



Headteacher's Update

5 December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well and have had a good week.

Library

Our library opened for business this week and I am so pleased that we have been able to get this going. I am delighted that so many students wish to volunteer and help support our lending systems and it has been fantastic to see how well used the library has been this week. Thank you to all the parental contributions you have made to make this happen and we will be in touch on our next set of plans to make it even better!



Christmas tree

As the term draws to a close our Christmas tree has been put up in Reception with some other decorations around the office. We are very grateful to Richfield Garden Centre for their generous donation, and we really value the positive relationship we have with our neighbouring business.



A few lucky students were selected to decorate the tree on Thursday morning.

Non-Uniform Day

Our non-uniform day was a great success last week, and I am pleased to say that the students managed the more informal atmosphere with great maturity. Most importantly, I am delighted that we raised over **£750 for Daisy's Dream**. This achievement means a lot, and I want to thank you for your generous support.



12 Days of Christmas

Our push to the end of term has started in earnest this week, with a strong focus on attendance and gaining extra merits and Sparx credits. Our first winners, with the lowest number of demerits for the week, were **7 Kennet**, who thoroughly enjoyed their reward—an exclusive lunchtime badminton session. Our second reward was a Christmas movie for a tutor group which was won by **8 Kennet**. This was for the tutor group who got the most SRP on Sparx Reader across the week. The difference between the first and second groups was less than 50 points which is less than 5 minutes reading in total or 9 seconds per pupil! In fact, **8 Kennet** averaged over 58 minutes reading per student last week which is a thoroughly fantastic effort and across the school we saw a 50% rise in reading times by the students.

Sparx

We had another fantastic week, with River Academy ranked as the **highest-performing school in the country for Maths and Reader**. This consistent approach—ensuring students receive regular and appropriate work each week—is key to our success at River. Equally important is our policy that students stay behind to catch up on any missed or incomplete work.

RIVER ACADEMY

The 12 days of Christmas

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

RIVER ACADEMY

99.7+% Completion Rates

Sparx Reader:	100%	1st out of 1000 schools
Sparx Maths:	100%	1st out of 2626 schools
Sparx Science:	99.7%	

By developing these habits, we aim to help students stay organised, manage deadlines, and continuously improve their skills and knowledge. Additionally, we know this approach supports those students who struggle to work independently, who struggle to find a space or support from home, and this is a real moral driver for our

approach.

Miss Moore and #TeamRiver

Ms Moore recently underwent a minor knee operation and has been off for the past five days (she's back today!). I would like to publicly thank my staff, especially Mr Clare, for rallying round and covering lessons to ensure that no students missed practical PE sessions.

Thanks to their efforts, we avoided using external agency cover, saving the school money and ensuring lessons continued smoothly without disruption. Despite being in Week 13 of term, our team ethos remains strong, and teacher absence is remarkably low—something for which I am incredibly grateful.

Sport

Our Year 7 boys' football team had their first outing this week at the Reading Schools' **5-a-side tournament**. They faced tough opposition and hit the woodwork several times, with losses against MES and MER, a win against The Willink, and a narrow defeat against Denefield to finish off.

The girls' team drew two games last night, against Little Heath and The Wren before losing to Bohunt. A huge well done to all of them who played, who despite the cold, played with great spirit and enthusiasm at all times.



Panto

Next week is our Year 7 pantomime trip to the Hexagon with all **187 students**! This promises to be a fabulous afternoon as we march across town to the theatre. If last year is anything to go by, it will be a very British and thoroughly raucous afternoon out.



Christmas Concert and Celebration Evening

We're really looking forward to our two upcoming Christmas events:

- **Christmas Concert** – Thursday 11th December
- **Christmas Awards Evening** – Tuesday 16th December

Invitations to the awards evening will be sent out soon, and we look forward to celebrating with our lucky winners!

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

Warm regards,

Andy Hartley

Headteacher