



13 October 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope the week has been kind to you and your families.

Covid and absence

Week 6 of a long half-term has seen both staff and students starting to look a little fatigued. I want to use this opportunity to pay tribute to the staff who have had to endure a difficult term because of the cyber-attack, and they have showed remarkable professionalism and resilience in keeping going.

Within some staff absence, we have seen the return of Covid which always has a debilitating effect on the school as each positive test leads to five days absence as per the NHS guidance. **Please be reminded that the NHS recommend that under 18s should isolate for three days following a positive test.**

Science Fair

It was wonderful to see so many students in attendance at our Science Fair recently. This event which sees our Year 7 and 8 students presenting their research on a famous invention or scientist and answering the audience's questions is a fantastic event for our students to showcase their enthusiasms and interests in the scientific world. Mrs Sarpong knows the winners, and all will be revealed soon...



Madame Castets

I am delighted to share with you that we welcomed Madame Castets, our Head of Modern Foreign Languages, to school on Tuesday following a long journey to gain her visa. Madame Castets is being inducted and prepping this week, readying herself to start teaching next Monday.

Open Mornings and tours

I had the pleasure of welcoming 75 families to the school for two open mornings this week. They were very complimentary about the school, and the guides who showed them round, and this bodes well for another full year next year with approximately 300 families visiting the site through our eight open mornings and Open Evening.

I also showed the CEO of Maiden Erlegh Trust, Jon Peck, around the school on Tuesday and it was lovely to see him tweet so positively afterwards. This was followed by a tour for the Chair of Governors, Charlotte Cant, on Wednesday and it was plain to see that almost all the students were working hard, correctly attired and aiming high.

Year 11 revision and next steps

Our Year 11s have been attending after school sessions during the last two weeks in preparation for their upcoming mocks which commence after half-term. Once again, I am grateful to staff for putting these sessions on and making sure the students have the best possible opportunity for success.

Last Friday saw all of Year 11 visit Maiden Erlegh School who were hosting a Trust Higher Education Fair which was useful in starting conversations about what happens next and assessing the right destinations for each student. This is followed up with Mrs Finlayson, the Trust careers co-ordinator, who is meeting each Year 11 for a 1:1 meeting to ensure they all have appropriate plans.

INSET day and early closure.

Please be reminded that Friday 20 October is an INSET day when school will be closed to students and Thursday November 2 is an early close with the buses collecting the students at 1.30pm.

The Governing Body, Match Funding and CESA bits - getting involved in the school!

Please do look at last week's newsletter with reference to the [governor recruitment and the CESA lottery](#).

In addition, if anyone works for a company that offers match funding, please can you contact Suzanne Hopes in the school office on s.hopes@maidenerleghtrust.org so she can discuss any events that you could support our school with. Last year we raised an extra £1000 because of this initiative.

Stars of the week

My student stars this week are all from Year 11. **Ben** from Year 11 recently ran the Sonning Common 10K. He came **second** in his category with an amazing time of 44 minutes and 54 seconds. Ben is one of our Head Students and always gets himself involved in life in the local community and shows such a positive mentality to every challenge he faces.

Amelia and Amelia (!) are also from Year 11 and recently completed their Duke of Edinburgh Silver awards through the Eyot Centre in Henley. To complete this award demonstrates substantial commitment to their own personal development with skill acquisition, volunteering, a physical activity, and the expedition which involves hill walking and navigation over several days.



My staff star of the week is **Mrs Kirby** who is contributing widely to school life. As well as leading a great House assembly for Thames House on Thursday, she is also leading the Eco Club, who are currently making bat boxes and bird boxes for our site and finally she is also delivering consistently great lessons in the science department.

Please use the links below to leave any feedback you may have (my very tired staff would definitely appreciate a fab mention if you feel it is appropriate).

Take care and have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

