



RIVER ACADEMY Issue 7

Headteacher's Update

8 November 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Return to School

We have returned from half term in a very positive fashion, and I have been delighted by the students' hard work, appearance, and positivity. On Wednesday, we revisited our routines, reflected on what had gone well, and considered areas for improvement. The students have risen to this challenge with real gusto.

Teaching and Learning Review

The students' dedication has been evident during my senior team's Teaching and Learning Review. Over the next week, we will be observing 6-10 lessons each day, ensuring our approaches are being followed in every subject and by every teacher. Additionally, we are reviewing booklets, meeting student panels, and listening to staff feedback. As a new school, I want to ensure the quality of learning is consistent and stands up to analytical scrutiny, however I must state that I was delighted by what I observed in the first two days of the review and as a parent you should be proud of the high levels of engagement and application the students are working with.

INSET Day

For our INSET day, the teaching staff visited a new start school in London. The school kindly provided us with a classroom space for briefings, debriefings, tours, and three hours of observations. It is heartening to work with a staff so invested in their classroom practice, both individually and collectively. The outcomes of these observations and our reviews will shape our path forward over the next few months.

Attendance

Attendance remains high, placing us in the top 10% of schools nationwide for all attendance measures so far this year. As we enter a trickier time for illnesses, please ensure you follow the correct advice. As a secondary school, there is no 48-hour rule after a tummy bug; it is a matter of parental judgment regarding the child's wellness. Please refer to the NHS document we sent out before half-term for further clarification. Thank you for your support in ensuring the children leave home each morning on time, in the correct uniform, and with the necessary equipment. These are great life habits, and it is important students know they are accountable for getting these things right.

Sparx and Homework

With our slightly different start to the week, students have had less school time to spend on Sparx. The completion rate is usually around 65 % by Friday morning but currently sits at 47% therefore please ensure you sit down with your son or daughter over the weekend to check they have completed their homework or support them in finishing it. Remember, they should be recording their homework answers in their Sparx maths book.

As a follow-up, Nabil, who has consistently topped our Sparx leaderboard since week one, recently ranked 7th in the UK for work completed since September. Considering we didn't start Sparx until week three or four of the term, his high ranking among approximately 250,000 students is remarkable. He is truly demonstrating the River values of excellence and determination.



Achievement Assembly

Our Achievement Assembly on a Friday continues to be a highpoint of the week and on Friday 25th October our top merit winners were rewarded. I have included the top 10 below, who all should be incredibly proud of their achievements.

1. **Eva W**
2. **Luke J**
3. **Ziara**
4. **Ethan G**
5. **Lucas G**
6. **Jacob B**
7. **Saanvi M**
8. **Isabelle R**
9. **Amaan A-S**
10. **Tommy R**

Pavement Widening

We are currently completing the final works outside the school, including widening the paving on the eastern and western pedestrian approaches. This will make it safer to cycle to school. Additionally, railings will be fitted by the pedestrian entrance to keep students safe as they leave school.

Cycling

Please remind all parents that a helmet is required for cycling to school, and students should have lights on their bikes for the winter season. On Wednesday, Ms. Billingham stood by the Toby Carvery, and I was near the Cow Lane bridges. We were disappointed to see many students without lights on their bikes.

Have a great weekend, everyone, and stay safe!

Take care

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink.

Andy Hartley
Headteacher