



## Headteacher's Update

13 June 2025

### Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope everyone is well and enjoying the lovely summer heat we're having today.

The students went back to their normal routines this week which I think has taken a little adjustment following the half-term break and assessment week. However, for the most part it has been incredibly smooth.

One part the students have taken a little time to adjust back into has been homework, but I hope the students can reflect this weekend and get organised for the next few weeks. As parents I hope you are all using Class Charts to monitor and support your child's homework status.

Attendance this week has been good, hovering around 96% all week and last week from Monday to Thursday (Friday was Eid Al Adha) was 98%, so I am grateful for your support in ensuring your children attend. Strong habits of attendance and punctuality are excellence life skills and embedding these positive routines in Year 7 can only help the longer-term success of our students.

### Reading Trip

As you know we have our Reading trip on Tuesday, and we are all very excited by the outing. Mrs Billingham delivered a brilliant assembly on Thursday morning to the students, and they listened impeccably to her explaining the details and the reasons behind the trip as we look to connect our students to the Reading and understand its past and present.

### Extra-curricular opportunities

As you can see from the photos at the end of the letter, we have had students on the water at Reading Rowing Club, over at Royal Holloway University studying Classics and attending an internal lecture on Sports Science this week. This followed on from our fantastic interhouse activities on Friday afternoon. The students were definitely ready for some exercise after a week of assessment but whilst the football was great fun, the way the students watched, supported and behaved throughout the 2 hours was lovely to see and I think all the staff really enjoyed the event

### Maiden Erlegh Trust Review

On Wednesday, we had the Director of Education along with two headteachers and the Director of Safeguarding visit the school. All schools within the Trust are reviewed each year and this was our day! Given our size, this meant every teacher was seen at least once and in many cases several times which was useful. In addition, there were student and staff panels, interviews with SLT on behaviour, attendance, curriculum and SEND, along with observations of our routines at the start of the day lunch and the the end of the school day.

The written report is to come but the verbal feedback was incredibly positive, and I am pleased the team saw the school we see every day and the school that makes working here such an exciting and enjoyable

experience. However, one of the stand outs was just how polite, smart and positive our students are about the school, themselves and the community. Indeed, this was also picked up by a bus driver and one of our visiting music teachers who all remarked what a stark contrast River Academy students strike versus some of their local peers.

### **Assembly on phone use and parenting adolescents workshop**

At our recent Parent Forum in May some parents asked if we could speak to the students about phone use and the potential negative consequences of this very large element of many young peoples' lives. We will share the slides with you later next week so that you can follow up the assembly with further discussion at home.

In addition, some parents also asked for any support we could provide with parenting young adolescents. We will be holding an evening workshop on this September but wanted to wait until we had two-year groups so we could make it more worthwhile from a cost point of view as we will be using an external provider to deliver this.

Have a great weekend everyone!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that curves back under the name.

Andy Hartley

Headteacher

