



MAIDEN ERLEGH

CHILTERN EDGE

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Dear Parent/Guardian

It felt incredibly strange to 'come back' to school this week as I'm sure you're aware.

I hope things are going well at home and everyone is maintaining the balance between work, keeping safe and healthy and finding some personal space and 'me time'. It's definitely a challenge for households and individuals across the nation!

We continue to get a lot of very positive feedback which I always pass on to staff whenever it comes in. As teachers, we get live feedback on our work every lesson of every day- you can sense the atmosphere in the room as to whether the lesson is going well or not and see the students working on your assignments (or not in some cases!). Therefore, to be disconnected from your students is unsettling so any feedback you have is always appreciated. Of course, as indicated by the Survey Monkey we constructed before Easter we also are keen to know what can be improved. With this in mind from next week my weekly newsletter will have a little section on it called '**Fab and Drab**' with hyperlinks to an e-mail inbox. If you feel something is going well it will give you an easy opportunity to pass on a positive note to the staff and similarly if you feel things could be developed or improved this link will take you to an inbox. One of our administrative team will hold responsibility for these two inboxes and we will endeavour to deal with these comments as they come in and there will be a section of the weekly newsletter that shows our responses and thanks.

My week has been dominated by Deputy Head interviews. Firstly, I would like to pass on my congratulations to Richard Hawthorne who will be taking up the position of Headteacher at John O'Gaunt School in Hungerford, West Berkshire at some point later in the summer term. Richard has worked within the Maiden Erlegh Trust for a number of years leading the Teaching School amongst other things. More recently, Richard was Acting Headteacher after the departure of Moira Green in September 2019. I hope you will join me in wishing Richard our hearty felicitations at achieving a wonderful promotion and we wish him our best when he does leave. To recruit his replacement within the current restrictions of social distancing has been a real challenge. Normally, Deputy Headteacher interviews would be over two days and involve a number of different challenges, meeting staff and students as well as being interviewed about their knowledge, competencies and experience. To do this remotely required some creative thinking indeed! Anyway, after getting a strong field of over 30 applicants we interviewed 4 candidates on Thursday. This involved over 20 different Zoom meetings, 4 different zoom hosts, presentations, assemblies to the MER pop up school children and a final interview for two candidates of about an hour in length. Thankfully, it all went smoothly and there were no epic technology fails! As a result of this exercise, I am delighted to announce that our current Assistant Headteacher, Emma Bliss, has been successfully appointed as Deputy Headteacher and will begin her new role in the summer term. Miss Bliss is currently responsible for a range of areas within the school including the timetable, careers and performance data. I can't wait for her to start her new role and to see the great places we can take the school to on our rapid journey of improvement.

Have a great weekend and look after each other. It is so important that we keep our discipline so that we can get back to normal as soon as possible. June 1st still keeps being mentioned but we'll have to see!

Yours

Andrew Hartley
Headteacher