





RIVER ACADEMY

Parent Welcome Evening

Tuesday 7th July 2026



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The purpose of this evening

- To share with you some of our excitement for September
- To give you a further insight into how our school will operate
- For you to meet some of our key staff
- For you to ask any personal questions you may have





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Key staff

- Mr Andy Hartley- Headteacher
- Mrs Laura Billingham- Deputy Headteacher
- Mrs Becky Clarke- Assistant Headteacher
- Mx Bowler- Head of Year 7
- Ms Sara Stevens- Operations Manager





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Welcome to #TeamRiver





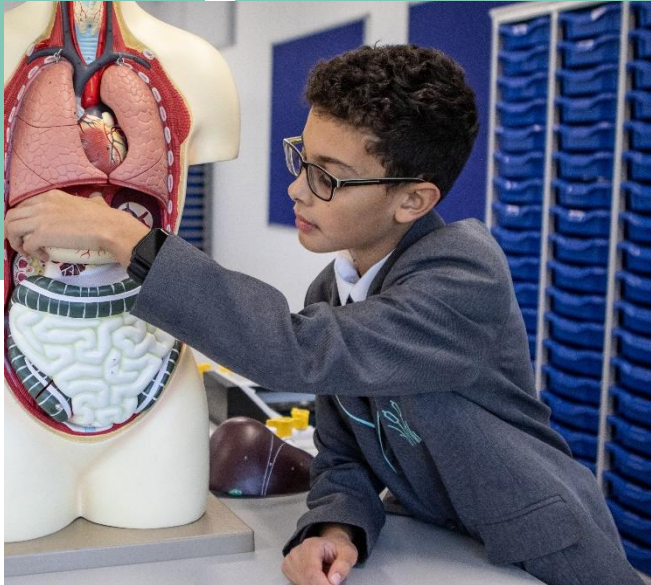
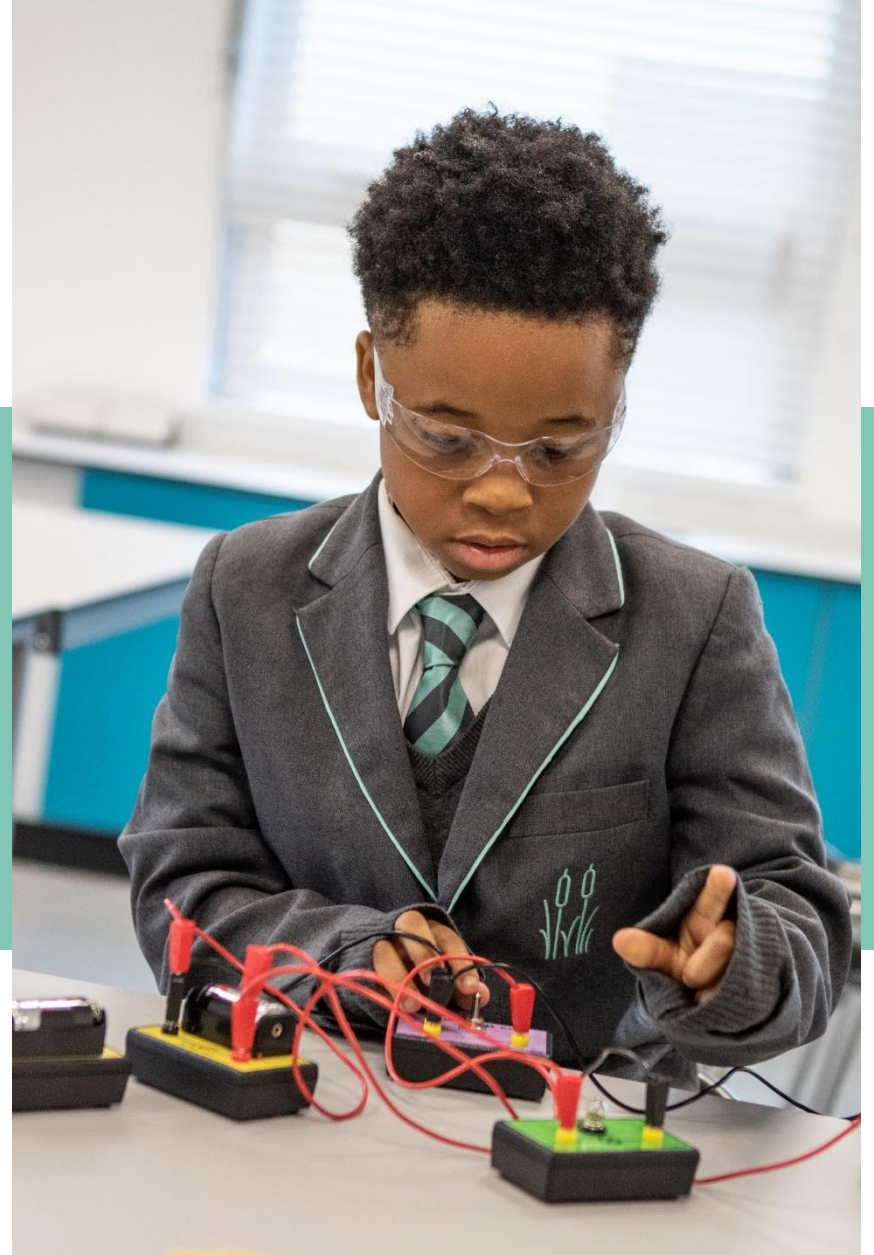
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RIVER ACADEMY | YEAR 7 2024 ~ 2025

TEMPEST
PHOTOGRAPHY







What sort of a school will River be?





Our Vision

- ✓ A school in the community and for the community
- ✓ High challenge in the classroom based on evidence-research and case studies of success
- ✓ A place where staff want to come and work
- ✓ Simple systems for behaviours
- ✓ Removing barriers for learning and attendance
- ✓ Creating a sense of joy and belonging
- ✓ No disadvantaged gap



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Our Values



Our aim / Our purpose / Why we are here?

