

Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our Performing Arts department has been given a fantastic opportunity to attend an exclusive preview of the brand new cast of Harry Potter and the Cursed Child in London next week. As a special celebration of their excellent or significantly improved attendance, twenty students have been selected to take part. We are incredibly proud of them and delighted to reward their commitment with such a memorable experience.

As we approach the end of January, Heads of Department are choosing their Department Stars of the Month. These awards recognise students who have shown exceptional effort, enthusiasm or progress. The winners will be announced in next week's newsletter, and we hope your child enjoys seeing the achievements of our wonderful students showcased. A reminder that we will be carrying out a lockdown drill on Monday 2 February. Students have already been given a clear explanation of what to expect during their year group assemblies. You may wish to discuss this with your child to offer reassurance and help ease any concerns.

Nominations for the Essex Teaching Awards 2026 open on Friday 30 January. This is a wonderful opportunity to recognise the exceptional teachers, support staff, teams or whole schools making a difference across Essex. If you would like to nominate a member of the Ormiston Rivers Academy staff who has gone above and beyond for your child, please visit: [Essex Teaching Awards | Essex County Council](https://www.essex.gov.uk/teachingawards)

Finally, if you drive your child to school, please may we ask that you take extra care when parking during drop-off and pick-up times. Being mindful of safe, considerate parking helps ensure smooth access for all families.

Thank you for your continued support. We deeply appreciate everything you do to help our school community thrive.

Warm regards,

Dijana Piralic
Principal [Interim]

Dates for your Diary

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 9 - Thursday 5 February 2026

Year 8 - Thursday 19 March 2026

Year 11 - Thursday 26 March 2026

Year 7 - Thursday 7 May 2026



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

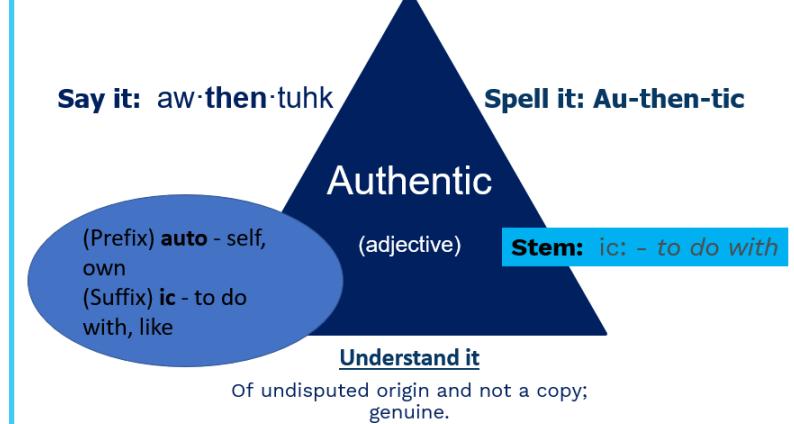
Students should attend school unless they are very unwell. On every day of absence please contact the school with the reason why your son/daughter is not attending. Please contact us as early as possible and at the latest by 8am on the first day of absence. This can be via the following methods:

- MyEd Messaging App
- 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 **"Authentic"**.

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



On Tuesday, we were privileged to welcome two members of the Jack Petchey Foundation to the Academy to induct our students into the Jack Petchey 'Speak Out' Challenge. This is a regional workshop that empowers over 30,000 students every year across London and Essex by providing students with a platform to voice their opinions on topics that are close to their hearts. Among developing communication and language skills, students are also coached on how to deliver a captivating speech designed to inspire or motivate. From each participating school a select among of students are given the opportunity to speak at a Regional Final. If successful, they will progress to a Semi-Final and ultimately a Grand Final, where the prize is £2,000.

Over sixty students from ORA were invited to participate this year, and as expected, the work produced was indeed inspiring. Ultimately, the programme selects several students to progress to the assembly final before they appear at the regional final. We are delighted to announce that among tough competition (from my group - I am not sure who was selected from the other group) the following students have been chosen to represent the Academy: Jess W, Jack S, Bradan D-D, Hugh L, Jensen S, Haidyn V and Ben H, with Penny S and Tommy S coming highly recommended!.

Rotary YOUNG CHEF COMPETITION

Six of our budding chefs from Years 8-10 took part in the first heat of the Young Chef Competition where they had to cook and serve a healthy two course meal in under 2 hours, with a total budget of £18 or less.

