember Pythagoras’ theorem to this day – he used to drill into us...S O H C A H T O A!!”*** – Phil Griffin, former pupil (84-90)

***“RIP RFB. I remember him quietly telling some of us that RFB could stand for Really Fine Bloke or Right F\*\*\*\*\* B\*\*\*\*\*, depending on how we acted. It always ended up being the former, he was a wise man.”*** – James Wakefield, former pupil (87-94)

***“RFB was a proper teacher! Good guy all round.”*** – Dan Knowles, former pupil (94-01)

***“I know I speak for many when I say that he was one of the most influential and formative teachers in my life. I owe a great deal to the wisdom and wit of RFB.”*** – Kris Moeckell, former pupil (02-09)

***"RIP Fearnie Brown. Great teacher, coach & bloke. One of the good guys."*** – Damian Hughes, former pupil (84-91)

***"I had the pleasure of being taught both Maths and History by RFB during my time at LRGS. He was a real character and a great teacher. He had a wonderful "scary" veneer which soon mellowed to reveal a friend and mentor to many LRGS pupils."*** – Sam Crossley, former pupil (84-91)

***"Like many, I'll always remember what 'RFB' could have meant depending on your behaviour. It seems that many learned a lot from RFB, and not just about Maths."*** – Tom Hall, former pupil (06-12)

***"Always remembered for describing that his name was Richard F Brown. The 'F' stood for either 'Furlong' or something much more offensive if you got on the wrong side of him!"*** – Neil Doyle, former pupil (06-12)

***"One of the best teachers I ever had!"*** – Max Eccles, former pupil (11-13)

***"I started my teaching career at LRGS and he was a huge personality that I grew to like and respect. I learned a lot from him, there was a sheer delight in his teaching that was infectious. He was proper 'old school'! There were also some good times in The Brown Cow: I would just sit and laugh my head off at the stories he'd tell, not all of them repeatable!"*** – Paul Sweeting, former teacher (92-97)

***"An LRGS legend"*** – Richard Halstead, former pupil (95-02)

***"What a guy he was. When he was effing and jeffing at rugby matches. He's defo a top 10 teacher.***

***Sad news. Pass my condolences on to his family."*** – Tom Marland, former pupil (89-96)

***"He was a brilliant teacher and I thoroughly enjoyed his lessons while I was at LRGS."*** – Gary Soar, former pupil (96-03)

***"While sometimes scary, RFB was a stand out teacher and got me through pure maths A level in the late 80's. Definitely one of my best teachers at LRGS. Rest in peace RFB!"*** – Steven Lewis, former pupil (81-88)

***"I always enjoyed my Pure Maths lesson with RFB. He was a great gent as well as being a great teacher."*** – Jonathan Oram, former pupil (88-95)

***"RFB was a fantastic teacher who knew how to get the most out of everyone. Keen cricket enthusiast too- my first lessons with him were during test 5 of the 2005 Ashes which was an experience."*** – Martyn Higson, former pupil (03-10)

***"A great teacher and wonderful boarding master."*** – Sam Blackburn, former pupil (95-02)

***"RFB was a real character and a real asset to LRGS. Rest in peace Sir."*** – Andrew Kevin Miller, (89-96)

***"Very sad news indeed"*** – Michael Burton, former pupil (92-99)

***"A great bloke always enjoyed his company and even his lessons"*** – Andrew Clark, former pupil (77-85)

***“He was a great..fair..honest teacher who always had the interests of the student at the forefront of his mind.”*** – Paul Foster, former pupil (84-91)

***“Enjoyed catching up with him over beers at the OL dinners over the years.”*** - Richard Bousfield, former pupil (86-93)

***“RIP RFB, a great loss”*** – Rob Huntington, former pupil (83-88)

***“A great teacher who influenced many.”*** - James Larton, former pupil (96-03)

***“Absolute Legend. Wouldn't be here without him. RIP RFB.”*** - Kamal Essa, former pupil (86-93)

***“Possibly the scariest man I have ever met in my life but one of the absolute best teachers at LRGS.”*** – Will Bellinger, former pupil (04-11)

