

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

Dear Parents,

### **RENDCOMB COLLEGE: CLOSURE**

I write on behalf of the Governors of Rendcomb College with the extremely sad and very distressing news that the decision has reluctantly been taken to close the school. I appreciate that this news will be a huge shock to everyone.

This letter sets out the reasons for the closure and the steps we are taking to work alongside you all to ensure that the pupils are able fully to enjoy and benefit from the remainder of this academic year at Rendcomb before transferring to other schools in September.

I cannot tell you how sorry I am that it has been necessary to arrive at this decision, which I know will be so deeply felt across the College and everyone involved with it. For over 100 years, the College has been a constant and vibrant presence in the area; it is devastating to us all that this decision has had to be made.

We appreciate that there is a great deal for parents, staff and pupils to take in as a result of this announcement. Our priority however has been to inform families and staff as quickly as possible and to ensure that everyone finds out at the same time.

You will all realise that the financial climate for independent schools has been increasingly challenging over recent years. The impact of Covid, the rise in energy costs, the introduction of VAT on fees, and increases in National Insurance for employers have caused enormous problems for many people.

The effect of these on the independent schools sector has been significant, alongside the increased costs of running a school, coupled with a considerable drop in demand for places. You will be aware of an increasingly large number of such schools that are having to close.

Rendcomb is therefore not alone, but that is of little comfort. The College has such an excellent track record. It is a much-loved, cherished and exceptionally caring school, with an ethos that runs through everything. It is important to stress that the closure in no way reflects on the amazing work of our staff; their dedication to the school and commitment to the pupils, which they have shown day in day out, year after year, is outstanding.

Rendcomb College unfortunately does not own assets nor have the benefit of legacies that can be used to support its operations. For many years, the College has been dependent upon the generous support of the Rendcomb Foundation; this has totalled over £7m across the last ten years.

Whilst this has made the operation of the College possible until now, the enormous increase in the deficit for the current year, and the anticipated financial picture for next year, mean that such support is unsustainable. To continue to fund the school would require the sale of the buildings which the school currently occupies which would likewise make its continuation untenable.

The Trustees have therefore decided, with very considerable sadness, that it is simply not possible to continue to support the College.

The Governors have explored every alternative option for keeping the College open in some form, including looking at internal restructure, and talking with other schools and organisations. Unfortunately, none of these

has looked viable or sustainable, certainly not in a way that would enable an appropriate education for our pupils to continue.

Our intention is that the College will remain open until the end of the summer term and our priority is now to assist families in securing places at other schools for our pupils from September.

We have held urgent discussions with four local schools and organisations:

- Cheltenham College
- The King's School Gloucester
- Wycliffe College
- Wishford Education (which includes Westonbirt School, Hatherop Castle and Cricklade Manor Prep)

The talks have discussed their fit for our pupils to transfer them in September and the extent to which they can help and support current Rendcomb parents.

Staff across the College will be working alongside families to ensure that each pupil is able to join the school most appropriate to their needs. Everyone at Rendcomb realises that the sooner families have certainty for the next academic year the better.

We will be doing everything you would expect to support all the pupils in enjoying as full and normal an educational experience as possible: all external exams, trips and activities will go ahead as planned. The school will be holding special assemblies for pupils during the coming days to talk about the news. The pastoral care of all pupils will be a key priority for all staff during the next two terms, as it always has been.

We appreciate that you will have numerous questions, both about your child's future and the decision that we are announcing today. We will therefore be holding a series of meetings over the next few days to give you every opportunity to ask questions and to seek reassurances.

**The first of these will be a Teams meeting for parents tomorrow evening, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January, at 6:30pm.** Information for accessing this meeting will be sent in a separate email tomorrow morning.

**There will be a series of in-person meetings next week where parents will be able to ask any questions.**

We have organised these in ways we hope will most benefit families in terms of discussing the impact for pupils at different stages in their education. These will be as follows:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| • Years 10 and 12: | 8:30am, Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> January  |
| • Years 11 and 13: | 9:30am, Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> January  |
| • Years 7 - 9:     | 8:30am, Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> January |
| • Junior School:   | 9:30am, Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> January |

**In addition, we have invited the four schools and organisations mentioned above – to whom we have given prior warning of our decision – to present to parents. This will take place on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January between 1pm and 6pm at Rendcomb College.** More information to follow.

As you all know and appreciate, Rendcomb is a close-knit community. We need to work together to ensure that the school is able to remain viable and thrive until the end of the school year. I very much hope that the loyalty that families have shown to the school during their education here will continue over the next two terms so that we can complete a full academic year. This is of course particularly important for pupils taking public exams this summer.

This is a simply horrible day for everyone associated with Rendcomb College. I would like to thank you in advance for understanding the pressures that this will place on staff during the coming weeks. I am certain however that their professionalism, dedication and commitment to the pupils will ensure that they continue to do everything they can to support your child.

I hope that we can all make the very most of the remainder of the academic year and give pupils and staff a final wonderful experience at the school.

Yours sincerely,



**Nicholas Ford**  
**Chairman of Governors**