Students have worked really hard over the last few months to develop their cookery and presentation skills at the Young Chef's Club- which takes place on Wednesdays after school with Mrs Hyde. We have been very fortunate to have excellent support from Ken Smith of the Burnham on Crouch Rotary Club, who has himself worked in the catering industry for many years and attends the club almost every week to help support and guide students and giving them constructive feedback which has been so valued.

At the competition we were kindly supported with judging from Simon Charles who is the Head Chef at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, and our own Mrs Etherton -who trained as a chef before she was a teacher and previously worked with Gordon Ramsay and at Harrods - so we were confident the judges were fit for the job!

The students worked so professionally and maturely, showing such dedication at every stage. It was particularly wonderful to overhear them encouraging and supporting each other, especially when some got a bit stressed due to the tight time constraints and pressure to finish and serve.

The competition was extremely close with only a handful of points between the entrants, every dish was enjoyed by the judges and visitors from Rotary who enjoyed a taste too!

The overall winner was Freddie G in Year 9 who now goes on to the Regional finals on 28th February. We wish him all the luck in the world for this next very exciting step!

Thanks so much to families and staff who supported this event, we couldn't do it without you!





Library News



We have been very pleased to host two events in the Library this week:

- Year 9s enjoyed taking part in the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge workshop on Tuesday 27th January to develop communication skills and learn how to create and deliver a speech.
- On Thursday 29th and Friday 30th January, mock careers interviews were held for Year 11 and 12 students to help prepare them for the 'real world' where they will need these skills when attending university or job interviews.

Well done to everyone who participated in these events, and thank you to our visitors and staff who made this possible.

February Book of the Month

Do you like murder mysteries, spy stories or crime fiction? We have some fantastic books in our February selection:

- Theodore Boone by John Grisham: Theo wants to be a lawyer or courtroom judge. There's a high-profile murder case in the city and Theo, sworn to secrecy, uncovers a surprise witness who could bring the killer to justice. Will he succeed or will a guilty man go free?
- Read one of Ally Carter's crime or spy stories! You could choose the Heist Society series, filled with intrigue, danger and romance ... or Gallagher Girls, set in a school for spies - espionage, danger and glamour!
- Hostage by Malorie Blackman is about a girl who has been kidnapped and has no idea of what will happen next. This book is printed by Barrington Stoke as one of their dyslexia friendly titles.

Read one of these titles and complete the activity sheet and book review - the best entries will get merits and a Reader of the Month badge!

Lexonic Advance

Year 7 and 8s have made a great start with Lexonic Advance this week. Students attend for 6 one-hour sessions over a period of 6 weeks, and we are grateful to the staff who deliver the sessions and the teachers who allow students from their lessons to follow the course. Each group will choose a team name - this week the Y8 Gigglers achieved 53 out of a possible 74 'syllables at speed' and the competition is on to see who will be on our leaderboard!

So far, this academic year we have seen very encouraging results with the majority of students improving their vocabulary, fluency, and confidence in decoding subject specific words. If your child is taking part this term, please encourage them to attend every session to get the best outcomes from the programme.

Book of the Month

Theo wants to be a lawyer or courtroom judge when he leaves school. There's a high profile murder case in his city and Theo, sworn to secrecy, uncovers a surprise witness who could bring the killer to justice. Will he succeed or will a guilty man go free?

Theodore Boone
John Grisham

Each month we recommend books for you to read and review. Introduce new authors and genres.

We have several copies of each book, issued on a first-come, first-served basis - books are loaned for 2 weeks only to allow as many students as possible to read them. We encourage you to share your opinions and thoughts about the books by completing reviews, challenges and activities - outstanding entries will be rewarded with certificates and badges!

Happy Reading!

February - Crime Thrillers

Read one of Ally Carter's crime or spy stories this month! The choice is yours - either Heist Society series, filled with intrigue, danger and romance... or Gallagher Girls Cross My Heart and Hope to Spy, set in a school for spies, there's espionage, danger and glamour!

Like Crime fiction? Take a look at these titles:

Enola Holmes by Nancy Springer
Boy Missing by Sophie McKenzie
Young Sherlock - Fire Storm by Andrew Lane
Arsenic for Tea by Robin Stevens
Artemis Fowl series by Eoin Colfer
The Pearl Thief by Elizabeth Wein (Y9+)
You'll Be the Death of Me by Karen M. McManus (Y9+)
Crossing the Line by Tia Fisher (Y8+)

For more information see Mrs Yerbury, Librarian

Exams News



Well done to Year 13 criminology students on completing their 8 hour assessment this week.

