

Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a busy and purposeful start to the Spring term at Rivers, and I would like to thank you for your continued support as we move forward together.

Our pastoral team has continued its work in reviewing and strengthening our Behaviour for Learning policy. At the heart of everything we do is a commitment to enriching students' lives through education. We firmly believe that education is a powerful equaliser and the key to unlocking future opportunities. For this reason, regular attendance, following school routines, and staying focused in lessons are essential. These expectations ensure that all students are able to engage fully in their learning, develop important skills, and make the most of their time in school.

Encouragingly, we have seen improvements in behaviour around the school site, particularly in corridors, alongside a reduction in truancy. While this progress is welcome, any absence from lessons remains a concern, as it directly limits students' access to their education. We work hard to ensure that our classrooms are positive and engaging environments, and therefore truancy is treated seriously.

From Monday 19th January, any student found to be truanting will be placed in the reflection room for the equivalent of a full school day. In cases where an extended reflection room sanction is issued, students will remain there until 4:20pm, with parents and carers responsible for arranging transport home. This additional time will be used for restorative education during Period 6 (3.20pm–4.20pm), allowing staff to explore the reasons behind the behaviour and to put supportive steps in place to help students move forward successfully. This work is an important part of ensuring students receive the guidance they need following a serious sanction.

Alongside our academic offer, we continue to provide enriching experiences beyond the classroom. This week, students taking part in the 2026 Ski Trip attended a taster session at The Snow Centre in Hemel Hempstead, where they had the opportunity to practise on the UK's largest indoor ski lesson slope.

We are also continuing to review our catering provision and would greatly value feedback from students. Please do take a few moments to complete the ORA Canteen Food Survey with your child(ren) using the following link: [ORA Canteen Food Survey January 2026](#)

Finally, I would like to share my personal thanks to a member of Burnham Rotary Club, who has generously volunteered his time and expertise as an experienced maths tutor to support some of our Year 11 students as they prepare for their GCSE exams.

Thank you, as always, for your partnership and support. By working together, we can ensure this term is a positive, supportive, and successful one for every student.

Warm regards,

Dijana Piralic
Principal [Interim]

Dates for your Diary

Dates for your Diary

Thursday 29th & Friday 30th January 2025

Year 11 Mock Interviews

Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2026

Half Term Holiday

Monday 23rd February 2026

Staff OAT INSET Day – academy closed to students

Parents Evenings

Year 10 - Thursday 22 January 2026

Year 9 - Thursday 5 February 2026

Year 8 - Thursday 19 March 2026

Year 11 - Thursday 26 March 2026

Year 7 - Thursday 7 May 2026

Introductions

We are extending a very warm welcome to our new SENCo, Becky Reynolds, who we are sure will be a great asset to the school team. Becky has made a great start already and we are looking forward to working with her.

"My name is Becky Reynolds and I am delighted to introduce myself as the new SENCo at Ormiston Rivers Academy.

I have worked in a large mainstream school in Milton Keynes for twenty years and during that time I had many roles such as: Head of Enrichment and Trips abroad, Head of Spanish and Italian, Lead Practitioner for Teaching and Learning, Whole school Mental Health Lead and Assistant Principal for Inclusive Learning. I hold the qualification National Award for SEN coordination, and I am passionate about removing barriers to learning for all students.



I am new to the area, and I am really keen to integrate into the local community. Therefore, please stop and say hello if you see me around. I am really excited to get to know as many students, staff, parents and carers as possible!

I will be organising designated coffee mornings for parents and carers of students in different year groups over the course of this half term.

I am looking forward to working with families to secure the best outcomes for your child.

Thank you for your support and patience while I settle into my role.

Becky Reynolds - SENCo"

Teaching Behaviours

Dear Parents and Carers,

In the blink of an eye the second week back after the Christmas has been completed - it has been wonderful to see students return with fresh energy, positive attitudes, and a strong readiness to learn. We appreciate their patience as we try to support them with their engagement in lessons and maximising their learning times. It has been a very wet week and I feel their frustration with having to remain inside during wet breaks - each year group has been assigned a large space in which to use during this time and they have adapted well to this routine too.

As we settle back into school routines, we wanted to share a few reminders and helpful habits to support students in getting off to the very best start each day.

1. Check Timetables Each Evening

Taking just a few minutes in the evening to look over the next day's timetable helps students feel prepared and confident.

Encourage your child to:

- Pack the correct books and equipment for each lesson
- Bring their PE kit on the right days
- Note any homework deadlines

This simple habit sets them up for a calmer, more organised morning.

3. Ready-to-Learn Mindset

We're impressed by how positively students have begun the term. To keep this going, the following habits are encouraged:

- Getting a good night's sleep
- Arriving in school uniform and on time
- Bringing the correct learning equipment (pens, pencils, planner, Chromebook if applicable)
- Approaching lessons with curiosity and effort

A strong start to the day leads to a strong start to each lesson.

2. Make Sure Phone Pouches Are Packed

To help maintain a focused learning environment, students must have their phone pouch ready in their bag each morning.

