

Ladies and gentlemen. It was almost six months ago – on 20 January – that I paid my first visit to Prince Henry's. I was here as a representative of the Lord Speaker's Peers in Schools programme. Up to 40 of us, usually on a Friday that the Lords are not sitting, like today, go out to talk to students about our work in Parliament, and the part that the House of Lords plays in our constitutional system.

I am almost always treated kindly, and the quality of the questions and discussion is normally very high. I don't want to flatter you, but I can honestly say my experience here was exceptional – the questions were penetrating and the discussions we had really well informed. I came away from Prince Henry's with the most favourable impression of you imaginable.

A couple of months after that I had the pleasure of meeting your students in the Houses of Parliament when you came up to visit our educational centre and have a tour of the building. Your local MP – and my good friend – Nigel Huddleston and I attempted a double act describing what each of us do. Your students must be among the best informed in the county as far as Parliament and politics are concerned. Long may that continue, say I.

There was one particular aspect of that visit which I found particularly impressive and moving. Just five days before you were due to be in Parliament we experienced the terrorist attack on Westminster Bridge. Dr Evans wrote a marvellous letter of sympathy and support to Nigel Huddleston and me, and I know that all your students who were due to take part in the visit were given the opportunity not to come on the following Monday. Not one chose to stay at home – well done all of you!

Perhaps you can understand why I was so pleased and proud to accept the Head's invitation to be your guest at Speech Day.

I have to say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that I have sat through many school prize days, and listened to excruciatingly boring speeches from old buffers who, before presenting the prizes thought they should patronise young people by offering them glimpses of the blindingly obvious.

I hope that I can avoid doing that today.

I start by adding my own congratulations to everyone here today who has been awarded a prize. I am sure that they are all thoroughly deserved, and have been won as a result of real hard work.

I remember from my own days as a student how tension and anxiety built up in the weeks and months before each examination, and the huge sense of relief you got when you came through each phase, and you can say to yourself “well, that wasn’t quite as bad as I expected”. It’s a huge achievement and so I say “well done” to all today’s prize winners.

I also congratulate – and thank on behalf all of you – all the friends and family members – not only for coming here today, but also for providing that encouragement, love and support to each student in the school. Students can sometimes be pretty difficult to live with, particularly as the tension mounts and the examination days approach. So well done the supporters, as well.

I would also like to offer some words of comfort to those members of the school who have not been fortunate in winning prizes. We read in Ecclesiastes:

“The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.”

And Oliver Wendell Holmes, regarded as one of the most brilliant and popular writers in 19th century United States, wrote:

“The world’s great men have not commonly been scholars, nor its great scholars great men.” These days he would also refer to the world’s great women.

As you said, Dr Evans, in that very flattering introduction, I have to confess that away from politics, my second great interest, after railways, is football.

I can tell that when I made my maiden speech in the House of Lords 18 years ago I took as my text a quotation that combined the two worlds of politics and football. When I was much younger I made four attempts to get elected to the House of Commons, with varying degrees of failure. I described my earlier unsuccessful political career in Tommy Docherty’s words describing his time as a football manager: “When one door closes, another slams in your face”.

But perhaps more relevant is a comment by the one time US Democrat presidential candidate, Eugene McCarthy, who said:

“Being in politics is like being a football coach. You have to be smart enough to understand the game, and dumb enough to think it important.”

Back to the serious stuff of this afternoon. If you asked me what was my over-riding impression of Prince Henry’s High School I would say that you succeed brilliantly in promoting the traditional values you quote in your prospectus. There is a great list of them:

Courage, Courtesy, Dedication, Determination, Discipline, Equality, Excellence, Fairness, Friendship, Honesty, Humility, Initiative, Inspiration, Integrity, Leadership, Loyalty, Mutual Understanding, Resilience, Respect, Tolerance and Trust.

These aims are wholly consistent with what all of us who take part in any form of public life should have at the forefront of what we try to do for our country.

Your latest OFSTED report is astonishingly positive. Let me quote from it.

“The school provides an exceptionally high quality of education for its students. They make outstanding progress in their academic and personal development.”

“Teachers have very high expectations of students and develop excellent working relationships in the classroom. Students have very positive attitudes towards their learning.”

