



RIVER ACADEMY

Issue 3

Headteachers Update

20th September 2024.

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope everyone has had a good week. We seem to be finding more of a rhythm now as we have completed one full cycle of the timetable, and the students have got more of a handle on using their planner to see what lessons they have. We have had the odd 'wanderer' but overall, everyone has been excellent at making it to lessons on time with their equipment in their hands ready to go!

It has been a wonderful week in terms of lessons and student application with around 5000 merits received versus around 230 demerits. Our tolerance of off-task behaviour is unashamedly low but the result is a calm learning environment allowing everyone to prosper. I gave two educationalists tours this week and they both wowed by the students focus, application and appearance during their tours.

Sparx Maths

I know the whole River team are incredibly proud of how well our students are doing and the positive attitude to learning of our students is demonstrated by the rapid and intensive engagement so many of our students have shown in Sparx Maths. **My student star of the week this week goes to Nabil Maalik who had not only done his homework but had voluntarily completed a further 1262 extra questions since Monday!** Wow! His actions really support our values of excellence and determination!

Can all parents please make sure the weekly Sparx homework is completed by Sunday evening.

Achievement Assembly

To celebrate our first Achievement Assembly last week was a real joy to behold seeing so many happy and smiling faces. It was also lovely to see students photographing their certificates as they left school clearly very keen to show parents. Thank you so much to Ms Moore for her excellent work in preparing this each week.



Electives



In a similar vein, our first Elective night was a delight with so many students getting stuck into a new sport or skill and this has been supplemented by good turnouts at Rugby, Badminton and Netball clubs. We are also running a choir each Thursday evening after school. Thank you to Mr Clare for his work in setting this initiative up.

New hall

It was also fabulous to witness the students' faces when we entered the hall for the first time on Wednesday morning. The hall is a fabulous space with great acoustics and the students clearly shared the 'Wow!' factor.



Music Lessons

Earlier this week I was visited by the Berkshire Music Trust with a view to them starting peripatetic lessons very soon. Please watch this space on our offer on this but I am delighted that we have forged this link so quickly.

Cycling to school

I am pleased that we have so many students cycling to school. However, I am afraid I can't permit anyone to use our cycle sheds if they are cycling in without a helmet. The roads around the school are busy and all students must protect themselves from the dangers of cycling within a town environment. If any of your sons and daughters are struggling to put a helmet on please show them this video on the potential impact of not wearing a helmet. <https://youtu.be/wF-Ft8FG2Mg>

Parent Welcome Evening

Can I also remind you that it is our Parent Welcome evening on Tuesday 24th September at 6.30pm. Please do come along and find out our plans for the year and get a tour of the building.

Open Evening, student leadership and early close

Ms Moore gave an excellent assembly on student leadership opportunities this week. Please do encourage your children to apply for the roles on student council, sports ambassadors and subject representatives. It will be great to harness the student voice of such a mature and engaged student body.

The assembly also mentioned the opportunity to support our Open Evening on October 2nd. I hope we can get as many of our students to support the event as possible helping out as subject support or as Tour guides around our amazing new building. There are letters (possibly in the bottom of bags!) that need signing so students can do this that were handed out yesterday.

Lastly, on this topic, the school will close at 1.30pm on Open Evening (we will feed the students before they leave) so that we can prepare subject areas and get the school thoroughly cleaned in time for the event at 5.30pm.

Have a great weekend everyone!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink.

Andy Hartley
Headteacher