



15 February 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

As we approach half-term it is always worth reflecting on what we have achieved (and overcome!) in this block of seven weeks.

Covid

Since the government made their announcements on January 2 regarding new procedures and protocols to support the control of the Omicron variant, we have been very busy indeed. The half-term has proved challenging, and as I speak, I will have three staff absent for most of this last week with Covid. However, this pattern, which has been constant for the last 7 weeks, whilst presenting us with huge logistical challenges has been dealt with brilliantly by all stakeholders. I have been delighted by the way the students have coped with the different agency staff we have had to use across the term and how my own staff have offered themselves up to cover whenever possible. Lastly, it has been so nice to read the positive and supportive messages from parents thanking us for our efforts in keeping everything going. It has needed the MECE community to be united over the last six weeks!

It will be very interesting to see how things work out after the reported relaxation of Covid isolation later this month.

The show...

This week sees our long awaited and once postponed show, The Addams Family, take place with everyone looking forward to Wednesday evening. I have been in school on Sunday and seen the large numbers of students and staff who have given up their weekend to make sure the show can go on. As I write a small number of tickets are available. A huge thank you to Mr Harte for his determination and resilience in ensuring the job gets done.



Visitors

We had visitors in school on Wednesday who were completing in a 3-day review of the Trust. Whilst this is not Ofsted it did allow external visitors to see just how positive the day-to-day experience of our students is. They met a group of our students and were impressed with the

pride they felt in the school and the confidence with which they could speak about their school and their learning journey.

Year 11

I was delighted to observe all of Year 11 attending English revision classes on Thursday lunchtime. This happened without SLT having to chase or cajole. They just all went and got on with it! Sometimes it is difficult to judge the progress of the school as we work so closely in it, however, this moment said so much about the culture of the school now. Similarly, we have had an almost perfect turn out for targeted revision in some other subjects recently.

I wish them well with their more formal revision block which begins this evening – Tuesday with a Chemistry session.

Uniform and appearance

In my newsletter last week, I mentioned a push on uniform. I am really pleased at the positive way the students rose to the challenge and saw superb uniform from our students across the week. We will keep this push up across this week, but can I also thank you for your support as parents in ensuring our students look so smart and ready to learn. However, can I remind parents that hair also needs to be presentable, and we ask that no student has hair at less than grade 1.

Extra-curricular opportunities

Despite all the current challenges I have been so grateful that our extra-curricular provision has been maintained. The recent launch of the Duke of Edinburgh Award with 40 students signed up shows the appetite our students have to develop their character and go beyond the taught curriculum. Similarly, our Wednesday football club has also seen excellent numbers in attendance. To further boost our offer, we will be sending out letters regarding a new Latin Club that will be starting after half-term and led by Ms Green from the MFL department.

Half-term and changes to our IT systems

Please can I remind you that we will return to school on Tuesday March 1 after half-term. The Trustees of the Maiden Erlegh Trust have granted its schools an extraordinary INSET day to allow for the launch and smooth transition of our Management Information System. Miss Bliss will be writing to you in more detail regarding this matter later in the week. However, this task is a major undertaking and has already taken up hundreds of labour hours and therefore please be prepared for a slightly reduced service in terms of parent information-house points, behaviour notifications etc., in the first week back. We are confident that the new system, Bromcom, will offer a greatly enhanced service for all concerned.

Stars of the week

My Staff member 'Star of the Week' goes to Mr Harte for his amazing work on the show.

My Student Stars of the Week go to all of Year 11. As well as their English revision last week we also saw a good number complete their Food and Nutrition practical examination. This was done with great enthusiasm and a huge degree of technical expertise. I really enjoyed the tasting afterwards!!

Lastly, please do not hesitate to click on the boxes below to offer us any feedback.

Take care and stay safe - Spring is on its way!

Yours sincerely



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

