



07 January 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope you are well and managed to have a good break together and most importantly you and all your family were able to stay well.

I know the first week back after Christmas is always a shock to everyone's system, but my Heads of Year have requested that students get back to their normal routines. Several students have been tired and related stories of very late bedtimes and late-night gaming, neither of which help when it comes to working hard in school.

Covid

Understandably we are affected by Covid and general staff absence now. This is having a particular impact on our support staff and administration team. Whilst we are endeavouring to meet all our obligations and reply to every e-mail you may find that we are not able to respond as quickly as usual to e-mails. Clearly, we do not know what the next few weeks will bring but my staff are being brilliant in their problem solving and flexibility and we maintain our primary focus on the students, their welfare, and their education.

Thank you for your patience and support in this matter.

Face coverings and testing

I have been delighted with the way the students have been towards face coverings in the classroom and around the school. Thank you for your support in this matter as clearly this has been supported by almost every MECE household.

In addition, it was hugely appreciated that the students were so positive and mature in their approach to testing. This made the test teams jobs so much easier.

School Review 2

Next week we undertake School Review 2, and the leadership team will be in lessons across the week. This will allow us to hold coaching and developmental conversations with our teaching staff. I always love these weeks as despite my daily walkarounds and drop ins this allows me to get to see a little more of the craft and impact of our staff on our students. I hope to report some of the highlights next week.

Bus behaviour

Please can I ask that you remind your sons and daughters that they should not be filming and photographing other students on the bus without permission. I do feel some students feel there is nothing wrong with this but for reasons of safeguarding and personal privacy this is not acceptable. We had two different incidents in the final week of term which left the students involved feeling very frustrated.

Positive drive

To recognise the excellent start Y10 have made to their GCSEs, in the final two weeks of the Christmas Term in each lesson a 'Student of the lesson' was nominated by teaching staff. Each nominee received 2 House Points and was entered into the draw made live on the last day of term. Our 2 winners were Kaitlyn and Corey. Each will receive an Amazon Voucher to

spend as they please. Congratulations to all who received a 'Student of the Lesson' nomination and keep up the good work for the upcoming term.

Over the remainder of the year similar 'Student of the Lesson' foci weeks will take place in other year groups too – more information to follow.

Food bank donations

A huge thank you to everyone who donated to the foodbank drive. We were able to deliver over 700 items of food in the end which says a lot about the spirit and character of our students and the strength of the MECE community. On the last afternoon of term after the students had departed Mr Hunter and I left on a road trip to deliver the food. As you can see from the picture below, Simone, the manager of the Weller Centre on the Amersham Road in Caversham, was very pleased with her donations.



Stars of the week

My staff members for this week are the admin team who have been amazing as they have coped with several absences, covering various jobs with enthusiasm and professionalism and I am incredibly grateful.

My student of the week is Emily in Year 11 who really represented everything that is great about the school as she has been helping some of our most vulnerable Year 7 students in getting their lunch. She has shown care, compassion and leadership in her actions and I feel very proud of her behaviour.

I received a lovely piece of feedback earlier this week and I wanted to share with you a short extract. It is always so pleasing to know that we are getting across our key messages to staff and students.

In the end, you are a unit and that's what comes across. X feels part of that unit, she wears her blazer with pride and any badge pinned to it has real meaning attached. She views the staff as people for whom she tries her best as she knows they do likewise for her, and a bond of trust is built between them. When I talk to her the language, she uses indicates a shared journey on which everyone has their part to play and inside that they know their roles and responsibilities...

Please also click on the links below to leave any feedback you may have

Take care and have a great weekend

A. Hartley

Andy Hartley
Headteacher

