



10 October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Today is **World Mental Health Day** – a global day dedicated to raising awareness of mental health issues, reducing stigma, and advocating for better mental health care and support worldwide. As we enter the penultimate week of this first half term, with nights starting to draw in, our energy levels are perhaps flagging and the weather starting to feel decidedly autumnal, it is a timely and important reminder of the vital role mental well-being plays in the lives of students and their families. At school, we are committed not only to academic success but also to nurturing resilient, emotionally healthy young people. Mental health awareness helps create a supportive environment where students feel safe, heard, and empowered to thrive. By working together and having an open dialogue that supports everyone's well-being and to promote healthy and balanced lives for all members of our community.

The first of our “big” school trips is upon us with forty students and four staff heading to Belgium at the start of half term on the **Battlefields Trip** – thank you to parents for attending the Parent Briefing with Mr Mount earlier this week and for bringing passports in for safe keeping.

A message from our Medical Welfare Officer, Mrs Stewart:

*I would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of keeping the school fully informed about any **medical conditions or allergies** your child may have. Recently, we have had a few cases where staff have only become aware of important health information directly from students, without any prior notification from parents. For the safety and well-being of all children, it is essential that we hold accurate, up-to-date records, as outlined in our Health and Safety Policy. Please ensure that any medical needs, allergies, or changes in your child's health are communicated to the absence and medical team (meceabsenceandmedical@maidenerleghtrust.org) as soon as possible, so we can provide the right care and support.*

We held two further **Open Mornings** this week, they were well attended by both Year 6 families and interested families of students who will be joining us “mid-year” into Years 8, 9 and 10. We continue to receive positive feedback from parents on their visits commenting on the confidence and maturity of the student guides, the calmness around the site, the friendliness of staff and for the first time how “normal” our school bell sounded!



The Year 11 launch of their first set of **PPEs** (Mock Exams) was on Monday in an extended assembly whereby they reflected on their start in Year 11 (academically, conduct and attitude) and set themselves a short-term target of an area to focus on ahead of the PPEs taking place in November. We then talked through the importance of the exams in practicing the routines of sitting exams as well as being a good line in the sand for how they are progressing in each of their subjects.

This week we have taken the next steps in our first **Community Schools Project** whereby students from Years 10 and 11 could apply to lead lunchtime activities at Sonning Common Primary School and Kidmore End School. Students were encouraged to consider taking part to bolster College/Sixth Form applications as well as build their own confidence and leadership skills. Over thirty students completed the application process and attended the training session and briefing delivered by Mrs Salmons (Headteacher, SCPS) on Wednesday. We are excited for the first of the cohort to get going in the upcoming weeks. Thank you to Mr Caldwell who has coordinated this opportunity.

Wednesday evening saw the **CESA AGM** where we gathered to review the previous year, thank departing members and look forward to upcoming events. These are great opportunities to remember all the superb work that goes into raising funds for the school and I wanted to thank the group of parent volunteers who give their time and energy to supporting the school in this way. I know the team are always keen for additional offers of support – this can be in time, ideas or helping with creating posters / social media – it really is a case of every little helps. Please do contact CESA if you would be interested in finding out more. I should also take this moment to plug the upcoming **Jumble and Tabletop Sale** taking place in the Main School Hall on Sunday 19 October – funds raised will be split between CESA and supporting the fundraising efforts of the student group heading to Kenya at the end of the school year – many of whom will be there supporting the running of the event. Further details can be found on the school website and CESA Social Media streams, which the school will link to on Facebook.

Following House assemblies, and a push on the importance of completing **Sparx homework tasks** to consolidate learning in English, Maths and Science a review of the latest figures indicates that as a school we sit at a 70% completion rate in Maths, with English and Science lagging behind at 56% and 59% respectively. This totals to over 200 hours of learning and 40 books finished over the week; there is always room for improvement – particularly in Year 10 where engagement seems to be patchy. The longer-term benefits for completing and consolidating information “little and often” is undeniable and so getting into these positive learning habits as early as possible is a target for all students. Should accessing the apps be an issue please do let your child’s tutor know and they can help investigate various avenues of support.

Yesterday, Miss Cheeseman and I enjoyed a celebratory morning **Hot Chocolate** with a group of students selected in **recognition of their determination and efforts** in September to focus on their school attendance. During the short session the students



shared their ambitions for careers which spanned from animator, professional motor cross, physio and astronomer. The students in Year 10 also offered advice to those in the younger years about the GCSE Options process. It was a lovely start to the day to celebrate this group of students' positive start and reflections on the term as well as listening to their interactions across the year groups.

And finally, a quick reminder that students break up for the **Half Term holiday at 3.15pm on Tuesday 21 October** – with the Wednesday being a Teacher Training Day. We return after the break on Monday 3 November.

Wishing you a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



Miss E Bliss
Headteacher

