



22 September 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope you all survived the awful rain on Wednesday evening and have had a good week.

IT

Following our cyber-attack, we are making progress here with our IT, our print facilities are back up and running and catering is now working more efficiently. It is hoped the students will be back on their computers by early next week. The implications of a cyber-attack have been profound on the school and far worse than initially thought and I would like to use this opportunity to pay tribute to the MECE staff who despite having to work even harder have dealt with the situation with an incredible level of forbearance and patience.

Staffing

I am also pleased to say that our art teacher, Dr Ramsookbhai, arrived on Sunday from South Africa and has been in lessons all week. She is clearly a very strong teacher with a high degree of skill in the production of art and design and it has been a pleasure to watch her work in the classroom.

Quality Assurance

I have been around the school on several occasions this week both as part of the two Year 6 open morning tours, on a learning walk with our Trust Director of Curriculum and with our Chair of Governors. The feedback from the open morning tours has been excellent and we also had lots of compliments for our student tour guides. To quote a couple of parents, "I have never seen teachers and students so focused and invested in their education" and "Why are more parents not talking about this school? This has been so impressive!" This was corroborated by my more in depth look at classroom practice with our Director of Curriculum where we sampled lessons from across the curriculum to check for consistency in terms of learning routines. It was great to see a uniformity in terms of Tools for Learning, uniform, reading strategies, quiet working and no hands up questioning combined with a variety of opportunities to get students thinking and developing.

Uniform

Uniform has also been a focus this week and we have checked students through our line ups each day this week. It has been really pleasing to see many students getting it right and I must thank tutors, the Heads of Year and parents for re-iterating and expecting students to follow our regulations.

Can I ask you to remind your children to make sure they are wearing their blazer as they arrive at school and that they do not wear bracelets or rings please?

Coats

Please can I remind you that our dress regulation is for dark coats. As many of you will be looking for a new winter coat now as the weather gets cooler can I ask that you stick to this guidance with black, navy, dark grey etc all acceptable and that the coats should not have large logos or motifs.

Behaviour

Whilst I am proud of our high standards there are always things to improve and one or two students who do not ascribe to our standards. As you may be aware, the students are given chances before they are removed from any lessons to reconsider their behaviour and therefore remain in the classroom. A teacher will give one warning to remind students to improve, followed by a second warning that will lead to the students having to talk to a member of staff who is 'On Patrol.' We hope that at this point the student can return to the lesson with improved focus, however, further poor behaviour will lead to the removal of a student from the classroom. If any student accrues two removals in a school day they are then removed from lessons for the rest of the day. This system is designed both to support students to improve their conduct and to ensure there is a real deterrent for students misbehaving.

Clubs

It has been excellent to see large numbers of students turning up for our extra-curricular clubs. Last night we had great numbers turn up for our Girls Football practice which was really pleasing. Can I ask that you have a look at our student bulletin that comes out today and encourage your children to get involved in the wonderful extra-curricular opportunities we have to offer at school.



Open Evening- Tuesday 26 September

Please be reminded it is our open evening next week and the students will be leaving site at 12.30pm. All the buses are booked to come early to take the student's home. In addition, can I thank in advance all of those students who are helping us on Open Evening either as guides or supporting in departments.

Stars of the week

My student star of the week this week is **Hayley** in Year 8. In the summer holidays she toured Belgium with the Berkshire Youth County Choirs and this past Sunday performed at the Royal Albert Hall.



It is great to hear about student's hard work and achievements out of school and so lovely to see someone who is clearly both dedicated and talented!

My staff star of the week is **Mrs Gehlot**, our School Business Manager, who has been incredible over the last few weeks serving in the canteen, fixing computers, liaising with the Trust, and making sure everything is running as best it can. She is completely #teamemce!

Have a wonderful weekend!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Hartley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Andy Hartley
Headteacher