

22nd July 2026

Dear Families,

Today marks the last day of another wonderfully busy year at Riverside School and, whether your child is at Riverside Beckenham, Phoenix, St Paul's Cray or West Wickham, we hope they have enjoyed their year. We hope they have formed connections and felt a true sense of belonging; and that they have always felt seen, heard and valued for being, quite simply, themselves.

We also hope that they have made progress in the areas that really matter to them, and yourselves. We know that for some of your children, progress towards a goal may be linear; they may take small steps in the same direction, each one moving them closer towards the target. And, of course, the target will look very different to all of them: perhaps trying a new food, recovering from surgery, forming a sentence, playing alongside a friend, waiting in a queue, tolerating a positional change, performing on stage, or using a communication app independently. All significant, meaningful and important.

Progress, however is not always linear. It may be "spiky"; it may be a little "round the houses" or, at times, it may be two steps forwards, one step back. At times, your child may not reach the target that had been set for them but, instead, they may move in a different direction, reaching different milestones and achieving success in areas that were not pre-planned. Sometimes it's these incidental and unintended successes that take us by surprise and make us feel so incredibly privileged to be able to share them.

In addition to your child's individual successes, there have been a number of whole-school highlights this year, both within the classroom and beyond the school gates. Just to pick out a few: in the Autumn Term we launched The Rhythmerside Approach; immersed ourselves in "Up, Up and Away" and won the Bromley SEND Stars Award for "providing continuous support, encouragement and services to children, young people, families and partner organisations working in Bromley". In the Spring Term, we celebrated World Book Day in style, brought The Winter's Tale to life and created the spectacularly moving "Journeys". In the Summer Term, we held a successful sibling event, raised over £3,000 on our Riverside Walkathon and ended the year with our annual Family Project: "Threads Between Us". This stunning piece needs no introduction, it speaks for itself. Please enjoy it [HERE](#).

We ended the year with Riverfest, an event that epitomises who we are and what we stand for. It's a whole-school celebration of individuality and difference, coupled with inclusion and connection. It's about friendship, togetherness, joy and laughter. I hope you enjoy the film [HERE](#).

We are extremely proud of these, and other successes, but we are never complacent and are always keen to learn when things don't go quite according to plan. In an environment such as ours, there are often twists and turns and when things need a rethink or a refresh, when there are lessons to be learnt, we stop, reflect, and review. As reflective practitioners, you'd expect nothing else and please be assured that we will never tire of finding the best way to do things, because that's what your children deserve.

Later today, we will be saying goodbye to 18 pupils as they end their time at Riverside School and embark on the next stage of their journey. We know that this can be an emotional time for everyone involved and, as we wave goodbye, our message to them and to you 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.

It just remains for me to remind you that pupils' first day back after the summer break is Tuesday 1st September for what promises to be another action-packed, fun-filled year. As always, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your child's class teacher on our return if there are any changes that you would like to tell us about or if you need any further support.

In the meantime, wishing you all a happy and healthy summer.

With very best wishes,



Steve Solomons
Headteacher