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England rugby's Ben and Tom Youngs thank Gresham's "legendary" coach ahead of his retirement

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From left, Richard Brearley pupil Harry Simmons and Sam Curtis, Mr Curtis is a maths teacher at Gresham's and Harry's former rugby coach. They are pictured at an awards ceremony last month where Harry was named Aviva Premiership club's Players' Young Player of the Year at Leicester Tigers. Picture: GRESHAM'S

Two of England's star rugby players have thanked the Norfolk coach who inspired their careers in the sport.

England's Ben Youngs and his brother Tom have thanked Gresham's sports coach Richard Brearley for his dedication to the school, ahead of Mr Brearley's retirement.

Ben Youngs said: "Everyone always has a couple of teachers that make a lifelong impression on them and Mr Brearley is one of them for me. His ability to bring the best out of you in the classroom or on the sports field shows how talented he is. He was a brilliant motivator on the rugby pitch and I know he played a big part in helping me achieve my potential."

His brother Tom, added: "Mr Brearley was the first coach who showed me the passion and winning attitude, you should have to play rugby and sport. This has stuck with me over the years.

"I have some wonderful memories of my school days on the rugby field, playing under his guidance. A fantastic teacher and coach but, above all, a wonderful man who, to this day, I have a lot of time for. Thank you, Mr Brearley, you are nothing short of a true legend."

As well as being a much-loved coach, Mr Brearley was Deputy Headmaster of Gresham's prep school, and has worked at the Holt school for 34 years. EDP

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