"Every single day is precious.

Don't waste a moment.

In a world full of adversity, we must still dare to dream".



Our aim / Our purpose / Why we are here?

“Qualifications and choices”

“So you can learn enough to do some good in the world.”



Our aim / Our purpose / Why we are here?

“Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit”

(Durant, discussing the writing of Aristotle, 1926:87)

Systems and goals

“You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems. Your goal is your desired outcome. Your system is the collection of daily habits that will get you there.” James Clear

We practise and rehearse our ways until they become automatic.

Sweat the small stuff- always- uniform, rules, classroom practice, consequences...



Steven Bartlett
@SteveBartlettSC

If you don't care about tiny details you'll produce bad work because good work is the culmination of hundreds of tiny details.

The most successful people I know all sweat the small stuff.



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Uniform

There are 3
branded items.

Most items are
available direct
from the high
street.

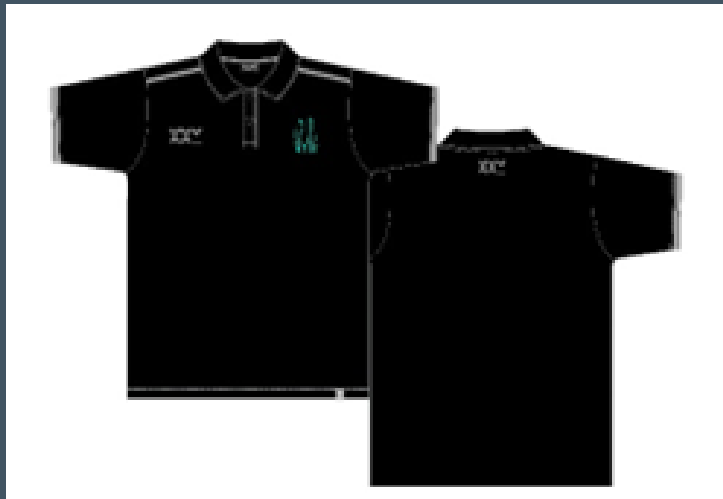




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Uniform

Our PE kit





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Personal Appearance

- Well-groomed hair/facial hair (no extreme styles). ***Nothing shorter than grade 1 please.*** Shoulder length and longer hair to be tied back during PE, design, art, science and food lessons for health, hygiene and safety reasons
- Natural coloured hair
- One small silver/gold stud or ring in the lower lobe of each ear only
- No other jewellery should be worn to school
- Head scarves may be worn for religious reasons by agreement and should be plain black, grey, or navy
- School uniform should be worn appropriately (e.g. ties done up, shirts tucked in, shoelaces tied etc.)
- No make-up or nail varnish except light foundation
- Smart watches are not permitted in school



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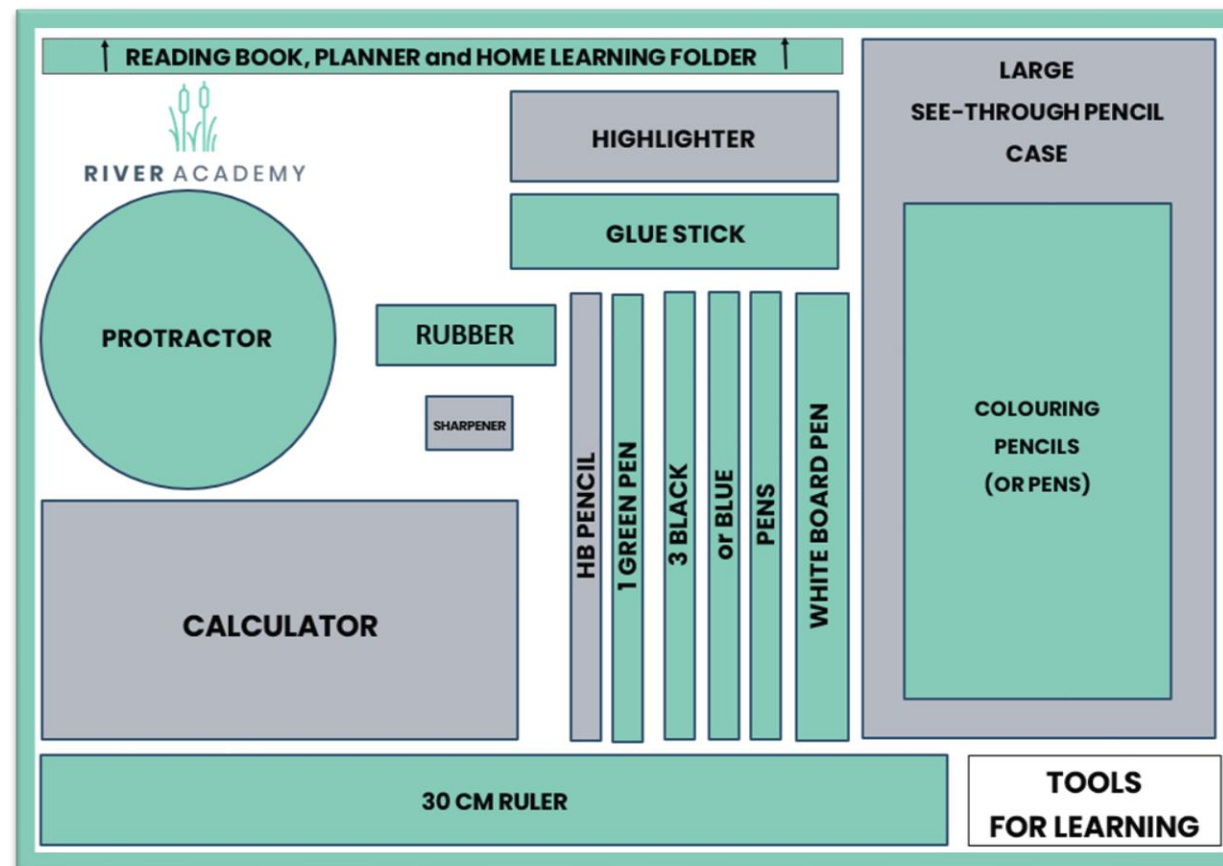