***“I was dreadful at maths for the first 3 years, until I got RFB!”*** – Matt Bennett, former pupil (93-98)

***“He was a top guy. And everyone remembers the Right Fine Bloke / something else line!”*** – Colin Leckey, former pupil (89-96)

***“Mr Furlong-Brown was one of the iconic members of the school. A great loss”*** – Al-Yasa Khan, former pupil (09-16)

***“RIP RFB”*** – Peter Edgar, former pupil (91-98)

***“Outstanding teachers have a lifelong influence on their pupils and “Fergie Brown” was one of those teachers whose influence extended well beyond my school years. He even took us all to the North of France one year on a school trip and was great fun. He was a top man!”*** – Jonathan Pelham, former pupil (82-89)

***“Richard was a truly wonderful character, and his love for every aspect of LRGS life was both unequivocal and palpable, indeed, from what I saw he was a part of the very fabric of this amazing school. He was hugely respected, indeed I would say loved, by pupils, colleagues, governors and OLs. I personally enjoyed every interaction I had with him. He was fun to be around, instantly likeable, and his joie de vivre was simply infectious!***

***My son William left LRGS two years ago, and was incredibly upset at hearing the news today. He studies in Oxford now, and I have no doubt that ‘Mr Furley B’ (as he was so affectionately known to the boys in William’s year) played no small part in helping him realise his potential. We are all incredibly grateful for the positive influence he had (I suspect thousands of other families will feel likewise)***

***Suffice to say, he was one of those rare and wonderful people who improved every life he touched. He will be sorely missed for sure, but remembered with huge fondness.”*** – Michael Burrow, governor, former pupil (77-83), former parent and family

***“Richard was a truly wonderful character. He clearly loved every facet of LRGS life and contributed hugely over so many years. He was held in very high regard by pupils, parents, alumni, governors and his teaching colleagues. And he was without doubt, one of William’s absolute favourite teachers.”*** – Michael Burrow LinkedIn post

***“It is deeply saddening to learn this news and your help in sending my condolences to Mrs Furlong Brown would be appreciated. Mr Furlong Brown was among the best teachers during my study at***

***LRGS from 1995 to 1999. Please also send my warmest wishes to Mrs Furlong Brown and hope she can take great care and stay strong.*** – Edward Ma, former pupil (95-99)

***"I have very fond memories of my maths lessons with him. A tremendous teacher and lovely man. One of the best."*** – Dave Piercy, former pupil (96-03)

***"My sincere condolences to Rose"*** – John Gleasure, former pupil (81-88)

***"It was with great sadness that I have learned of the passing of Richard and would be most grateful if you would pass my condolences to his lovely wife Rose.***

***I had the pleasure of living next to them both in Bay View Cottages when I first joined LRGS as Bursar. They were a joy to know and live near them."*** - Jeremy Ranford, former colleague

***"RFB was variously my form tutor, maths teacher, french trip leader and cricket coach. Very fond memories - one of those VERY rare teachers whose contribution to your life stays with you forever. My memory of him was in his round-glasses-long-hair-at-the-back era in the 80s"*** – Peter Crossley, former pupil (85-92)

***"Very fond memories of RFB in the mid-80s across maths, form tutoring & cricket. A proper teacher - simultaneously very scary and very caring."*** – Peter Crossley, former pupil (85-92) LinkedIn post

