



## RIVER ACADEMY Issue 11

### Headteacher's Update

28 November 2025

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I hope everyone has had a good week and is ready for a relaxing and productive weekend.

#### Attendance

Our attendance remains extremely high, with the school's overall rate at 96%. I am delighted that, despite having two-year groups, our attendance is currently higher than at this time last year.

On Wednesday, I delivered an assembly to all students about the importance of attendance, common barriers, and how the school can support students to overcome these challenges. While occasional absences are understandable, students need to know the impact of prolonged absence on academic progress, friendships, and mental health.

Our Attendance Officer, Ms Ceesay, works hard to engage parents when attendance falls below 90%. These conversations are sometimes difficult, but they are essential and required by Reading Council, who ask us to account for every student below this threshold. Research shows that students with better attendance achieve higher academic success, and at River Academy, we are committed to fostering positive life habits.

#### Staffing for Next Year & Social Media

We have started posting on social media about our recruitment for next year. With three-year groups in September, we will need to increase our teaching and support teams by one-third. Recruitment begins mid-December and runs through February.

If you see our adverts and know any outstanding teachers who may be interested, please share, like, or repost to help us reach as many people as possible.



**Maiden Erlegh Trust**

1,117 followers  
21h • Edited •

River Academy – Join Our Growing Team

**River Academy** is a new secondary school in central Reading. We opened our doors in September 2024, and by 2026 we will have Year 7, 8, and 9 in the building. We are now beginning to plan our Key Stage 4 curriculum for first teaching in 2027. River Academy is already heavily oversubscribed, reflecting the strong demand for places.

As we prepare for our third year of opening, we will soon be recruiting for a range of teaching positions, including:

- + Mathematics
- Drama with English
- Science
- Religion and Philosophy
- Physical Education
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Computer Science
- Design Technology- Curriculum Leader
- General Teacher for our Additional Resource Base for MLD students

In addition, we anticipate recruiting for a new Assistant Headteacher role, focused on teaching and learning, with a range of wider responsibilities.

If you would enjoy teaching in a school with a clear focus on high-quality teaching and learning, where classrooms are disruption-free and students are warm, respectful, and hardworking, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact [river@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:river@maidenerleghtrust.org) to arrange a conversation with the Headteacher **Andrew Hartley** and a tour of our facilities.

#TeamMET #TeacherVacancy #JoinOurTeam #Rdguk #ProudOfOurSchools  
#EducationMatters

# Community Lectures

A new series of FREE public lectures  
Open to all!



Born twenty miles away in rural Hampshire, Jane Austen attended Reading's Abbey School as a girl, and remained a Thames Valley visitor all her life. Her readers have always noticed how odd it is that someone with a regional background and little formal education produced such brilliant, intelligent writing. How did she do it? And why are her novels still so popular after two and a half centuries? Paddy Bullard, who appeared on the recent BBC documentary 'Jane Austen: Rise of a Genius', will attempt to answer the question.

**Professor Paddy Bullard**  
University of Reading

**Lecture: Jane Austen:  
how a Reading girl  
invented the modern  
novel**

Free termly  
academic  
lectures for  
the school  
and wider  
community

No need to  
register -  
everyone  
welcome!

The chance  
to meet  
academics  
and ask  
questions!



**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November**  
**4-5pm**  
Arrive by 3.45pm



**University of  
Reading**

The Year 7 girls football team defeated Prospect 2-1 and lost narrowly to Denefield on Thursday and should be very proud of their achievements.

Practices have been really well attended this week with 25 boys turning up for basketball on a very frosty Wednesday morning, 58 Year 7 boys for football training on Thursday and 40 for football on Friday morning.

## Christmas Events

The festive season is approaching, and we have several exciting events planned:

- December 10 – Year 7 Pantomime Trip
- December 11 – Christmas Music Concert (6–7 pm) Please see the attached invitation
- December 16 – Christmas Awards Celebration Evening (6–7 pm) – Invitations coming soon

## Community Lecture

A huge thank you to Ms Angell for organizing our latest community lecture and well done to all students who attended Dr Bullard's talk on Jane Austen and her connections with Reading. It was fantastic to see parents and local residents join us. Dr Bullard also mentioned a local exhibition on Jane Austen running until just before Christmas: Jane Austen and Rural Life Exhibition:

<https://merl.reading.ac.uk/whats-on/jane-austen-and-rural-life/>

## Sports Update

Our boys' basketball team playing in a Year 8 and 9 league came away with a creditable 62-40 defeat at Bohunt on Tuesday. Many of the Bohunt boys play representative basketball so this result was even more impressive.



