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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD



I can hardly believe that I've been headteacher here for a full year - it has been a great pleasure to lead and be a part of this wonderful community and I can safely say there has never been a dull day! The end of term and the end of another calendar year is a good opportunity to look back on the events and successes which we have enjoyed together as a community. This edition of MECE matters is once again packed full of this term's highlights and I am so proud of the range of opportunities which are available to our students both in and out of the classroom. As we say goodbye to Mrs Kirby, I would particularly like to celebrate her brilliant contribution to enriching the curriculum with Eco club, the Key stage 3 Science Fayre and the Astronomy evening.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and hope that 2025 brings more MECE joy!

Bugsy Malone

For our 2024 school production, we have been working hard in rehearsals to ready our performance of 'Bugsy Malone'. We started getting things ready back in June with the audition process and rehearsals began in earnest in September. Each week, cast members have been involved with singing rehearsals at lunch time and acting rehearsals after school. This show is a musical set in 1920s New York, involving the rivalry between two gangs. Those who get caught up in the fray might well get 'splurged'. The shows has been delighting audience for decades with its fun characters, catchy songs and messy fight scenes. We hope our production will be a treat for our audiences this year! Thank you to all those who have supported us with our show this year.

Mr Harte
Head of Performing Arts



CALENDAR

06 January	First Day of term
16 January	Year 8 Parents' Evening
03 February	Year 9 Options Information Evening
11 February	Year 9 Parents' Evening
14 February	Last day of term

A Sad Farwell to Ms Biddiss from us all at MECE. Currently Head of year 7, Ms Biddiss has been with us since 1993 when she joined as a teacher of MFL. She has always been a fondly regarded member of staff and regularly goes above and beyond, so much so that in 2023 she was nominated for a pride of Reading award by a MECE parent. I am sure you will all join us in wishing her well in her new role at another MET school, Hamilton. We are certain that she will be just as highly regarded there.



Trips & Events

Ypres trip - October half term

In October half term, 50 historians braved a very early morning to take a bus and a ferry to Ypres in Belgium! We spent 3 jam packed days visiting significant sites from World War One including several cemeteries and battlefields. We were fortunate enough to go on a tour of an underground quarry used as a hideout for British soldiers as well as experiencing one of the daily remembrance ceremonies at the Menin Gate. We explored real trenches and visited the site of a crater made by a World War Two bomb. The students were able to use the knowledge they'd gained in History lessons to develop a deeper understanding of the events and atrocities of World War One. This was not only a sobering and fascinating trip, it also gave students the opportunity to gain some independence during their free time chocolate shopping in Ypres centre. The staff were blown away by how well behaved the students were, they were appropriately respectful during the visits but were also so inclusive and friendly during their free time. We are hoping to run the trip again in 2025 for current Year 8 and Year 9 students so if you feel like your child missed out this year then please do express your interest!

Mrs Smith,
Head of History

**Hardwick Hall**

At the end of September our year 11 Historians took the long journey up to Derbyshire to visit the Elizabethan manor house, Hardwick Hall, the specified site for this year's History GCSE

**Astronomy Evening**

In mid November our year 7 & 8 students were invited to attend an astronomy evening. We welcomed astronomers from The Reading Astronomers Society who set up their telescopes on the field to make the best of the dark skies that our rural situation benefits from. As well as clear views of the moon, students and parents were also able to see Saturn and Jupiter and four of it's moons.

**Food Technology**

Students in year 10 and 11 went to the Italian restaurant 'Piccolino' in Henley. Students has a great experience behind the scenes in the kitchens and gained an insight into how the chefs prepared the food including the skills of chopping onions and making pizza dough. Afterwards they were served a two course lunch which included options such as Pizza, Spaghetti Carbonara or meatballs with salad and Tiramisu for pudding. Everyone enjoyed the trip and students learned about the pressures of working in a kitchen and that every detail matters.

**Young Voices**

4 students attended the Young Voices Online Safety Submit in November, two of them then appeared on ITV news to share their views.

**Reading Museum & Abbey**

Year 7 Historians went to Reading Museum and Abbey as part of their studies on the Battle of Hastings and the Bayeux Tapestry. The students re-enacted the whole of the Norman Conquest which not only saw some fantastic acting, it also brought to life such a significant historic event.

**Geography Association Quiz**

6 students represented MECE at Reading School—not only did we have the youngest team but out of a field of 20 we finished 2nd, only 1 point behind the winners. What a fantastic result!

Science Fair & Writing Competition

Science Fair

In September year 7 & 8 students took part in a Science Fair. Year 7 focused their research on their favourite scientist - dead or alive. Year 8 looked at scientific inventions and many included models such as telescopes, rockets and LEDs.

All attending students and staff voted for their favourite entry.

The year 7 winner was Naomi. Whilst long term she dreams of becoming a Forensic Pathologist for this project delved into the world of DNA for her project. She created an intricate model of the DNA double helix, researching in the library and going as far as dismantling a disused appliance cable to craft her model.



The year 8 winner was Henry whose focus on the world's largest particle collider took visitors deep into the world of particle physics. Henry's research centred around CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator, where scientists conduct experiments to understand the fundamental particles of the universe.

Writing Competition

The Students from Years 7 to 11 were invited to submit their original pieces, limited to 750 words, showcasing their creativity and literary skills. After a thorough review of the numerous entries, five outstanding writers were chosen as winners: Wilbur, Naomi, Gwen, Lilah, and Eddie.

