

Good evening to all,

This will be my only speech this year as I am off to Australia next week to visit my daughter who I miss very much. It is therefore the last opportunity I have to thank and say good bye to Mr Rosevear. Mark has been the Principal of the school for 5 years and made many valuable contributions amongst which I highlight the successful navigation of the pandemic, that now seems like something of the past, but nobody had anticipated or prepared for it and required fast decisions and actions. Mark, please receive our thanks for your service and our best wishes for the future.

One event that marked this year was the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Referring to this may not be the most cheerful start to a speech. However, my thoughts are not about her death, but rather about celebrating her life. Think about the places she visited, the people she met, the decisions she had to make and the impact these had on thousands or millions of people's lives. There is no doubt that the Queen had a special life. It is also true that she was born with many privileges. However, all of you here today have one privilege that the Queen never had and this is the possibility of choosing what you want to do with your lives and the liberty to pursue that dream. You are also very privileged by the fact that your parents chose The British Schools for the initial stages of your education and I certainly hope you are leaving the school with a strong foundation on which to build your future success. Success is very personal and comes in very different forms, shapes and sizes. What may be very fulfilling for some is probably like a bad dream for others. Each one of you will have to figure this out on your own. Do listen to all the advice you receive, but do not forget that you have one life, that is your own and that it is up to you to make the most of it. Do not be afraid to try different things or to change paths and move in different directions when things don't feel right.

But whatever you do, please do it with passion and purpose and remember to enjoy every step of the journey. In the words of Avicii: try to "live a life you will remember".

Congratulations to all of you and thank you very much.