



Headteacher's Update

19 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are well and have had a good week. The rhythms and routines of school life are settling in, and I hope all our River families are now 'in the flow' of how our weeks work.

Welcome Evenings

Thank you to all the parents who joined us on Wednesday for our *Welcome to Year 7* evening. We estimate that around 130–140 families were represented, which bodes well for a harmonious and positive partnership between home and school. For those who couldn't attend, the presentation slides will be sent out next week. We look forward to welcoming our Year 8 parents next Thursday at 6pm.

Home Learning

We've been really impressed with Year 8 this week and how well they've transitioned back into homework routines. As I write this on Friday morning, fewer than 5% of students need support completing their Sparx Maths, Reader, and Science tasks. Year 7 will receive their first Sparx homework today, due next Friday (26th September).

From a parent's perspective, please do keep checking the ClassCharts app for homework details and deadlines. Encouraging students to give each task the time and effort it deserves makes a big difference. As always, if homework is forgotten or not completed to the expected standard, students may be asked to stay after school—but we'd much rather they get it done right the first time!

In the Classroom

We operate an open-door policy for staff and encourage regular peer observation. All staff have already been observed this term—many more than once—and it's been fantastic to see the high quality of teaching and the strong levels of student engagement across the school.



Electives and Clubs

Our Electives programme launched this week, and it was wonderful to see such a wide range of options available. From rowing and chess to First Aid and Roman board games, this part of school life fills us with pride. Please ensure students bring the correct kit for sports electives (rowing, netball, Reading FC, or badminton) to avoid breaktime detentions.

Clubs also began this week, and it was great to see so many students involved- girls' football, badminton, choir, and homework club were all buzzing on Tuesday. A special mention to Mr Clare's Wednesday morning basketball club, which starts at 8am and had a great turnout. Busy students tend to be successful students, so please do encourage your child to get involved. Full details are in the student bulletin.

Silver Programme

Our super-curricular programme begins on Thursday with Dr Dukinfield doing a fantastic Climate Change workshop with Year 7. This event is designed for anyone with an interest in the world and the scientific explanations behind what is happening to our planet. Students can sign up for this event on the sheet outside Dr Dukinfield's classroom.

Climate Change: Save Stemville!
Thursday 25th September 3:45-4:45pm

RIVER ACADEMY
Silver Programme

In this session, students will learn more about the relationship between climate change and flooding, and, in small teams, evaluate the impact of a variety of different flood defence systems, all with the intent to save the village of Stemville.

Free event!

Y7 ONLY

Speak to Mr. Dukinfield if you have any questions.

Sign up required – outside 2.57 (Mr. Dukinfield's room)

Detentions

From Monday we will no longer be calling each parent regarding detentions, but we will be sending you a text message notifying you of this detention. This will be sent each day between 2.30 and 2.45pm. As you will understand, as the school grows this is a more efficient way of delivering these messages. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Open Evening

Our Open Evening for Year 6 families is fast approaching on **Tuesday, 1st October**. A letter will go home early next week asking for student helpers—your support with this is much appreciated, as our students are fantastic ambassadors for the school. Please also note that school will close at **1:30pm** on the day to allow staff time to prepare.

Wishing you a lovely weekend—enjoy the warm weather before next week's cooler temperatures arrive.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a dark ink and has a smooth, flowing style.

Andy Hartley

Headteacher