



Headteacher's Update

25 April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you're well and looking forward to next week's warm weather.

It has been a great first week back with the students really responding well to our high expectations and clear boundaries.

Visitors

On Wednesday we had a visitors from another trust including their Director of Teaching. I include with some pride their comments below!

Dear Laura and Andy,

Laura- I firstly want to say the hugest of thanks from me and Natalie for being so generous with your time yesterday and for welcoming us so warmly into your wonderful school; it was an absolute joy and inspiration to visit.

To you both and all your colleagues, we want to express our deepest admiration for the wonderful learning environment you have created for the children. We were so impressed with the disruption-free learning we saw throughout, created through your high expectations, clear and consistent routines, common language and 'warm-strict' approach, with a huge emphasis on narrating the positives both in terms of conduct and attitude as well as contributions to learning. From the morning line-up and greeting from the HoY to each and every classroom and interaction we saw, we left inspired by the exceptional thinking and participation ratios we saw in action, the calm, safe and inclusive learning environments in evidence throughout and the warmth and positivity that radiated from staff and students. You should feel so proud of the highly ambitious and inclusive culture you are creating, and we cannot thank you enough for allowing us to spend the morning with you to see this in action.

With hugest thanks,

Laura and Natalie

Electives

We started our new round of electives on Wednesday. This meant students were doing a whole new range of brilliant activities including debating, Korean, photography, eco club, cricket, softball, chess, and rowing. It was a brilliant session and judging by the smiles it was a definite hit!



Lecture

May I remind you about our next community lecture. The poster is below but please be reminded this lecture is open to everyone from the River learning community and is designed to support and engage the intellectual curiosity of our students, parents, neighbours and staff.



**Community Lecture Series
all welcome**

**Seals from Space –
how polar explorers use
satellites to study Antarctic
wildlife**

April 29th, 4:00–5:00 PM

Main Hall, River Academy, Reading

**Presented by
Prem Gill**

www.river-academy.co.uk


RIVER ACADEMY

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TRUST

Parent Forum

You will have received an invite to our Parent Forum/Information evening on May 14th. Please do come along and hear how you can support your sons and daughters in their preparation for the June assessment week (week beginning June 2nd). Additionally, please come along to contribute to the discussion on character and reading development.

The link to register your interest is [here](#)

Ms Moore

As you will know Ms Moore is away at present, but I have been delighted at the way the students have adapted to the tweaked curriculum including bigger Maths sets with two teachers, food theory lessons and PE sports science lessons. Our new teacher Mx Bowler has been delivering these lessons and has been a fantastic addition to #TeamRiver.

I have also been delighted at the way Mr Clare, Dr Dukinfield and Ms Angell have 'subbed in' for Ms Moore's Head of Year role and are attacking their new roles with real vigour.

You will also be pleased to know that Ms Moore is well on the road to recovery.

Fridays

We are aware that this is the final term with just Year 7, and we have tweaked Fridays as a way of making this term a little more memorable. From today, lunchtimes will be 10 minutes longer each Friday, we will have

staff versus student challenges during the lunchtimes too (today was netball!), and interform challenges every other week instead of the celebration assembly. The extra 10 minutes has been gained by not having the short Friday tutor time but going straight into Lesson 1.

Let's see how it goes but judging by the round of applause I got from the students when I told them they seemed quite pleased!

PTA

I am indebted to the PTA who have a grand calendar of events for fundraising across the term. Their first event is on May 16th for which a formal invitation will be sent out next week, however, do try and come along at the end of school on Friday 16th for some international food and tasty treats.

Pavements and access to school

I am pleased that the works have been concluded on the pavement improvements that have been made since Christmas. Furthermore, Reading Council have also put in an additional pathway on the South side of Portman Road supporting access to the flats near Tesco. These additions will only make the journey to school much safer.

Our field is almost now ready for the students and following some additional drainage work this week we hope to be on there next week for PE lessons.

Take care everyone and have a super weekend

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Andy Hartley

Headteacher