Please remind your child to:

- Pack their pouch the night before
- Keep it easily accessible for morning entry routines
- Ensure phones are switched off before school begins

This supports a smooth start and helps students remain present and engaged throughout the day.

Merit Swap shop!

Your partnership makes a tremendous difference. By reinforcing these routines at home, you help set your child up for success—academically, socially, and emotionally. We want to enhance our rewards system further and introduce a Merit swap shop. Students will be able to cash in their merits for prizes. I would really like to ask for your help in providing any small gifts, equipment resources or prizes that I can add to the Swap shop. Please let me know what you could offer, or reach out to local community to help us celebrate our students success.

I look forward to a hearing from you and appreciate your efforts with this:
dmarklew@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Attendance Matters

100%

Each week we are giving a shout out to the tutor groups with the highest attendance for Years 7 to 11. This is something that needs to be celebrated, as attendance really does matter!

If you see your child's year group mentioned, give them a big high five for their contribution towards this fantastic achievement.



Absence Reporting

Students should attend school unless they are very unwell. On every day of absence please contact the school with the reason why your son/daughter is not attending. Please contact us as early as possible and at the latest by 8am on the first day of absence. This can be via the following methods:

- MyEd Messaging App
- ConnectED absence line: 0845 355 8104
- Attendance line: 01621 787855

WORD OF THE WEEK

One of the literacy challenges we run weekly is "Word of the Week" where students are invited to use the word in a sentence and submit it in order to receive merit points. The WOTW for next week is **"Contender"**.

Why not have a go? Send the definition and the word in a sentence to wotw@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk.

Say it: kuhn-ten-duh

Spell it: Con-ten-der

Contender

(noun)

Stem: tend:- stretch/reach

(Prefix) **con** - together, with; altogether
(Stem) **tend** - stretch, reach, hold, keep - can be 'ten' or 'tent'
(Suffix)**er**-person or thing that performs an action

Understand it

Someone who competes with other people to try to win something

Lexonik Advance

More than 50 students across Years 7 & 8 have now completed their 6 sessions of Lexonik Advance this academic year, and many have achieved excellent results - well done!



Library News



The programme teaches students to read for knowledge and decode subject specific words to help them achieve their goals across all subject areas. The course is challenging, very fast and fun! Lexonik Advance is delivered in the Library for one-hour per week to groups of 3 or 4 students for a period of 6 consecutive weeks.

New groups will be starting Lexonik Advance during the next 2 weeks and we look forward to hearing about and celebrating their progress. If your child is taking part this term, please encourage them to attend each week to get the best outcomes from the programme.

Learn more about Lexonik Advance

What benefits will you see?
Imagine being in a lesson and you come across some new words that you don't know. You might feel scared and might not understand the meaning of the word and tough to treat. Lexonik Advance is the key to unlocking the language.

What do sessions look like?
Your Lexonik Advance sessions will take place once a week for 6 weeks. You will be in a group of 3 or 4 students in your group, working with a member of staff. It's all about human interaction, not just reading and writing.

What is Lexonik Advance?
Lexonik Advance is an intervention designed to improve student's comprehension, reading and spelling. It'll help you to understand the words that you see, and help you right across the curriculum. Lexonik Advance has been designed for older learners, and you'll see massive progress in just 6 weeks.

Why have I chosen?
Your teachers have chosen you because they believe you have read perfect. Lexonik Advance is going to help you achieve this.

Lexonik Advance is different to other interventions. That's one of the reasons why it's so effective. That's one of the things that make it work. It's fast-paced, fun and competitive. You're going to love it!

Library Badges

Have you got a *Library Champion* or *Reader of the Month* badge?

- Library Champion** - there are 2 ways to achieve this badge: (1) read a library book and collect a 'Let's Talk About Books' sheet to write a review, or (2) design an amazing poster about an author whose books are on the Library shelves.
- Reader or the Month** - read one of the recommended books of the month and complete the activity sheet and review.
- Hibernate with a Good Book this Winter** - read one of the 32 recommended winter themed books and complete the Hibernate Book Review - successful students can choose either the Library Champion or Reader of the Month badge.

Hibernate with a good book this winter



Exams News



Well done to our sixth form students who have been completing vocational module assessments this week, good luck to those completing further assessments over the next two weeks. The exams team would like to thank students in all year groups for showing their respect for these exams when observing the 'Silence - Exams in Progress' signs around the school.

Spring Mock Exams

After half term we will be moving on to our final mock season before the real summer exams. Our provisional schedule is available via [this link](#). Individual timetables will follow before half term. This is an important opportunity to identify any gaps in learning whilst there is still time to close them and to become familiar with the exams process. In accordance with the Department for Education contingency arrangements, papers sat under exam conditions during this mock series may also be used towards calculating final grades if there is a national event which causes the summer exams to be cancelled, as we experienced in 2020. Please try to avoid making any medical appointments etc. during the mock season, as with the real exams, we will not be able to offer catch-up sessions in exam conditions.

