



SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome Back Everyone!

Dear Parents,

I would like to offer a very warm 'Welcome Back' to our pupils and families and a 'Special Welcome' to our new pupils and parents this year. We are delighted that you have chosen Riverside Primary School for your child to begin their 'Journey of Learning'. I can assure you that your children will be well cared for and we will support them in reaching their full potential, both academically and socially. We place a large emphasis on supporting our children's mental health and well-being and this philosophy underpins our approaches to teaching and learning.

I was pleased to welcome children into school on the yard yesterday morning before the classroom doors opened. They all looked so smart in their uniform! Over the course of the day, throughout school, children showed excellent learning behaviours, superb manners, positive relationships and respect and classrooms were quiet and industrious - What an impressive start to a new school year!

Staffing News

We would like to welcome Miss Barry and Miss Badminton to Riverside. Miss Barry is supporting children in Reception class and Miss Badminton is supporting children in Year 1. These Teaching Assistants are in addition to our current team of Teaching Assistants and this will therefore enhance the specialist support we can offer our children. Also, Miss Luther has returned after the summer holidays as Mrs Cox, having got married during the summer. Mrs Cox currently supports in Year 3 and works Wednesday to Friday. Christine, our school cook, is currently absent from work, having undergone surgery in the summer holidays. She will be absent for some time in order to recuperate but, in the meantime, we have Donna, our temporary school cook, who the children met yesterday.

Summer Works

During the six week's holidays, we have had numerous projects carried out. We have had new windows installed in classrooms (you will notice they are all now grey frames when previously they were white). We have upgraded our Main Reception area too, where we have installed new signage and put up new photographs, making it more welcoming. We have upgraded our Fire Detection System and this work has been extensive and has included the installation of more alarm call points and there are now smoke alarms throughout the building. However, one of the most exciting projects over the summer has been the installation of our brand new Sensory Garden! This is now in the place where our old quadrant garden was. The space is now equipped with resources to support children with sensory needs and we have also installed floor to ceiling windows with a sliding glass door as access to the Sensory Garden. Today was the official 'ribbon cutting' ceremony and from today onwards, pupils can now access this amazing new space!

Home/School Communication

Following on from feedback from parents, we have reviewed the ways in which we communicate with you and we are introducing some new procedures this year which we hope will improve the communication between school and parents. One of these procedures is to make school staff more available to parents for queries and questions. Firstly, I will be on the school gate in the morning from about 8.40am, Miss Kaczan, Pastoral and Guidance Leader, will be on the school yard every day from 3.05pm, and Mrs Hall, SENDCo, will be on the school yard on Tuesdays and

Thursdays from 3.00pm. Miss Kaczan will also be on the front desk in the Main Reception from 8.50am – 9.30am, every day. We hope that making staff more available to answer your queries, informally, will reduce the need to make an appointment or request a call back as we know it can be frustrating when staff are unavailable.

New School Website

We will be launching our new website soon. We have worked extensively with a website designer to make the site easier to navigate and enable you to find the information you are looking for, quicker. It will have a more modern look and feel to it and we are delighted with the colour quality of photographs and videos. Once it is up and running, we will let you know!

School Office

The School Office is open Monday to Thursday from 8.00am – 4.00pm and 8.00am – 3.30pm on Friday. The school answerphone is in use outside of these times if you wish to leave message or request a call back. All messages are picked up at 8.00am. The school office staff are Ms Taylor, School Business Manager, and Miss Clay, Administration Assistant.

Forward Dates

Forward Dates for the autumn term will be uploaded to the school website soon and they will also be added to the school calendar on the home page of the school website.

Please note, whilst we try to stick to the dates and times for events, occasionally it may be necessary to make a change. We will keep you updated of any changes via our text message service and on the website. We try to give as much notice as possible of changes but sometimes this is unavoidable.

Monthly Newsletters

Newsletters are published on the school website on the last Friday of the month and you will receive a text message with a link to the newsletter. The newsletter contains valuable and relevant information for parents and carers about school and updates you need to know about so please do take five minutes to read it so that nothing is a 'surprise'!! We aim to make you aware of the important things that are happening in school which will affect you and your children and communicate this through our newsletter.

Attendance and Absence

We would like to remind you that we do not authorise leave of absence during term time for the purpose of Family Holidays. Parents who take their children on holiday during term time are likely to receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority Attendance and Placement Service.

This year, we will also be introducing rewards for children who have 100% attendance and punctuality. This will work on a termly basis so those children who have been at school every day and on time for the whole of the autumn term, will receive an Amazon voucher at the last assembly on 20th December, 2024. This will be repeated for children who have 100% attendance for the Spring Term, and then again for the summer term. However, for any children who have been at school every day FOR THE FULL YEAR will receive an Amazon voucher for a greater amount on the last assembly of the academic year on Thursday 17th July, 2025!

Data Collection

It is particularly important that we have your current mobile phone number on file in case of emergency contact so if you do change your phone number, or details of your emergency contacts, it is essential you tell us straight away.

