



1

WELCOME

ST BIRINUS SCHOOL HAS BEEN AT THE HEART OF THE DIDCOT COMMUNITY FOR OVER 75 YEARS. DURING WHICH TIME WE HAVE DEVELOPED A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE AND EXPERTISE IN THE EDUCATION OF BOYS.



While single-sex schooling remains the norm in the private sector, we are proud to be the only state school in Oxfordshire to offer this superb opportunity for boys.

We would like to show you how we can provide a first-class education for your son which is caring, challenging and tailored to his personal requirements. We know that our teaching staff have an unrivalled understanding of the specific educational and emotional needs of boys and that they will bring out the very best in your son, whatever his interests and abilities.

Comprising about 1000 boys, the school is non-denominational, non-selective and single-sex from ages 11-16. Thereafter, the majority of our students go on to Didcot Sixth Form College which is our highly successful joint and mixed venture with Didcot Girls' School. We feel this provides the ideal balance of experience while creating the perfect atmosphere for success both in the classroom and beyond.

This prospectus will give you a flavour of the energy, passion and creativity which makes St Birinus School such an exciting place. I would urge you to visit our school website (www.st-birinus-school.org.uk) which gives a much more detailed overview of school life. Equally, I would be delighted to meet with you and to take you on a tour of our wonderful school.

John Marston BA (Hons), M.Ed.
Headteacher

2

MOVING UP

AT ST BIRINUS WE UNDERSTAND WHAT A BIG STEP THE TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY EDUCATION REPRESENTS, BOTH FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS.



"My son thoroughly enjoyed his transition days and was so excited and happy when he came home." ■ PARENT



We have a carefully tailored programme of events which will inspire our new students while reassuring them about the very exciting opportunities at their new school.

As early as Year 5, we invite prospective students to take part in our famous Moon Buggy competition which gives a taste of the school's excellent Technology department. By the time they have finished primary school, students will have had several more opportunities – such as our International Sports and Dragons' Den days – to become familiar with many other areas of the school.

When term begins, we endeavour to keep Year 7 boys in their own smaller community as they adjust to the new expectations and geography of the school. Our strategies in this area are constantly developing and the feedback from students and parents shows we are getting this process right.

We also understand that parents miss the "school gate" contact of primary school, so we have excellent lines of communication between school and home – we recognise that a strong connection between parents, students and teachers underpins any successful education. Through our website, weekly email bulletins and social media, we are striving to keep parents in the loop with every aspect of their son's education. Our innovative use of 21st Century technology will enable all parents to track live data about their son's progress and performance at school.



ENSURING THAT EVERY BOY REALISES HIS FULL ACADEMIC POTENTIAL LIES AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO AT ST BIRINUS.

We strive from the outset to make lessons enjoyable and engaging and establish good habits of work which will lead to a lifetime of successful learning. Developing high standards in literacy and numeracy are pivotal to this.

When boys begin Year 7, they are placed in House-based Tutor groups which they will remain in until the end of Year 11. Form Tutors will monitor your son's work, act as his mentor and serve as your first point of contact with the school. These tutor groups will also be linked to one of the four highly-competitive Houses.

Within Years 7 and 8, students will follow a broad range of subject areas, from English, Maths and Science, to the Humanities, Modern Foreign Languages, ICT, Technology, PE and the Arts. Running across these subject areas will be a range of core and life-long learning skills and aptitudes, ranging from literacy and numeracy to team work and presentation skills.

Increasingly from Year 9, students will have a greater choice and flexibility over some of the subjects they can study, thus providing a more personalised curriculum in preparation for GCSEs.

We take every care to ensure the boys make the most informed choices and parents are fully involved in the process. A full list of courses available can be seen in our supplementary documents.

We pride ourselves in offering a broad range of options involving academic, applied and vocational learning. This includes offering a range of teaching methods beyond the traditional classwork/homework system, from guest speakers to field trips and creating multimedia projects.