Digital Education Record for Year 11s – National Pilot

As you may have seen [in the press](#), the DfE has now launched a national pilot of the Education Record. The Education Record is a secure, mobile app that gives pupils lifelong access to verified data about their education, starting with schools attended and GCSE results and expanding as they progress through further education. This will be an easy to access record provided along-side the traditional paper-based results slips issued on results day. This year results days are 20th August for GCSE level subjects and 13th August for A Level and sixth form vocational subjects. We will consult further on the method by which secure access to the app will be rolled out to our Year 11 students and share details to students and parents later in the year.

Certificates

Our students work so hard towards their qualifications and it is such a shame that some have not collected their certificates. If you know anyone who sat exams in Summer 2025, November 2024 or Summer 2024, please encourage them to pop in during a school day to collect their certificates if they have not done so already.



Careers Spotlight

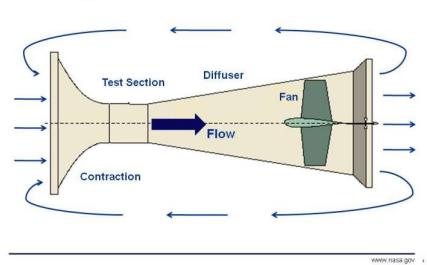
Career of the Week

JOB OF THE WEEK - EPISODE #254 - WIND TUNNEL TECHNICIAN



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Open Return Wind Tunnel



Work Experience Week - Get looking for your placement now!

Year 10 - Monday 20th July - Friday 26th July 2026

Year 12 - Monday 29th June - Friday 3rd July 2026

Work Experience Week ... Get looking for your placement now! Log your placement on Unifrog - All students have received an email from Unifrog so they can log in.

Year 7,8, 9 and 10 - Take Your Child to Work Day - Monday 23rd February

To widen the understanding and appreciation of the working world, we are delighted to start running the “Take Your Child to Work Day”. Your child is invited to participate, and we hope that every student in Years 7-10 will be able to organise a suitable day’s experience with **a parent, relative, family friend or someone they know well - it does not have to be a parent**. Booklets will be handed out in tutor time before half term.

Your help is greatly appreciated in helping to organise this for them. We hope a day can be arranged on Monday 23rd February 2026. This is an INSET days, so no lessons will be affected.

The aims of the day are for students to:

- Gain an awareness of a workplace organisation
- Find out about the jobs that are available in different organisations
- Develop an awareness of the skills and qualifications that are required in the workplace
- Consider the need to develop an individual learning plan towards employability.

Parents should use their own judgement about where their child goes, and I would like to stress that the focus for students will be observation and fact-finding. **The day is not intended to be a hands-on work experience placement and, therefore, for insurance purposes students should be treated as visitors and not workers, as the school cannot be held responsible for your child while they are in the workplace.**

We appreciate your support in organising a suitable, worthwhile experience for your child. If you require further information and advice, please contact me on email on fcompton@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk.



Dance Competition

Jess (10A2) attended the 40th Year of Champions of Tomorrow competition, in Blackpool Winter Gardens on 11th Jan, competing as a solo dancer and in the ProAm Teacher Student league the first time.

Jess was delighted to be crowned the Latin Champion and place 6th in Ballroom. Jess competed with her teachers Ben Milan-Vega, UK & National Latin and Showdance Champion, and Alexander Shindilia, World, European & UK Professional Ten Dance/Ballroom Champion.

Well done Jess. We are so proud of you.



Rotary Young Musician competition - Friday 9th January.



Year 7 - Mr Adair

The spring term is now fully underway, and it has been a wonderfully positive and energetic start for our Year 7 students. With routines settling back into place, the year group has embraced the new term with enthusiasm, curiosity, and a real sense of community. It has certainly been a busy week, filled with learning, activity, and plenty of moments to celebrate.

In PE, our students have particularly impressed staff with their focus and determination. This week's badminton lessons have been a real highlight, with students demonstrating excellent progress in their skills and showing great teamwork throughout. Their attitude in lessons has been outstanding, and it has been fantastic to see so many students pushing themselves and supporting one another.

We have also been delighted by the brilliant response to the upcoming *Matilda* theatre trip. Tickets sold out for Year 7 in record time, reflecting just how excited our students are to experience live theatre together. For those who were unable to secure a place, please don't worry—the Performing Arts team, alongside the Year 7 pastoral team, are already planning the next trip. The enthusiasm shown by students has inspired us to create even more opportunities for cultural enrichment this year.

As we continue through this busy and exciting term, we would like to remind parents of our expectations around jewellery. Year 7 students should not be wearing any jewellery other than one pair of small ear studs and a watch. This helps us maintain a safe, consistent environment for all students, and we appreciate your support in reinforcing this at home.

Top merit earners this week are Harrison from 7M2 with 40 merits, Rosa from 7A2 with 40 merits and Samuel from 7Z1 with 38 merits.

Contact: cadair@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 8 - Mr Moon

Welcome to the second week of the new year. Year 8 have returned with great focus and positivity, and it's been brilliant to see students quickly re-establish strong routines across the school.