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Tools for Learning

- Large see-through pencil case
- Three black or blue pens
- Green pen
- HB pencil
- Rubber
- Pencil sharpener
- 30cm ruler
- Protractor
- Highlighter pen
- Whiteboard pen
- Scientific calculator
- Coloured pencils (or pens)
- Glue stick
- Reading book
- Planner
- Sparx Book
- Home Learning Booklets in folder

The calculator we recommend is the [Casio FX-83GTCW](#).





Line Ups

- ✓ At the start of the day
 - ✓ End of break
 - ✓ End of lunch
 - ✓ End of the day
- A calm and crisp start to each lesson
 - Key messages
 - Positive and celebratory



The River Way

Developing our knowledge, skills and character...



...so that we can go on to lead happy, successful lives, as drivers of our own destinies.



Manners and Oracy At River Academy

STEPS

Polite and Respectful

- S Sir / Miss
- T Thank you
- E Excuse me
- P Please
- S Smile

SHAPE

Confident and Clear

- S Sentences
- H Hands
- A Articulate
- P Projection
- E Eyes

ABCQ

Formal and Extended

- A Add
- B Build
- C Contest
- Q Question

"It only takes one voice, at the right pitch,
to start an avalanche."

Dianna Hardy

Sit like a **STAR** ★



Sit up tall



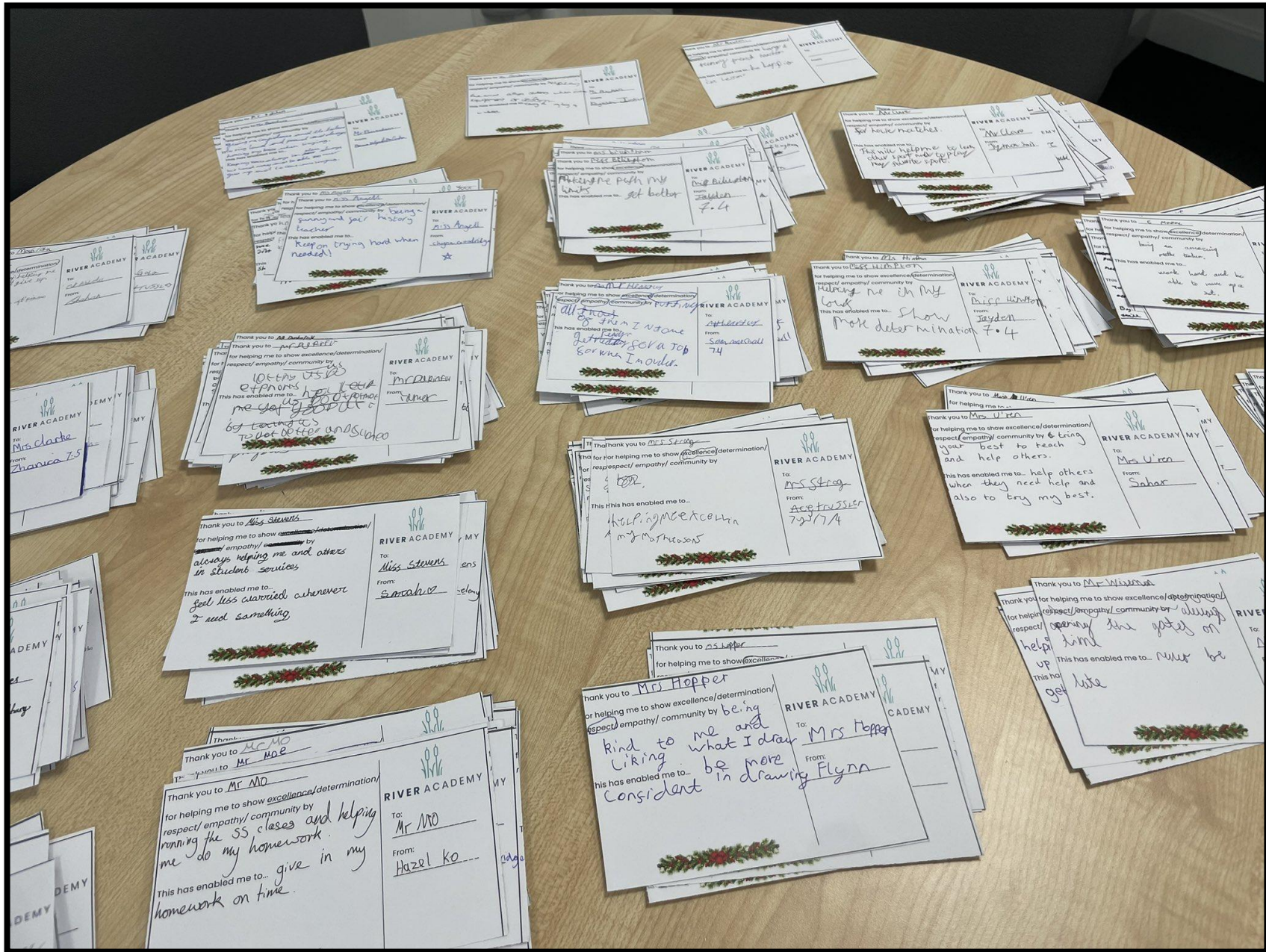
Track the speaker



Ask and answer questions



Respect those around you





Electives and Enrichment



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Community Lectures
A new series of FREE public lectures open to all

 Join polar conservationist and leader of the 'Seals from Space' research project Prem Gill to celebrate the Antarctic. Learn about its many animal inhabitants and how changes in this region are impacting our climate.

