

13th February 2026

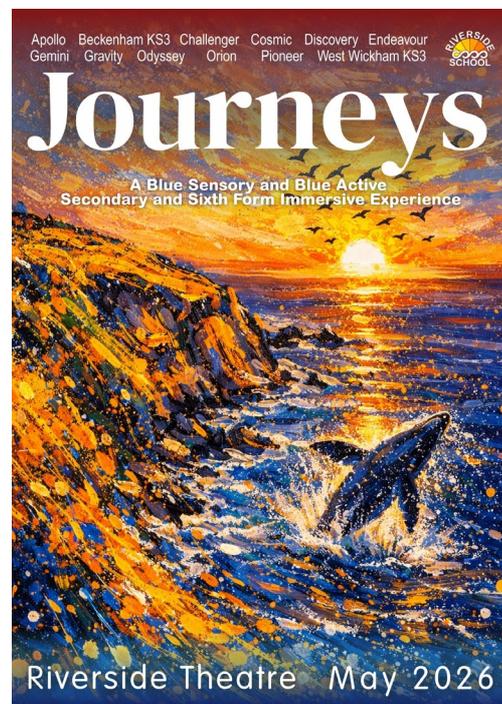
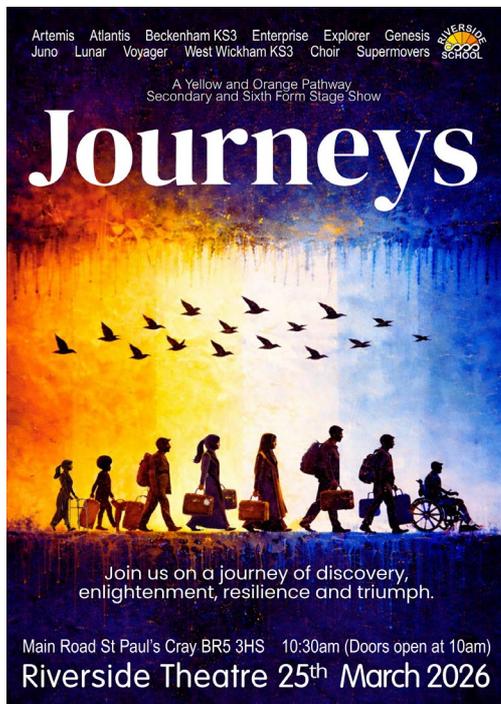
Dear Riverside families,

I hope that you are all well.

It has been another busy half term at Riverside School and I hope your child has enjoyed it. We know that January and February can often be a little wet and windy but, regardless of the weather outside, we will always do everything we can to ensure your child feels nothing but warmth and comfort inside. Of course, "comfort" looks and feels very different for every child, from being positioned perfectly to feeling truly valued for who they are. Equally, we feel that it is our responsibility to take them out of their comfort zones once in a while; to stretch and challenge and expose them to situations they may initially find difficult or scary. Again, this looks very different for every child: it may be visiting a new place, or trying a new food, or connecting with new people but, unless we try, we will never know. And needless to say, they regularly show us that they have the courage and the strength to overcome any initial nerves. Your children are, quite simply, inspiring.

You will be aware that we have a Training Day on Monday 23rd February so the first day back for pupils is Tuesday 24th February. I thought you may be interested to know that, on our Training Day, the focus is on "Community, Connection and Culture" and these are all areas very close to our hearts. In my first letter of the year, I referred to the flags that appeared across the borough and reiterated our position as a school: that we will always choose diversity over division, and inclusion over exclusion. We remain fiercely proud of our Be Here. Be You. Belong mantra and as a team of 300 staff, we will be exploring a number of key themes that underpin our ethos and practices. Initiatives like "Riverside Roots" are starting to, literally, take root and we have other plans that we look forward to sharing with you in the coming months.

One such event is our Secondary Stage Show for pupils in our Orange and Yellow Pathways, followed by our Secondary Phase Immersive Experience for pupils in our Blue Active and Blue Sensory Pathways. I won't give away too many spoilers at this stage but I can promise you that it will be a journey you will want to join us on ...



You will soon be receiving your child's Unique Profile (UP) for the first half of the year and thank you to so many of you for sharing with us some of the achievements that your child has made at home in recent months. These are truly worthy of celebrating and we love to hear about them.

In other news, we are aware that drop offs and pick-ups at all sites can be particularly busy and we remain committed to making them as safe as we can. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate the challenges of road closures, parking restrictions and general congestion as we, like you, want these times to be as stress-free as possible. We will continue to work with all parties to try and achieve this.

There are so many things to look forward to next half term and, whichever site, phase or pathway your child is in, we will never tire of finding new ways to excite and engage them; to widen their worlds and enable them to Be All That They Can Be.

That's it for now, other than to thank you for your support and partnership and to wish you all a happy and healthy half term.

With very best wishes,

Steve Solomons
Headteacher