Mocks

There have been a few tweaks made to the mock schedule this week to ensure that all students have time to be fully prepared for these exams. Below is the current schedule, we will be sending out individual timetables as soon as seating arrangements have been finalised.

[Spring Mock Timetable](#)

Summer public exams

The first written exam of the summer exam season will be on the 8th May 2026 and run up to and including 24th June 2026. All students must remain available to sit exams on all days up to and including the 24th June which is the National exams contingency date. Between now and the start of the formal exam season, there are various practical assessments and coursework assignments to complete which subject teachers will discuss with students. Individual timetables will be provided after the mock season. There is no fixed date for the start of any study leave. Study leave will begin after the examination season has started and will be formally announced by the Academy during this period. Until students are notified, they are expected to attend school as normal.

Autumn Resit exams

The JCQ have announced provisional dates for the Autumn Maths and English GCSE resits. These will begin on 2nd November and run through to 11th November 2026.

Certificates

Certificates for the summer season are usually available at the beginning of December. A definite date will be shared in results envelopes. As previously mentioned, adults can collect certificates on behalf of former students as long as we receive written permission to release them. This can be via an email to exams@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk or a note upon collection. Please call in to main reception during the school day to collect. We have a large number of certificates earned over the last 2 years which we would love to pass on to their owners.



Year 8 Netball

On Thursday 29th January, our Year 8 students travelled to William de Ferrers School to take part in a Netball tournament. The team performed brilliantly throughout the tournament, demonstrating great determination and teamwork. Out of their four matches, the girls secured two wins, one draw, and one loss—a fantastic achievement!

They represented the school with pride, positivity, and excellent sportsmanship. A special congratulations goes to Amelia E (8D2), who is our Player of the Match for showcasing her superb netball skills and consistent effort on court.

We would also like to give a heartfelt thank you to Helena D, Betsy MM, and Matilda S, who stepped in at the last minute to ensure we had a full team. Your commitment is greatly appreciated.

Well done to everyone involved!

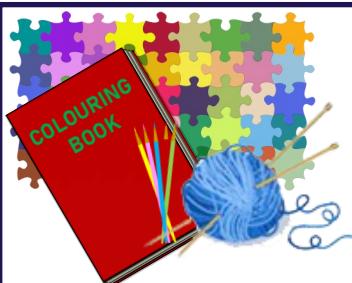


Year 7 Netball

On Tuesday 27th January, our Year 7 girls travelled to Brentwood County High School for a Netball fixture. The team showed incredible resilience and determination throughout the match, working hard and supporting one another from start to finish. Although the girls were unfortunately beaten, they displayed fantastic attitude and sportsmanship.

Player of the Match was awarded to Adeline M (7A2) for her outstanding effort and commitment on court.

Well done to all the girls for their hard work and enthusiasm!



HOBBY CLUB

Don't forget that Hobby Club is open to all students in years 7, 8 and 9 on Friday D05. We have some things for you to do, but please feel free to make suggestions or bring in your own hobby to share with the group.



**CAREERS
WORK
JOB**
**Careers
Spotlight**

Career of the week

[JOB OF THE WEEK -
EPISODE #243 -
PROSTHETICS
TECHNICIAN](#)



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 Year 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 day, 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

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 their placement there.

Year 10 Work Experience Week - Monday 20th July - Friday 24th July 2026

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

Year 7 - Mr Adair

Dear Parents and Carers,

Year 7 have enjoyed an action-packed and inspiring week across all their subjects. In PE, students have thrown themselves into high-energy volleyball lessons, working hard to develop their dexterity, coordination, and teamwork as they refine their serves, volleys, and rallies. Their enthusiasm has been fantastic to witness.

Over in History, learners have taken a vivid walk into the past as they explored the horror and impact of the Black Death, engaging thoughtfully with the realities of medieval life and the challenges faced by communities during this devastating period.

Meanwhile, in Music, creativity has been in full flow as students developed their composition skills by crafting striking leitmotifs to represent the dramatic arrival of THE GLADIATOR, experimenting with melody, rhythm, and instrumentation to bring their ideas to life.

I would also like to take a moment to thank all students for their excellent conduct during last week's fire drill. Their calm, sensible behaviour ensured the drill ran smoothly, and throughout the year we will continue to practise a range of scenarios so that, as a school community, we remain prepared and safe should anything unexpected occur.