Fourteen-year-old Wilbur captured the judges' attention with his thought-provoking and evocative poetry. Both Miss Thomas, Head of English, and Mrs. Roberts, Trust Curriculum Lead for English, praised his ability to convey deep emotions and imagery. Currently working on a play, Wilbur expressed his disappointment about the limited opportunities for creative writing within the GCSE curriculum, emphasizing the need for more avenues for students to explore their creativity.

Lilah's entry, titled "Lost in Cheddar Gorge," drew inspiration from her recent Geography studies. The judges were particularly impressed by her creative use of similes, which brought her vivid description of the area to life. Naomi took the judges on a journey back to World War II Britain with her gripping story, immersing them in the historical context and emotional weight of the era. Her ability to create a palpable sense of time and place resonated and showcased her talent for storytelling. Gwen's piece, "Between Two Times," stood out for its rich descriptive language that effortlessly transported readers into its world. Her keen eye for detail and ability to evoke strong imagery left a lasting impression on the judges. Eddie's entry, "The Thing in the Woods," was a genre-defying narrative that combined elements of science fiction and ghost stories. His imaginative twist on traditional storytelling delighted the judges, who appreciated his unique voice and ability to weave suspense into his writing.



MECE Staff Christmas Cheer



Every Christmas Miss Bliss organises a giving tree for the staff room, this year Miss Bliss changed the theme to advent calendars which were then donated to the Weller centre, who support so many local families.

Cow Shed Christmas Sacks

This year Miss Hibberd made sure to not leave families without and made her kind referrals for Christmas sacks to The Cowshed, before she moved into a new role and left MECE in October. we are so grateful to have such support from so many wonderful charities who work within the local community.



Thank You!

Staffing changes

After many years at MECE Ms Biddiss has left to take up a new role at Hamilton School. This is sad news for us at MECE and we will miss her a great deal. As you can imagine it has been a challenge to replace her, and so we have made not one but two great appointments for the new year:

Mrs Yaucat-guendi will be joining us as Head of French, she will take over almost all the teaching of French including both year 11 GCSE classes and year 11 parents were able

to meet her at parents evening.

Mrs Haycock will be joining us at the new head of year 7 and students were able to meet her at a special assembly, we will organise an opportunity for her to meet parents in the new term.

We have also said goodbye to Mrs Kirby who has been a great science teacher, Head of House and tutor - we wish her all the best for her new role at the UTC in Didcot.

Mr Mavromichalis who has been with us on a temporary basis this term will start his permanent role as Head of Science from 1 February.

Ms Audsley joins us as Head of Computer Science in a shared role at MECE and River Academy from January.



Introducing our new Head of Year

► Sian Haycock



We would like to welcome Sian Haycock, as our new Head of Year.

Sian, who joins us in January, is currently a Head of Years 8 & 9 at a secondary school in Oxfordshire. She has a degree in History from Manchester University and went on to complete her teacher training through the Oxfordshire Teacher training SCITT programme. Sian's previous roles include History specialist and Head of Year 7.

Sian is a firm animal lover, enjoying going for walks with her dog. Most of her weekends are spent watching her son play football.

Sian has a real passion for improving student's outcomes and is really looking forward to having a positive impact on students school experience at MECE.



Introducing our new Curriculum Lead for MFL

► Aya Yaucat-Guendi



We would like to welcome Aya Yaucat-Guendi, as our new Curriculum Lead for MFL.

Aya who joins us in January has degrees in both Modern Foreign Languages and Marketing. She currently teaches French in a Surrey secondary. Before teaching she worked in as a manager in marketing and subsequently with younger children as a playgroup assistant and then as a Teaching Assistant.

A native French speaker, Aya spent her childhood in France and the Republic of Congo, later completing her first degree in the Cote d'Ivoire. Aya's childhood dream was to work in education and after moving to Reading in 2005 to start her family she later studied for her languages degree and subsequent PGCE at Reading University.

Aya is looking forward to coming to Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge and helping all her students to become the best version of themselves.



Introducing our new Curriculum Lead for Science

► Adonis Mavromichalis



We would like to welcome Adonis Mavromichalis, as our new Curriculum Lead for Science.

Adonis, who joined us in November, previously worked as Learning Executive at Up Learn, a company that makes online GCSE and A-Level science courses. He has a degree in Sport Science, a Master's in Physiology (both from the University of Brighton) and he obtained his Post-Graduate Diploma in Education with Teach First. Before his time at Up Learn Adonis was a science teacher and, before teaching, worked with athletes as a Strength and Conditioning coach.

Adonis spent his early life in Greece before moving to Kent and finally settling in nearby Berkshire. He loves sport, particularly basketball and tennis, both of which he still plays. Adonis is really excited to be working at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge and hopes he'll make a positive contribution to school life, both inside and outside the classroom.



Introducing our new Curriculum Lead for Computer Science

► Tracy Audsley



We would like to welcome Tracy Audsley, as our new Curriculum Lead for Computer Science.

Tracy, who joins us in January, is currently the acting Head of Computer Science at a secondary school in south Reading. She brings with her a wealth of industry experience, helping to bring the curriculum to life by providing pupils with real world examples.

Having settled in the region 15 years ago Tracy has brought up her family in the Reading area. Community is important to her and she has been a parish councillor, helped run local community events and volunteered with various charities. Tracy is excited to be joining the Maiden Erlegh Trust to be able to share her enthusiasm and passion for Computer Science.



MECE Moments

