



07 July 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope you've all had a good week. It's been another positive week at MECE in terms of behaviour and conduct and lots of happy student faces. We have had a number of visitors again this week who have all reported on the clam atmosphere both in unstructured time and in the classroom.

Industrial action

I can only apologise for the implications for strike action because of the National Education Union's industrial action. There are no more strike days planned on this side of the summer holidays, however all four education unions (including my own union, ASCL, for the first time ever) have discussed united industrial action in the autumn term. I will keep you updated when I know more.

Knives and MECE

I have spoken to all of the students in assembly regarding the dangers of knives following a recent incident with a MECE student carrying a craft knife in their bag. We have discussed the tragic death of Olly Stephens and our determination to avoid another such tragedy in our area. I have also made it absolutely clear that if any student is found with a blade about themselves there will be stringent sanctions and that student will not return to MECE. I hope you can all find the time to re-iterate the importance of this message with your children.

House Music

We had a wonderful afternoon on Monday. Mrs Brown has been working hard with all of Years 7-9 practising, performing and refining pieces ready for House Music over the last few weeks. The process began some weeks ago and led up to class heats, semi finals and the grand final itself with judging from Miss Bliss, Miss Shepherd and the Hammond twins in Year 8. The quality of performances was just brilliant, and I am so proud to be head of a school with such talent amongst its student population!

The event finished with Mrs Brown on piano accompanied by Samuel from Year 8 on drums leading a rendition of 'MECE', our new House song, with lyrics rewritten by Mrs Brown to the tune of YMCA. It was just magnificent, and I am so proud of the way Year 7 sang this with such zeal and gusto.

Headteacher vacancy

We will be interviewing for my replacement on Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 July with a view to appointing before the summer holidays. I have shown a number of candidates around the school this week ahead of next Monday's application deadline and I wanted to assure you that the Trust have been working hard to ensure there will be an excellent replacement for me from January 2024.

Uniform

We continue to work hard in the maintenance of our uniform standards. However, there is still a degree of frustration regarding the number of bracelets and rings being worn. We will be discussing this with the students on Monday and ensuring standards remain high in this area. However, we will also be confiscating any items being worn and putting them into safe keeping from September and can I ask you support us in this matter. **Ties**

Our new House ties are now available from Stevenson's. For the new Year 7 students these will be compulsory, however for all other year groups the old ties will be acceptable. However, when any replacements are purchased it will be a House tie only that will be available.

Bus passes

Reading Buses have been insistent that students must carry passes with them to get onto the school buses. Please can I ask parents to work with their children, ensuring that they are carrying the pass and thus able to get up to school each morning.

Henley Rowing Club

Just a reminder we have Henley Rowing Club coming in to school each Tuesday at 3.15 to provide an introduction to rowing. This is a great opportunity for our students, and I know the coaches are looking to take the students out on the water in September.

Student stars of the week

This week I'd like to honour **Charlotte** in Year 10 who has been selected to kayak for Team GB in September in Poland. Charlotte is incredibly dedicated to her sport and competes on most weekends as well as always maintaining high academic standards.

I would also like to say well done to **Lianna** in Year 9 for her Bronze in Tae-Kwando in the London Open last weekend.

Finally, I wish **Ines** in Year 7 the best of luck as she competes in the ballroom dancing championships in Blackpool this weekend.

It is so good to hear about our students keeping busy and making the most of their opportunities beyond school.

Staff star of the week

My staff star of the week goes to **Miss Shepherd** for her excellent organisation of the Tower of London trip for all of Year 8. A lovely trip where MECE students once again showed themselves to be great ambassadors for the school!



Please leave any feedback you may have using the links below.
Take care and enjoy the warmth this weekend.



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