“Students are very proud of their school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary.”

“The Sixth Form is outstanding and students make excellent progress on their AS-level and A-level courses. Students receive first-rate information, advice and guidance, which help them to make well-informed decisions about future employment, education and training.”

The Headteacher is very ably supported by his Senior Leadership Team. School leaders are relentless in their drive for improvement in all parts of the school’s work.”

OFSTED even has nice things to say about your governors. “The very experienced governing body is exceptionally effective. Governors provide both support and challenge for the school and are committed to its continued improvement.”

These days schools must work hard to be relevant to the academic, economic, commercial and industrial Britain of today. As the world of work in Britain has changed almost out of all recognition compared with how it was 10, 20 or 30 years ago, so the country's institutions of learning have had to change and adapt, so that they are able to respond to the needs of our society, and help to deliver the range of skills and expertise which future employers will regard as essential in their workforce.

I hope you'll let me conclude by offering just two suggestions. The first is not to assume that the need to learn finishes with the end of formal study. The world is changing so fast, and globalisation is increasing so rapidly, that there are now very few exclusively British solutions to resolving problems and overcoming difficulties, so we must all continue to refine and extend the skills and knowledge we acquire, and be prepared to work with others from different countries, different faiths and different cultures.

My second suggestion is that you continue to put to good use the enquiring mind you've acquired during your time at school and continue to question the so-called "wisdom" preached at you by older people.

I was at university in the late '60s, and even discounting the fact that everyone looks back on the time they were young as the golden age better than anything that's come afterwards, the 60s decade was a good time for self-expression, personal freedom, vibrant music, progressive theatre, pioneering film making, and adventurous television.

Thousands of us became heavily involved in politics then. Students and young people led demonstrations against racist South Africa, the American bombing of Vietnam, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and much more.

I am deliberately avoiding saying anything that could be interpreted as being party political, but I can't help observing that last month's general election attracted more involvement on the part of young people – certainly in the 18 to 24 age range – than any I can remember since the 1960s.

I'll simply make the point that for me the most precious skill you can acquire from your time as a student is the ability to think for yourself.

That way you can be pretty certain that you will be able to say in later life that because you knew how to challenge and question what others wanted you to do, you were able to make a difference.

Meanwhile my thanks again for inviting me today, and my congratulations to all your prize winners. Prince Henry's is a great school, and I salute you.

Truly successful education is a partnership between school, students, parents and our community, and we aim to develop a future generation who have the self-confidence to use their talents and skills for their own benefit and that of the community in which they live. We aspire to enable pupils to develop their abilities and personal characteristics such as initiative, enthusiasm, leadership, tolerance, perseverance, commitment and self-discipline. Our students are supported by an experienced, dedicated and committed staff to ensure their learning experience is as wonderful as it can be.

We are all very proud to be a part of Prince Henry's High School and are conscious of its history, current achievements and distinctive ethos. Visitors to the school often comment on the sense of purpose and commitment that they encounter. We hope that you will feel the same and that you will share our belief that Prince Henry's has something very special to offer. Indeed, at the end of a survey inspection undertaken by Ofsted in 2014, the Inspector noted that "staff are prepared to 'go the extra mile' for the students". This still stands true today. In 2015, Prince Henry's featured very favourably in a national report published by Ofsted which focused upon the provision for more able students.

Prince Henry's received its last general inspection by Ofsted in May 2013 and details of this, together with our other recent Ofsted visits are on our Ofsted page. The Inspectors again judged Prince Henry's to be outstanding; the fourth consecutive inspection in which we have been placed in the highest category. Our Sixth Form was also judged to be outstanding, as were all of the individual component judgements such as

Teaching & Learning and Care, Guidance & Support. The following are extracts from the report:-

“The school provides an exceptionally high quality of education for its students. They make outstanding progress in their academic and personal development.”

“Teachers have very high expectations of students and develop excellent working relationships in the classroom.”

“Students take great pride in the school, have highly positive attitudes to learning and are very keen to do their best in class. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. The vast majority of parents and carers agree that their children are safe and happy in school and are very positive about behaviour in the school.”