***"I am very sorry to hear about RFB. I was in one of the first groups that he taught at LRGS, back in 1980, when he stood in for John Fidler for a term as our history teacher. So I was quite surprised to see him return a year or so later, this time teaching maths. It sounds pretty hackneyed to say so, but he was a unique character with his own individual style. He was my maths teacher and form master for the two years up to O-level (as it was back then, in the days when it still even had a bit of calculus on it). My main aptitude at LRGS was for languages, and I was only a fairly middling mathematician in lower school. But RFB's teaching was outstanding; something really clicked during those two O-level years, and I came out with an "A". Most importantly, though, I had learned with him to enjoy maths. I continued down the Classics line at school and university, but, in slightly later life, I became what is known as a "quantitative" or "mathematical" linguist. Nowadays, I spend a fair portion of my time teaching introductory and intermediate statistics. So RFB almost certainly had a far greater impact on my subsequent career than he would probably have imagined. I have good memories of his very lively and enjoyable classes, and also of a dedicated teacher who could read personalities well. I am sure he will be a great loss to the wider LRGS community, as he would still have had so much to offer in his retirement; and it is sad that he was not able to enjoy more of it."*** – Andrew Wilson, former pupil (78-85)

***"I attended LRGS from 1981-88. Richard taught me first year Maths and O level History. He was an outstanding teacher who always gave his all for his pupils. He certainly deserved his nickname of "Right fine bloke". I now work at Lancaster and Morecambe College as a Learning Support Tutor with Maths specialism. I still use some teaching techniques that Richard introduced me to, for example, the way he introduced Algebra. I also remember Richard and Mr Iddon(French) who took us on the second year trip to France in 1983, which proved to be an enjoyable experience. At LRGS, Richard was one of many outstanding teachers from that era. I owe a massive debt of gratitude to them all for giving me the best possible start in life."*** – Steven Gerrard, former pupil (81-88)

***"During my time at LRGS I at first found "Fergie Brown" scary and a little intimidating. Subsequently I got to know the amazing teacher and mentor, who I will never forget, respect and***

***owe a huge debt of gratitude to. I have many fond and amusing memories of my time in his form and lessons.***

***Also hearing him bellowing my name on the memorial field, when playing for the first team inspired me greatly, as well as his constructive criticism the following Monday morning, for what I could have done better!***

***His animation, wisdom, kindness, drive and passion were clear to see and he will be greatly missed. My thoughts are with you at this difficult time. A great man!"*** – Mark Wright, former pupil (87-94)

***"He was a great teacher and a great person! He will be sorely missed by all who had the pleasure to be taught by him and get to know him!"*** – Sam Stott, former pupil (10-17)

***"He was my maths teacher and responsible for pulling me up from an average c grade student to an a in the end. I think my son Charlie may have met him too a few years back now."*** – Bill Knowles, former pupil (82-87)

***"I seem to recall Mr Furlong Brown initially came to the school on a short term placement, which was when he taught me. I wasn't a particularly academic nor necessarily well behaved pupil however he managed to bring out the best in me with his kindness, energy and enthusiasm. He couldn't have been teaching long as I recall he was quite young at the time however he seemed to connect with everyone in the class with a rare natural teaching ability. I also have a memory that we all had a whip round of our pocket money to buy him a leaving gift at the end of term. I don't recall that happening for anyone else during the rest of my time at the school."*** – Bruce Philips, former pupil (78-83)

***"He coached me at cricket and through my Maths A level, he made a big impact on me."*** – Jeremy Graham, former pupil (86-88)

***"Sorry to hear about Richard passing - he was definitely one of life's characters and will be missed from "post OL dinner drinks".*** – Chris Carson, former pupil (92-99)

***"I am sure that you will be inundated with similar messages from many boys who will have had the pleasure of being taught by RAFB and so perhaps you can add mine to a long list.***

***I look back on my school career (1980-87) as the making of who I am today, and RAFB was one of my biggest influences. I must admit I can't remember much of the content of what he taught me, but I do remember the positive impact of his personality on myself and others.***

***I remember his humour: he taught me History in the 2nd form (1981-2) and my parents always remember his comment "Not the world's greatest historian..." delivered in his unique dead-pan manner at Parents' Evening. He was right, of course!***

***I remember his passion: he taught me Pure Maths in the Sixth Form (1985-7) and succeeded where others had failed at giving me confidence in my ability. I specifically remember him imploring our set to do better after a disappointing performance in our Mocks, which had a hugely positive impact on me, ultimately leading to a happy outcome at A level.***

