



12 November 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

It has been another action-packed week at MECE with loads of brilliant events, practices and visits crammed into the week.

Trips and Events

Our Year 11s finished their PPES (mocks in old money!) on Tuesday and with perfect timing were at Henley College on Thursday completing taster sessions and discovering more about life beyond MECE. Henley College were full of praise for our students and their calm, orderly behaviour, and engagement with the day.

In addition, on Tuesday 12 of our Year 8 and 9 students attended training to become anti-bullying ambassadors as part of the school achieving the Diana Award. I am really looking forward to meeting the group with their ideas for what we can do to improve our provision.

On Wednesday, 42 of our Higher Ability Pupils visited Trinity College, Oxford to discover about life in this prestigious establishment. As well as having lunch in the 'Harry Potteresque' dining hall they attended workshops and talks on life at the university and the qualities they would need for a successful application.

On a sporting front, last Friday saw schools from across South Oxfordshire attend MECE for a rowing and running duathlon competition and on Tuesday 30 students competed for the school in a cross-country event at Gillotts School in Henley. Alongside this, 20 students attended our new 'Boxin2Shape' class on Thursday evening led by local boxer, Jay Clarke.

Rehearsals are also continuing apace for our school production, The Addams Family, which will be performed in the final week of this term. The atmosphere in the rehearsals is brilliant and we can't wait to see the polished production in a few weeks. Huge thanks go to Mr Harte for his commitment of giving up three evenings a week for the rehearsals.

Lastly, there will be news about our Duke of Edinburgh programme in the next few weeks, but we can't wait to get started.

Remembrance

It is so important that our MECE students understand the importance of commemorating Remembrance and understanding the importance of conflict and the role of ordinary people within those conflicts. I hope our events this week have supported this view. This week saw Remembrance Day marked by our now annual rendition of the Last Post by Katy Hardman, our Head of Science. The school fell silent for 2 minutes and the students listened brilliantly to the trumpeting. The event has also been supported by an excellent assembly by Mr Yarwood. On Sunday I will be laying a wreath at St Nicholas' Church in Kidmore End with two members of the student community.

Quality Assurance

This week our Heads of Department have been working hard on their Quality Assurance programme looking at books, dropping into lessons and meeting groups of students. The aim of this has been to look at the quality of teaching and learning, ensure that work is being completed and to a high standard and to garner if the students feel enthused and supported

regarding their learning. We have asked staff to particularly look at the quality of feedback and the way staff are guiding students to improve their work.

Reading

There will be a communication about the next layer in our reading strategy, 'Drop Everything and Read' in the next week. Our focus on reading and literacy is important and it has been a pleasure to visit lessons recently and see all students using rulers to follow texts, fully engaged in the page in front of them.

Mental Health

At the foot of this communication is the latest newsletter from mental health charity Place2be. Place2be are an excellent organisation which the school is currently working with but as we all know many mental health issues often happen quietly at home so I wanted you to read this communication so that it will help to raise awareness of the issues and strategies we can all use to deal with mental health issues.

Community morning

Just a quick reminder of our gardening morning on Saturday 4 December where we will be preparing our garden areas for some vegetables and other planting. Please see the communication that went out earlier this week for details on how to sign up.

Stars

My stars of the week for this week are **Emmanuel** in Year 7 for his superb performance in the Cross-Country meeting on Monday.

My star staff member is **Mr Watterson** for his work in securing extra equipment for the school through his village social media pages. He got a lovely response to his appeal but most importantly it demonstrates a real commitment to the school and the continuous improvement of the services we provide our students. My second star is to **Mr Harte** for his commitment to the show by putting on a Friday night rehearsal slot to support catching up the time missed from earlier in the term.

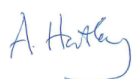
Feedback

Please click on the links below to leave us any feedback you may wish to.

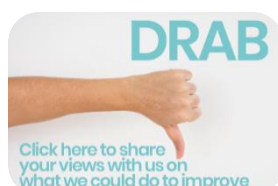
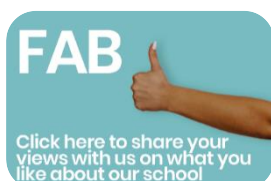
Have a great weekend everyone.

Take care and stay safe.

Yours faithfully



Andy Hartley
Headteacher



Place 2 Be Mental Health newsletter

Welcome back from the autumn half-term break! We hope that you enjoyed a bit of we dive back into the term and head towards the end of year. This is my first newsletter as Director of Operations for Place2Be and it is great to be in touch with so many schools who are committed to the mental health of children and young people.

After piloting with parents and carers in our partner schools, we are proud to have launched [Parenting Smart](#) for all UK parents and carers of 4-11 year olds. The Parenting Smart site is completely free to use and access, full of tips and advice on a range of topics including transition to secondary school, meltdowns, and sleep difficulties. Visit our website for the latest resources.

We're delighted to share that our theme for [Children's Mental Health Week 2022](#) is **Together**. It's all about growing emotionally – trying new things that can help us move beyond our comfort zone and recognising that challenges and setbacks can help us learn and adapt. You can find resources to use throughout the week on the Children's Mental Health Week website.

Thank you for your continued work towards supporting children's mental health. You will find several resources below to further support you in your work.

Best wishes,

Simon Yates

Director of Learning and Practice