This week's assembly centred on the new rules coming into effect next week, particularly around movement and transitions. Students reflected on how these changes will help create a calmer school environment and discussed what it means to be a positive influence in lessons. The year group engaged thoughtfully, considering how their behaviour can support not just their own learning, but the learning of those around them.

In lessons, students have also made a fantastic start to their new units. In English, they have been exploring the theme of influential criminals, looking at how certain figures have shaped society and how writers portray their actions and impact. This topic has prompted some mature discussions and analytical thinking. Meanwhile, in Geography, Year 8 have begun learning about settlements in the UK, investigating why towns and cities develop the way they do and how different types of settlements compare.

We also continue to celebrate the excellent achievements of our students. Mrs Byford's **Student of the Week is Beau in 8D2** for their outstanding attitude and effort.

Our top merit earners this week are Noah in 8D1 and Dougie in 8Z1, both of whom have shown superb consistency and dedication.

Well done to all of Year 8 for a strong and positive start to 2026—keep it going!

Contact: smoon@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk



Year 9 – Mr Chapman

It's been another fantastic week for Year 9, with students continuing to show great effort, engagement, and positivity around school. A big well done to all of our pupils who have worked hard and demonstrated our school values throughout the week.

Top 3 Merits of the Week:

James (9D2)

Alex (9D1)

Leo (9A2)

Top 3 Merits of the Year (So Far):

Ava (9A2)

James (9D2)

Alex (9D1)

A huge congratulations to our current merit leaders — an excellent reflection of your sustained hard work and commitment.

Contact: rchapman@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 10 - Mr Field

It was fantastic to see pupils working hard in their English lessons this week. During my visits, several pupils shared how they are progressing with their learning. Jaydon talked me through his analysis of Scrooge's changing behaviour in *A Christmas Carol*, while Tom was confidently using quotations to support his understanding of the character. Brodie was focused on developing her paragraph analysis of Dickens' text, and it was brilliant to see Dexter working carefully to refine and extend his written responses.

During form time, pupils also continued their careers work by exploring Unifrog. A reminder to pupils and parents: if work experience placements have not yet been organised, there is still time to arrange one. Please do take the opportunity to secure a placement as soon as possible.

Finally, a reminder that **Year 10 Parents' Evening will take place on Thursday 22nd January**. The booking website is now open, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. If you would like to speak with me on the evening, please feel welcome to drop in—no appointment is necessary.

Contact: sfield@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 11 – Ms Taylor

Year 11 have continued their good start to 2026 with a noticeable improvement to attendance and attending lessons promptly so well done!

Friday Tutor times are being used for careers and looking at options for the next stage after year 11, please make sure that you are applying for your post 16 places so that you have more of a chance to secure your places and are able to join the courses that you would like to do. I am happy to help with this, and should any student require a careers interview, please do let me know.

All year 11 students have a revision guide given to them, these are a valuable resource to help students organise and manage their time- start revising now! Do not leave it until the last minute, trying to ram information into your heads does not work ;). If you need any guidance on how to fill these in and use as intended then please let me know.

Interventions for next week have now been compiled using the data from the PPEs in November, you will receive new timetables Monday, in readiness for Tuesday. It is important that you focus and make the most of these sessions as these are designed to help you attain better outcomes. Any issues please speak to Mrs Gibson, however there are no guarantees that you will be moved.

A reminder again that prom invites are based on conduct in school, attendance and attendance to lessons.

Students are reminded that there are 3 things that I am tracking for the prom:

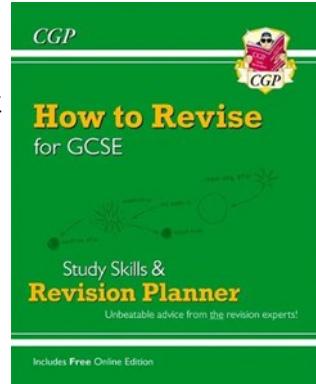
- attendance to school
- attendance to lessons
- conduct in school

A letter will be sent shortly.

This week's top merit earners are:

Sam S (11D1), Holly B (11Z1), Kiefer B (11Z1), Kayden D (11D1), Eve M (11M2), Maisey S (11Z2) and Maria W (11 M1)

Contact: staylor@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk





Chelmsford College

www.chelmsford.ac.uk

Wednesday 1st October 2025 – 6pm to 8.30pm
Wednesday 12th November 2025 – 6pm to 8.30pm
Wednesday 4th February 2026 – 6pm to 8.30pm
Wednesday 20th May 2026 – 6pm to 8.30pm

USP College

www.uspcollege.ac.uk

Seevic Campus - Benfleet

Thursday 2nd October 2025 – 5.20pm to 8pm
Wednesday 19th November 2025 - tbc
Thursday 22nd January 2026 – tbc
Tuesday 7th July 2026 – tbc (yr 10/11)

Palmer's Campus - Grays

Thursday 16th October 2025 – 5.20pm to 7.00pm
Wednesday 5th November 2025 - tbc
Thursday 29th January 2026 – tbc