“The Sixth Form is outstanding and students make excellent progress on their AS-level and A-level courses. Sixth Form students receive outstanding information, support and guidance. They make an excellent contribution to the life of the school, for example on the School Council, as prefects, or as mentors to younger students.”

“The headteacher and senior leaders provide excellent leadership. Governors and staff are very proud of the school and are fully committed to its success. There is an obvious determination to ensure that all students achieve the highest standards they can.”

“School leaders are relentless in their drive for improvement in all parts of the school’s work. The very experienced governing body is exceptionally effective. Governors provide both support and challenge for the school and are committed to its continued improvement.”

Many students from Prince Henry's go on to achieve outstanding success in their future careers and lives. We want for your child exactly what you want as parents – the best and nothing but the best. Prince Henry's has a great deal to offer your child and I am as excited as ever at the prospect of leading everyone connected with the school in the drive to develop, maintain and extend its exceptional quality.

Early life[\[edit\]](#)

Henry was born at [Stirling Castle](#), Scotland and became [Duke of Rothesay](#), [Earl of Carrick](#), [Baron of Renfrew](#), [Lord of the Isles](#) and [Prince and Great Steward of Scotland](#) automatically on his birth. His father placed him in the care of John Erskine, [Earl of Mar](#), and out of the care of the boy's mother, because James worried that the mother's tendency toward [Catholicism](#) might affect the son. Although the child's removal caused enormous tension between Anne and James, Henry remained under the care of Mar's family until 1603, when James became King of England and his family moved south.^[1] Henry's baptism on 30 August 1594 was celebrated with complex theatrical entertainments written by poet [William Fowler](#) and a ceremony in a new Chapel Royal at Stirling purpose-built by [William Schaw](#).^[2]

One of his tutors until he went to England was Sir [George Lauder of the Bass](#), a [Privy Counsellor](#) – described as the King's "familiar councillor"^[3] – and he was also tutored in music by [Alfonso Ferrabosco the younger](#). Henry's tutor Adam Newton continued to serve the Prince in England, and some Scottish servants from Stirling were retained, including poet [David Murray](#).^[4]



Henry, Prince of Wales, by [Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger](#), c. 1603

Training and personality[\[edit\]](#)

The king greatly preferred the role of schoolmaster to that of father, and he wrote texts for the schooling of his children. James directed that Henry's household "should rather imitate a College than a Court",^[5] or, as Sir Thomas Chaloner wrote in 1607, His Highness's household [...] was intended by the King for a *courtly college* or a *collegiate court*.^[6] He passionately engaged in such physical pursuits as hawking, hunting, jousting and fencing,^[7] and from a young age studied naval and military affairs and national issues, about which he often disagreed with his father. He also disapproved of the way his father conducted the royal court, disliked [Robert Carr](#), a favourite of his father, and esteemed [Sir Walter Raleigh](#), wishing him to be released from the [Tower of London](#).^[1]

The prince's popularity rose so high that it threatened his father. Relations between the two could be tense, and on occasion surfaced in public. At one point, the two were hunting near Royston when James criticised his son for lacking enthusiasm for the chase, and Henry initially

moved to strike his father with a cane, but rode off. Most of the hunting party then followed the son.^[5]

"Upright to the point of priggishness, he fined all who swore in his presence", according to Charles Carlton, a biographer of Charles I, who describes Henry as an "obdurate Protestant".^[5] In addition to the alms box to which Henry forced swearers to contribute, he made sure his household attended church services. His religious views were influenced by the clerics in his household, who came largely from a tradition of politicised [Calvinism](#). Henry listened humbly, attentively, and regularly to the sermons preached to his household, and once told his chaplain, Richard Milbourne, that he esteemed most the preachers whose attitude suggested, "Sir, you must hear me diligently: you must have a care to observe what I say."^[6]

Henry is said to have disliked his younger brother, Charles, and to have teased him, although this derives from only one anecdote: when Charles was nine years of age, Henry snatched the hat off a bishop and put it on the younger child's head, then told his younger brother that when he became king he would make Charles [Archbishop of Canterbury](#), and then Charles would have a long robe to hide his ugly rickety legs. Charles stamped on the cap and had to be dragged off in tears.^[5]

Investiture and leadership[\[edit\]](#)



Henry Frederick c. 1610 by [Robert Peake the Elder](#).

