

20th July 2023

Dear Families,

Today marks the end of what has been another wonderfully busy year at Riverside School. We often say that "time flies when you're having fun" and it really does. We try to ensure that your children'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. We want them to feel safe in their school environment, whilst at the same time be challenged and feel confident enough to step out of their comfort zones. It is often when they, like us, are given that extra nudge or word of encouragement that they fly. This philosophy is akin to The Goldilocks Principle, based on the premise that we experience peak motivation and performance when we are working on tasks that are right on the edge of our abilities. Not too hard, not too easy, but just right. At Riverside School, we strive to provide "just the right amount", whether this relates to sensory stimulation, language input or adult support. There is always a fine balance to strike and it is our responsibility to do everything we can to provide the best possible environment – both physical and emotional, for your child to flourish.

In just a couple of hours' time, we will be saying goodbye to nine of our pupils, at different stages of their educational journeys. They have spent between one and fifteen years with us and our message to them, and their families, is simple – we hope we have served you well. Not all of our pupils have the words to articulate how they feel about their time at school, but we hope that wherever your child is on their Riverside journey – whether they are right at the beginning or nearing the end, that they are building up their own memory bank of special moments. A first word perhaps, or a first step. A new friend or special interest, a developing life skill or the important ability to make someone else smile. We never underestimate the significance and the power of these moments.

Last week, through the Annual Family Project, sixteen families gave us a glimpse into their lives and shared their personal journeys. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for sharing their stories and for stepping out of their comfort zones. It was a truly humbling performance. Thank you.

We are already looking forward with real excitement to the new term, when we will add two more classes (one at Riverside SPC and one at Riverside Phoenix). This will take us to 350 pupils in 39 classes across four sites. However, despite our continued growth, we will always do our best to maintain a close-knit, family feel. We hope you feel this way and we are always open to feedback to ensure we get things "just right".

For now, it just remains for me to wish you all a safe and happy summer. We can't wait to see your children again on Thursday 31st August, when we will start the next leg of our irresistible journey together.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Steve Solomons".Steve Solomons
Headteacher