School Day

A reminder that, our school day will **start at 8.50am** and **finishes at 3.20pm**.

Breakfast Club operates from 8.20am until 8.40am. Remember: entrance to Breakfast Club is via the school playground and NOT the rear car park of the Riverside Centre.

Medication

No child should bring medication to school. If your child is unwell, and has been prescribed medication to be taken during the school day, a parent **MUST** complete a form and the arrangement **MUST** be agreed by the Headteacher **before** any medication is administered. All enquiries regarding medicines should be directed to Miss Kaczan.

Health and Safety

May I remind you that pupils are **not** allowed to ride their bikes or scooters on the yard in order to minimise the risk of an accident. We would also ask that due care and attention is shown by ALL bike and scooter users on the path just outside of school. Children who cross Waterville Road by Rose Cottage should use the School Crossing Patrol so that they can cross safely.

I would like to remind parents that we placed signs on the entrances to the school premises last year which prohibit smoking or the use of vapes on the school yard. There is also a sign which shows we do not allow electric bikes or electric scooters on the yard. Additionally, dogs are not allowed on the yard – this includes puppies and small dogs which can be carried. We would appreciate it if parents would adhere to these rules and ensure their children follow them, too – especially the riding of bikes and scooters on the yard in the morning and at home time when the yard is very busy.

School Uniform Expectations and PE Kit

We would like to remind you of our school dress code for pupils which clearly states what we expect pupils to wear to school. This includes black school shoes or plain black trainers, plimsolls for indoors and no jewellery except one pair of earrings and a watch. We do not allow children to come to school wearing make-up (including body make up eg fake tan), nail varnish (including 'gel' nails, 'acrylic' nails or any type of artificial nail extension), temporary tattoos or body piercings.

Children are required to come to school on their PE days wearing their PE kit.

Pupil Birthdays – Reminder

Pupils must not bring in birthday cakes or sweets to share with their classmates on their birthday. This is because it contravenes our school's Health Eating Policy and we are having an increasing number of pupils with allergies and food intolerances.

However, when it is your child's birthday on a school day, they receive 'Special Day Provision' on that day. They are given a birthday hat and badge to wear all day, their classmates sing Happy Birthday to them in the morning and there is the option of the child having all pupils sing Happy Birthday to them in the dinner hall at lunchtime!

Playground Toys / Other items from home – Reminder

We would also like to remind parents that pupils are not allowed to bring in items from home to play with at playtimes and lunchtimes. This includes footballs and skipping ropes. The Sports Councillors and OPAL Play Buddies will ensure there is adequate SCHOOL equipment and resources for children to play with. Pupils are not allowed to bring in soft toys or fidget toys either – we have a wide range of resources your child can access, if they need to.

Children should not bring in pencil cases from home. All equipment required for learning – pencils, pens, rulers, felt pens, scissors etc – will be provided by the school. We discourage the bringing in of rucksacks/backpacks/tote bags as they take up too much space in our cloakrooms. Children need only to bring in their purple reading folder (if they

have one) for their Home Reading Book, the clear School Book Bag (for Read, Write, Inc home reading books), and a sturdy packed lunch box if they do not eat a school meal at lunchtime.

KS2 SWIMMING

On the days when pupils in Years 4-6 go swimming (which is a Wednesday) pupils need only to bring in a small kit bag or a carrier bag containing a swimming costume and a towel. Large and bulky bags for swimming kit are unnecessary and again, take up too much space in the cloakrooms.

School Meals Ordering System – Hutchison's Appetite

Can we please remind parents to order their child's school meals in advance. We understand it may have been something you forgot to do in the holidays and so we expected a long queue at the office yesterday morning! However, despite sending a text message reminder yesterday, only 50% of children had a meal ordered in advance, today. The menus are due to change in October so please order until the end of September – thanks!

SCHOOL UNIFORM / CLOTHING RAIL

Our school clothing rail in the Main Entrance has been replenished for the start of the new term. Parents can access additional school uniform items (polo shirts, trousers, skirts) at no cost. All uniform and other clothing items on this rail have been freshly laundered for September. If you have any outgrown school sweatshirts or other items in good condition you would be happy to donate, please bring them in. Any contributions will be gratefully received – thank you. We will also be adding new/unused school clothing items regularly. If you are experiencing difficulty in providing your child with school clothing or footwear, please contact the School Office where we will be able to help.

Ofsted Inspection of Riverside Primary School – 2nd & 3rd July, 2024

As you will be aware, our school was inspected by Ofsted in the last few weeks of the summer term. The report will be published shortly and we hope to be able to provide you with this on Monday of next week. This will be a link to the report on the website via text message. However, I would like to inform parents that as from 2nd September, 2024, Ofsted single headline grades, also known as single word judgements (Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, Inadequate) have been removed. However, schools will still receive a rating in the four sub-categories: quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership & management. The most important and informative aspect of any school's Ofsted Report are in the sections, 'What does the school does well and what does it need to do better?' and 'What does the school need to do to improve?'

Yours sincerely,
Mrs A Yilmaz
Headteacher