



# 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

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Dear Parent/Guardian

As another week draws to a close, I was happy to leave school on Thursday evening with plenty of positives to draw on. Walking the site after school I saw some great examples of what we offer as a school. In the Sports Hall I witnessed students working hard on their fitness with our Boxin2shape coach, I wandered over to the Duke of Edinburgh meeting where staff were being trained ready for the new year, in the hall our show cast were rehearsing ready for their upcoming performance, and I had just waved off the skiers on the way to their first session on the slope at Aldershot. I am so proud of the staff and their passion and commitment to maintain such a broad offer of great clubs and opportunities for our students despite our small school.



### Reading

On Monday we held the first of our 'Drop Everything and Read' sessions which saw all of Year 7-9 silently reading for 20 minutes of period 1. It was great to see lots of Rick Riordan's and Michael Morpurgo's along with a few interesting choices such as Psychology for Beginners. My favourite scene was Mr Hunter and Mr Burningham reading intently with 60 Year 7s sitting in a crescent on benches in our Sports Hall. You could hear a pin drop!



This initiative will be rolled out more widely in the new year and complements our twice weekly Tutor Reading programme. All Year 7, 8 and 9 students will be expected to have a reading

book as a part of their Tools for Learning from January. Literacy and reading are so important for all our students whatever their futures and we will continue to strive to support the progress of our students with their reading along with exposing them to interesting texts and the knowledge that reading offers.

### **Sniffer Dog**

I also wanted to take this opportunity to inform you that in January we will be visited by a sniffer dog. I spoke to our governing body on Tuesday and additionally discussed this at the Parent Forum on Wednesday evening and from both groups received unanimous support. Many schools use sniffer dogs as a way of ensuring the school site remains a safe place for students and to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs. You may remember that we were visited by Paul Hannaford last year who spoke to all the students from Year 8 upwards about how his life was ruined by drugs and gangs and the sniffer dog visit is part of this wider holistic education of the students. I have used the company that we have booked in two previous schools, and they were previously recommended to me by a friend who worked at a prestigious boarding school. In each school the visits acted as an effective deterrent. Since I became headteacher I have not had to sanction any student for possession of drugs however schools reflect the societies they serve, and we know that drugs are prevalent across our catchment area. I hope the sniffer dog becomes another part of how we educate our students and keep them safe and allow them to focus on their studies.

### **Covid**

Thank you all for your support regarding face coverings in school. Non-compliance has been few and far between and I have been impressed by how well the students have adapted to our expectations. In addition, thank you for your support regarding the postponements and changes we made to the school calendar over the last three weeks of term. We'll keep our fingers crossed that these changes are only temporary.

We are required to test students for Covid on their return after the Christmas holiday and we will be writing to you regarding the arrangements for this and permissions in the next week. However, please be prepared that it is likely that there will be a staggered start to the school term as we must test all the students before they can go into lessons.

### **Stars**

My staff star of the week is our Site Manager, **John Agar**. Last week John had to cover a Covid absence in the team and he worked some very long shifts across the week including a 9pm finish on Presentation Evening after a pre-7am start. John embodies the selfless, 'extra mile' commitment that so many of our staff have but last week John's extra mile was even longer!!

My student's stars of the week are **Hugo H, Archie W** and **Will K** for being finalists in Year 8s Bake Off competition but an absolute special mention to **Lola S** for winning the whole thing. I always love walking down the corridor when they are cooking and the quality of work in our food tech room is a joy to behold so these students must have hit a very high standard indeed!

### **Feedback**

Please use the following links to leave us any feedback you may have (especially the nice stuff for my lovely staff who have been heroic in their energy, stoicism, and passion for their work over the last few weeks!).

I will leave you with an image of our School Council representatives from Year 7 through to Year 11 dressing our Christmas tree earlier in the week. This image encapsulates a lot about community and strength.



Take care and stay safe

Best wishes

*A. Hartley*

Andy Hartley  
Headteacher

