



20 July 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

Hot weather

Monday and Tuesday of this week presented us with some unprecedented logistical challenges. The forecast of high temperatures and the Met Office red weather warning meant that on Friday last week we spent several hours trying to plan and work around a potentially incredibly challenging situation. Our first inclination was to impose a half day with a midday closure, however, Reading Buses could not support this change of timetable at such short notice. It was clearly going to be intolerable in the afternoons at school and having had to come on site yesterday I can vouch for this! Therefore, we had little choice but to go for the full closure. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Last week

As you will know last week was a challenge regarding staffing, and as such, we have had to impose a rolling rota with Year 10, 9 and 8 missing a day each. I can only apologise as I know this will have caused a degree of inconvenience to many families and I hope not to have to do it again if it can be avoided. However, I thank you for your support and understanding regarding this matter.

Year 5 and Year 6

On a more positive note, last week we hosted three open mornings for Year 5 families. In total we had over 120 families visit the school and this bodes very well for our September 2023 intake. We also welcomed another group of lovely Year 6 students who did a mini transition on Thursday morning. These were students who were on school residentials when we held our main event last Thursday and Friday. Incidentally, our main transition days finished with Mrs Brown, our new Music teacher, leading the students in the Big Sing, a wonderful communal singing event with many parents in attendance too. It was a wonderful moment, and it gives me great heart for the future of the school that we have so many great young people joining us in September.

Exhibition

On Friday 8, we held our Dance show and Exhibition. I want to thank Ms Gardner for her tenacity in making sure this event happened. Despite Covid throughout the week of the final rehearsals, Ms Gardner and the cast still managed to practice with Ms Gardner on screen co-ordinating affairs! I also want to say well done to all the dancers for not giving up despite this challenge. It was a lovely evening and our parents got to see work from many departments displayed along with this showcase of our dance talent.

CESA

I met with some of the stalwarts of the CESA committee last week and discussed the plans for next year. The important date for all of you to put in your diaries is the CESA AGM which will be on September 15 at 7pm and will be held at MECE. The group need volunteers and support in ensuring they have enough hands on deck for their fundraising projects. I look forward to seeing you there!

Goodbye

We also said farewell to our outgoing CEO, Mary Davies, this week. Mary has been an incredible supporter of the school since she led The Maiden Erlegh Trust in the takeover of

Chiltern Edge in 2018. The personal support she has given me has been instrumental in ensuring I have had a great sounding board for ideas and someone holding me to account to ensure all our work is of the highest quality. Mary leaves the Trust for a variety of roles in school improvement and inspection work, and I am sure you will join me in wishing her well.

Water sports trip

This week has also seen about 30 Year 8, 9 and 10s in Dorset on a water sports and activity centre trip. They have been swimming, climbing, throwing axes (gulp!) and lots of other active challenges. It has been a relief to finally get this trip off the ground having been originally scheduled for last year and in France. Fortunately, the weather has been very France!

We have also been finalising our calendar for next year and hopefully we are back to an uninterrupted normal that will allow us to run trips, expeditions and other events that develop the character, independence, and resilience of our young people. We look forward to sharing this with you in September.

Stars

My stars of the week are **Mrs Walker** (the Trust Director of Inclusion), **Mr Watterson** and **Mrs Allen** who have been away on our water sports trip supporting the students, giving up their week and making sure the everyone has had a brilliant time.

My student star of the week is **Amelia B** in Year 9 who has been accepted on an Oxford University Computer Science course across the summer holidays. Amelia embodies our school motto- Qui, Veut, Peut (If you want to, you can) -and always embraces every opportunity she is offered. A true embodiment of the new MECE.

Please do not hesitate to leave any feedback you have clicking on the boxes below.

Take care and stay safe in the heat.

Yours sincerely



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

