

24th July 2024

Dear Families,

Today marks the end of what has been another wonderfully busy year at Riverside School. We hope that your child has enjoyed their year, made connections, strengthened relationships and made progress in the areas that really make a difference to their lives and the lives of your family. We remain fiercely committed to ensuring that your child's days are filled with the types of activities and opportunities that motivate, excite and inspire them to learn more, do more and know more.

There have been so many highlights from the past year, both at an individual and a whole-school level and I hope that you have been able to share these with your child. From Bring Yourself Days to The Campaigners; 'Twas the Night to Julius Caesar; World Book Day to the Secondary Prom; Paralympics Day to the Family Conference; Rainbow Day to "Join in June", there really has been something for everyone. And in addition to these wider, whole-phase or site events, it is important to mention the smaller, but equally important things that happen every day to support your child achieve their PLP outcomes. We will always try to take your child out of their comfort zone in a safe way, providing the right blend of support and challenge to help them to flourish.

I would like to draw your attention to two particular events from the past month. Firstly, the Family Project, "Inner Landscapes", which can be seen [HERE](#). I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the families involved for giving us a glimpse into your lives and for sharing your stories. It was a truly humbling performance. Secondly, we ended the year with Riverfest, an event that epitomises who we are and what we stand for. It is a whole-school celebration of individuality and difference, couple with inclusion and connection. It is about friendship, togetherness, joy and laughter. I hope you enjoy the film [HERE](#).

Thank you very much to the large number of you who completed the recent Family Survey, in which we asked for your feedback on aspects such as annual reviews, home-school communication, website and social media, events and training. Your feedback is very important to us and please know that your responses will be carefully considered in the Autumn Term and will shape future practice.

Later today, we will be saying goodbye to 16 of our pupils at different stages of their educational journeys. As we wave goodbye, our message to them, and their families, is simple – we hope we have served you well. Please do stay in touch – you will always be part of the Riverside family and we would love to hear how you are getting on in the coming months.

Not all of our pupils have the words to say how they feel about their time at school, but we sincerely hope that wherever your child is on their Riverside journey, that they are collecting special moments and storing them in their own memory boxes.

You will find two attachments to this letter, the first is the Annual Governance Statement, which provides an overview of the work of the Governing Board and the second is the updated School Term Dates, taking us up to the Summer Term 2026.

It just remains for me to remind you that our first day back after the summer break is Friday 30th August and whilst none of us can ever predict exactly what next year will bring, what I can promise you is that it will be another action-packed, fun-filled one. Your children deserve nothing less and we are all looking forward to seeing them again soon.

With very best wishes,



Steve Solomons
Headteacher

Riverside Annual Governance Statement 2023-24

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual governance statement, which sets out the work of the governing board over the last year.

Who we are

Our [Governing Board](#) is made up of four parent governors, one local authority governor, one staff governor and four co-opted governors. Over the last year we have held elections for a staff governor and two parent governors. These resulted in Charley Reed being re-elected as staff governor and Roger Fernandes being re-elected as a parent governor, as well as Saddaf Solomon joining us as a new parent governor. We would like to welcome them all to the Governing Board.

Our job

Our job is to make sure that the school runs effectively. The three core functions of the governing board are:

1. Ensuring Riverside has a clear vision for where we want to go;
2. Making sure our pupils and staff do as well as they can; and
3. Ensuring Riverside's money is well spent.

All governors sit on the full governing board and one of our two committees, Resources Committee and Personalisation, Engagement, Curriculum and Transition (PECT) Committee.

Our priorities

As well as the 10 pledges of the School Development Plan, the governing board has focused on 4 priorities over the last year:

- 1) We will continue to deliver a truly inclusive environment, in which the whole school community feel welcomed, valued and confident to bring their whole selves to the school.
- 2) We will ensure that the quality of provision for our families is of the highest standard and consistent across all Riverside sites.
- 3) We will work with the local community to create an equitable, fair and responsible culture that transforms our world.
- 4) We will oversee a relentless focus on preparation for life after Riverside to ensure that pupils transition smoothly to appropriate provision.

Progress on our priorities

- 1) Our Belonging Agenda (Be Here. Be You. Belong) remains at the heart of one of our ten pledges and our commitment to celebrating pupil and staff difference runs through our curriculum planning and whole school culture. We have held Bring Yourself Days to reflect every member of the school community's background, heritage and culture and is part of our wider commitment to understand

one another better, to actively promote inclusion and celebrate diversity. Our Belonging Team has worked across all sites to ensure our whole school community see themselves reflected in all curriculum resources, choice of texts and across the physical environment.

