



15 January 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Week 2 of Lockdown 3 comes to a close!!

However, it has been another great week at MECE. We have delighted at the continuing levels of attendance and engagement of the students along with the quality and quantity of work being submitted by the vast majority of students. We have surveyed parents and our staff to better understand how our provision is being received and how easy it is to work remotely delivering lessons for 5 hours a day. We were delighted with the key messages of the feedback, but also grateful for some constructive feedback. As mentioned in a previous communication, 100% of parents who responded rated the online provision good or excellent and 100% of staff felt our provision was better than in the summer. We couldn't be prouder!

We have also been working hard to support the staff, giving them lots of tips and training on the best methodology for delivering online teaching and I hope this is now feeding in to our lessons through feedback tools such as Mote which allows teachers to give 60 seconds of verbal comment rather than writing feedback down.

We also worked with our Heads of Department earlier this week to discuss our ongoing methods of quality assurance despite the context of remote learning and I hope you will be reassured to know that this begins from Monday in terms of visiting lessons, looking at the content, feedback and the quality of work students are submitting. The staff also reported back on the work they had had to complete to get their lessons ready for home learning. These ranged from putting all knowledge retrieval quizzes onto a Google Form to changing the sequence of the curriculum so that sex education doesn't need to be learnt at home in Year 8 (we felt that might not have been fair on the parents!). It has been a huge effort from everyone in the team but it feels like it has been very much worthwhile.

Our next challenge has been to craft a system that allows staff to both recognise good work but also when work isn't submitted or is of a poor quality. This will go live with staff from Monday and we will be running a daily report on this as well as attendance. In doing so this will enable us to communicate home and support families by ensuring that all students are pushed to keep up with the work and succeed. Our daily postcard home has also kicked in this week with over 20 students each day receiving an email home in recognition of their efforts

I think we are all conscious that we need to try and reduce screen time at the moment especially outside the school day. To support this Miss Bliss sent out a communication appealing for parents and members of our community to purchase books for our low-income family students both to support literacy and provide an alternative to screen time. A link to this can be found [here](#). We will also be issuing a series of after school challenges based around non-screen activities such as exercise, cooking, music etc over the next few weeks which students can complete and earn house points from. We have also tweaked the school day to give a longer lunch, slightly shorter lessons and extended breaks between lessons and a communication on this from Miss Bliss can be found [here](#). As parents please try to insist that your children do something non-screen based during these 'downtimes'.

We have also worked hard to maintain things such as Gifted and Talented provision during this lockdown. Invitations have been sent out to students today for a 'gold' and 'silver'



programme that is starting on Monday. There will be weekly sessions on very interesting topics such as:

- From chaos to order – the magic of data analysis
- What is economics?
- The impact of Sports Concussion on brain health
- Eating disorders, empathy, and the power of words

Alongside this, our Brilliant Club students in Years 9 and 10 have just submitted their final essays for grading. I quote below from two of our Year 9 students work below in their essay examining the validity of the Marxist interpretation of the causes of the French Revolution.

Two philosophers developed these ideas further: Montesquieu (1689-1755) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Montesquieu argued that the power between the government should be split between the different groups – for example, the king, the nobles, the Church and the common people. However, Rousseau believed that the people of France (or any country) should rule themselves. These ideas inspired the people of France to form their own ideas about the government, the king and religion. So now, because of what Rousseau and Montesquieu argued, people would want equal power, or to rule themselves, resulting in many protests groups and uprisings which later led to the French Revolution.

Marx's theory suggests that the commoners gained what is called a 'class consciousness' which means they collectively realised that they were being mistreated by the king and other dominant estates and wanted to do something about it.

One of the criticisms of the school I heard before I took up my position as Headteacher just over a year ago was the lack of stretch and challenge in the work set at MECE. I hope that both through our in-class curriculum overhaul and extra opportunities such as the Brilliant Club and our Gold and Silver programmes we are shifting that viewpoint with great rapidity.

With this in mind and in order to widen everyone's horizons despite the lockdown all students attended a virtual tour of Paris today as part of their tutor time. We used a brilliant interactive online resource for this and further destinations will follow, but hopefully despite ongoing travel restrictions, we can keep students inspired by visiting the world from their laptop!

My staff members of the week this week are Mr Watterson for his great online provision, alongside being our morning hand sanitiser officer greeting the students off the bus and ensuring they are virus free as they enter school. He does this alongside everything else with real enthusiasm and commitment and always makes a difference. In addition, I'd also like to recognise Mr Hunter, who gets consistently high levels of praise from both students and parents for his online teaching both in PE and History. As ever, please use our [FAB](#) and [DRAB](#) links to provide us with any feedback on our work and also use the , [staff member of the week](#) link if you want to let us know about any member of staff you feel has gone above and beyond for the school.

Take care and stay safe

Andy Hartley
Headteacher