



## Headteacher's Update

3 April 2025

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I hope you are all well and enjoying the current spell of dazzling weather. What a refreshing shift from the dampness of 2025 and the wet winter we endured. The lighter nights and settled conditions have given everyone a lift. I hope you can all enjoy some lovely family time outside over the next two weeks.

### **Ms Moore**

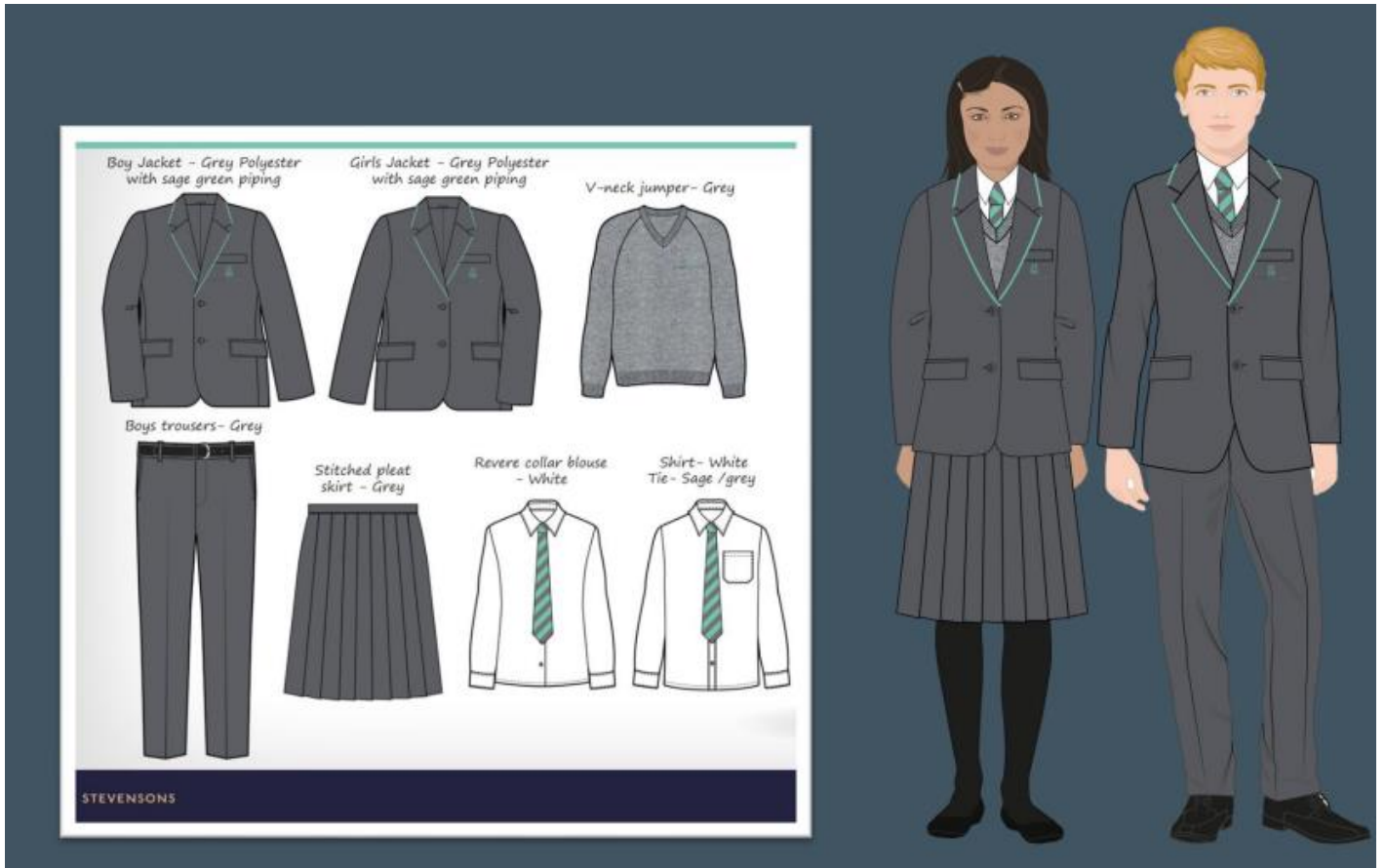
I wanted to keep you informed about Ms Moore who is having a knee operation next week and this means she will be off school for much of the next half-term. This is great news for her as it means she can get back to some degree of normality after over a year of struggling on her damaged knee. It does mean that we need to shift things around although we have been hugely fortunate to employ Ms Bowler for the next five weeks whilst Ms Moore is absent. Ms Bowler is a very experienced teacher with a track record of success and serendipitously happened to be available.

Unfortunately, the amount of practical PE will be reduced over the next five weeks and students will be working through sports science work about the skeleton, muscles and how the body works as an alternative. It also means there won't be any practical food lessons in this half term, however we will maximise these opportunities in the second half term. In her Maths lessons we are going to shuffle the groups making a larger set 2 and 3 which will be taught by Mrs Strong, our Head of Maths and supported by Ms Bowler. Ms Moore's Personal Development lessons will also be covered Ms Bowler.

