

30th August 2024

Dear Riverside families,

I hope that you are all well and have had a good summer.

It has been so lovely to welcome your child back to school today and I hope that their first day has been a positive one. We know that some children positively bounce back into school after a long break and for others, the transition from home to school can be more challenging. We hope that they settle back quickly and start to feel secure in their new surroundings. The focus in these first few weeks is to develop the kinds of relationships that will enable them to find their place and find their voice, in whatever form this takes. And, however loud or quiet, we will always hear them and tailor our responses and approaches accordingly.

If today has been your child's first day at Riverside School, I hope they have returned home happy, despite any natural anxieties that they (or you) may have. We know how daunting the first day at a new school can be and we are here to support them, and you, as they get into the swing of Riverside life. If there is anything at all that you need to ease the transition, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your child's class teacher and I hope that you start to feel part of the wider school community, the Riverside family, soon.

We now have 360 pupils, aged between 3 and 19 in 40 classes across our four sites: 25 at Riverside SPC, 6 at Riverside Beckenham, 5 at Riverside West Wickham and 4 at Riverside Phoenix and, as we continue to grow in size, please know that we will never lose sight of the things that really matter to you and your child. Every single Riverside child is wonderfully unique, with a wide range of strengths, interests and needs and our commitment is to provide them with a profoundly personalised curriculum and an environment that enables them to flourish and feel truly valued for who they are.

Thank you to all of you who completed our Family Feedback forms at the end of last term. These covered aspects such as annual reviews; home-school contact systems; involvement in your child's Personal Learning Plan (PLP), Unique Profile (UP) and Happiness Passport; accessibility of our website and social media; family events and training opportunities. We promised that your responses will be carefully considered and will shape future practice and this will indeed be the case. We look forward to going through all the feedback and will provide a full response later this term.

At an individual level, it remains extremely important to us that you receive the information you need to feel included in all aspects of your child's school experience, so please let your child's teacher know exactly what you want to hear about. Please also feel free to contact anyone on the Leadership Team if you require any further support. We are:

Headteacher: Steve Solomons (*cross-site*)

Deputy Headteachers: Amy Price and Charlotte Downs (*cross-site*)

School Business Manager: Naomi Walters (*cross-site*)

Assistant Headteachers: Daniella Costanza (*SPC Primary*); Helen Bushell-Movahedi (*SPC KS3*); Katie Collett-Strutt (*SPC KS4*); Clare Collett (*SPC 6th Form*)

Phase Leaders: Clare Marseglia (*Riverside Beckenham*); Lauren Mullan (*Riverside West Wickham*); Emily Morris and Lucy Godley (*Riverside Phoenix*); Laura Stevens (*currently maternity leave*).

Over the summer, we carried out maintenance work and refurbishment on all four sites and we are all very much looking forward to what promises to be a fun-filled and action-packed Autumn Term. As I wrote in my end of-term letter, we will always endeavour to fill your child's days with the types of activities and opportunities that motivate, excite and inspire them to learn more, do more and know more. We will also 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 within, outside and beyond Riverside School.

Here's to the new term!

With very best wishes,



Steve Solomons
Headteacher