***In addition, although he spent much of his summer terms on the Douthwaite running cricket teams, he was also very generous with his time in supporting Athletics fixtures through timekeeping and other managerial duties.***

***I am sure that he will be sorely missed by many others, and will be raising a glass in his memory in the coming days.*** – Nick Bray, former pupil (80-87)

***“He will be sorely missed. Took care of me very well during my time at Ashton House.”*** – Adrian Wong, former pupil (09-11)

***“He was always held in such high esteem, respected by pupils throughout the school for his no nonsense approach. His sense of humour was brilliant, and was always enjoyed by those he taught.”*** – Martin Peters, former pupil (98-05)

***“Richard was always very grateful for my having appointed him to LRGS, and when we used to meet in later years, was very good at passing on news of the school as he saw it.”*** – Tony Joyce, former colleague

***“He was a great teacher and will be missed!”*** - Nick Jackson, former pupil (91-98)

***“RFB was my form master ('T') and maths teacher while at LRGS. Upon learning that RFB would be our form teacher, we were worried. There were rumours circling that his bin had dents in it from kicking it if a boy misbehaving and worse, that a board wiper might head your way if you misbehaved. We needed have worried - RFB, was a wonderful teacher, with a great sense of humour. He genuinely cared for the success of his students, and supported our development. His title of 'right fine bloke' was well deserved”*** – Freddie van Mierlo, former pupil (01-08)

***“He was a Right Fine Bloke.. embodies everything great about LRGS. He shaped many lives in his career”*** – Matthew Speight, former pupil (94-01)

***“One of the good guys!”*** – Graeme Bowerbank, former pupil (89-96)

***“Great guy who did outstanding things for LRGS.”*** – Brian Ashton MBE

***“I was never actually taught by Mr Furlong Brown throughout my seven years at the school but he always seemed to know who I was, what I was interested in and would always gladly have a chat with you. I must confess that I was a little nervous when first speaking to him, given he had a reputation as a disciplinarian (though always of the firm but fair variety) but soon learned to relax in his company... I am glad I did, as he recommended the Love album 'Forever Changes' to me, which became a teenage favourite (and still is to this day!). It was always evident how much he cared about the school and I imagine his enthusiasm for it was infectious and inspiring for other members of staff.***

***I always enjoyed bumping into him after my time at the school, be it at an OL event or simply by accident. He was always very happy talking about school or a myriad of other topics ... it transpired he knew the road I was then living down in West Hampstead very well from his younger days!***

***A few years ago our dear friend from school Martin Sutherland died in his mid-twenties. It is some measure of what a great man Mr Furlong Brown was that he came to the funeral, especially as Martin always had a relationship with the school that might most charitably be described as problematic. His presence there that sad day was a great surprise and comfort to many of us there. Discussing this kind act since Mr Furlong Brown's own sad passing, we strongly suspect that he never actually taught Martin, but was simply there to do what he did so well - represent LRGS.”***  
– Ben Cottam, former pupil (95-02)

***"I had the pleasure of being taught by Richard during my time at LRGS between 2004-2010. He truly was one of the best teachers I ever had. His style of teaching was disciplined but completely fair. His care for the pupils also went far beyond just the classroom. Having also experienced him as a duty master in Ashton house he was a real character to be around and genuinely cared about us as individuals and our personal development outside of our academic studies. I think it's fair to say he left a lasting impression on all of us, and for all the right reasons. He will be sorely missed and my sincere condolences go to you and your family for your loss. I trust he is now at peace; he was and remains a first class chap and Right Fine Bloke."*** – Tom Forshaw, former pupil (04-10)

***"He was a cracking teacher and a great bloke. Remember my first lesson with him where he told us his initials were RFB and we'd all know what they stood for by the end of the lesson!!! RIP"*** – Peter Aikman, former pupil (86-93)