XTEND Digital Campus – Canvey

Thursday 25th September 2025 – 5.20pm to 7pm
Wednesday 25th February 2026 - tbc

Writtle College

www.aru.ac.uk/writtle-college

Saturday 11th October 2025 – 10am to 3pm
Saturday 29th November 2025 – 10am to 3pm
Saturday 14th March 2026 – 10am to 3pm
Wednesday 10th June 2026 – 3.30pm to 7.30pm

Harlow College

www.harlow-college.ac.uk

Thursday 16th October 2025 - 5.00pm to 8.00pm
Tuesday 10th February 2026 - 5.00pm to 8.00pm

The Sixth Form College, Colchester

www.colchsf.ac.uk

Wednesday 22nd October 2025 - 6.15pm to 9pm
Thursday 23rd October 2025 – 6.15pm to 9pm

Applications will open online from 24th October 2025 and will close on 31st January 2026

William de Ferrers School

www.wdf.school

To be advised

**For Grammar Schools –
please visit their websites for details of their
Sixth Form open events.**

The Grammar Schools in our area are as follows

King Edward VI - Grammar School

Chelmsford County High School for Girls

Colchester County High School – for Girls

Colchester Royal – Grammar School

Southend High School – for Girls

Southend High School – for Boys

Westcliff High School – for Girls

Westcliff High School – for Boys

South Essex College - SEC

www.southessex.ac.uk

SEC - Southend City College

Thursday 25th September 2025 – 5pm to 8pm
Wednesday 14th January 2026 – 5pm to 8pm
Thursday 12th March 2026 – 5pm to 7pm

SEC- Stephenson Road, Southend

Tuesday 11th November 2025 – 5pm to 7pm
Tuesday 3rd February 2026 – 5pm to 7pm
Thursday 16th April 2026 – 5pm to 6pm

SEC - Centre for Digital Technologies, Basildon

Tuesday 21st October 2025 - 5pm to 7pm
Tuesday 10th February 2026 – 5pm to 7pm
Tuesday 28th April 2026 – 5pm to 6pm

SEC - Luckyn Lane, Basildon

Thursday 9th October 2025 – 5pm to 7pm
Thursday 29th January 2026 – 5pm to 7pm
Tuesday 31st March 2026 – 5pm to 6pm

SEC - Thurrock Campus

Wednesday 1st October 2025 – 5pm to 8pm
Wednesday 7th January 2026 – 5pm to 8pm
Wednesday 25th March 2026 – 5pm to 7pm

Plume Academy

www.plume.essex.sch.uk

Thursday 9th October 2025 – 6pm to 8pm

Stansted Airport College

www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk

Saturday 11th October 2025 - 10am to 2pm
Thursday 22nd January 2026 – 5pm to 8pm

Colchester Institute

www.colchester.ac.uk

Colchester Campus

Tuesday 14th October 2025 – 5pm to 8pm
Saturday 18th October 2025 – 10am to 1pm
Thursday 23rd October 2025 – 5pm to 8pm
Thursday 22nd January 2026 – 5pm to 8pm

Braintree Campus

Monday 13th October 2025 – 5pm to 7pm
Saturday 8th November 2025 – 10am to 12.30pm
Tuesday 20th January 2026 – 5pm to 7pm
Thursday 14th May 2026 – 5pm to 6.30pm

Apprenticeship Information Events at Colchester Institute

Thursday 12th February 2026 - 5pm to 7pm
Thursday 18th June 2026 - 5pm to 7pm

Braintree Sixth Form

www.braintreesixthform.com

Wednesday 5th November 2025 –
5.30pm to 7.30pm

Applications will open online from
6th November 2025 and will close on
31st January 2026

RIVERS SIXTH FORM

Year 12 & 13 - Mrs Wilkins

Welcome back to the second week of the new term. It has already been a busy and highly successful start to January, with much to celebrate across the Sixth Form and wider school community. We are delighted with the number of students who have passed their English and Maths resits, and we commend our Year 13 students for meeting the UCAS deadline and submitting their university applications. It has also been wonderful to see our Sixth Form Leadership Team leading assemblies in the lower school throughout the week. They have been launching the new School Council initiative that will give a voice to the younger years. Alongside the start of further external examinations, we finished the week on a high with a fantastic Parents' Evening.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Rivers Sixth Form operates a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy. Over the coming weeks, the laptop trolley will be removed from the Sixth Form area, meaning students will need to begin bringing their own devices into Sixth Form sooner than planned. If any students do not currently have access to a laptop or suitable device, please speak to a member of the Sixth Form team so that appropriate support can be arranged.

Student Shout Out

Year 12 – Connie - always working hard and approaches everything she does with a smile. Her positive attitude and consistent effort make her a pleasure to have in Sixth Form.

Year 13 – Marli - recognised for her hardworking attitude and dedication to her studies. She consistently puts in great effort and sets a strong example to others.



Rivers Sport Academy



The lads produced a spirited and disciplined performance to secure a comfortable 2–0 victory against SEC3. Blake was once again on the scoresheet, adding two more goals to further extend his impressive tally for the season. A special mention goes to Vik, whose commanding midfield display earned him a well-deserved Man of the Match award.

Every player executed their role superbly, and the result was a true reflection of the teamwork, commitment and ethos that ORA Sixth Form proudly represents.