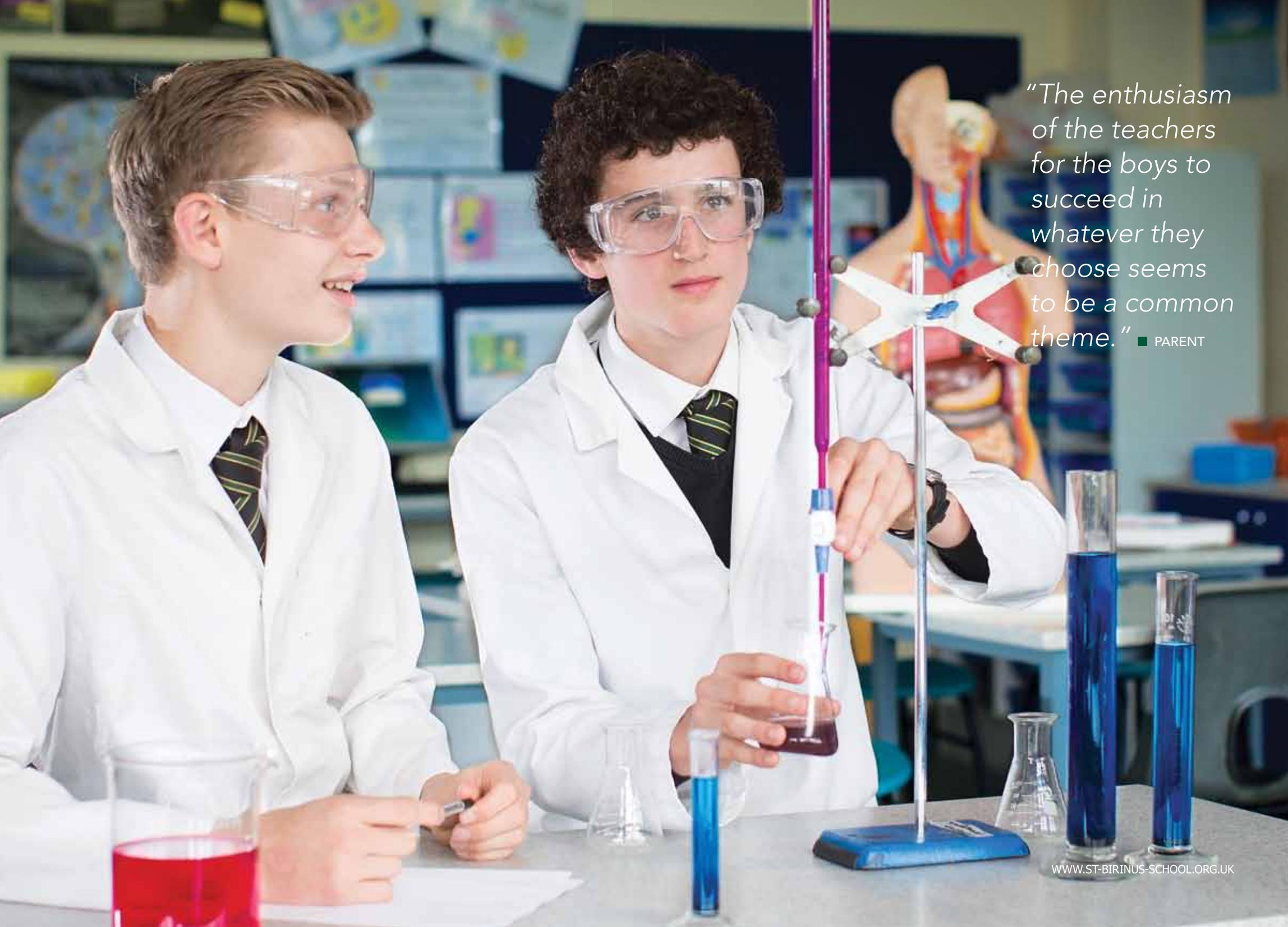
Great care is taken throughout Years 9, 10 and 11 to ensure that each boy's progress is supported and monitored carefully. We employ the most sophisticated range of statistical data to ensure no boy is left behind and that they all maximise their full potential. There are no ceilings to what our students can achieve.

We also provide extensive guidance to students on how best to achieve their future life goals, so that at the conclusion of Year 11 they are fully prepared for the next stage of their development – whether that be through continued study at our Sixth Form, acquiring a career or apprenticeship, or another path that they wish to explore.

