

Slovenia

Summer Fair

WowNow Day with Rose Bruford

A Year in Pictures

2016-2017

MOBOs

There's no business like show business

Onesie Day (Children in Need)

Primary Sports Day

Colourscape

Shakespeare Schools Festival

Sunseekers

Sports Day

World Book Day

Teddy Bear's picnic

Christmas Fair

Orpheus Project

Isle of Wight trip

Riverfest

"THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS"

Co Motion

Sports Day

Rotary Club Visit

Primary Christmas Show

Leaver's Prom



Riverside Roundup – July 2017

Dear Families,

As we approach the end of the year, there is so much to look back on and feel proud of. On the back page of this Riverside Roundup, you will see some of this year's highlights. Many of these events have been shared with you over the course of the year via our website and social media platforms and we have been delighted with the responses and feedback so far. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further thoughts about the ways in which we communicate with you.

Our new annual School Development Action Plan (March 2017 – March 2018) is well underway and as always, this year's outcomes are aspirational and closely linked to our school mission and vision. I would like to share some recent developments linked to each of our four pledges:

The Riverside Way

Our
Mission

To transform our children's lives and the lives of their families

Our
Vision

To inspire breakthroughs in the way society enables children with complex needs to find true fulfilment

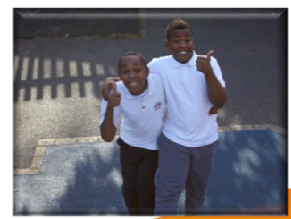
Our
Pledges

We will equip our pupils with a bespoke package of profoundly personalised support so that when they leave school, they succeed, flourish and leave their mark on society.

We will inspire our pupils, families and the wider community to make the seemingly unachievable achievable through the Performing Arts.

We will ensure current and future pupils make remarkable progress by attracting and training the highest calibre special educators at Riverside School and beyond.

We will influence the world of specialist education by creating an innovative curriculum framework based around The Pursuit of Happiness.



Be All That You Can Be

RIVERSIDE
SCHOOL

Pledge One: We will equip our pupils with a bespoke package of profoundly personalised support so that when they leave school, they succeed, flourish and leave their mark on society.

Following our latest collaboration with Swiftkey and Microsoft to produce an app which has the potential to give many of our pupils a voice, we recently received feedback from Microsoft:

"We are close to having our final version of the SwiftKey Symbols video. I can't begin to tell you how much I love this story. The folks at Microsoft love it so much they want to

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air it at an Artificial Intelligence event in London in July. There will be press at the event. I often think of the loving and hard work you do and it kept me and the team motivated to make sure this video honoured your school. I hope you love it”.

We look forward to sharing the film with you in the near future.

Pledge Two: We will inspire our pupils, families and the wider community to make the seemingly unachievable achievable through the Performing Arts.

There have been numerous reasons to celebrate the impact that the Performing Arts has had on our school community over the past year. We continue to build upon the talents amongst our staff to create innovative pieces that are truly inspiring. One recent example of this is our Sunseekers project, which involved approximately fifty pupils and a number of families, over fifteen different performances. Feedback from pupils, families and staff was glowing and I would like to share a letter received by the Performing Arts Team:

Dear Performing Arts Team,

You don't know me very well. Or at least, I didn't think you did. We have spent some time together doing different Performing Arts types of things and I have enjoyed them a lot. But last week was different. You took me on a journey to find the sun and we found it. I think another forty or so children also went on the journey with you during the week, and just three others went on my particular voyage.

But you know what, it didn't matter how many others were in the hall. There could have been three or there could have been three hundred. And that's because during the time we were together, nothing else mattered. All that mattered was me and you. And that doesn't happen often. It was as if the rest of the world stood still and whispered to me: this is your time ... just your time ... nobody else's.

No one needed to touch me to do the stuff I need help with. Don't get me wrong - positioning me, re-positioning me, feeding me and changing me are always done nicely. But let's face it, they are pretty functional and are just part of my daily routine so I get used to them.

But last week, you touched me in a different way. You made me open my eyes a little differently, turn my head a little differently and move my body a little differently. I can't really explain it, but you made feel different. I think it is because I didn't really know how I was supposed to feel, so I just felt how I felt. At times, I wasn't sure what was going to happen next. That can be scary. But I wasn't too scared because when things changed, I quickly realised it was going to be OK. At times, I thought things that were happening were quite funny and I smiled and laughed like any other child would have done. And at times, I was kind of wrapped up in a feeling of warmth. Warmth within myself, and warmth with you.

The idea of warmth probably means different things to different people. For me, it means more than a physical thing. It means tenderness; compassion and kindness. It means that at that moment, I was deeply cared for and cared about. I was respected, valued and appreciated for exactly who I am. I felt dignified, important and special. You made me feel really loved. And that felt really, really nice.

So I guess I just want to thank you. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. As you probably know, my voice doesn't allow me to say that. And whilst I can't speak for all the other Sunseekers, I am pretty sure that, if they could, they would say the same thing. You touched us and you moved us and you made things better. Never stop making things better. Never stop transforming our lives.

And never stop helping us Be All That We Can Be.



Pledge Three: We will ensure current and future pupils make remarkable progress by attracting and training the highest calibre special educators at Riverside School and beyond.

Despite the national teacher recruitment challenge, we are fully staffed for September and the whole school team are already looking forward to the new term. At this time of year, we also say farewell to those that are leaving us. I would like to extend our congratulations to Teresa Prior, Assistant Headteacher at Riverside Beckenham, who has secured her first Headship in a special school in Surrey. Teresa has been with us for ten years and following her first few years as a teacher, has progressed to a Senior Leadership position within the school; has jointly introduced our highly regarded in-house Postgraduate Certificate in Autism and has also taken Riverside School international, through her links in Slovenia. Thank you Teresa from everyone lucky enough to be have been taught, or led by you over the years.

We will also be saying farewell to two teaching assistants, Carole Moody and Jane Emans, who have been with us for a significant number of years at both Woodbrook and Riverside School. I would also like to thank Lisa Edwards, Charlotte Rumsey, James Fuller, Amy Parker, Kirsty Fifield, George Gill and Vicky Pisarski who are moving on – we would like to thank you all for your personal contributions to Riverside School during your time with us.

Our new Leadership Team structure includes:

Steve Solomons (Headteacher)

Amy Skelton (Assistant Headteacher – Primary)

Kerry Reed (Assistant Headteacher – KS3)

Charlotte Downs (Assistant Headteacher – KS4/5)

Sue Crane (Advanced School Business Manager)

Charlotte Parkhouse (Engagement for Learning Lead)

Holly Wheatley (Wellbeing Lead)

Sarah Stark (Phase Leader, Riverside Beckenham)

Clare Collett, Assistant Headteacher, will be re-joining the Leadership Team when she returns from Maternity Leave.

We have also recently created a tier of nine Lead Teachers. These are existing class-based teachers who will be involved in supporting newer teachers and developing new initiatives across the school.

Pledge Four: We will influence the world of specialist education by creating an innovative curriculum framework based around The Pursuit of Happiness.

We have written a new curriculum framework which we feel is profoundly personalised and based around the needs, interests and passions of all our pupils. We will continue to ensure that your child's Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is at the core of their curriculum and that their achievements are celebrated and shared with you through their Unique Profiles (UPs). We look forward to sharing our new framework with you in the Autumn Term – there really are many exciting times ahead.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your continued support and for sharing your incredible children with us.

Wishing you all a lovely Summer.



Steve Solomons, Headteacher