Sixth Form in the Community

Sixth Form Parents' Evening

What an excellent evening it was, with fantastic attendance from our Sixth Form families. It was wonderful to see so many parents and carers taking such an active interest in their child's studies and engaging with the Sixth Form team. We hope the advice and guidance shared during the evening proves valuable. Please continue to use this information to support your child at home and help give them the best possible chance of securing top grades.

RIVERS SIXTH FORM

Chemistry Trip to Cambridge

Our recent trip to Cambridge was a thrilling hands-on experience for our chemistry students. The focus of the visit was on analytical chemistry techniques, where we had the opportunity to prepare samples of unknown compounds for infrared (IR) and proton nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy.

The goal was to unravel the chemical structures of these compounds by interpreting the spectral data from both IR and proton NMR techniques. In the lab, students learned how to identify functional groups through IR spectra and deduce molecular structures through proton NMR analysis. The challenge of deciphering the unknowns was both intellectually stimulating and highly rewarding, offering a deep dive into the power of spectroscopy in real-world chemistry.

This trip provided invaluable hands-on experience, reinforcing our students' theoretical knowledge and giving them a glimpse into the fascinating world of chemical analysis. It was an unforgettable opportunity to develop practical skills that will serve them well in their future careers.



We look forward to more educational trips like this one that allow our students to apply what they've learned in the classroom to real-world situations!

Sixth Form Applications

Sixth Form applications have now closed. Thank you to all Year 11 students who submitted their applications before the closing date last Friday. We have been overwhelmed by the number of applications received and, once again, the Sixth Form is oversubscribed. A message has been sent to all parents and carers to confirm receipt of applications, and interview times will be issued over the course of the next half term.

Exams/Study

Mrs Penberthy will continue to host an optional revision session in the Sixth Form area titled "Pemboodle's Revision". She provides snacks and light background music to create a warm and inviting environment. This session will run every Wednesday 3:20 - 4:20pm.

RIVERS SIXTH FORM

What's Coming Up

- Mock Interviews - 29th/30th January 2026
- Year 12 Work Experience - W/C 29th June 2026 - Upload to Unifrog
- Charlie Dix leading sessions on Finance and Future Careers
- Bake Off's
- House competitions
- Summer Ball 3rd July 2026
- Online Oxford and Cambridge University Evening - 6pm Monday 19th January. Link has been emailed out to all Year 12 students.

Exam Behaviour & JCQ Regulations

As we approach the exam season, it's important to remember the expectations for behaviour during all exams. To ensure a smooth and fair exam experience, students must adhere to the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) regulations, which are in place to maintain integrity and fairness for all candidates.

Key points to remember:

- **Arrive on time:** Make sure you arrive at least 15 minutes before the exam starts. Late arrivals can lead to complications, and in some cases, may not be allowed to sit the exam.
- **Clear water bottle:** Only clear, unlabelled bottles are permitted in the exam room. No labels or logos are allowed on the bottle, and the bottle should be free from any writing or stickers.
- **Prohibited items:** Phones, smartwatches, or any electronic devices must be turned off and left in your bag, which should be placed at the back of the exam room. Only pens, pencils, and necessary equipment should be on your desk.

Respect and Focus: It is essential to maintain a calm, respectful environment for everyone in the exam hall. Please follow the instructions given by the invigilators, remain focused, and take the time to carefully read all instructions. Following these regulations is vital for a smooth exam experience and for your success in the upcoming assessments. Let's all do our part to ensure that everything runs smoothly!

Sixth Form Dress Code

We would like to take a moment to recognise our students who have gone above and beyond in following the new Sixth Form dress code – we are very proud of how smart and professional they all look. Thank you for setting such a positive example.

Please continue to follow the dress code carefully, and if you are ever unsure about what is appropriate, don't hesitate to check with the Sixth Form team.

Please note: Following a first warning, students who do not meet the dress code expectations will be asked to return home to change before re-joining lessons. Thank you for your cooperation and continued high standards.

The Rivers Sixth Form Team

 mwilkins@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk
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FELSTED SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

Felsted

SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY COMPETITION

The Felsted Summer School application process has changed this year and places for students will be awarded through their **International Summer School Essay Competition** with students applying independently online giving them the chance to win a fully funded place on the programme in the role of a British Ambassador.

Details about the competition and application process can be viewed here:

<https://www.felsted.org/global-education/summer-school/essay-competition>

Further information about the Summer School can be found here:

[Felsted Summer School](#)

Win a Scholarship to Felsted Summer School



We are delighted to announce our First annual Essay Competition, offering students the opportunity to earn a scholarship to Felsted International Summer School 2026.

Essay Competition 2026

We invite curious, ambitious students to sharpen their thinking, polish their expression, and step confidently into the role of a British Ambassador by entering this year's Felsted Essay Competition.

The competition is open to:

- British Students Only (UK home address required)
- Primary Category: Years 5-8-9 (8-11 years old)
- Senior Category: Years A-D (12-17 years old)

ESSAY COMPETITION TOPICS

Why would you like to attend Felsted International Summer School?