Finally, thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support — it is greatly appreciated and plays a vital role in helping our students thrive.

Contact: cadair@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 8 - Mr Moon

This week has been a fantastic one for Year 8, filled with achievements, engaging learning, and plenty of positive momentum across the year group. On Thursday, our Year 8 girls took to the court for a netball match and represented the school brilliantly. Their teamwork, determination, and excellent communication were evident throughout, and they demonstrated impressive skill and sportsmanship from start to finish. Well done to all the girls involved—you should feel very proud of your performance.

We would also like to celebrate our top merit earners for the week. Congratulations to Tabitha (8M1), Jessica (8M2), Ethan (8A1), and Fern (8Z1) for their consistent hard work and outstanding attitude.

Alongside these achievements, a special mention goes to Bellamarie, who came second in the Rotary Cooking Competition with her delicious homemade lasagne and brownies. This is a brilliant accomplishment—well done, Bellamarie!

In lessons this week, students have been exploring a wide range of topics across the curriculum. In English, Year 8 have been delving into gothic fairy tales, analysing the eerie atmospheres, darker twists, and storytelling techniques that give these tales their distinctive style. In Maths, pupils have been working on simplifying algebraic equations, strengthening the foundations of their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Over in History, classes have been learning about Jack the Ripper, gaining insights into Victorian London and the challenges faced in crime and policing during that period. In Religious Studies, students have been focusing on religious festivals and how they are celebrated within different faith communities, while in Personal Studies, Year 8 have been learning about medications, building important knowledge about safe use and understanding their purpose.

Finally, a big well done to the year group for maintaining an attendance rate of 93.69%, keeping Year 8 in second place across the school. This is a strong position, but with just two weeks left of the half term, we encourage everyone to make that extra effort to be in school every day. Let's work together to finish the half term even stronger.

Contact: smoon@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 9 – Mr Chapman

Top 3 Merits of the Week

1st Place: Evie (9Z2)
2nd Place: Lou Lou (9D2)
3rd Place: Tie — Mia (9D1) & Lara (9Z1)

Top 3 Merits of the Year (So Far)

1st Place: Ava (9A2)
2nd Place: James (9D2)
3rd Place: Alex (9D1)

Layer Marney Trip – Essex Boys & Girls Club

On Wednesday, 12 Year 9 students took part in a fantastic school trip to Layer Marney, organised by the Essex Boys and Girls Club. Students spent the day completing a range of teambuilding challenges and learning about the importance of resilience.

Five of these students will soon be selected to take part in the Respect Project, which will conclude with an exciting week-long expedition to the Lake District. It was brilliant to see the group working together outside the classroom and embracing new challenges.

Contact: rchapman@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 10 - Mr Field

The English Department welcomed visiting facilitators this week to deliver the 'Speak Out' Challenge, a programme designed to help pupils develop confidence and skill in public speaking. Throughout the session, students took part in a range of engaging activities focused on building self assurance, developing clear communication, and learning how to project their voices effectively.

We are thrilled to announce the pupils who have progressed to the next round, where they will present in front of a lower school assembly:

Jenson S, Haidyn V, Ben H, Jessica W, Jack S, Bradon D, and Hugh L.

A huge well done to each of them! It was fantastic to see pupils embrace the activities, step out of their comfort zones, and support one another throughout the challenge.

Congratulations to this week's top positive points earners:

Lorna, Freya, Skye, Owen, Jessica, Evelyn, Bradon, Tommy Mason, Pippa, and Mirella.

Your hard work, positive attitude, and commitment to school values have truly stood out. Keep it up!

Contact: sfield@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Year 11 – Ms Taylor

Year 11 have had a positive week - with a highlight being their mock interviews. They presented well, looked very smart and conducted themselves well. I am very proud of them.

Some of the invites for prom have gone out. We will be inviting students on a rolling basis to give as many as possible the chance to come. A reminder that the criteria for invites is:

- Attendance to school
- Attendance to lessons
- Conduct in school.

I want to invite as many as possible, and so am giving students as much time as I can to get there.

A huge shout out to our top merit earners this week:

Maisie B (11Z2), Bobby B (11D1), Sienna B (11D1), Riley W (11D1), Max C (11D1), Alfie L (11Z2), Maisey S (11Z2), Evie S (11Z2), Maria W (11M1), Oliver B (11A1), Keifer B (11Z1), Holly D (11Z1), Tylor E (11D1), Isla G (11Z1), Ava H (11D1), C. J H (11Z2) Teddy K (11Z2), Kyla L (11D1), Harry L (11M2), Eve M (11M2), Tia O (11D1), Summer T (11D1), Faith W (11Z2), Christie w (11M1) and Damien W (11Z1).