***"RFB did a huge amount for me, providing sage advice and support as my form-master for two years. His advice stuck with me and is one of the reasons my career has gone the way it has. He stuck up for me, supported me when life at home wasn't great, and was generally a top bloke. RIP Fergie, you will be sadly missed"*** – Johan Perkins, former pupil (87-92)

***"Mr Furlong-Brown was by far one of the best teachers the school ever had."*** – Arijit Bhattacharyya, former pupil (11-18)

***"Great teacher. Used to say 'don't be scared of exams, I do them for fun, I do them just because I can'. RIP."*** – Andrew Nattrass, former pupil (90-97)

***"A true asset to LRGS and responsible for guiding many pupils to future successes."*** – Jan-Erik Back, former pupil (93-95)

***"He was a fantastic teacher and a real mentor. I would have messed up my maths A level without his guidance. RIP."*** – Amro Ahmed-Ebbiary, former pupil (97-02)

***"Fantastic teacher"*** – David Roberts, former pupil (93-00)

***"He was without a doubt the best teacher I ever had - and a terrific bloke on top of that. Please pass on my condolences."*** – Joe Atkinson, former pupil (94-01)

***"Right Fine Bloke- will be missed. He helped me with maths after school in the boarding house for which I will be eternally grateful."*** – William Peter Buck, former pupil (08-10)

***"Fantastic teacher. Lovely person. Provided inspiration to many boys, myself included (having followed a career that leaned heavily on the knowledge of mathematics he instilled). Will be much missed."*** – Richard Jordan, former pupil (83-90)

***"I just wanted to send my condolences and to say that he was an excellent teacher. I always thoroughly enjoyed his lessons and he was a genuinely lovely man. He will be very missed."*** – George Mundy, former pupil (07-14)

***"I was and still am genuinely shocked by RFB passing, I enjoyed many a good cricket chat over the last 5 years with him. Really, really sad news."*** – Shaun Whatmuff, former pupil (80-86)

***"Richard joined the school when I entered the middle sixth form. He was one of the boarding house staff at Ashton. I remember him well. He was genuinely interested in the boys in a way that was almost unique 40 years ago. He was in the same category as Brian Salmon in that he seemed only***

*interested in what he could give. Very sad to hear of his death but his family should know that he lives on in my memory. Even though our paths crossed so briefly, less than a year, I cannot think of LRGs without thinking of him. That's how much of an impression he made. It doesn't surprise me that he stayed there for the rest of his career."* – Sunil Limaye, former pupil (74-81)

*"Richard taught me GCSE maths and was a larger than life character in all respects. I have two clear memories of him:*

*1) Reminding all new pupils that his initials were RFB - which could stand for "Right Fine Bloke" -- or an alternative, which, he warned us, we did not want to find out about....*

*2) Leading us into the corridor of the Timberlake Building around Christmas to disturb other classes by singing Good King Wenceslas (his favourite carol) out loud. He used to kick open the doors of other classrooms so that everyone would hear us!"* – David Robinson, former pupil (94-01)

*"I was deeply saddened to read the news of Richards passing and I wanted to write and tell you how sorry I am for your loss.*

*It was thirty years ago that Richard started to teach me A level maths and he taught me many life lessons too along the way. It was an honour to serve alongside him on the Old Lancastrian committee and a huge honour to nominate him for president. In my time there, there has never been a more worthy candidate. Rich was always a delight to meet at the dinners as well the odd impromptu supper in your home and the club will not be the same in his absence. Although I only knew him as a teacher and from the club, he became one of the best gentlemen it has ever been my pleasure and privilege to have known.*

*Rich was a man whose life lessons have served me well and whose opinion I sought, highly valued and trusted. Quite a few years ago after an Old Lancastrian dinner in Edinburgh, I shared a few more drinks and chatted with Rich till about 5am back at his hotel. I was reconsidering a life choice I had made about not having children and if I would be content on simply being an Uncle Rich myself. He told me he had no regrets but if I remember correctly that he was Godfather to Ian Whitehouse's children, that it was his duty to nurture them, how he loved them as his own surrogate children, and how he spoilt them rotten. He told me that if I did change my mind, which I did, in no small part to that conversation, that I wouldn't regret it. And I haven't. And for that alone, I am truly thankful and will be forever grateful for his warmth and wisdom and friendship. I just hope that my boy goes on to have teachers even half as great as Rich.*