With his father's accession to the throne of England in 1603, Henry at once became [Duke of Cornwall](#). In 1610 he was further invested as [Prince of Wales](#) and [Earl of Chester](#), thus for the first time uniting the six automatic and two traditional Scottish and English titles held by heirs-apparent to the two thrones.

As a young man, Henry showed great promise and was beginning to be active in leadership matters. Among his activities, he was responsible for the reassignment of Sir [Thomas Dale](#) to the [Virginia Company of London](#)'s struggling colony in North America.

The Irish [Gaelic](#) lord of [Inishowen](#), Sir [Cahir O'Doherty](#), had applied to gain a position as a [courtier](#) in the household of Henry, to help him in his struggles against officials in [Ireland](#). Unknown to Sir Cahir, on 19 April 1608, the day he launched [O'Doherty's Rebellion](#) by [burning Derry](#), his application was approved.^[8] Henry took an interest in the [Kingdom of Ireland](#) and was known to be supportive of the idea of a reconciliation

with the former rebel [Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone](#), who had fled into exile during the [Flight of the Earls](#). Because of this Tyrone and his entourage mourned when the Prince met his early death.^[9]

Death[\[edit\]](#)

For more details on this topic, see [Charles I of England](#).

Henry died from [typhoid fever](#) at the age of 18. (The diagnosis can be made with reasonable certainty from written records of the post-mortem examination, although at the time there were rumours of poisoning.) He was buried in [Westminster Abbey](#).

Prince Henry's death was widely regarded as a tragedy for the nation. According to Charles Carlton, "Few heirs to the English throne have been as widely and deeply mourned as Prince Henry." His body lay in state at [St. James's Palace](#) for four weeks. On 7 December, over a thousand people walked in the mile-long cortege to Westminster Abbey to hear a two-hour sermon delivered by [George Abbot](#), the Archbishop of Canterbury. As Henry's body was lowered into the ground, his chief servants broke their staves of office at the grave. An insane man ran naked through the mourners, yelling that he was the boy's ghost.^[5]

Immediately after Henry's death, the prince's brother Charles fell ill, but he was the chief mourner at the funeral, which his Father, King James (who detested funerals) refused to attend.^[5] All of Henry's automatic titles passed to Charles, who until then had lived in Henry's shadow. Four years later Charles, by then sixteen years old, was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.

Literature and music occasioned by the prince's death[\[edit\]](#)



Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, aged 13 or 14.

Sermons[\[edit\]](#)

Henry's chaplain, Dr. Daniel Price, delivered a series of sermons about the young man's death. (Price borrowed from [John Donne](#)'s unrelated *The first Anniversary*, published in 1611, and *The second Anniversary*, published in 1612, for some of his language and ideas.).^[10]

- *Lamentations for the death of the late illustrious Prince Henry [...] Two Sermons* (1613; see [1613 in literature](#)): "Oh, why is there not a generall thaw throughout all mankinde? why in this debashed Ayre doe not all things expire, seeing Time looks upon us with watry eues, disheveld lockes, and heavie dismall lookes; now that the Sunne is gone out of our Firmament, the ioy, the beautie, the glory of Israel is departed?"^[10]
- *Spirituell Odours to the Memory of Prince Henry. In Four of the Last Sermons Preached in St James after his Highnesse Death* (Oxford, 1613; see [1613 in literature](#)) From "Meditations of

Consolation in our Lamentations": "[...] his body was so faire and strong that a soule might have been pleased to live an age in it [...] vertue and valor, beauty and chastity, armes and arts, met and kist in him, and his goodnesse lent so much mintage to other Princes, that if Xenophon were now to describe a Prince, Prince HENRY had been his Patterne. [...] He hath gon his Passover from death to life, where there is more grace and more capacity [...] where earthly bodies shalbe more celestiall, then man in his Innocency or Angels in their glory, for they could fall: Hee is there with those Patriarchs that have expected Christ on earth, longer then they have enjoyed him in heaven; He is with those holy Penmen of the holy spirit, they bee now his paterns, who were here his teachers [...]"^[10]

