



13 February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope that none of you are afflicted with *paraskavedekatriaphobia*.... (the fear of Friday 13<sup>th</sup>). The superstitious amongst us have avoided cracks in the pavement and black cats just to be safe today.

As promised the shortlisted images from the annual photography competition are now ready to be shared – there were well over 50 entries, and they were whittled down with the help of some Year 11 Art students. You can view the images [here](#) and the winners will be announced at the start of next term – I hope you would agree they are of a very high standard.

Preparations for Sister Act continue and tickets are selling fast. I was treated to a rendition of a song medley during my Y10 PE lesson this morning and it is sounding great! I know the cast and crew are in school for final rehearsals during the Half Term – making sure that it is ready and raring to go on Wednesday evening. I know Ms Richmond is very grateful for the support from a wide range of staff and as ever the production is a true reflection of our MECE Community pulling together.

I have had information today from the Sonning Common spring clean team for their event on the 1 March. Please see more details [here](#). It would be great if any local students/families would like to take part and support the local community. This could be a great opportunity for those doing DoFE to pick up some volunteering hours.

For Year 11 their PPEs, running through the week, have finished today with Physics and Maths and I think there is some relief that next week they can enjoy some time to sleep and relax. As part of their exam week those studying French also had a trial speaking exam – many of our staff dragged up their own GCSE knowledge (and a bit of Google Translate!) to give students a bit of extra practice during break and lunch time... every little helps, as the saying goes! The students have really impressed us during the exams with their attendance, punctuality and conduct in the exam hall. By the end of the week, we were down to just 3 students who hadn't brought all their equipment in – a huge thank you to parents for your support in this – it makes a massive difference to the starts of the sessions promoting a calm start and (hopefully) a positive impact on results too. Year 11 return after Half Term to a busy period of practical subject exams and the final build up and preparations to their GCSEs starting in early May.





Year 10s have been working with focus as they are now squarely in the middle of their courses – in BTEC Sport students have been completing coursework and gathering film evidence on their chosen skills and sports and Food Tech has seen students broadening their skill development, last week with fish cakes and this week with a variety of dishes including one-pot roasts. Today in maths students completed some tasks on financial education – the ins and outs of payslips and tax. There were certainly some horrified faces at just how much take-home pay often is! All students have been encouraged to secure their Work Experience placement if they haven't yet done so and behind the scenes, we have been piecing together the workshops to complete the week's provision. Next Half Term we will be launching the Student Leadership elections ready for handover from the current team just after Easter.

Year 9s have had a busy week with the launch of the KS4 Options with a workshop on Monday and the formal launch on Wednesday. It was lovely to welcome Y9 parents on Thursday evening to discuss the process. Students now have a short period of time to read the information provided, speak to staff about their subjects and make their final decisions by 5 March.



Year 7 and 8 netball is in full swing with students competing against local schools. It has been lovely to see the pride in which students have been representing the school and irrespective of the scores the teamwork and comradery shown by all is impressive.



Across the curriculum students have been engaging in a wide range of topics and opportunities including, in Y7 have had a lesson in RP delivered by the team from Reach where they have been discussing “Christianity and lifestyle” – an opportunity for thoughtful questions exploration of religion and culture.





In History assessments have just been completed on William the Conqueror and how he took control of England. Year 8 Food Tech have now completed their unit on Food Around the World where students were able to showcase their skills on a variety of dishes and in Drama students have devised a short piece of group drama and performed it over this week.

A reminder that Y7,8 and 9 have now completed their first Tech rotation and after Half Term will be switching to either Food Tech or D&T for the remainder of the academic year. This will take place in the same slot on their timetable, which will change over Half Term on their Class Charts app to reflect the updated subject allocation.

I will take the opportunity to please encourage you to check that your son/daughter has their full uniform – specifically shoes and a tie – and that they are coming to school dressed in it correctly for the day. Hopefully now we are seeing warmer weather start to return so I will also remind all that hoodies are not part of our school uniform and are not a replacement for a coat. Students can expect to be challenged on their uniform by their tutor or other staff around the site and are expected to make reasonable efforts to rectify the issue upon asking. Student Services holds plenty of spare items that we can lend & CESA hold regular sales of pre-loved items (including a sale tomorrow, Saturday). (can we add the poster from CESA website?)

Finally, a quick reminder that the school is closed to students on Friday 27 February.

Wishing you all a wonderful and relaxing break and look forward to seeing the students back on Monday 23 February.

Best wishes,

Miss E Bliss  
Headteacher