*Please let me or the Old Lancastrian club know if I or we can do anything for you or in way of memory or Rich. And I hope you are finding a measure of comfort in surrounding yourself with his closest friends at this difficult time."* - Richard Brigg, former pupil (85-92) and OL Committee member.

*"A great man and a great teacher. I will never forget his opening line in my first lesson. "My initials are RFB.....work it out yourselves". Genuinely brilliant and charming man."* - David Sharatt, former pupil (84-91)

*"I was so shocked and saddened to hear of Richard's death last week, all the more so because Richard is fixed in my memory as one of the younger generation of teachers when I was at school; I have clear memories of him starting out, teaching me maths and also history to many of my friends, it still feels like yesterday.*

***As a history teacher, I think Richard was a great addition and invaluable help to my dad's team, and he has clearly done an incredible amount for the school community since I left, he will be greatly missed.***

***I'm still in touch with some friends from school and they were of course, equally shocked and saddened by this news. It did also however bring on a wave of happy memories, comments and anecdotes from many of his memorable lessons, which were always lively and fun. As I say, it feels to us as if it was yesterday.***

***Richard will certainly live long in all our memories.***" - Richard Lea, former pupil (79-86) and son of former teacher, John Lea

***"Dear Rose,***

***My name is Ruaidhri Johnston, and I wanted to write and express my sincere condolences about Richard's passing. I imagine you have been inundated with messages of support, and I thought I would add mine.***

***RFB was a very special teacher to me. He taught me maths in Year 9, and was instrumental in me "pulling my finger out" in the build up to and then throughout GCSE Maths. Both my mum and I have a very clear memory of parent's evening that year, where he made the most astute assumption about me a teacher ever made, and I will try and paraphrase it below:***

***"Ruaidhri, you have started working hard in Maths, and I'm pleased with your grades. As it stands, you're in line for top-set. However, I don't think you should aim for it. You would hate being bottom of that set, you would lose motivation, and you'd be a pain in the backside for whichever teacher you had. The normal set would suit you better, and I think you'll achieve a high grade there."***

***Obviously, I'm having to be creative with that, as it was over 12 years ago. I can honestly say though that a teacher has never been more right about me. RFB was able to get the best out of me, and understood me perfectly. That instinct for teaching is something you rarely see.***

***Outside of the classroom RFB was also a companion for me onstage as part of Emma Rucastle's All The World's A Stage production. We performed at The Duke's and travelled down to Stratford together to perform at The Dell theatre at the RSC. His dynamic personality was obvious when performing, and I will cherish those memories.***

***I lost my father just before I started at LRGS, and I spent my full 7 years there as a boarder. Many teachers were instrumental in making me feel welcome, and RFB wasn't one I came across until I'd been there for a couple of years. I think the overwhelming impression from him was that once you'd earned his respect he would continue to give it to you. At the time, I felt quite isolated at school, and Richard's support of my acting endeavours, and our chances to chat on the weekends when he was covering boarding duties were special to me. I will miss him greatly.***" - Ruaidhri Johnston, former pupil (06-13)

***Dear Rosemary***

***I was so sorry to hear the very sad news of Richard's death. I overlapped with him on the staff for only three years, and not even in the same department, but my memories of him are of a***

*wonderful colleague and a committed, dedicated schoolmaster in true LRGS style. The tributes from his former students abundantly confirm that.*

*Elizabeth, our daughter, whom you taught at Dallas Road Primary School (and who remembers your teaching with fondness and as a real inspiration), joins me in sending our sincere condolences.* - Dr Peter Mason, LRGS staff 1977-83