Prem Gill
University of Cambridge

Lecture: Seals from Space- how polar explorers use satellites to study Antarctic wildlife

Free termly academic lectures for the school and wider community

No need to register - everyone welcome!

The chance to meet academics and ask questions!

Tuesday 29th April
4-5pm
Arrive by 3.45pm

RIVER ACADEMY
Community lectures

 UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



Merits and Demerits



We are a school:

- with high expectations
4000 merits a day

100 demerits a day

safe, respectful and
successful because of
these things.

Celebration Fridays




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Achievements of the week

Friday 16th May

Merits' Leaderboard

7 THAMES	Archie	110
7 KENNET	Zainab	119
7 PANG	Aneeqa	119
7 LODDON	Molly St	110
7 LAMBOURN	Tommy	145
7 AVON	Jacob D	112
7 BRIDGE	Bethany & Lilly-Rose	75

Teachers' Awards

Ms Myers	Moses 7AV
Dr Dukinfield	Theo B/David 7AV
Ms Strong	Aryan G 7KE
Ms Clare	Hazel C 7KE
Ms Angell	Eliza 7KE/Ethan U 7AV
Mr Mo	Syesha 7TH
Ms Billingham	AJ 7LA
Ms Basham	Tyler-James 7BRI
Mr Abiola	Jessica 7PA
Mx Bowler	Hazel K7LO
Ms U'ren	Weronika 7LO
Ms Audsley	Daniel 7KE

Spax Stars

	Maths	Reader
7X1	Yahya & Jacinth	Benas & Marlos
7X2	Zainab & Yaroslav	Rosalind & Leif
7X3	Hugo N & Sophie	Sophie & Feybian
7Y1	Soanvi M & Jacob D	Lucas G & Aariz
7Y2	Nahrelle & Ethan U	Maya & Hassan
7Y3	Sam M & Emma	Sam M & Shahan
The Bridge	Kya & Bethany	Bethany & Joey

Tutor Group Successes

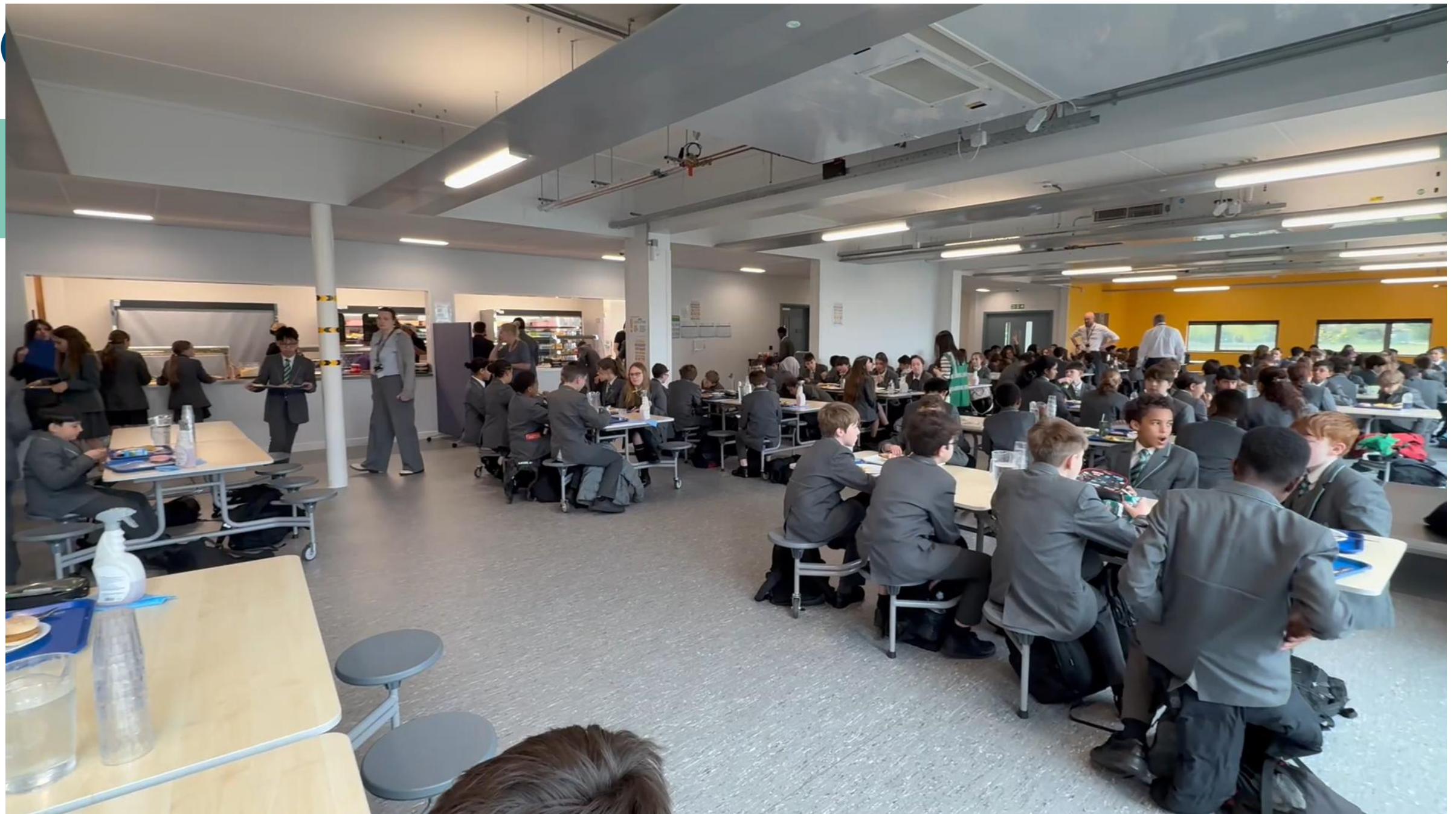
Attendance	7 BRIDGE 100%
Top Merits	7 LAMBOURN 2822 Merits

Leadership Awards

Head of Year Award	Harley 7PA
Deputy Head Award	Joey 7BRI
Headteacher Award	Tlayana 7LA Alman 7PA

*WorkHardPlayHard





Detentions – No-one falls behind...

