



19 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope you have had a great week! Believe it or not, this time next week we will be approaching the mid-point of Term 1 – although I am undecided whether it's truly flown by... or if it really *has* only been twelve days since we came back! Either way, there is a real buzz around school with fantastic achievements, busy classrooms, happy students and staff settling into the routines of the school year. Today's "surprise" day of summer certainly contributed to a lovely, relaxed feeling at lunchtime with groups of friends sitting around chatting in the September sunshine whilst others kicked a ball around on the courts.

This week we have met with parents from Year 11 (virtually) on Wednesday and Years 7 & 10 last night in our Parent Information Evenings. These evenings offer a chance to share expectations for the upcoming year with specific information pertinent to that year group as well as an insight into key events that are calendared to support student academic progress, details of careers education and avenues for support available for those who might need it. Thank you to those who joined us and especially those who stopped for a chat – it is always lovely to speak to parents and hear about their child's experiences and successes. We look forward to next week's virtual evenings for Years 8 and 9.

On Thursday our first trip of the year took place. Mr Perry and a group of students with a particular interest in climate and sustainability attended Sonning Common's Climate and Nature forum where local interest groups pitched their ideas for action to interested parties including our local MP, Freddie van Mierlo. The students returned with lots of ideas and a renewed determination to adopt some strategies at school. We will keep you updated on their ideas and plans as they formulate them.

Hot on their heels is trip no 2 as 7 students from Year 11 are currently undertaking their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Qualifying expedition under the watchful eye of Mr Caldwell. Luckily it seems the weather might be shining on them and I'm sure we will have a few stories to share in next week's newsletter – for now we send them good luck for sunny days and no blisters!

Members of the Leadership team have spent time this week dropping into lessons to get a flavour of curriculum content and to see our "MECE Basics" in action – I am pleased to report students are overwhelmingly positively engaged, working with pride and endeavouring to complete lesson tasks to their best ability. We continue to see sharp and focused starts to lessons thanks to the Do Now activities that ask students to recall key learning from previous





lessons. The drop ins have also led to many informal conversations at break and lunch with students about their learning and it is lovely to chat about a particular topic or concept they have just learnt about. My final drop in of the week was to Year 10 Food Tech where it was only right that I also got to sample the chicken stir fry that each of them had created! I am led to believe that next week is “sauces” and so have made a note in my calendar to conveniently drop by!

We are fast approaching Open Morning and Evening season and are looking forward to inviting prospective families to the site. Thank you in advance to students who have already signed up to support on the Open Evening (Tuesday 30 September) – there will be further information in Tutor time on Monday for students and consent letters heading your way too. Next week we also have a second round of publicity photos being taken around the site to update our website and artwork used in promotional materials.

This week we have seen a small but growing number of students arriving late to site in the morning. Please help us give your child the best start to the day by ensuring they arrive before the bell rings at 8.40am if you are dropping them off. Students arriving on the school buses are not permitted to leave site once they arrive and as such have no excuse for lateness. And those walking in from the village just need to pick up the pace a bit please! You can keep a tab via the Class Charts app on the attendance tab where morning (and afternoon) lates will register as yellow. Morning tutor time is critical to supporting students in knowing what is going on each day as well giving them messages and information. Furthermore, the tutor programme has been carefully curated in each year group to develop character, reading and/or focused intervention for core subjects. Your support with this is really appreciated!

And finally for this week, again I wanted to share and celebrate our rolling school attendance and current House Point achievers for this week. We are currently sitting at 93% with Years 9 and 7 at 96.1 and 95.7% respectively. Eleven tutor groups have attendance over 93% with 7B sitting pretty at the top of the charts with a very impressive 98.4%. In terms of House Points - topping the charts for most House Points this week are: Hazel, Sebastian J, Harry, Elliot and Aksel (Y7), Leo, Isobelle H, Anushka, Daisy and Naomi (Y8), Amelie, David, Olivia, Ellie and Jayden (Y9), Oscar H, Baylen, Paige, Grace and Sophie (Y10) and Natasha, Tiwana, James H, Ruby-Rae and Qasim (Y11). I am also pleased to announce that just over 60% of the school are yet to receive a negative behaviour point this year – fantastic!





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Here's hoping the warm weather continues into the weekend,

Yours sincerely

Miss E Bliss
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