



17 November 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope this week has been successful for you and your families. We have had another good week with lots of positives to remind us what a great school this is!

Parental Engagement

Firstly, I want to thank all those parents who have responded so positively to my communication about parent conduct on the school site. We've even had a box of chocolates delivered to reception to be put into the staffroom!

Secondly, it has been very encouraging to see how many parents have been involved in school events this week, with 50 sets of parents attending the Duke of Edinburgh presentation on Tuesday and another 50 families attending the Parent Forum with Mrs Bowers on Wednesday, along with the 15 families at the ski trip information evening.

Also, a huge thank you to all the MECE families who came to our CESA Bingo night on Friday - a lovely evening with spoof prizes, real prizes, lots of laughs and a bit of bingo too!! Over £1000 was raised on the night – fantastic!

When I became Headteacher four years ago, it was very challenging to get any parental involvement in events, but the last week has been very encouraging indeed.

House Challenge

One of my big pushes this year is to make sure our students know what our Trust values are - Aim High, Be Inclusive and Work Together and our current House Challenge encapsulates all of those. Between now and the end of term we will be collecting food for the Weller Centre food bank as part of our House Challenge. There are labelled boxes in reception where students can drop dried 'in date' food plus toiletries or treats for Christmas hampers. The deadline is Monday 11 December.

The Weller Centre in Caversham provides support, leisure opportunities, youth work, food and warmth to the community it serves, and we are proud to work with them in their endeavours. Thank you for your support in this campaign and house points will be awarded for all donations.

Girls Football

We are proud to announce that we are part of just a few schools nationwide delivering an FA girl's coaching initiative. The girls in Year 10 are currently taking a course to become FA Active Leaders. They will then work with Rotherfield F.C. and Caversham Trents, two local teams we have made community links with, to deliver coaching sessions to girls. We will also be hosting the local primary school football tournament in the spring term, which the students will manage and lead.

We hope to open up the course to Year 11 and 9 in the future. Please contact Mr Caldwell if your club would like to be involved in supporting our volunteers.

Our girls' football success continued this week with a wonderful 1-0 victory for the Year 7s over Wallingford School. Wallingford has an intake over twice the size of MECE so this victory was no mean feat. Mr Caldwell is now looking at an English School's Cup entry for this team in Year 8 as they are clearly very strong indeed.

Sparx Maths

Please can I use this opportunity to give this homework platform a nudge? Students in Years 7-9 are expected to complete two exercises each week. If they struggle or are stuck, they can get support from their teacher or attend maths drop-in on a Tuesday lunchtime. Any students failing to complete the work who haven't contacted their teacher are required to spend the following Tuesday at a Maths Catch-up Club.

Maths is all about practice, practice, practice and applying taught knowledge in different scenarios and the Sparx platform supports that. As a parent you receive notifications about the homework so please can I ask you support your child in being successful and getting into good habits by doing their Sparx homework and getting better at maths!

Behaviour

Behaviour in schools is always a hot topic and I know when I led a Parent Forum on this subject last year there was lots of interest. As a school we know it isn't perfect and it is something we are continuously reviewing and reflecting upon. As always, we look at the data to give us a precise view to support our anecdotal and 'gut' feelings. The headlines are encouraging:

1. The student population grew numerically by 18% from the last academic year to this one but the number of in lesson logged behaviour incidents has fallen by 15%
2. The number of suspensions compared to this time last year has fallen. This statistic is supported by the fact we have seen a strong drop in our most serious behaviour incidents.

Of course, we're not 'there' yet but please be assured that things are moving in the right direction, and we continue to strive for even more.

Stars of the Week

My student star of the week is **Gabi Petford**. Gabi is one of our Head Students and was with me along with Henry Murtagh and Ben White at the Remembrance Service at Kidmore End on Sunday. On Monday after school, she was leading the dance rehearsals at the school show acting as both a performer and choreographer. Gabi has a fantastic academic record and always approaches situations with positivity and maturity. She is a great role model for the younger students.



My staff star of the week is **Miss Bliss** who stepped in at the last moment to prepare and deliver a staff training session for our staff after an unexpected absence. In addition, she works tirelessly to support our most vulnerable families in her role as Designated Safeguarding Lead. She is MECE through and through!

Please leave any feedback you may have using the links below.

Have a lovely weekend.



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