Breaktime Detention:

15 minutes - uniform, equipment etc

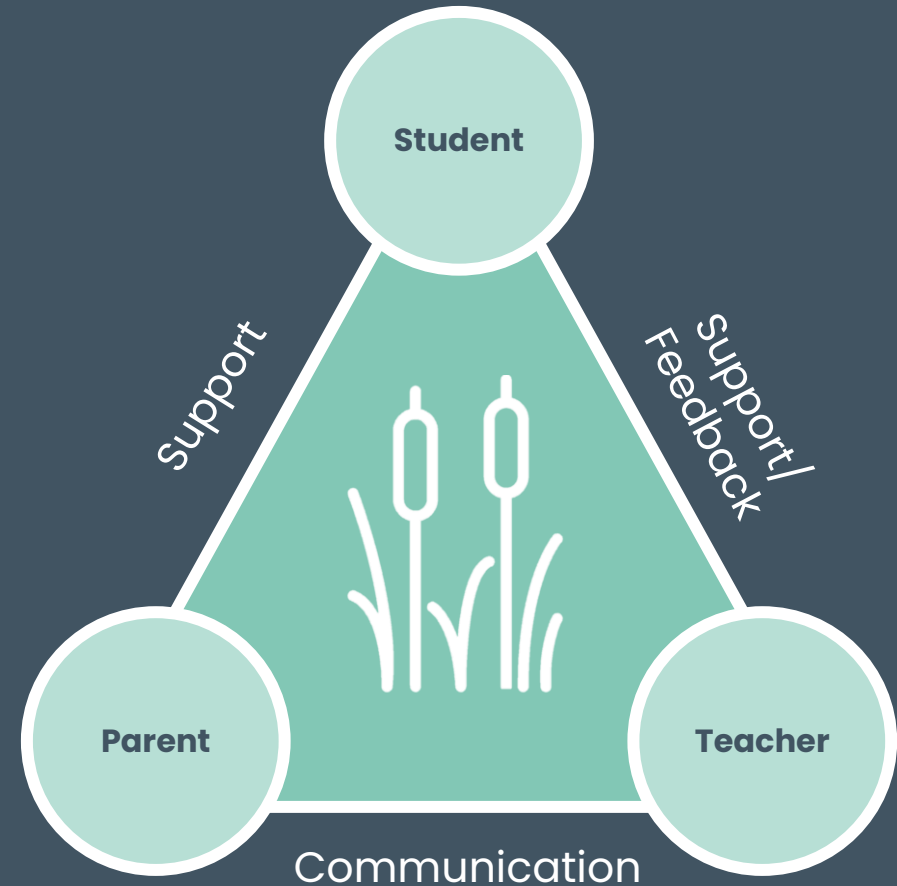
After School Same Day Detention:

40 minutes - for behaviour issues or lack of/sub-standard Home Learning



The parents' role

- A trinity – school, parent, student
- Remember that not everything you hear will be true!
- Check the Homework App, support
- Ensure uniform is correct
- Clear communication if there are issues
- Be ready to come in to discuss matters face to face
- Home School agreement



Metrics



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- Very low staff absence – no external cover used all year
- Overall attendance – 95.6%
- SEND students thriving- attendance and progress
- Junior Maths Challenge- 91 awards; 72% of participants gained awards
- Reading Ages: 52nd to 73rd percentile
- Student engagement in Sparx Maths/Sparx Reader – Top 2 in the country every week out of 2900 schools
- Intra-Trust Assessments; progress far exceeding starting points
- Waiting list for September - 80+
- Very low parental complaints
- External interest – Visits most weeks from fellow educators



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Supporting your child

Abi Bowler, Head of Year 7



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Typical Day in the life of a River Year 7

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	
Time	Activity
09:05– 09:30	Tutor
09:30 – 10:30	Lesson 1
10:30– 10:50	Break
10:50 – 11:50	Lesson 2
11.50 – 12.50	Lesson 3
12:50 – 13:50	Lunch
13:50– 14:45	Lesson 4
14:45 – 15:40	Lesson 5



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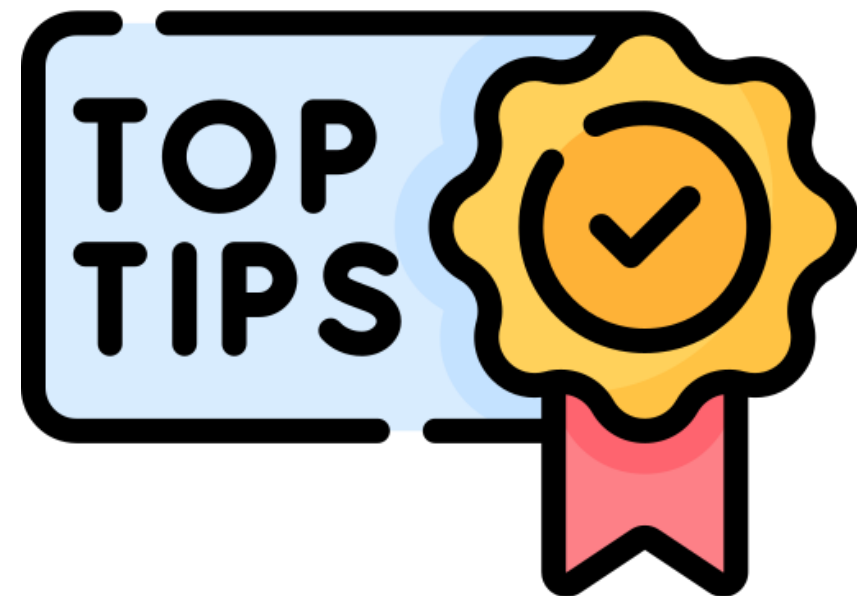