In terms of Ms Moore's Head of Year role, this will be covered by Mr Clare, Dr Dukinfield and Ms Angell, with each of them taking up a third of the students. This is a great career development for all three of them and I have absolute faith in their ability to support your sons and daughters over the next five weeks.

### **The new term and uniform**

We come back to school on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April and school begins at 9.10am. Please make sure all your sons and daughters have a full set of equipment, the correct shoes and uniform. If any skirts have got shorter due to growth spurts, can I ask that a longer one is purchased. Skirts should sit on the top of the knee as a minimum.



Shoes should be school shoes and not trainer style.

Please see below for examples.




Please see the link to our tools for learning list [here](#).

Also, please can we insist that students do not get piercings done that cannot be removed and go against school regulations. The start of the summer holidays is the time for such events, as this gives the wound time to heal and therefore earrings etc can be removed for the school day with no detrimental effect to the piercing hole.

### Sparx

We had a brilliant week on Sparx last week with 99% of students completing their work. This ranked us a No.1

school for Sparx Reader and No.3 school for Sparx Maths and No.1 school overall for the combined scores. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> week in the last six that we have led the national rankings which is some achievement!!



**99.2%** Completion Rates

**Sparx Reader: 1<sup>st</sup> out of 894 schools**  
**Sparx Maths: 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 2635 schools**

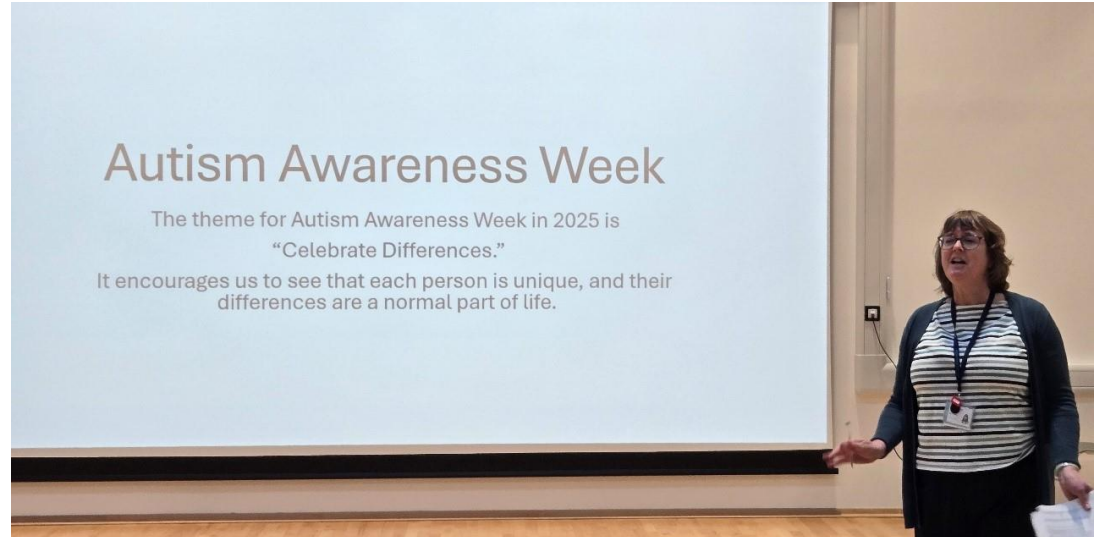


#### **Interschool Trust events**

It has been a pleasure to see our teams playing in the recent inter-trust sports events. It is hoped these are the start of even more collaboration within the Trust for both students and staff. In this week's events we were triumphant in the badminton with emphatic victories but over MES, MER and MECE but lost narrowly in the football.

## Assembly

Ms Clarke delivered a great assembly as part of Autism Awareness Week. It is important that we give our students the knowledge to empathise with the individual symptoms that each person with autism presents and I hope Ms Clarke's assembly gave all of our school community food for thought in this matter.



## The field

We will be having PE lessons on our new field after Easter which is exciting. If the field holds up, we will start to use parts of it at lunchtime later in the term.

## Celebration assembly

We had a wonderful time last week finishing with the whole school body celebrating the netball championship win and everyone singing "Let's Go River, Let's Go!!" It typifies the strong sense of community and respect that is our modus operandi at River and a visiting interview candidate was completely bowled over by this effusive celebration!





I was also proud to award my Headteacher's Certificate to Ethan who encapsulates our River community. With 1000 merits so far and only 19 demerits, he is always one of the first to complete his homework, is always positive and smiling, supports others and is known for his kindness so it was a pleasure to see his pleasure at winning this award.

### **Interhouse**

We had a fantastic afternoon with our interhouse sports on Wednesday. The girls played handball and the boys' football. As ever, the competition was fierce but fair. The winners were Kennet for the football and for the handball. After Easter we have our spelling bee which should be great fun!

I will conclude by wishing all our Christian families a Happy Easter and I hope you are able to make it a special time together.

Enjoy the break everyone!

Take care and best wishes

*A. Hartley*

Andy Hartley

Headteacher