Wishing you all a restful weekend

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

It's been an exciting and meaningful week here at Rivers Sixth Form. Our Year 12 students rose to the challenge as they prepared for and confidently took part in Mock Interviews, gaining invaluable experience for the future. We also paused to remember and reflect on Holocaust Memorial Day, coming together to honour those affected and reinforce the importance of remembrance. Alongside this, students completed their Real Criminology exams, which we successfully spread across two days, and to top it all off, our long-awaited Football Academy kits arrived and were worn with pride by our boys and adding a real buzz around the sixth form.

Student Shout Out

Year 12 – Jessica - for her mature, academically driven approach to her studies and for being an absolute pleasure to have in Sixth Form.

Year 13 – Harry - for his outstanding work ethic and positive attitude, proving that nothing (not even being a shoe down) can stop his focus and determination.

Football Academy Updates

This week our Football Academy boys received their brand-new Rivers Sixth Form home and away kits. There was a real buzz as they tried them on and took part in a training session wearing them for the first time. The kits have added another layer of pride and professionalism, perfectly reflecting the high standards the students adopt when training with their coach, Mr Hill.



Sixth Form in the Community

Holocaust Memorial Day

On Tuesday 27th, our students observed Holocaust Memorial Day, commemorating the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust. Students contributed thoughtful facts and messages to a memorial board in the Sixth Form area and took part in meaningful discussions about the importance of remembrance and the ongoing fight against prejudice.

Rivers Sixth Form Applications

It has been wonderful meeting all of our prospective Year 11 students as they attend their Sixth Form interviews. We have been blown away by the number of applications received and by how many students have chosen Rivers as their first choice. Interview slips have now all been handed out; if you have missed receiving yours, please contact the Sixth Form team.

RIVERS SIXTH FORM

Year 12 Mock Interviews

Today, our Year 12 students took part in mock interviews, and we are incredibly proud of the way they prepared themselves and the professional manner in which they presented. They all looked smart and approached the experience with confidence and maturity. This valuable opportunity will support them as they move into Year 13, when they will be preparing for real interviews for university, apprenticeships, and work placements.



What's Coming Up

- 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

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Rivers Sixth Form operates a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy. The laptop trolley has been removed from the Sixth Form area, meaning students will need to bring 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. Alternatively there are 10 laptops available in the LRC for Sixth Form students to rent for the day.

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.

RIVERS SIXTH FORM

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!

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.

The Rivers Sixth Form Team

 mwilkins@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

 sixthform@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

 Absent reporting to Mrs Penberthy: 01621 787882

 Follow us on Instagram: @RiversSixthForm

 Visit: www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk



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.



ACL

FREE!

English

**KS4 Support for
GCSE English Exams
Online Live Course**

This course is run by a GCSE English Tutor. It aims to equip parents with the knowledge to support their child through the GCSE papers.

The course will explore both the Language and Literature paper and identify Literacy techniques needed for the exams.

Date: 18/03/26 to 25/03/26

Time: 09:30 - 11:30

Scan the QR code, or

Visit our website aclessex.com
and type 'KS4 ENGLISH' in the 'Find a
course...' box



aclessex.com

0345 603 7635





EXPLORE YOUR FUTURE IN HEALTHCARE

with Mid and South Essex
Health & Care Academy



The Health & Care Academy is working with Medical Mavericks to provide a fantastic hands on workshop where you can explore careers in the NHS whilst getting the opportunity to practice your skills and take basic medical obs!

Activities include...

- Record and print an ECG from your heart
- Use a needle to take fake blood from a dummy arm
- Try your hand at keyhole surgery
- See inside your body with an ultrasound machine.
- Scan your retina with a ophthalmoscope.
- Listen to your pulse with a pulse doppler.
- See your veins under a vein scanner.
- Take basic medical obs.

This opportunity is available to students in Years 10 - 13, who are thinking of a career in healthcare.

**Tuesday 17th February
2026**
(am) 9.30am - 12pm



**Tuesday 17th February
2026**
(pm) 1pm - 3.30pm



**Wednesday 18th
February 2026**
(am) 9.30am - 12pm



**Wednesday 18th
February 2026**
(pm) 1pm - 3.30pm





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.

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.

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.

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'.