



18 December 2023

Dear MECE Community

The end of this term marks both the end of an important chapter in the life of the school and looks forward to the start of an exciting new one. We say “farewell” to Mr Andy Hartley as he steps down as Headteacher. We are, of course, delighted that Andy stays within our wider organisation as he takes up the leadership of River Academy and we are also delighted that Mrs Briony Bowers will take hold of the baton to continue to move the school forward. However, it is right to take a moment to pause and reflect on the significant impact that Andy has had as Headteacher at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge.

Andy was appointed to be the Headteacher following a challenging time in the history of the school. A poor Ofsted report led to discussions to potentially close the school, but thanks to the campaigning efforts of the local community the school remained open and joined Maiden Erlegh Trust. Following some further staff movement, Andy Hartley was appointed to lead the school through a phase of transformative improvement. This is what has happened! Under Andy’s leadership, the school community pulled together, relationships were strengthened with local primary schools and the wider community and Andy’s leadership brought an ethos of high expectations and care to the school. This was particularly important as no sooner had he started, then the school had to face the challenges of the pandemic and school lockdowns. Through Andy’s leadership the school staff stepped up to make excellent provision for students especially our most vulnerable students and to keep in very regular contact so that students felt valued and connected. During this time a significant amount of work was completed in reviewing the curriculum so that when the school emerged from the pandemic there was a step-change in the quality of education being delivered to children. Alongside this, Andy has worked hard with the staff team to define and strengthen a very clear behaviour culture which balances high expectations and standards with care, concern, and compassion.

As a result, Ofsted judged the school to be “good” in all areas, we have seen results improve and more families deciding to choose MECE for their children. Increasing numbers of students means that we can grow the staff team and broaden the curriculum further; we are all delighted that we are starting to realise our ambition that Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge becomes the school of choice for the local community.

Good leaders shouldn’t only be judged on what they do at the time, but by what they leave behind. Andy leaves a school brimming with optimism, a school delivering a strengthening quality of education and a community that cares; a school culture aligned with our trust values: Aim High, Be Inclusive and Work Together.

So, thankyou Andy and we wish you every success as you take up your new role.

Yours sincerely

Jonathon Peck
Chief Executive Officer

Andy Johnson
Executive Director of Education