



26 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Today marks the last Friday of September and is designated as National Teaching Assistants' Day to raise the profile of the fantastic and tireless work TAs do within schools. At MECE I am forever grateful for the vital work our TAs do in school supporting some of our most vulnerable learners to access education and thrive; helping to bridge gaps, support learning, and make sure every child is seen, feels safe and is valued.

Last Friday our intrepid Silver DofE group were undertaking day 1 of 3 of their qualifying expedition – I am pleased to report they successfully navigated their route and returned safely home a little bit dirty and very tired, but rightfully proud of their achievement. They now must ensure they have completed their other sections (volunteering, skills and physical activity) to receive the Silver accreditation and then decide as to whether after GCSEs they embark on the Gold Award.

This week we completed our year group information evenings with Year 8 and Year 9 events online on Wednesday. Thank you to all who attended – the slide decks will be shared in due course so if you were unable to attend you can see the key messages and expectations for students in each of the year groups.

This week saw the first of our Open Events aimed at current Year 5 and Year 6 parents who might be considering MECE as their secondary school in the years to come. It is always a pleasure to welcome families to site and as ever the student guides did us proud with their ability to answer questions (from parents and students) with knowledge and confidence. This week we welcomed families from Kidmore End, Emmer Green and Micklands Primary Schools as well as some potential "in-year" transfers from Highdown. Additionally, Ms Cheeseman and I attended The Heights Primary School's local offer event on Wednesday where we spoke to students and their families about the school. It was lovely to hear from so many of the families that they had heard positive stories and recommendations from current parents about our summer results, our nurturing approach and our broad extra-curricular offer – key areas that we pride ourselves on.





Next week we have our main Open Evening event on Tuesday. A reminder that school closes to students at 1.30pm to allow staff time to set up in preparation for the event. There will be no lunch service on Tuesday, so students should stock up at break if they think they are going to be hungry before they get home! Students who are eligible for Free School Meals will be able to pick up a sandwich/baguette lunch deal before they leave at 1.30pm – details will go to students via tutor next week.

The MECE student leadership programme is an area that we have continued to focus on and grow over the past few years to include opportunities for students to be school guides on open events, subject captains, sports captains, House Leaders and tutor or year reps on school council. This week the first of the Sports and Subject Captains have commenced their roles and the coveted pin badges have been awarded. The roles vary a little by subject but might include, promoting & supporting at extra-curricular clubs, developing student-focused material for Open Events/website and in the case of the Sports Captains helping to ensure there are teams for fixtures.



Yesterday our head students, Imogen and Isaias held the first Student Council meeting of the year where they discussed student views on what is going well and what we might want to consider changing or introducing. I look forward to meeting with Imogen and Isaias next week to discuss the ideas further but to give you a flavour of some of the hot topics there was praise for the canteen food, the Hive team, staff being friendly and approachable and the overall organisation of the school weeks. Key ideas for improvement were using detentions to complete litter picking on the site, introducing more House competitions and finding ways to limit students eating in the toilets – all of which sound perfectly reasonable and sensible!



Attendance continues to be strong across the year groups, with Year 7 and Year 9 still leading the way registering over 95% for the term to date. A shout out to 7B, 11C, 10B, 7C and 9C who this week had attendance over 94%. In terms of behaviour, we saw a little wobble from a few students earlier in the week – the novelty of the start of term had worn off, but the stamina to get through the week had not quite kicked in – however we have ended on a much more positive note after some targeted interventions from tutors and Head of Year to reset expectations as needed.

Our area of focus next week will be around mobile phones following a spate of students falling foul of expectations in this area. As you all know we have a simple and clear mobile phone policy – see it, hear it, lose it. This applies from when they arrive at school in the morning to when they leave the site in the afternoon and includes air pods / headphones. We encourage students to turn off phones and put them in their bag for the day to reduce the temptation to check on notifications when they buzz in their pockets. Additionally, all students have been issued paper copies of their timetables and if they need to contact a parent during the school day they are welcome to visit student services to do so – we are also happy to pass on messages from you if needed.





And finally, as we head into October a couple of events to alert you to. The first is a table-top sale hosted by CESA – this will take place on Sunday 19 October at school between 10-2pm. Further information will be shared through our website and social media.

The second is an opportunity for students in Years 7 and 8 to design the school's entry to the Sonning Common Scarecrow Trail – our inaugural entry last year – Charlie Chiltern – was well received so I am keen this year to ensure that we do not let our standards slip. Students can submit their designs (and likely help us to construct!) via Google Classroom – tutors will share the code on Monday if they have not already got it.

Deadline for entry is Wednesday 01 October.

Wishing you a relaxing weekend.

Yours sincerely

Miss E Bliss
Headteacher