3

LEARNING





"The enthusiasm of the teachers for the boys to succeed in whatever they choose seems to be a common theme." ■ PARENT

4

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

WHILE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT REMAINS THE YARDSTICK BY WHICH ANY SCHOOL MUST BE JUDGED, IT DOES NOT TELL THE WHOLE STORY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STUDENT.



At St Birinus we believe a complete education requires boys to be fully involved with all aspects of school life beyond the classroom. We offer a very broad range of creative, sporting and cultural activities to inspire and engage every student.

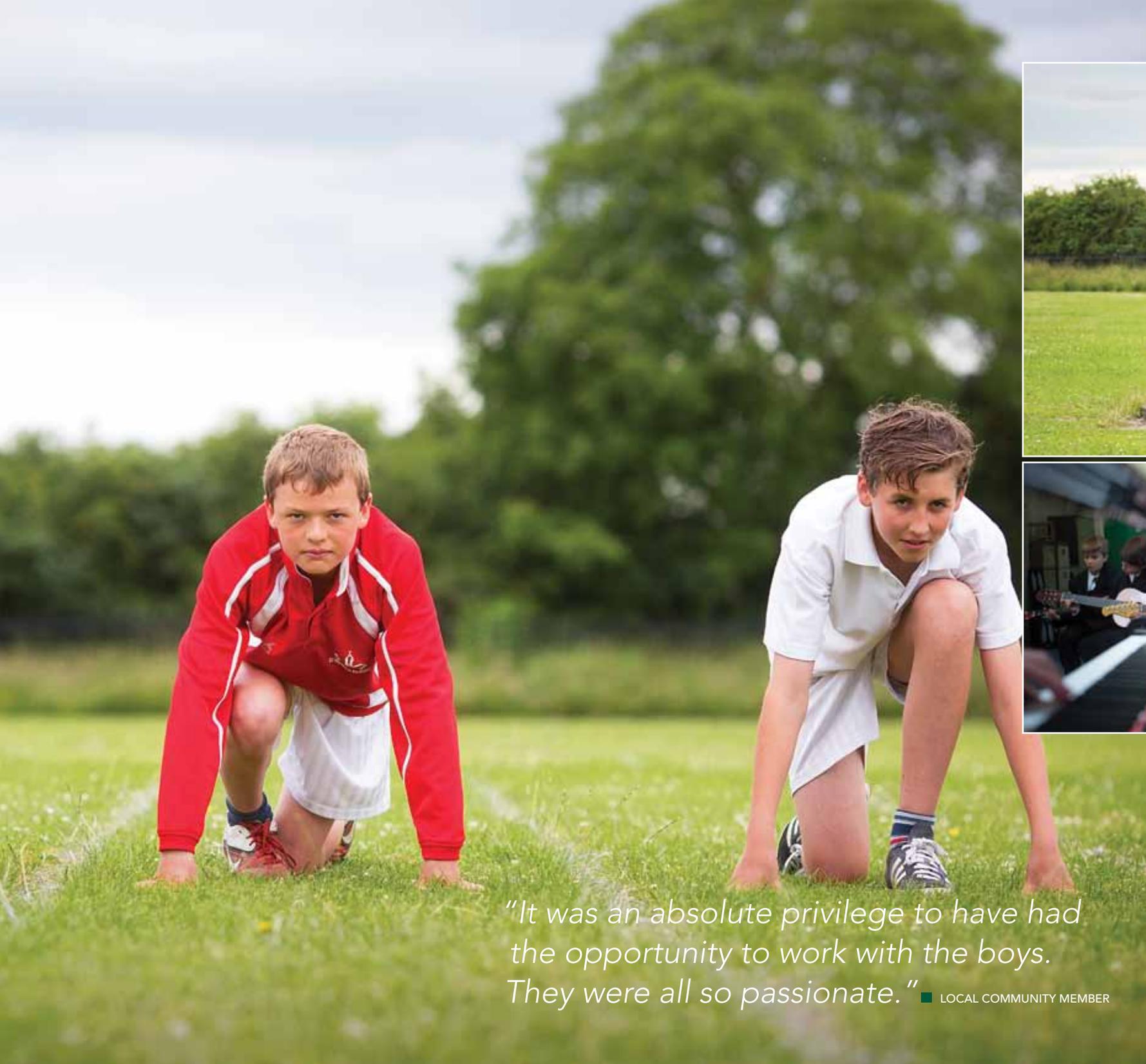
Sport plays a vital role in our extra-curricular programme and the school fields teams in every year group. The success of our football, rugby, cricket, tennis, swimming and athletics teams is demonstrated by their accomplishments at district, county and national levels, while a keenly contested House competition ensures the widest participation in sport throughout the school. We also have a truly exceptional weightlifting team – arguably the best in the UK – which continues to produce numerous national and international champions.

