



7 November 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been a fantastic start to the new half term, and we're delighted to see students settling back into routines with such enthusiasm and focus.

With Halloween and Bonfire Night now behind us and the John Lewis Ad officially launched it feels acceptable to say that Mrs Brown and I met to discuss all things music and Christmas yesterday. With the School Show moving to February, we are re-instating the Christmas concert and students will be invited to audition over the next few weeks to claim one of the coveted performance spots. We are hoping to round up a staff group too... but we'll see how the term progresses before I give any more detail on that! We are also planning the annual Battle of the Bands showcase and pulling together a short programme of Carols and songs to perform at the local Old People's Home in the Village.

Over the half term break, 40 students took part in the **Battlefields Trip** to Ypres and The Somme had an unforgettable experience. They showed great respect and maturity as they explored key historical sites including Tyn Cot Cemetery, replica trenches and site of the Battle of the Somme and deepened their understanding of the events that shaped our world. We were privileged to be able to join the nightly Remembrance event at the Menin Gate and lay a wreath on behalf of the school Community. A huge thank you to the staff who organised and accompanied the trip. Next week, on Tuesday 11th November, we will be holding a 2-minute silence, and the Last Post will play to allow all students and staff to take a moment of reflection.





I previously shared our 2025 Sonning common village Scarecrow entry and I am very pleased and proud to announce that we were awarded second prize! The bar is now set high, and you can believe that we will be aiming for top spot next year!

Mrs Gibbs, who is being seconded to MECE full time from MER in January (when Mrs Hills departs on maternity leave) had the first of her days with us on Tuesday and Wednesday and got herself stuck straight in supporting Years 11 in their exam prep and meeting groups of students to better understand their views on the school. Over this term on her days with us she will be meeting with Heads of Year and Heads of Faculty so that come January she is up to speed to hit the ground running.

This week, our Year 11 students have made an excellent start to their PPEs with both their overall attendance and their conduct within the exams being extremely positive and pleasing and reflects their commitment to doing their very best. We're proud of the way they are approaching this important stage in their education. Exams continue into next week (including a scheduled "catch up day" in case it is needed) and students then will all visit Henley College on Thursday to experience taster sessions as well as experience a college environment for the day.

Meanwhile, our **Year 10 community projects** are now well underway. Students who have applied and been through an interview process have now been paired with clubs and activities at local Primary Schools as well as opportunities to support in some Y7/8 lessons in school. The students will be building confidence and independence through these projects, and we are hoping to expand it further over the course of the year.

Mrs Stewart, our Medical Welfare officer has asked me to remind you about Asthma Inhalers:

If your child has been diagnosed with asthma and requires the use of an inhaler, it is essential that they bring their own, clearly labelled inhaler to school every day. This ensures that your child has immediate access to their medication should they need it, supporting their safety and wellbeing while at school. Please check regularly that the inhaler is in your child's bag and that it is in date and in good working condition.

The first of our newly sponsored PE Team kit has arrived which has kindly been sponsored by Sonning Common Garages, Harrington and Peppard Stores. A huge thank you to those local businesses who have connected with us to do this. If you have local contacts and you think they might be willing to discuss possible sponsorship or donation to the school, please do put them in contact with us (or provide us with details) via the Office email – as the saying goes.... Every Little Helps!





Today we hosted the South Oxfordshire Duathlon event – although with the almighty downpour we had just as it was starting, I think we could easily have rebranded it as a Triathlon and added bog-snorkelling to the 2km row and 2km run the participants had to complete. Teams compete in groups of 3 with times combining to generate overall winners. With Gillots, Icknield and Wallingford (as well as MECE) taking part the rivalry is strong, and we look forward to hearing the results



Thank you to Mr Caldwell and Mr Nutt for getting it set up and supporting (and encouraging) the students to do their best!

Over the next few weeks we have a number of opportunities that fall outside the regular curriculum for students across different year groups which we will bring details of as they happen – however to give a flavour we have a group of Y9-10s involved in a Sustainability Conference led by Mr Perry where they will be sharing ideas for how the school is tackling the aim to reduce plastic bottle use, all of Y8 are involved in a Teambuilding coordinated by Mrs Haycock, Y7 have a digital AI workshop with Ms Cheeseman and Y10 a workshop delivered by the BBC looking at fake news. Alongside this our clubs and activities at lunch and afterschool continue to grow with a number of student-led initiatives getting off the ground including a Dance Club.

Finally, a quick word on attendance – we have returned this week very positive attendance for the most part with 6 tutors groups registering attendance above 95% (7A, 7B, 9C, 10B, 11B, 11C). A reminder please to always let us know if your son/daughter is unwell and unable to attend which can be done via email, phone or through the ClassCharts app.

And finally, in the last few minutes just now I have had the very great pleasure of dropping into a Year 10 Food Tech lesson where “fake-aways” were the order of the day. Not only was the smell very inviting but the mouthfuls of Chicken Stir-fry, Chicken & chips, egg fried rice and burgers that I sampled were truly spectacular! I must make a particular shout out to one of our new students in Y10 who in his first Food Tech lesson since joining MECE having relocated with his family from the USA made bread for the first time and absolutely smashed a very very lovely looking garlic bread – well done Dex!





MAIDEN ERLEGH
CHILTERN EDGE

Headteacher: Emma Bliss
MA, NPQH

Reades Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9LN
0118 972 1500
meceoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org
www.maidenerleghchilternedge.co.uk
@MaidenErleghTru

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to another positive and productive week ahead.

Warm regards,

Miss Emma Bliss
Headteacher