- *Teares Shed over Abner. The Sermon Preached on the Sunday before the Prince his funerall in St James Chappell before the body* (Oxford, (1613; see [1613 in literature](#)): "He, He is dead, who while he lived, was a perpetuall Paradise, every season that he shewd himselfe in a perpetuall spring, eavery exercise wherein he was scene a special felicity: He, He is dead before us [...] He, He is dead; that blessed Model of heaven his face is covered till the latter day, whose shining lamps his eyes in whose light there was life to the beholders, they bee eclipsed until the sunne give over shining. [...] He, He is dead, and now yee see this [...]"^[10]

Prose memorials^[edit]

Price also wrote two prose "Anniversaries" on the death:

- *Prince Henry His First Anniversary* (Oxford, 1613; see [1613 in literature](#)): "in HIM, a glimmering light of the Golden times appeare,

all lines of expectation met in this Center, all spirits of vertue, scattered into others were extracted into him [...]"^[10]

- Another "Anniversary", published in 1614^[10]

Verses^[edit]

Within a few months of the prince's death, at least 32 poets had versified on it. In addition to those listed below, the writers included [Sir Walter Raleigh](#) (a friend), [John Donne](#), [Edward Herbert](#), [Thomas Heywood](#) and [Henry King](#).^[5]

These poems were published in 1612 (see [1612 in poetry](#)):

- Sir [William Alexander](#), *An Elegie on the Death of Prince Henrie*^[11]
- [Joshua Sylvester](#), *Lachrimae Lachrimarum; or, The Distillation of Teares Shede for the Untimely Death of the Incomparable Prince Panaretus*, also includes poems in English, French, Latin and Italian by [Walter Quin](#)^[11]
- [George Wither](#), *Prince Henries Obsequies; or, Mournfull Elegies Upon his Death*^[11]

These poems and songs were published in 1613 (see [1613 in poetry](#)):

- [Thomas Campion](#), *Songs of Mourning: Bewailing the Untimely Death of Prince Henry*, verse and music; music by [Giovanni Coperario](#) (or "Copario"), said to have been John Cooper, an Englishman^[11]
- [George Chapman](#), *An Epicede or Funerall Song, On the Most Disastrous Death, of the Highborne Prince of Men, Henry Prince of Wales, &c.*, the work states "1612" but was published in 1613^[11]
- [John Davies](#), *The Muses-Teares for the Losse of their Hope*^[11]

- [William Drummond of Hawthornden](#), *Tears on the Death of Moeliades*^[11]

Music^[edit]

In addition to the above verse-setting by Coperario, both [Thomas Tomkins](#) and [Thomas Weelkes](#) composed settings of "When David heard", a Biblical passage in which King [David](#) laments the loss of his son [Absalom](#) in battle; it is thought that both settings were directly inspired by the death of the prince.^[12]

The [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography](#) refers to a mourning song in memory of Prince Henry by [John Ward](#) remaining unpublished during the composer's lifetime;^[13] however, a "newly composed" song on the same subject was included in his *First Set of Madrigals* (1613).^[14]

Legacy^[edit]

Both [Prince Henry's Grammar School](#) in [Otley](#), West Yorkshire, and [Prince Henry's High School](#) in [Evesham, Worcestershire](#) in England are named after him.

The school is over 600 years old ^[3] and was originally established as a school for the poor that was attached to [Evesham's Benedictine Abbey](#). The school is named after [Prince Henry](#), the brother of [King Charles I](#). Dr Lewis Bayley had previously taught at and secured an endowment for the school from the town of Evesham through a new town charter^[citation needed], which identifies the school as a "Free Grammar School of Prince

Henry in Evesham". As Prince Henry's Grammar School, the school had around 500 boys and girls.

- [Alex Gregory MBE](#), Team GB Rower and Olympic Gold Medallist. Left the sixth form in 2002. ^[6]

Prince Henry's Grammar School[\[edit\]](#)

- [Les Huckfield](#), Labour MP 1967-83 for [Nuneaton](#), and MEP 1984-89 for [Merseyside East](#)
- [Nigel Jones, Baron Jones of Cheltenham](#), Lib Dem MP 1992-2005 for [Cheltenham](#)