- December 17 – Christmas Dinner & Christmas Jumper Day

We will also launch our '12 Days of Christmas' initiative next Thursday to keep spirits high as the long term draws to a close.

**Non uniform day**

Today is our first ever non-uniform day and I am very proud to be raising money for Daisy's Dream. Whilst there has been an extra frisson of excitement about the day, particularly during social time the students have still worked incredibly hard in each and every lesson.

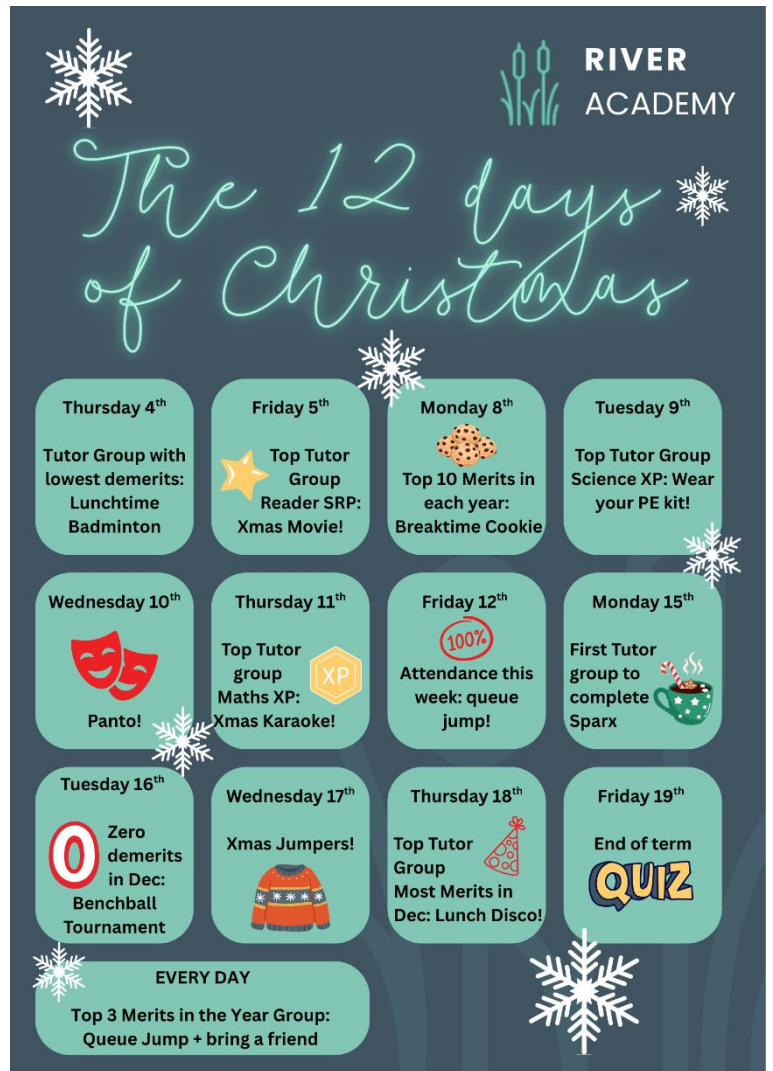
**Thank you for your continued support. Have a great weekend! Have a great weekend.**

Warm regards,



**Andy Hartley**

Headteacher



**RIVER ACADEMY**

# The 12 days of Christmas

<b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup></b> Tutor Group with lowest demerits: Lunchtime Badminton	<b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup></b> Top Tutor Group Reader SRP: Xmas Movie!	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup></b> Top 10 Merits in each year: Breaktime Cookie	<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup></b> Top Tutor Group Science XP: Wear your PE kit!
<b>Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup></b> Panto!	<b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup></b> Top Tutor group Maths XP: Xmas Karaoke!	<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup></b> Attendance this week: queue jump!	<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup></b> First Tutor group to complete Sparx
<b>Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup></b> Zero demerits in Dec: Benchball Tournament	<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup></b> Xmas Jumpers!	<b>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup></b> Top Tutor Group Most Merits in Dec: Lunch Disco!	<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup></b> End of term <b>QUIZ</b>
<b>EVERY DAY</b> Top 3 Merits in the Year Group: Queue Jump + bring a friend			