



Headteacher's Update

12 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope everyone has had a good week and managed to stay dry despite the downpours!

It has been a brilliant week, and I have been delighted by how well the students have settled into their learning routines. The corridors are calm, and the lessons focused and purposeful and it is exciting to consider how much progress our students can make this year given the positive learning conditions we have created.

Matriculation

Monday marked an exciting milestone as both year groups were on site together for the first time. We spent the day completing our induction programmes to ensure all students are clear on our expectations and are fully 'River ready'. It was a real pleasure to hear our Year 7s conclude their matriculation with stirring renditions of *Invictus* and *You've Got a Friend in Me* — both songs beautifully reflect our core values of resilience and community here at River Academy.





It was equally lovely to welcome our Year 8 students back. They have returned with such maturity, settling seamlessly into positive routines. Their smart appearance on Day 1 spoke volumes about the pride they take in wearing the River Academy badge.

Photographs

Throughout the week, all Year 7 students had their school photographs taken, and the photographers were full of praise for their conduct and presentation — a great reflection of the high standards we set and maintain.

Skirts

We have spoken to a small number of girls regarding skirt lengths, and we hope this can be easily resolved. For those looking for longer options, Marks & Spencer offers a suitable range:

[Girls' Longer Length School Skirt \(2-16 Yrs\) | M&S Collection at M&S](#)

Electives

On Wednesday, students enjoyed our Electives 'Dragon's Den' assembly, where over 20 exciting options were pitched. Mr Clare is currently working hard to ensure every student gets one of their top choices before Electives begin next week (please remember the 4:30pm finish). It was fantastic to see both year groups in the hall together — despite the large numbers, their focus and behaviour were impeccable.



Car Parking

Thank you for your continued support with the car park arrangements. By using the Richfield Garden Centre car park, you are helping to significantly reduce congestion during busy drop-off and pick-up times, making the site safer for everyone.

Term Dates 2026-2027

Looking ahead, next year's term dates are now live on our website and available below. Please note that we return later than most schools due to the timing of Reading Festival, which will be held later next year due to the timing of the bank holiday. As the car park remains out of use for five days after the festival, students will return on **September 7th**, with Year 8 and 9 likely starting on **September 10th**. We hope this later return may offer families the opportunity to benefit from more affordable holiday options — but more importantly, we hope it ensures all students are back on time for the crucial start-of-year orientation. However, please be assured we will make up the days missed later in the school year.

2026/27 Term Dates – MET Schools

September 2026							October 2026							November 2026							December 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027							February 2027							March 2027							April 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28							28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	
31																											

May 2027							June 2027							July 2027							August 2027						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				
30	31																										

Calendar Key			Number of days		
	Term Time (first day for students/pupils 07/09)		Inset Day for all schools	Autumn Term	69
	Bank and Public Holidays			Spring Term	54
	2026/27 School Holidays			Summer Term	67

Home Learning

Home learning begins today for Year 8, with their first Sparx homework set. Year 7 will begin next week. Please ensure you have the **Class Charts** app installed so you can support your child in staying on top of their tasks and avoid same-day detentions for non-completion.

Reading

Ms Myers, our Head of English has written about the importance of reading in the student bulletin, and I

hope all parents take time to read that. Can I also point you towards the reading list suggestions on our website?

[River Academy - TOOLS FOR LEARNING](#)

Wishing you all a brilliant weekend filled with rest and recuperation.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Andy Hartley

Headteacher