

Head of School

Speech Day 2021

Congratulations to our prize winners today.

I'd like to talk to you this afternoon about a simple question.

Who Am I?

When we arrived in Year 7, or at whatever stage our LRGS journey began, this question was no doubt resounding loudly in our heads. Not only, Who am I?

but, Who will this school allow me to be?

And, most crucially;

Who will this school help me to become?

We all arrived at LRGS with our own strengths and interests. For those interested in sport, there was a huge variety of very competitive sport on offer: Rugby, Cricket, Rowing, Badminton, Handball, Swimming, Golf, Athletics, Water Polo.... We didn't just improve our skills in these areas, we learned about teamwork and resilience. We learned about victory and defeat. For those interested in Music and Drama, there were clubs celebrating a huge variety of instruments from the Ukulele to the Saxophone; you could make friends with similar interests in bands, choir and orchestra, you could perform in drama club and put on productions with the Girls' Grammar. Like-minded people could find each other quickly by looking at the wealth of activities on offer and turning up to Warhammer, Debating, Chess, Languages and Orienteering. It didn't matter who you were or what you were interested in, you could find people who shared your interests at LRGS and be on your way to making lifelong friends and developing lifelong talents.

And the opportunities kept on coming. As we moved through the school, we were offered the opportunity to join the CCF, MedSoc and

D of E. We tried out new skills and started to look at career pathways. All the while we were able to think, is this me? Or is this me? As we continued on our journey of self-discovery.

Academically we were encouraged to compete with quiz teams, spelling tests, Maths Challenges, and Science competitions.

And then, just as we were primed for our GCSEs, Covid hit. The culmination of all our hard work to date was right in front of us and then with one press conference it vanished. Some of us felt robbed of the chance to flex our academic muscles and show the examiners what we were capable of achieving; some of us felt relieved; some wished they hadn't decided to save themselves for the real thing. It was a surreal time for us all and one we will never forget. But through it all, LRGS kept us united and helped us to realise that as novel as staying at home was, we actually really wanted to be back in school.

In Sixth Form we adjusted to the arrival of girls and quickly felt as though they had always been there. They aren't an addition to the Sixth Form, they are an integral part of the Sixth Form and we learn from each other on a daily basis. We were introduced to the idea of study periods and struggled initially with self-motivation and organization.

We become more aware on a daily basis of our strengths and weaknesses as we deal with new challenges and experiences. As we look towards our future, we become more aware of who we want to be in life and the journey we want to take. But as for my initial question, Who Am I? It still remains a tough one.

I don't think there is a single one of us in this room who could confidently answer this question about themselves. How do you define who you are? How do you put it into words? How do you even know?

Well, I think it's ok not to know. We're only just beginning to discover our true potential. LRGS has given us the very best education we could hope for. We have spent the past 6 years in pursuit of academic excellence, we have been presented with a wealth of opportunity and expert tuition. We now owe it to our school, our teachers, our fellow students and ourselves to take the next step with confidence into the world, to use the full power of the LRGS springboard to leap to great heights. We need to remember to keep our horizons broad and our ambition limitless, allowing ourselves to keep the question of 'Who Am I?' as one with endless possibilities.