

Headteacher's Update

26 June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

May I thank you for your support and understanding during this period of extreme heat and the red weather warning that we experienced from Wednesday through to Friday of this week.

Closing the school is not an easy decision and is never taken lightly. The four secondary Headteachers from the Trust met on Monday morning to review the weather forecast and consider all relevant factors. Most importantly, we placed the health and safety of all members of the River community at the centre of our decision-making. As a result, we agreed to implement a shortened day on Tuesday and full closure on Wednesday and Thursday. Unfortunately, this closure had to be extended to Friday following the late announcement of a red weather warning by the Met Office during Thursday morning.

As the school site has been closed, this has inevitably meant that a number of planned events have had to be postponed or rearranged. I have been meeting with my team each morning to carefully re-plan the coming weeks, and whilst we will do everything possible to accommodate all key events, there may be some adjustments to the calendar as we work to fit everything into the final three and a half weeks of term.

Next week is the **Year 7 Parents' Evening**. If you have not yet made a booking, please ensure you do so via the parent system. In the parent survey conducted in March, families requested more opportunities to meet with teachers, along with sufficient time to see all relevant staff. By running Parents' Evening over two sessions, we have worked to address this feedback. However, I have been a little disappointed by the slow uptake so far, and I strongly encourage all parents and carers to take this valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress and attitude to learning with their teachers.

[SchoolCloud - River Academy](#)

One event we have had to reschedule are the **Mastery Showcase results**, which were due to be released on Wednesday. I appreciate that many students were eagerly anticipating these outcomes. The results will now be shared on **Wednesday of next week**, followed by **celebration assemblies on Thursday** for Years 7 and 8. These assemblies will recognise students who have achieved the

highest scores, made the greatest progress, and demonstrated exceptional grit and determination. Whilst it is always important to celebrate high attainment, it is those students who show resilience and significant improvement who most embody the values we seek to nurture.

Finally, I would like to inform you that the school will no longer be using its X (formerly Twitter) account. This is a Trust-wide decision, based on concerns regarding content promoted through the platform's algorithms which we do not feel align with the values of Maiden Erlegh Trust or River Academy. Moving forward, we will be using **Facebook and LinkedIn** as our primary channels for social media communication.

I hope that everyone is able to stay cool over the next couple of days and that students return refreshed and ready for learning on Monday. The current forecast suggests temperatures of around **24°C**, and therefore Monday and Tuesday will be **shirt-sleeve order**. Students should wear their school shirt and may choose to wear skirts, shorts, or trousers; ties and blazers will not be required. Have a wonderful weekend.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the sender.

Andy Hartley,

Headteacher