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Home Learning and how you can support

Top Homework Tips:

- Make homework a **priority**
- Check your child's **ClassChart's**
- Make sure your child has somewhere **quiet** to sit and work
- Make sure they **don't** have their **phone** in the same room
- Be there to **answer questions** when they need help
- Make sure they take **breaks**
- Stay **positive**
- Ensure they have enough **time** to complete the homework



If home learning is not completed/is sub-standard, students will be held back to complete this. **We will not let students fall behind.**



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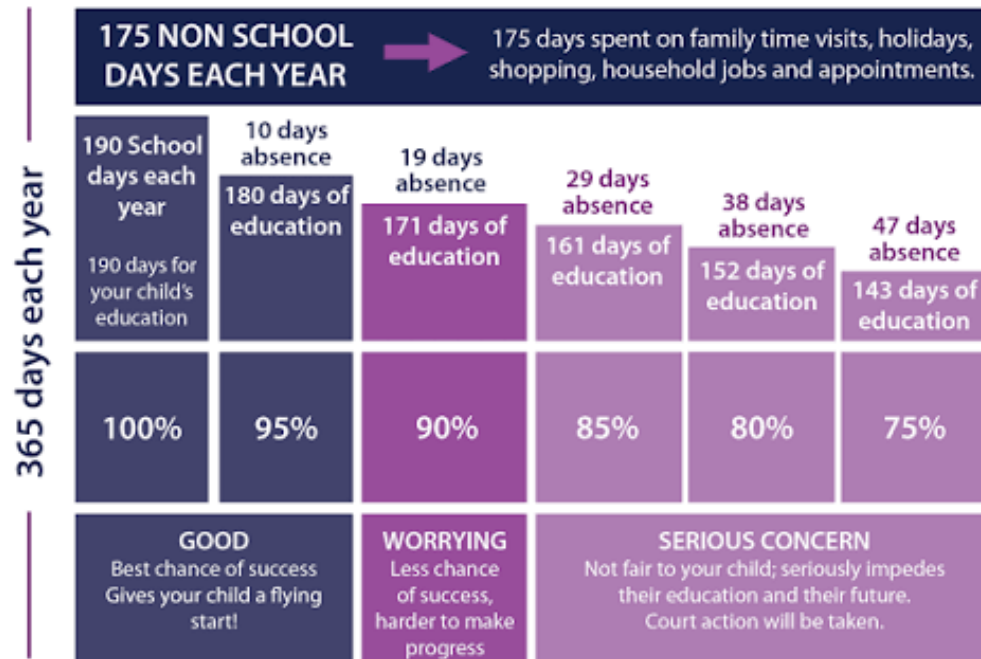


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Attendance

School success starts with attendance. Every school day counts.



- If your child is absent from school, we ask that you contact us each morning (*details can be found in the handbook*)
- River Academy operates a **'first day calling'** policy
- Our aim is for all students to record attendance **above 96%**
- Below 90% attendance = on average ½ day missed every week..... Equates to 4 weeks over a school year. In five years of school that's **around half a year's absence.**

Attendance is no just about being at school; it's about being present for opportunity.



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Pastoral Care and Support

Form Tutor- The Form Tutor is your first point of contact.

Head of Year- Serious matters or concerns

Behaviour Support/ Family Liaison Worker- To share a problem

Student Services- If your child are feeling unwell

Reach out if you feel your child needs some extra support in and around school:

River@maidenerleghttrust.org

NB: Whilst we make every effort to respond as quickly as possible, the school has a policy to respond within *3 working days*.



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Mobile phones in school

- Our school rule is **NO** mobile phones should be seen or used whilst in school.
- We ask you to consider buying a '**brick**' phone.
- Phones will be handed in each morning
- Apple/Smart watches are **not permitted**
- **Monitor** what your child is using and has access to. Check games and Apps. **Check the search history!**
- Any phones seen out on school site will be **confiscated** and **parents will need to collect**. The student will be given a detention.



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Supporting our pupils with transition

Transition Day- **9th July 2026**

Matriculation – **September onwards**

- Welcome Workshops
- Family dining
- School tour
- Buddying up
- Information sessions and expectations
- Interhouse activities
- Extra- Curricular – sports and intellectual
- LRC, River Canon
- Poetry – Invictus.





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Checklist for Thursday

- PE kit
- Packed lunch (unless FSM)
- Pencil Case – with pen, pencil and ruler.
- Water bottle
- Be here for 9.15am but no earlier please
- Finish at 2.30pm
- Big smile 😊 and a 'can do' attitude!



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The Curriculum

Laura Billingham, Deputy Headteacher



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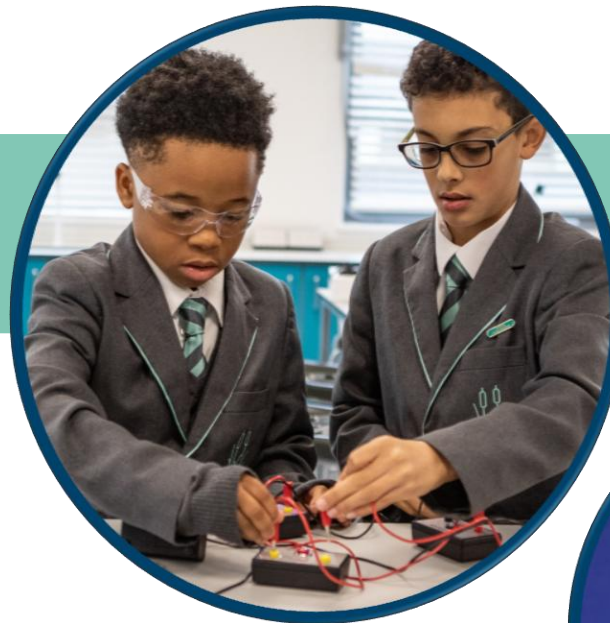
The Curriculum Offer

English, Maths, Science

Geography, History, R.E., French

Music, Art, Technology, Computer Science, P.E.

