



21 November 2025

Dear parents/guardians

Well, who knew a blast of snow could cause so much excitement! I will admit there was something very pretty about the large flakes falling on Wednesday morning, but the sludge that resulted certainly wasn't ideal for keeping feet dry and warm!

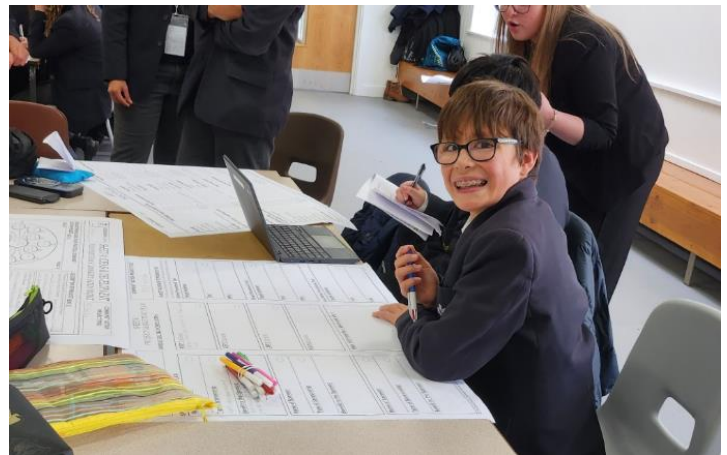
Last night we held our annual Awards evening where we welcome back the Class of 2025 to receive their GCSE certificates as well as present awards to students from all year groups for their achievements in individual subjects, overall progress as well as service to the school. It was lovely to reflect on 2024/5 and the very many successes we had as a school and to have a packed-out hall with current and former students and their parents as well as MECE staff, Governors and members from Maiden Erlegh Trust made for a wonderfully uplifting evening. A particular thank you to students who gave speeches or musical performances – they really added something great to the evening.





Earlier in the week 2 different groups of students from Years 9/10 were invited to represent the school at the Lionheart event (held at Maiden Erlegh School) and the COP30 student summit held in Reading's civic chambers. Both sets of students excelled themselves demonstrating fantastic teamwork, confidence and problem-solving skills as they looked to develop ideas and then present or debate to the room.

The Lionheart event saw student teams comprised from students across the Trust schools with Rohan, Lauren, and Hugh from MECE in the winning team. The judging panel included representatives from Jaguar Land Rover and Peter Jones Company (of Dragon's Den fame) and they commented on the overall high standard of the participants. They made special mention of Leon (pictured) for his enthusiasm and big smile during his presentation – they noted he exuded confidence and positivity.



Poppy-Ann (Y10) who represented us at the COP event shared the following summary of their day:

“COP 30 (30th Conference of the Parties) is currently being held in Belem, Brazil and countries are trying to come to agreement on how to reduce Carbon emissions and mitigate against the effects of global climate change and so it was timely for Reading students to come together to recreate a version closer to home.

MECE represented Barbados and Elliot & I delivered a punchy and thought-provoking initial presentation which questioned the (in) action of the World's major polluting nations. Students representing other countries then debated proposals and formed their own message for COP30. In the afternoon, Henry Olivia and Izzy (Y9) presented on what MECE is doing to actively reduce our carbon footprint. Amongst a number of items on our School 'Climate Action Plan' they focussed on our forthcoming reusable plastic bottle strategy designed to reduce the waste of hundreds of single use plastic bottles in school. Their efforts were well received”.





Mr Perry who coordinated their efforts added a huge well done to all those involved noting the considerable amount of preparation in advance and the confidence required to speak in front of a large audience. I would also like to add my own congratulations to both the Lionhearts and the COP30 students who represented MECE fantastically and a special thanks to Mr Perry and Mrs Flett for their time and efforts on the day too.

On Thursday students from across the school had their annual flu vaccine. For most this was an “up the nose” dose limiting the anxiety around injections. The Oxfordshire Nursing team were extremely complimentary of our students’ conduct and the efficiency of the process – huge thanks to Mrs Stewart and Ms Dunn for getting students in (and out) calmly. If your child was due to receive the vaccination but missed it on the day you will be contacted directly by the immunization team.

Students in schools across the country can often be of the opinion that Year 8 is a little bit of a “lost year” – the buzz of Year 7 and a new school have passed, but the excitement of Year 9 and GCSE Options choices still a fair distance away. Mrs Haycock, keen to buck the trend and ensure our Year 8s make the most of the year to not only focus on building their knowledge but also continue to work on their interpersonal skills has developed the “Year of Opportunity” programme and today marks the official launch! Students are engaged with a daylong workshop to foster positive relationships, teambuilding as well as confidence and motivation. Students have been working in small teams to problem solve together at a range of activities. As we approach lunchtime here the atmosphere in the Main Hall is one of comradery and staff have reported excellent participation and resilience shown by students as they tackle the puzzles they have been set. Other features of the programme include a Pupil Passport linked to our school values to promote engagement in enrichment activities and recognition of acts to inclusivity & teamwork, and opportunities to extend knowledge beyond the curriculum in various workshops ranging from History, Poetry and Forensic Science.





And finally, we have rounded off the week with Year 11s making a trip to the Trust's Higher and Further Education Fayre hosted by Maiden Erlegh School. This is a great opportunity for students to speak to local providers about different types of qualifications, apprenticeships and pathways into specific careers. Students returned to school mid-morning keen to share information they had found. Thank you to Mrs Hills for coordinating.



Last week I asked for your support in reminding your sons/daughters that hoodies are not part of our school uniform and I wanted to thank you – we have certainly seen far fewer which was pleasing especially in light of the much colder weather. My plea this week is primarily aimed at our girls and earrings – students are permitted to wear stud earrings but not hoops and unfortunately, we have had a flurry of larger hoops make their way into school.





MAIDEN ERLEGH
CHILTERN EDGE

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Tutors have plenty of plastic jewellery bags at their disposal and students can expect to be asked to remove hoops if they choose to continue wearing them.

And finally, next week I will be launching MECE's Christmas Card competition where students will have the opportunity to submit their design to be the school's official Christmas Card that will be sent to local schools, partner agencies and other members of our MECE Community. Students will get details through their tutor and in Art lessons next week.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend,

Yours sincerely

Miss Emma Bliss
Headteacher

