



30 June 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope the week has gone well for you all.

### Duke of Edinburgh

As mentioned in my last newsletter I hope you can excuse my hiatus from last week when I was up in the Chiltern Hills with our Duke of Edinburgh expedition team on Thursday evening. The expedition took place in the extreme heat at the end of last week and many of the students certainly found the endurance part of the expedition to be a challenge. Similarly, the navigation of the map and getting to checkpoints, supporting the team and staying sensibly hydrated all tested the students and took them out of their comfort zone. There were definitely mistakes, but with the help of the assessors and the staff team there was a lot of reflection and Friday saw a much more efficient walking performance than on the Thursday. The photo below shows the tired but happy faces on their arrival at Mill Meadows in Henley to complete the 2 days and they should be rightfully proud of their achievements.



I am so pleased we were able to complete the expedition, despite some of the staffing pressures we are currently facing, and my thanks go to Mrs Chopra for her leadership, and Miss Shepherd, Mr Watterson, Mrs Bosley, Miss Bliss and Mr Baker for their support over the two days.

### Go Ape

Monday saw a trip for 30 students go to Go Ape in Swinley Forest, Bracknell as a reward for their continued hard work and application across the year. These students seize every opportunity, attend extracurricular clubs, gather house points like confetti, complete homework and generally contribute to the school each and every day and it is a pleasure that we can reward such excellent students.



### Parents' Forum

This Wednesday saw our termly Parents' Forum. We showcased and took feedback on the new reports that will be used from September and additionally took a walking tour of the site gathering views from the parents on site improvements we can make. We finished the event with a 'what's going well' and an 'even better if' session. The evening was most positive, and it was good to see that our direction of travel and desire for improvements mirrors the parents' views.

### Head Students

I also wanted to share our picture of the Head Students, Ben, Henry and Gabby with myself, taken this week. I had breakfast with them on Monday and was pleased by their desire to make the school a better place. In particular, their aspiration to make the school more environmentally friendly and to make the 'cause' of environmentalism matter more to our students was incredibly encouraging. It is good to know that our future is in very safe hands.



### House Assemblies

This week we launched our upcoming Sports Day with our students through our House Assemblies which took place on Wednesday morning. Sports Day is on 12 July and we can't wait to see the students in action across that week in the various activities and events. The



image I've shared from the House assembly shows Chiltern House listening to the story of the Belgian shot-putter taking part in the hurdles last week for her team. It wasn't the winning or the personal best that mattered, it was the desire to help her team members and the pride in her flag that counted. It was a great story to hear and a very positive lesson to heed.



### **Inset and Industrial Action**

Please be reminded that next Wednesday 05 July is an INSET day and we are closed to all our students. In addition, Friday 07 July is a day on which the National Education Union are taking industrial action and thus we are open only to our vulnerable students.

### **Stars**

My staff star of the week this week goes to Mr Hunter for organising the Go Ape trip, the cover team during staff absence, as well readying us for Sports Day and always supporting his colleagues and the school.

My student star goes to Emily N in Year 10 for her strong performance on the Duke of Edinburgh expedition and her high levels of engagement on the Berkshire College of Agriculture trip on Thursday. It is great to see her applying herself so well and we can see what a positive future she has in front of her.

Please do not hesitate to leave any feedback via the links below.

Enjoy the summer weekend!

Andy Hartley  
Headteacher