- 2) As the school has grown in size, it is so important to ensure that our pupils receive the best possible provision, regardless of their age, phase, site or pathway. As a governing board, we visit our different sites over the course of the year and have the opportunity to speak to staff, pupils and families. Family surveys and feedback from events such as the Family Conference, Transition Morning, Expressive Arts Shows and Join in June suggest that families on all sites are really pleased with their children's placements. As a board we review data on both pupil attainment and teaching and learning, and are reassured that pupils on all four sites make excellent progress.
- 3) We believe that not only should Riverside pupils feel part of their local communities, but we also have a responsibility to influence and affect positive change beyond our school gates. We fully support the inclusion of community participation within the curriculum and building further links with other schools, colleges and community organisations. We also support the school's commitment to building cultural capital and widening our pupils' worlds. Our Secondary Phase's community and work experience programme goes from strength to strength and we are pleased that residential opportunities (such as camping and Isle of Wight trip) are now built into the timetable as pupils move through the school.
- 4) The majority of our pupils are with us for the whole of their school career, with a small number joining us for their secondary years. This means that moving on from Riverside can be daunting for pupils and families alike and we know that the school tries hard to ease the transition as much as possible. The curriculum in KS4 and Sixth Form in particular has a real focus on skills for life, supports the Preparing for Adulthood programme and is designed to equip our pupils for life beyond Riverside, wherever that may be.

Next year

We currently have 353 pupils over four sites and we will be increasing by one class at Riverside Phoenix in the new term. As we plan for governance in the coming academic year, we have agreed to continue to focus on the four priorities listed overleaf, as well as the ten pledges in our School Development Plan.

Get in touch

Thank you for your interest. If you want to find out more about the work of the governing board or anything in this statement please get in touch as follows:

George Christian – Chair of Governors - george.christian@riverside.bromley.sch.uk

Darren Jenkins – Vice-chair of Governors - darren.jenkins@riverside.bromley.sch.uk

Steve Solomons – Headteacher - steve.solomons@riverside.bromley.sch.uk

Riverside School: Term and Holiday Dates for 2024 – 2026

Autumn 2024	Tuesday 27 th August 2024	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
	Wednesday 28 th August 2024	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
	Thursday 29 th August 2024	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
	Friday 30 th August 2024	Pupils' first day of Autumn Term
	Friday 18 th October 2024	Last day before Half-Term

Half-Term Monday 21st October – Friday 1st November 2024

Monday 4 th November 2024	First day after Half-Term
Friday 20 th December 2024	Last day of Autumn Term

Spring 2025	Monday 6 th January 2025	First day of Spring Term
	Friday 14 th February 2025	Last day before Half-Term

Half-Term Monday 17th – Friday 21st February 2025

Monday 24 th February 2025	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
Tuesday 25 th February 2025	Pupils' first day after Half-Term
Friday 4 th April 2025	Last day of Spring Term

Summer 2025	Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	First day of Summer Term
	Monday 5 th May 2025	Bank Holiday – no school
	Friday 23 rd May 2025	Pupils' last day before Half-Term

Half-Term Monday 26th – Friday 30th May 2025

Monday 2 nd June 2025	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
Tuesday 3 rd June 2025	Pupils' first day after Half-Term
Wednesday 23 rd July 2025	Last day of Summer Term

Autumn 2025	Wednesday 27 th August 2025	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
	Thursday 28 th August 2025	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
	Friday 29 th August 2025	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
	Monday 1 st September 2025	Pupils' first day of Autumn Term
	Friday 17 th October 2025	Last day before Half-Term

Half-Term Monday 20th October – Friday 31st October 2025

Monday 3 rd November 2025	First day after Half-Term
Friday 19 th December 2025	Last day of Autumn Term

Spring 2026	Monday 5 th January 2026	First day of Spring Term
	Friday 13 th February 2026	Last day before Half-Term

Half-Term Monday 16th – Friday 20th February 2026

Monday 23 rd February 2026	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
Tuesday 24 th February 2026	Pupils' first day after Half-Term
Friday 27 th March 2026	Last day of Spring Term

Summer 2026	Monday 13 th April 2026	First day of Summer Term
	Monday 4 th May 2026	Bank Holiday – no school
	Friday 22 nd May 2026	Pupils' last day before Half-Term

Half-Term Monday 25th – Friday 29th May 2026

Monday 1 st June 2026	Staff Training Day – no school for pupils
Tuesday 2 nd June 2026	Pupils' first day after Half-Term
Wednesday 22 nd July 2026	Last day of Summer Term