Personal Development, Supported Study,
Electives





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A Bookletised Curriculum



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ENGLISH

Spoken Language



NAME:

TEACHER:

Icons



Activating prior knowledge
Remember what you already know about a topic before you start to learn something new, to help build connections in your long-term memory.



Retrieval practice
Quizzing, recall and memory activities to slow down the rate of forgetting!



New knowledge
Learn something new through reading, teacher explanation, diagrams, listening to or watching something.



Processing knowledge
Do something with your new knowledge to help you understand it better.



Guided practice
Work collaboratively with your teacher as you strengthen new skills.



Independent practice
Using your knowledge and understanding to complete a piece of quality work independently.



Reflect and respond
Thinking about what you have learned, what went well and what you could improve next time.

NEW KNOWLEDGE: Challenges and opportunities of performance
Dame Estelle Morris of Yardley, 2020

Speeches are alive. They may be "written," but they are there to be heard, not studied on the page. They are a performance, and even the same speaker might give the same speech in 20 different ways depending on different audience, venue, time and reaction. It is this interactive nature of speeches that makes them unique; you will receive immediate feedback from an audience in terms of their body language – or cheering or heckling – in a way that you wouldn't if you wrote something for people to read. A writer for the page is spared the immediacy and rawness of a live audience. In many ways, this presents a challenge – a good speaker must attempt to marry up the speech they had planned with the one that is most needed for that audience and situation. Every speech is a composite of circumstances, meaning that the ability to adapt, change vocabulary, phrasing, timing, emphasis, prosody and body language is vital to conveying the right message at the right time. Another challenge is that you will rarely be addressing an audience of one! Speakers often have to appeal to a range of different people and groups with varying viewpoints and priorities. This calls for nuance and sensitive judgement.

The opportunity of speaking live, of creating something and having the flexibility to adapt, is an exciting one, though. Writers for the page must have something concrete and final. Writing and delivering a speech is something that is far more fluid, and a truly competent speaker can therefore tailor their message exactly to meet the needs of their listeners at that precise moment in time. The potential power of speeches is enormous.

Listening to a speech is an experience akin to going to a concert or theatre performance – the auditory and visual elements are just as important as the words being said. The best speakers consider their volume and dynamics throughout their performance.

Pace – how quickly or slowly you want to speak. Sometimes you might want to vary your pace depending on what you are saying at the time.

Pauses – even the shortest pause can feel like you are stopping for a very long time, but sometimes it is critical to give your listener some time to process what you have just said. Sometimes it is equally important to give yourself a little break!

Tone – nobody wants to listen to a speech given entirely in monotone. Variety of tone and prosody helps to convey meaning. Some people have naturally more exciting, varied tone colour to their voice than others. If you are someone with quite a plain tone of voice, consider ways in which you can vary this to emphasise important words and key ideas.

Body language – gestures, facial expression and other movement can significantly affect the way people understand your message. The best rule is to do what feels natural rather than trying to do something that is not comfortable for you. Body language can help to convince your audience that you believe in what you are saying, but this doesn't need to be dramatic gesticulation and pacing around the stage if this is not your style. It's also important to remember that very exaggerated body language may actually detract from the message you are trying to convey; try to keep things simple and clear.

Summarise the key points Morris makes about the challenges and benefits of making live speeches...

Masters of Recall Quizzes: Art of Rhetoric			
Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.	8.
9.	9.	9.	9.
10.	10.	10.	10.
10	10	10	10



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Home Learning



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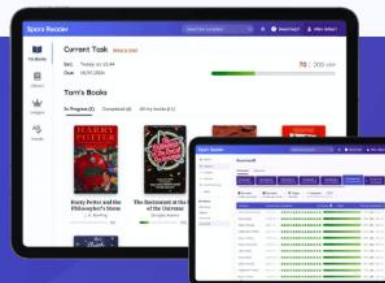
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Sparx Platforms



Sparx Maths

Building maths confidence through personalised homework.



Sparx Reader

Building confident readers through regular reading practice.



Sparx Science

Improving scientific knowledge through thoughtful practice.



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Sparx Platforms





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The River Way

A Framework for Outstanding Teaching and Learning



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The River Way

“Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit”

(Durant, discussing the writing of Aristotle, 1926:87)