Our vibrant Performing Arts department ensures that boys can gain confidence that comes from public performance, whether that be in the choir, band or taking part in our celebrated school play. The standards of all are incredibly high, but the emphasis is very much on encouraging everyone to participate.

In fact, our programme of after-school and lunchtime activities is so extensive, we've produced a separate Extra-Curricular Activities booklet to list them all. Equally, we are always keen to hear about any ideas for clubs and activities that you, or your son, may have.

From maths challenges to mock trials, from attending concerts at the Albert Hall to raising funds for charitable causes, we know that somewhere between trekking in the Atlas Mountains and understanding the intricacies of Warhammer, we have the activities to fire the imaginations of all our boys.





"It was an absolute privilege to have had the opportunity to work with the boys. They were all so passionate." ■ LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBER

5

OUR BELIEFS



ST BIRINUS IS A COMMUNITY BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT EVERYONE WITHIN IT WILL TREAT EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT.

"Emphasis is placed on high-quality pastoral care and anti-bullying. A very impressive school."

■ PARENT





We expect our boys to be polite, respectful and hardworking and in turn we believe they should be taught in an environment that is caring, encouraging and – above all – safe and nurturing.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying of any form. We will not accept the behaviour of those who try to harass, insult or harm any person for any reason. Because we have pursued this policy effectively over the years, we know that our students feel secure and are able to develop the confidence and resilience necessary to succeed at school and in life.

Through regular assemblies, tutorials and extra-curricular activities we constantly seek to instil these values of tolerance, compassion and mutual respect. Our aim is to develop self-respect amongst all our boys and to shape them into confident young adults at ease with themselves.

We fully believe that our students are also community and global citizens, and we therefore strive to ensure that their education is outward-looking, embracing the world in its many wonders and challenges. The peer mentoring scheme, School Council and South Africa link school are just three of the many projects we run in which our students are proactively developing a strong awareness of their responsibilities in the wider community as well as enhancing their leadership skills.

As educators, we passionately believe that we serve as role models for our students and we are constantly looking to show strong, fair-minded leadership in everything we do. As the American writer, Tom Peters, put it, "Great leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders."

"Your pupils are a credit to the school - they were keen, confident and very polite."

■ LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBER

6

THE FUTURE

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE EXCITING TIME TO BE INVOLVED WITH ST BIRINUS.



Having recently become an Academy, we have achieved greater independence to pursue our ambitions and this has already led to numerous dynamic developments.

The school recently benefitted from the launch of our £4.8 million Science Centre, its 13 laboratories making it the best facility of its kind in Oxfordshire. Matching this level of ambition, we will soon have an all-weather sports pitch which will transform the teaching of PE in the school. Students also benefit from bespoke Maths, Humanities and Technology specialist learning centres.

At the same time, we are currently developing our House system, to place its activities at the very heart of the school and ensure the participation of every boy in the school in our extra-curricular activities. This represents a vital strand in pursuing our aim to make sure that no boy is left behind and that every boy has the very best possible chances to develop and succeed.

Our recent run of exam results are the best in St Birinus' history and our latest Ofsted report highlighted numerous outstanding qualities, leading us to believe that we are on the verge of achieving this status across the whole school. We know we have the vision, the leadership, the staff and the students to make this a reality and we very much welcome you and your son to join our exhilarating community that inspires excellence in everything we do.



"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at SBS and I am looking forward to the years to come." ■ STUDENT



“The Headteacher and senior team have established a highly cohesive and confident school community.” ■ OFSTED



7

CONTACT US

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE
SCHOOL IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

WWW.ST-BIRINUS-SCHOOL.ORG.UK

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