



Headteacher's Update

22 May 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the bank holiday weekend, it is wonderful to see the promise of some warm and sunny weather ahead. We hope this brings an opportunity for our whole school community to relax, recharge, and enjoy some well-deserved time outdoors with family and friends.

Masters of Recall prize draw

A huge thank you to all the parents who donated to our Masters of Recall prize draw which we held on Monday at the end of school. Conducted by Mrs Billingham and using our newly purchased school megaphone, complete with siren (!), she called everyone to order before drawing 40 tickets from her box for students who had demonstrated knowledge by recalling to her correct answers using their revision flashcards. As you can see from the photograph the prizes of Uno, basketballs, pens flashcards and more were very well received!



Junior Maths Challenge

We are absolutely delighted to celebrate the fantastic results in the recent Junior Maths Challenge. An incredible five of our students have progressed to the prestigious Kangaroo Challenge, a higher level of this national competition—an outstanding achievement. Overall, more than 90 of our students received an award, which is truly exceptional. This success is a testament to the brilliance and dedication of the Mathematics Department at River Academy, as well as the hard work and commitment of our students. These results place us among the very highest-performing schools we can find nationally in this competition.



Interhouse badminton- photos

Our recent inter-house badminton event was a true highlight. The day was filled with energy, enthusiasm, and healthy competition. Students followed instructions impeccably, demonstrated excellent sportsmanship, and supported one another in the right spirit throughout. It was wonderful to see such respect and encouragement on display, making it an enjoyable, if somewhat noisy experience, for all involved.



School Improvement Plan 2026/2027

We are currently developing our School Improvement Plan for the coming year, and this is being shaped using a wide range of information, including valuable feedback from our stakeholders such as the parent survey you completed in March. By listening carefully to students, parents, and staff, we are ensuring that our plans are well-informed and focused on making River Academy even stronger in the year ahead.

Re-set- June 1st, 2026

As always, after each holiday, we carry out a “reset” to ensure we continue to build on our successes.

Students will be introduced to a number of small tweaks designed to improve the school experience even further. Alongside this, we will also take time to remind students just how well they are doing, what our values mean and celebrate the fantastic standards already in place.

Trips

Looking ahead, we are excited about the upcoming KPMG trip for Year 8 students shortly after the half-term break. This visit will give 25 students the opportunity to visit a global accountancy firm and will hopefully inspire them to pursue this as a career option. In addition, during the following week, on Wednesday 10th June, both Year 7 and Year 8 will be out on trips. Year 8 will be visiting Milford-on-Sea for a Geography/Science fieldwork day while Year 7 will take part in their “Our Hometown” trip to Reading. These experiences are an important part of our wider curriculum and always prove memorable and valuable for students.

Attendance

Attendance continues to be a real strength of our school, and we would like to extend a huge thank you to all parents and carers for your support this term. With attendance well in excess of 96% for the half term, this reflects a strong partnership between home and school. At the same time, the attendance team continues to work closely with a small number of families where absence frequently falls just before or after holidays. Missing these key days can disadvantage students, as they miss important learning, messages, and events.

Home Learning

A reminder regarding home learning: there will be a small amount set over the half-term break, but as always, we aim to keep this light. Students have worked incredibly hard during the term, and the holiday is an important time for rest and recuperation.

Happy Half-term!

Finally, I would like to say a sincere thank you to all members of our River community—students, parents, and staff—for your continued support and hard work over the past six weeks. It has been a hugely successful half term, and we are very grateful for the positive contribution everyone makes to our school.

We wish you a restful and enjoyable bank holiday and half-term break.

Best wishes,



Andy Hartley, Headteacher