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The River Academy

Teaching and Learning Playbook



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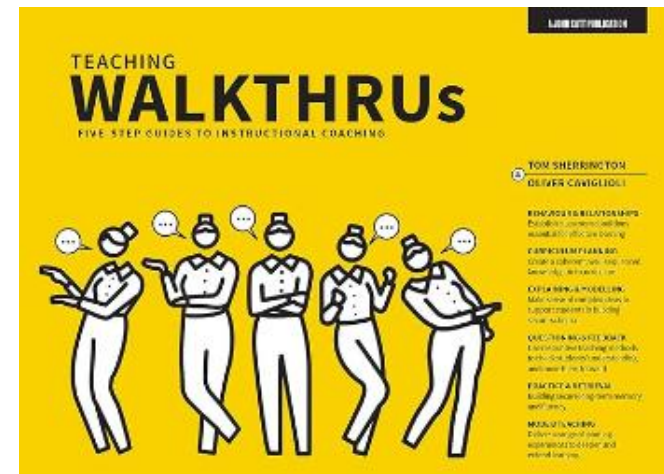
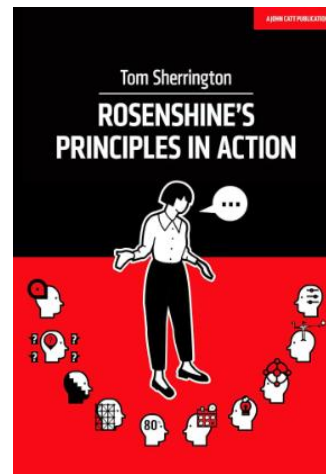
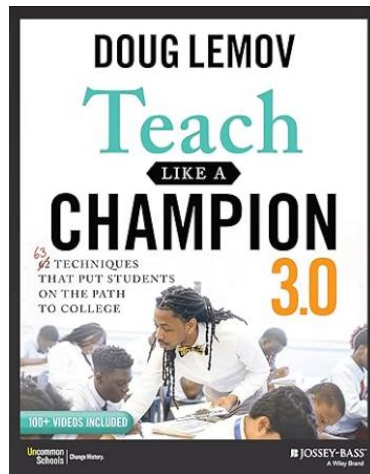


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An Evidence-based / Research-based Approach



MICHAELA
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



Ark Soane
Academy



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The River Way – Why?

- We believe in providing the very best chances of success for every student, every day.
- Consistency and alignment in everything that we do.
- We work in a school, not in isolation.
- The predictability of routines and standards also benefits students, particularly those in need of clear boundaries.
- In the classroom, we expect the focus to be on teaching and learning at all times.
- Excellent behaviour for learning is achieved through consistent expectations which are shared explicitly with all students and modelled until they become habit.
- 100% is the minimum acceptable level of compliance in response to any instruction.
- Routines in lessons are 'normalised', allowing teachers to focus on the students in front of them, and students, the task at hand.



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What can students expect?

- ✓ **100% engagement and focus**
 - Tracking the teacher
 - High levels of listening
 - Thinking hard
- ✓ **100% participation**
 - All hands up
 - Turn and Talk
 - Loud and Proud
 - Choral Response / repeat after me





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SEND Support

Becky Clarke, Assistant Headteacher



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SEND Support at River Academy

- Quality First Teaching; teacher-led lessons via visualiser and bookletised curriculum
- All students expected to go to every lesson; maximising time spent in class, building resilience, self-esteem, good learning habits
- Teachers follow strategies on SEN Support Plans and Passports
- Teachers know and monitor students with SEND - identify the need for bespoke interventions led by Teaching Assistant team
- TAs not deployed in class; support with interventions building skills and resilience; interventions targeted around non-core lessons such as Supported Study
- Line ups and Tutor time give notice of change
- Students with SEND have equal access to broad offer of extra-curricular activities
- Assigned lunch seating provides natural opportunities for connection without the pressure of initiating



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SEND Support at River Academy – The River Way

- Consistency across every lesson offers reassurance throughout the day
- Orderly transitions minimise sensory overload
- Calm compliance in class maximises focus and attention and ensures learning is accessible to all
- Clear instructions minimise confusion
- Modelling positive behaviours promotes improved social interactions
- Changes of activities throughout lessons helps cue and redirect attention
- Teachers are sensitive in the groupings and seating plans
- **Turn and Talk** eases social pressure
- **All Hands Up** avoids perceptions of injustice
- **Choral Response** provides safety in numbers



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SEND Support – Interventions

Communication & Interaction

- Autism Support
- Zones of Regulation
- Social Skills – *Talkabout for Teenagers*
- *Language for Behaviour and Emotions* – Speech & Language support

Social Emotional Mental Health

- *Sort and Settle* – check in with support staff
- Emotional Literacy small group support
- *Building Resilience in Young Minds* – external professional mentoring

Cognition & Learning

- *LEXIA* online literacy support
- *Rapid Plus* online reading support
- *Securing Y7 Foundations* online numeracy support
- *ABC to read* reading support

Physical & Intervention

- Handwriting intervention



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Transition Information

Sara Stevens, Operations and Administrative Manager



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MCAS

Please make sure you have signed up for MCAS where you will complete all the admissions information.



my
child at
school.com ✓



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MCAS



The office team have been working hard to assist you in completing the admissions forms. If anyone has had any issues, please come and see me after the presentation, where I can assist.

Mrs Cotterell –First Aid
and Student Services



Please contact the office for any further assistance

River@maidenerleghtrust.org



Any students with medical needs, please don't forget to bring in any medication **clearly labelled for Thursday** and **complete the medical form**, previously emailed. Anyone who needs assistance with the form please see me and I will be able to help



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Parent Information Booklet

Please read through, digest and put your September plan together so that September is successful.





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Headteacher's Challenge

We would like all students to produce a **piece of work** that tells us something about themselves. This could be a photo montage, a model, a film, a mind map, a painting or any other medium that would best communicate each child's story. Please complete this over the summer and bring to their first day on Monday 7th September.

Tutors and senior staff would use these pieces of work as a way of gaining insights and understanding of our new intake of students.

There will be prizes for the very best pieces of work, both in terms of effort, accomplishment, and ingenuity.

River Academy PTA

We are dedicated group of parents and teachers working together to enrich our children's school experience.

Why Join the PTA?

- 🗣️ **Have a Voice** – Share ideas, give feedback, and help shape school events.
- 👩 **Support Our Students** – Fundraise for trips, equipment & fun extras.
- 🎉 **Build Community** – Connect with other parents and staff.
- 👏 **Get Involved** – From bake sales to discos – big or small, your help matters!



SCAN ME

River Academy PTA
Food Festival



Evaluation and Evolution



Your voice will matter!

Thank you and see you soon!

