



MAIDEN ERLEGH

CHILTERN EDGE

Headteacher: Mr A Hartley
BA(Hons) PGCE

Reades Lane, Sonning Common,
Reading, RG4 9LN
0118 972 1500
MECEoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org
www.maidenerleghchilternedge.co.uk
@MEChilternEdge

8 January 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

It has definitely been a busy week or weeks! However, it feels like it has gone really well given lots of the great feedback I've seen from parents and students. Can I thank you as parents for the huge support you have given us in ensuring that the move to remote learning has been smooth and that levels of engagement have been incredibly high indeed? The success of this style of learning definitely does place a much high emphasis on the role of the parent but in garnering feedback from staff this week they are also delighted at how the students are working so that in no small part is down to high parental expectations. A great illustration of the positive attitude to learning of our students this week was when one of our teachers suffered a power outage on their laptop at the start of their lesson. However, the students whilst waiting put together and completed a Kahoot quiz in that subject on their phone. To have such autonomous self-motivated learners in the school is a real sign of where we are on our journey.

However, there has also been a lot of work from staff and the support teams in getting students back to work with passwords and Google Classroom codes to be found, technical advice to be given and technology to be distributed. However, it has been done smoothly and from what I can see quickly so that students have able to overcome issues very quickly indeed. The Trust have also played their part and there have lots of ideas pinging between the three secondary schools regarding best practice.

The full timetable and live lessons definitely present a greater challenge for staff and for ourselves however it leads, we feel, to a much better learning experience all round. Judging by some of the great feedback on various social media forums this week our remote learning journey is heading in the right direction. To quote just two of the many we have seen:

"It is an amazing school full of dedicated and talented staff. So reassuring in such a difficult time."

"Goodness knows how much planning and hard graft has had to be put in to set all this remote learning up. Spot on yet again MECE."

We have also started our 'Pop Up' provision for key worker and vulnerable students this week that has been very successful with 30-40 students each day using this facility. The students have worked with concentration and purpose across the week and it has been a pleasure to offer these students our support.

However, whilst this method becomes our main way of delivering education can I ask that as parents you do ensure the students take regular breaks, spend time away from their screens when lessons aren't on and make sure they do get some exercise each day. It isn't easy, especially during a chilly January but keeping healthy is also very important. I attach a best practice for online learning link just [here](#) and also a guide to using phones and online technology safely [here](#).

I also want to publicly thank the staff who have rapidly adjusted their working style to cope with this new situation. Information was coming out thick and fast across the holiday and how



this half term was going to operate shifted again on Monday evening. However, despite some understandable anxiety the staff have been incredibly resilient, very open and solution focused. This collaborative approach has meant we have been able to offer such strong provision this week.

Along with the switch to remote learning we have also had to cope with setting up our Covid test facility this week. The government have provided us with guidance and training but it is a little nerve racking to work in a medical context without a full background in such an area. However, led by Mrs Perry our Business and Operations Manager, we did our first dry run yesterday with three staff (I was thankfully negative!!) and we will test half the staff today and half on Tuesday along with the students attending our pop-up school facility. It is not currently confirmed but it is expected that the rest of the school student population will be tested on when they return to school after half-term.

Stop Press: All students and staff have tested negative!! A great relief in so many ways.

We heard this week of the cancellation of Year 11 exams for this calendar year. Year 11 have been excellent with their engagement this week despite the uncertainty of what is happening which will help them as we consider their final grades. We await guidance from exam boards and OFQUAL regarding how we should assess the students to arrive at their final grade but as it stands the students just need to work as hard as possible and show us the highest quality of work possible so we can justify the best grades for each and every one of them.

Lastly, I would like to continue to use the following [FAB](#) and [DRAB](#) links to allow parents to e-mail feedback through to us. In addition, please do use the following link, [staff member of the week](#) to let us know of any outstanding staff contributions. Our student of the week this week goes Dillon B in Year 10 who has had a brilliant week getting several Praise Postcards for his consistent effort and engagement throughout the week. My staff member of the week goes to Mrs Perry, our Business and Operations Manager, for fighting through the mass of documentation, gathering and training a team and completing our first round of Covid testing. A brilliant effort and what a relief!

Take care and stay safe.

Andy Hartley
Headteacher