



Headteacher's Update

14th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I'm sure your children have told you, it is a much-deserved half-term from today. We return to school on Monday 24th February but please also be reminded that there is a calendared INSET day on Friday 28TH February.

Return to school

As we always do, Monday 24th will see an extended tutor time with some key reminders so students can carry on with their fantastic River Academy journey and as stated previously Tuesday 25th February will see the students listening to a knife crime assembly at the start of the day.

Electives and participation

On Wednesday lunchtime I had the pleasure of being a part of a magnificent recital of 'If' by all of Year 7. Despite it being a lengthy four stanza poem, the students are really starting to master it and recite it with zeal and gusto as is the River way.

On Tuesday, our students engaged in a lunchtime question: "Would you rather have a well-paid boring job or an exciting low-paid job?" It was wonderful to see five students, who had never spoken before, confidently share their answers with their entire year group. Our focus on oracy is paying off, as students embrace our culture, grow in confidence, and develop essential life skills.

The students were also magnificent in their Elective sessions as this photo montage from our Japanese and Korean club shows- a huge thank you to Mr Mo for delivering this brilliant session.





Interhouse

It was also excellent to referee basketball and netball fixtures on Monday afternoon as part of our Interhouse Olympiad that also saw students compete in table tennis and chess. The inclement weather necessitated some agile planning from Mr Clare and the Sportshall was turned in a 3 court space with alternating netball/basketball fixtures. Despite having 120+ students in the same space for over two hours they behaved impeccably and competed with ardour and zest for their houses.

Extra curricular

It has been lovely to see our extra-curricular offerings remain strong even in the sixth week of

the half-term. This week, students in an Art class prepared work for the Royal Academy junior show, and on Thursday, 30 students attended a lecture on Roman board games given by a lecturer from the University of Reading, organized by Miss Angell.

There have also been fixtures, with the A team netball defeating Prospect and the B team narrowly losing to Prospect's A team. Additionally, the boys played football against Denefield on Thursday with the A team winning 2-1!



Homework

Our students outdid themselves on Sparx this week and amazingly the school was ranked No.1 in the country for both Sparx Maths and Sparx Reader which is quite extraordinary. Thank you to all the parents who have supported this journey.

We are mindful the students get a rest at half term so there will be no homework set to be completed over half term but there will be work that has deadlines but the number of school days for the work to be completed will be the same as usual.

River Academy @RiverAcReading · Feb 10

It's **DOUBLE GOLD** at @RiverAcReading this week with students living our values of #Determination and #Excellence. Their engagement with @SparxMaths and @SparxReader is phenomenal and we are very proud of their hard work. #WorkHardPlayHard




100% Completion Rates

Sparx Reader: **1st** out of 815 schools
Sparx Maths: **1st** out of 2608 schools

Pavements and travelling to school

The pavement work on the Rivermead side of the road is now complete all the way to the roundabout. The new pavement is almost double the width of the previous one, providing a safer route to school. The paving on either side of the Rivermead roundabout is yet to be done, but we are happy to wait while the January/February gym rush reduces, as requested by Rivermead.

We will be talking to the students about a few of them using inappropriate language as they leave the school site. Our students look smart, and I hear so many good things about them from the local community, so I was disappointed to hear that a few students had let themselves down in front of parents with some choice vocabulary. Students will be reminded that wearing the River Academy uniform requires high standards of conduct both in school and on the journey to and from school.

New teachers!

I have made some brilliant appointments in the last few weeks with fantastic Maths, English, French and Geography teachers so far. I hope to 'complete the 2025/2026 set in the next couple of weeks but with the appointments we have made so far, your children's academic journey will remain as strong and speedy as ever with these fantastic professionals in their classrooms.

Please take care, put the phones away for a while, have some family fun, and I hope all our families get some rest and relaxation. See you on the 24th at 9.05am

Take care and best wishes

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in black ink and has a simple, elegant style.

Andy Hartley

Headteacher