



MAIDEN ERLEGH

CHILTERN EDGE

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Dear Parent/Guardian

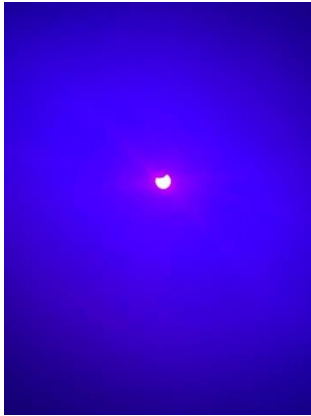
It has been great to be back in school in the sunshine this week. We have been on the field at breaktimes which has given us a nice sense of space as the sun always seems to add a degree of calm to the students and their behaviour.

When I was a younger teacher, this half-term always seemed to be one that is much less busy, however as Headteacher and especially this year where this half-term is a week shorter than the norm, we have a lot to do to get ready for next year. The leadership team met on Wednesday for an extended meeting to review this year which leads into a further meeting in two weeks' time when we will begin writing our plans for next year which is really exciting. We will be sharing these plans with you at our Parent Forum on July 1 - invites for this will be sent out next week.

During half-term the matter of the Delta variant became a reality in school, thankfully we have not had any further cases since May 26. As a team we met on Monday morning before school to make decisions based upon school and local data about whether we should re-introduce face coverings into classrooms and other adjustments to reduce the possibility of transmission. We decided that as our school setting is predominantly outside and because there had been no further cases that we would allow students and staff to make the choice regarding face coverings. So far, this seems to have been the correct decision, but we will maintain our process of dynamic risk assessment and make changes if they are needed.

There have been a number of extra opportunities for students this week. It has been wonderful to hear about our Brilliant Club students in Year 8 and 9 writing essays on malaria and the reasons for its spread. These students have been working with a PhD student from Oxford University and are now involved in the writing phase of their projects which have been supported by in school by Mr Perry. In addition, Year 9 worked with the engineering company Thales on an employment skills workshop entitled 'People Like Us'. I visited the AV theatre when Set 2 were participating in this and there was a real buzz of creativity and engagement. We have also had a number of students in Year 7 and 8 working with an oracy coach this week. The ability to speak confidently and clearly is a real skill and we all know as adults, communication skills will open many doors for you in later life, this pilot project is very exciting and I was delighted to how well the students responded to the coach and his methods.

The solar eclipse caused quite a stir at Thursday break and Ms Hardman brought down a large number of colanders and plastic filters for KS3 students to witness the eclipse through. The students seemed really excited and I attach a copy of a photo that Floyd in Year 8 took (with permission!) using his phone and the purple plastic filter.



I have been delivering assemblies all week regarding communication. My message has focused on two different aspects of communication. Firstly, that as learners there is much neuro-scientific research to indicate that students need a quiet classroom for any work requiring thinking. The inner voice that you have when you are attempting to recall facts or instructions gets lost if there is noise around. Research shows that performance in number puzzles or word games improves significantly when attempted in silence or in a silent room. However, part of our teaching methodology is also making sure that within lessons there is a chance to talk, problem solve in pairs and discuss matters in each lesson but always at the teacher's discretion and instruction. The second part of the assembly focused firmly on being clear with the students around the impact that name calling can have on others and that the school will not tolerate this. The students listened really well to both messages and the week has been (so far!!) a very calm one.

My student of the week this week is Floyd in Year 8, not only for his eclipse photo, but also for answering a question in my assembly and in one of the lessons I popped into. His intellectual curiosity is definitely something to admire.

My staff member of the week is Miss Bliss for her outstanding work in putting the Teacher Assessed Grades together for Year 11. This process is a daunting undertaking but we are on schedule and ready for next week's submission due to her thorough and professional approach to this process.

Have a great weekend and take care and good luck to all the Year 10s involved in their exams next week!

Andy Hartley
Headteacher

