



## Headteacher's Update

22 November 2024

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I hope everyone is well and not too wind-chapped and weather-worn after such a chilly week.

### **Attendance**

Our students have maintained high levels of engagement and excellent behaviour throughout this week. However, we have experienced high levels of absence, possibly due to a contagious bug that affected around a third of the students at some point. Despite this, our absence rate remains in the top 10% of all schools for Year 7 this year. Thank you for your support in this matter.

### **Sparx**



Our Sparx completion rate from last week was 94%, ranking us in the 98th percentile and 45th out of all schools using Sparx, which is highly satisfying. As of 8pm on Thursday, our completion rate for this week is 58% so I hope the 50+ students still to complete their work can make a concerted effort to finish over the weekend. Success in Maths is all about practice and consolidation, and Sparx, through its AI algorithm, allows each student to work at their own appropriate pace. I hope you can continue to support this effort.

### **PTA**

As discussed previously, we want to set up a PTA to help us with fundraising including the furnishing of our new library with books.

We will be holding our next meeting to help us set up our PTA on December 3rd at 6pm. It is our intention to discuss the next steps, hopefully get some volunteers to serve on the committee and also to call an AGM for which we need give 21 days notice. Please come along to discuss how you can help and how we can raise some money for the school!

### **School Advisory Board (SAB)**

I hope you all saw the communication regarding our School Advisory Board this week. The SAB, along with the Trust, acts as the governing body of the school and meets three times a year, as well

as visiting and supporting the school at various times. We already have a diverse group of governors, and some enthusiastic parents joining us would be the icing on the cake. Thank you in advance to the parents who have expressed interest.

## Achievement Assembly

We had another fabulous achievement assembly this week, introducing a new award for outstanding attitudes towards Elective activities, alongside our usual subject, merit, and values prizes. The students absolutely love these Friday afternoons, and the staff enjoy seeing the pleasure the students derive from the awards and competitions we celebrate each week.



## Assembly

This Week Mrs. Billingham delivered a wonderful assembly with the help of five students, focusing on why we work hard at River Academy. Special thanks to Ezzah, who stepped in at the last minute, and to Haidar, who stole the show in my suit jacket. The key takeaway is that we aim to cultivate students who work hard because they value and enjoy engaging in tasks, not just because they have to.



## Girls' Football Team Fixture

Our girls' football team had their first fixtures on a freezing Wednesday night, and they acquitted themselves well despite it being their inaugural outing. It was heartwarming to hear Bruna expressing gratitude to her teammates and Ms. Moore for their support and camaraderie. The girls drew with Prospect 0-0 and narrowly lost to Bohunt 2-0. You can see from the photo that the girls loved their evening out!



Next week, we also have our first-ever home fixture with a boys' basketball match against Blessed Hugh Faringdon.

## Meet the Tutor Evening

On December 12th, we will be holding a Meet the Tutor evening at River Academy. This evening will provide an overview of how your child has settled in during their first term, using the first report, which will be sent home on December 4th. I hope to send a letter regarding the logistics of the evening and how to book appointments by the end of next week.

I hope everyone has a lovely weekend and doesn't get too wet!

**Andy Hartley**

**Headteacher**