How have your learning experiences or personal challenges prepared you to support and represent British culture as a British Helper?



SCAN
ME

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The summer school program offers students a unique opportunity to:

- Build confidence and leadership by welcoming and supporting international students
- Share their culture, experiences, and knowledge, helping others feel at home
- Develop communication skills and strengthen their English in a real-world, international setting
- Form lasting friendships with students from around the world
- Experience the atmosphere of a leading UK boarding school during the summer holidays

Please encourage your child to apply for this fantastic opportunity. We are here to support students with their application if required.



Catering



Menu

We have pleasure of enclosing a link to next weeks [menu](#). Please note that items are subject to change at short notice due to availability of produce from our suppliers. We welcome feedback on our catering offer; so please email our catering manager, Leanne Warner at lwarner@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk with any comments / suggestions.

Nut Allergies

Any form of nut or products that contain nuts should not be brought into school. We do have students with severe nut allergies, which can be life threatening, and we would appreciate your support in keeping them safe.

Parentpay

The daily limit for students to spend is set at £4.50 as a default. This means, should a student select items at break and / or lunch which take them over the limit, they will be asked to put something back. If you would like to change the limit on your child's account please email our catering manager lwarner@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk. Please note: it can take a while before the cashless system updates once you have added funds to your child's catering account. Please be mindful of this and try and get the money on there in plenty of time for break / lunch. When adding funds please ensure you add it to Dinner money and make sure it's not just sitting in your parent account.

Free School Meals

The daily limit for free school meals is £3.30. Funds will need to be added to your child's Parentpay account should you wish them to be allowed to exceed the limit.

Catering Cards

Students must tap their catering card each time they wish to make a purchase, even if they are entitled to free school meals. Please remind them that they need to bring their catering card in every day. Those students without their card will be held back until the end of the queue, allowing those through with cards first. The cards really speed up the catering service, giving students more time to socialise with friends and eat their food. If a card is lost or damaged, a new one can be purchased for £1 on ParentPay. The new card will be delivered to tutors the following morning.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above please contact either Leanne Warner, Catering Manager lwarner@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk or Angela Mahoney, Finance & Business Director amahoney@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk.



Rivers Academy Shop

Academy Shop

All students are required to have sufficient equipment to allow them to learn and achieve their full potential. It is a students' responsibility to arrive at the Academy with the appropriate equipment for lessons:

Equipment:

2 x black pens
1 x purple biro for assessment feedback
2 x pencils
1 x 30cm ruler
Coloured pencils (not felt tips)
Eraser
Pencil sharpener

Maths set (including a scientific calculator)
Student Planner (student organiser)
Reading book
Books / folders for the days lessons
Water bottle
Basic art equipment

The Academy Shop, located near the main hall, is open before school 8.30 - 8.50am and at breaktime 11.20 - 11.50am every day. The shop stocks all of the above equipment, as well as a wide selection of revision guides & workbooks, for all year groups. You can also purchase new ties from here. We can only accept cash for shop purchases on site, we are unable to use credit on a students catering card. Alternatively, you can complete an order form and return it to finance@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk.

Year 10 & 11 - You will find an item on ParentPay - KS4 Revision Guides & Equipment- just overwrite the amount with the total to be paid, we will check it against your order and let you know when the items can be collected from the shop (or you can call in and collect from main reception if you would prefer).

Year 7, 8 & 9 (KS3) - Once we have received your completed order, we will add it to your ParentPay account. When payment has been confirmed we will let you know when the items can be collected from the shop (or you can call in and collect from main reception if you would prefer).

You can access the up to date [KS3 order form](#) and the [KS4 order form](#) here; these are also available on our website www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk. Please contact finance on 01621 787845 if you have any queries.

Absence Reporting

Students should attend school unless they are very unwell. On every day of absence please contact the school with the reason why your son/daughter is not attending. Please contact us as early as possible and at the latest by 8am on the first day of absence. This can be via the following methods:

MyEd Messaging App

ConnectED absence line: 0845 355 8104

Attendance line: 01621 787855

Change of Personal Details

It is essential that we are kept up to date with changes in your contact details. This may be a change to a mobile number, an e-mail address, a full address or even a change of who is the first priority to contact. By keeping us up to date with changes we can ensure that you are receiving information regarding your child's progress and that we can contact someone in the case of an emergency. Or preferred means of communication is by e-mail, please ensure that we have a current e-mail address for you. Please notify us of any changes by e-mail to: kcannon@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk.

Lost Property

We have several items in lost property, mainly coats, PE kits, blazers and drinking bottles. Any student can check in Student Reception for lost items. Please note that items not collected before the end of each half-term may be donated to charity or disposed of accordingly, therefore, please remind your children to check for anything they have misplaced before this time. Thank you.



GET INVOLVED!



Join our **Couch2Court[®]** netball taster session!

