



Headteacher's Update

9 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

A very Happy New Year to all our River families! I hope everyone is well and enjoyed a restful break.

Our students returned on Monday with a really positive start. We've been delighted by their conduct and engagement throughout the week, and the number of demerits has been minimal—an excellent beginning to the term.

Snow Day Surprise

The unexpected snowfall on Tuesday morning brought real delight to the site. It was wonderful to see students enjoying their time outside at break. What struck us most—and says so much about our community—is that many of our students had never seen snow before. A truly memorable moment!



Year 8 Assessment Week: January 12–16

Next week, Year 8 will sit the first of two **Mastery Showcase Assessment Weeks** this year. This is a great opportunity for students to demonstrate the hard work and determination they've shown over the past year and a term.

At River Academy, we prioritise knowledge retention, so assessments will draw on the

curriculum so far. We've been impressed by Year 8's attitude and focus and know they'll strive for success.

- Papers will be sat in lessons, in classrooms. Timetables are in student planners.
- Teachers will ensure silent environments so students can focus.
- Students should bring revision materials to school.

If expectations aren't met, students will complete the paper after school on the same day. In lessons without assessments, students will be guided in revision.

We wish Year 8 the very best and look forward to seeing the fruits of their labour!

(Year 7's Mastery Showcase follows on Monday 2nd February—details to follow.)

Italian for Beginners: Year 7 Silver Programme

On Thursday, Mrs Clark hosted 18 students for an Italian for Beginners session. It was wonderful to see their enthusiasm as they tackled new sounds and accents. Thank you to



RIVER ACADEMY
Community Lectures

Held at: River Academy
7 Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8EQ

A new series of FREE public lectures
Open to all!

Join Dr Dan Renshaw for his second community lecture at River Academy. Dr Renshaw will explore our local Victorian History!

Dr Dan Renshaw
University of Reading

Lecture: Berkshire in the nineteenth century- challenges and change

How did the technological and social changes of the nineteenth century impact on the lives of people living in the county of Berkshire? In this talk we'll look at what life was like at the beginning of the century, and what had changed and what had stayed the same by the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, both in expanding industrial centres such as Reading and in the Berkshire countryside.

No need to register - everyone welcome!

Free termly academic lectures for the school and wider community

The chance to meet academics and ask questions!

Tuesday 20th January
4-5pm
Arrive by 3.45pm

RIVER ACADEMY
Community Lectures

University of Reading

Miss Angell for organising the Silver Programme and ensuring students and parents can take advantage of these opportunities.

As part of this programme we will be holding our next community Lecture on 20th Jan. Please see the poster for details – we look forward to seeing you there.

Electives Return

Our Elective Programme restarted on Wednesday, and it was fantastic to see students embracing their new choices. The Classics session, delivered by a facilitator from Royal Holloway University, received glowing praise, and the trampolining group certainly threw themselves into their activity!

Looking Ahead: Sixth Form Plans

On Monday, I met with the Trust team to discuss plans for a Sixth Form at River Academy, opening in 2029. Mrs Billingham and I will host a consultation event on **17th March at 6pm** to share our vision for Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form. Further details will follow—watch this space!

Have a great weekend

Best wishes,



Andy Hartley

Headteacher

