



11 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of our first week of the new academic year, I would like to thank our students, staff and families for helping to make it such a positive start. It has been wonderful to welcome students back to school. The atmosphere around the academy has been very positive, with students returning ready to learn, engaging well in lessons and demonstrating a mature and enthusiastic attitude. It has also been encouraging to see the pride students have taken in their appearance, looking smart and representing the MECE community so well.

I was delighted to finally be able to share our Ofsted outcomes with you this week. The inspection itself took place in June, and due to publication timelines, we did not receive the final report until the start of term. As we read through the report, I was particularly pleased to see recognition of our inclusive practice, our commitment to knowing students as individuals, and the significant work that has gone into improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning. It was also encouraging to see the positive impact this work is having on student outcomes. While it was disappointing that our attendance figures had not quite reached the national average and that this area was therefore identified as needing attention, I was pleased that inspectors recognised both our context and the extensive work that takes place with families to build strong relationships and foster a genuine sense of belonging within our community.

Thank you to everyone in the #MECEFamily for your support over the last 18 months since I stepped into headship. This achievement reflects the collective efforts of our staff, students, families and wider community.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the newest members of the MECE community:

- **Mr Root** - Deputy Headteacher
- **Mrs Andrews** - Head of Humanities
- **Ms Basson** - English Lead
- **Mrs McCarthy** - Health & Social Care and Food Technology

In addition, we are pleased to welcome **Ms Mengham** to our Inclusion Team.



I know our students and wider community will join me in making them feel welcome as members of the MECE family.



At the end of last term, our intrepid explorers from the then Year 10 and Year 11 cohort, accompanied by Mr Caldwell and Ms Cheeseman, were part-way through their Kenyan adventure.

I am pleased to report that they returned safely and have been sharing some wonderful stories and photographs from their trip. Highlights included safari experiences, visits to giraffe sanctuaries, and meaningful community work through teaching opportunities and sustainable aid projects.

A selection of photographs from the expedition can be found below.



The group have asked me to pass on their sincere thanks to everyone who supported their fundraising efforts and to all those who wished them well before their travels. Your support played an important part in making this memorable experience possible. We are in early talks for Kenya 2028.... Watch this space!

This week in school we enacted Stage One of our new mobile phone policy. I am pleased to report that students have responded extremely well, arriving at school, turning off their phones and placing them in their bags without issue. We have also met with the pouch company this week to discuss the installation of the release mechanisms across the school site. Once a firm installation date has been confirmed, we will share a clear timeline for the next phase of the pouch implementation process with students and families.

On Thursday, students had their school photographs taken today and the process ran extremely smoothly. The photographers, who visit many local schools at this time of year, commented on the excellent manners, polite conversations and positive attitudes demonstrated by our students throughout the day. I was very proud to hear such positive feedback. Photograph proofs will be shared with families as soon as we receive them. The proof envelopes will include full details of how photographs can be purchased should you wish to do so.

Next week we will be holding the first of our Parent Information Evenings:

- **Year 8** - Wednesday, 5:00pm (Online)
- **Year 9** - Thursday, 5:00pm (Online)
- **Year 10** - Thursday, 6:00pm (In Person at MECE)
- **Year 11** - Thursday, 6:30pm (In Person at MECE)

These evenings are an important opportunity for our Heads of Year to outline the year ahead and share key information regarding attendance, learning, personal development and homework expectations.

The online sessions will last approximately 30 minutes, while the in-person events will last around 45 minutes. Links for the online sessions will be shared early next week. We hope you will be able to join us.

There will be a Year 7 Welcome Evening in early October. Further details will be shared by Mr Mount in due course.

The end of the first week House Points and Attendance updates stand as follows: Whole-school attendance currently stands at **97%**, with **Year 7 recording an impressive 99.5%** and **Year 8 at 99.2%**. We have three tutor groups recording **100% attendance: 8A, 8B and 7B**. In addition, **11A, 11C, 11D, 10A, 10B, 10C, 8C and 7A** are all recording attendance above 95%, which is an excellent start to the year.

In terms of House Points, the average points per pupil already sits at **10.1**, reflecting the positive way students have approached the start of term. Year 7 and Year 11 have



made a particularly strong start, although they did benefit from being in school for an additional day this week. Among the Houses, **Chiltern** currently hold a narrow lead over **Abbey** by just two points.



A reminder that parents and students can monitor House Points (and behaviour points), timetables, homework and attendance via the **Class Charts app**. Year 7 students received their login codes today and existing students should still have access from last year. If you need a code or any support accessing the platform, please contact the school office.

Thank you once again for your continued support. We have made a very positive start to the year and look forward to building on this momentum over the coming weeks and months.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "E Bliss".

E Bliss
Headteacher