Bloom Netball are launching a new social netball group in Burnham On Crouch and people of all ages and ability are welcome. This will take place at Ormiston Rivers School on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm and is ideal for beginners and back to netballers! Please click here for more information: [Bloom Netball - Play, Grow, Flourish on our Netball Courts](#)

They will be running a taster session on Wednesday 28th January 7pm for half price. If you would be interested in attending, please sign up via this link and type DISCOUNT50 and it will bring the cost of the session down to £2.50 <https://www.bloomnetball.co.uk/couch2court-details/3196-ormiston-rivers-academy/>



Essex County Council

Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools after 19th August 2024.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, including the U code (late after registers have closed).

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court.

Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.



Parent / Carer Login

Go4Schools is an online platform providing parents and carers with live attainment, timetable, targets & attendance. This will also be where pupil reports are released.

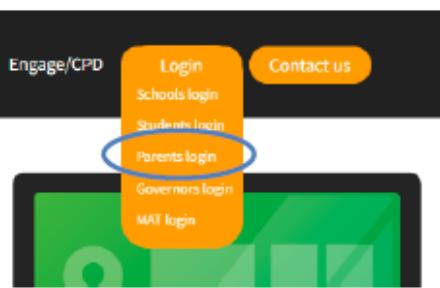
1 – www.Go4schools.com through any web browser.



Welcome to GO 4 Schools

Your school can make better decisions with information that is accurate, up to date, complete,

- 2 Select Parents Login
- 3 Click First-time user
- 4 Enter email address registered with Ormiston Rivers
- 5 Click New password
- 6 Select Sign in to Parent Site
- 7 Open link sent to personal email address entered and activate account
- 8 Set your Go4Schools password
- 9 Sign in



Overview

Attendance live percentage for the academic year (24hr update).



Attendance

Behaviour positive and negative points.



Behaviour

Homework see what homework has been set.



Homework

Inbox messages from the school will be displayed here.



Inbox

Progress grades for assessments taken over the academic year.



Progress

Reports Annual written communication including strengths and next steps.



Reports

Timetable full academic timetable.



Sign in with GO

First-time user?

Forgotten Password?

If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it by entering your email address.

Email address

Send password reset link

Forgotten Password

If you have forgotten your password, click 'Forgotten your Password' which is located just below the sign in option.

Enter your school email address and a password reset will be emailed to your school account.



G4S App Login

1 – Download the app.



[Click here](#)

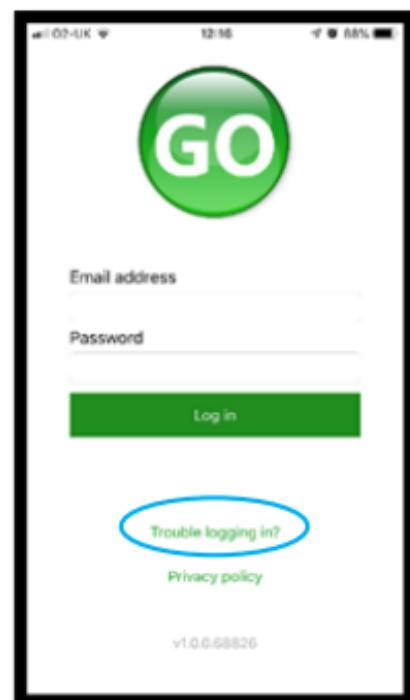
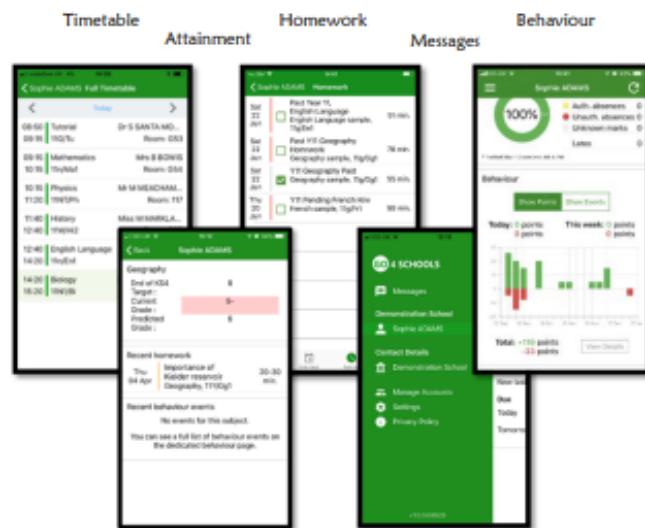


[Click here](#)

2 – Type in your school email address.

3 – Type in your password.

This is the password you have already set in go4schools.



FORGOTTEN YOUR PASSWORD?

If you have forgotten your password, click 'Trouble logging in?'

This will open the web browser where you will click forgotten password.

Sign in with GO First-time user?

[Forgotten Password?](#)

Email address

Password [Forgotten Password?](#)

Remember my email address

[Sign in with GO](#)

Sign in with GO First-time user?

[Forgotten Password?](#)

If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it by entering your email address.

This is the password you may use to log in to GO 4 Schools if your school supports this login method.

Email address

[Send password reset link](#)

Type in your school email address and click 'Send password reset link'. Open Outlook from Office 365 (your school email) and you will have received an email from Go4schools that include instructions on how to reset your password.