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CHILTERN EDGE
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Dear Parent/Carer

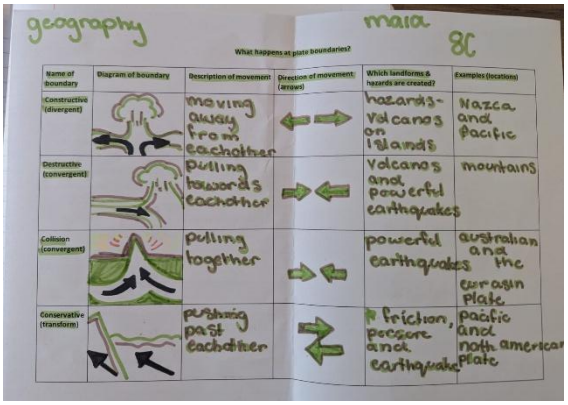
As we move deeper into this first part of the autumn term, there is a still real sense of momentum across the school – although I think it would be fair to say there are some weary bodies going to be dragging themselves through next week! The leaves are turning and despite enjoying two beautiful sunny days yesterday and today, there is no doubt that the mornings are becoming noticeably chillier. Around the site, the growing carpet of orange and brown leaves is a reminder that Winter is fast approaching.

This week it has been particularly pleasing to see so many students making the most of the wide range of opportunities available beyond the classroom. From homework support sessions in the Library to Rugby, Football and Running Club on the field and local trails, students are engaging enthusiastically with activities that help develop confidence, resilience and friendships alongside their academic learning.

I am also delighted by the consistently strong and indeed growing attendance at Year 11 revision sessions in English, Maths and Science. With PPE examinations in the two weeks after the half-term break, it is encouraging to see so many students investing additional time and effort in their preparation. These sessions provide valuable opportunities for students to strengthen their knowledge, build exam confidence and address any areas of uncertainty ahead of this important assessment period.

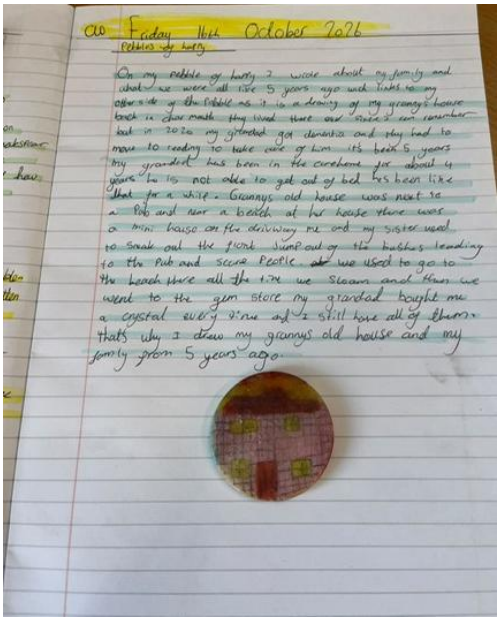
This week, my leadership team and I have also thoroughly enjoyed spending time in lessons, seeing students hard at work and talking to them about their learning. Every visit has provided examples of students demonstrating curiosity, resilience and pride in their work. Photographs never quite do classroom learning justice, but I hope the snapshots below give you a flavour of the fantastic work taking place across the school each day.

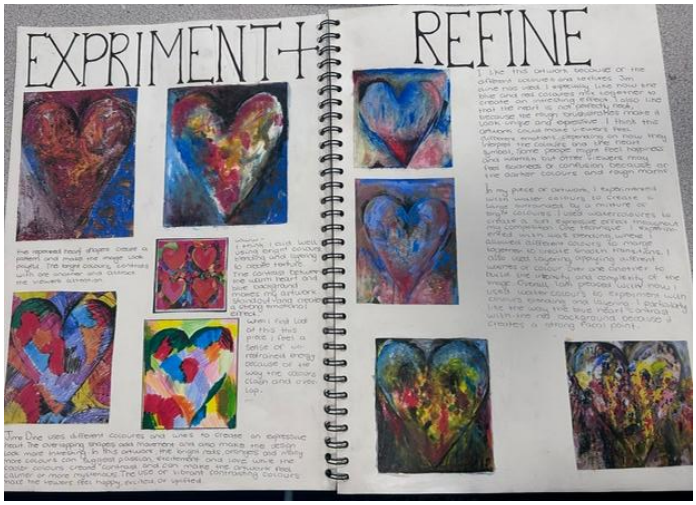




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Aim High
Be Inclusive
Work Together





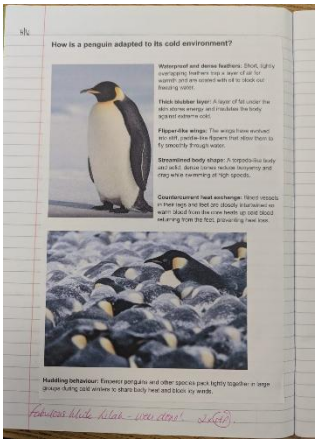
There has been no shortage of memorable learning taking place across the curriculum. In English, Year 11 students have continued their study of *Macbeth*, refining their analytical writing and practising the essay structures that will support them in their upcoming assessments. Our Year 10 musicians have begun preparations for the Christmas Concert, rehearsing their ensemble performance of *Last Christmas* and developing their performance skills as they work together towards the event.

In Science, students have been investigating the principles of incomplete combustion through practical experiments and, I am pleased to report, successfully managing to do so without setting off the fire alarm! Meanwhile, Food Technology classrooms have been filled with impressive culinary creations, including stir-fries and freshly baked scones.





Humanities lessons have also been buzzing with activity. Students have been exploring the challenges and significance of Antarctica, uncovering insights into daily life in Ancient Rome through evidence preserved at Pompeii, and examining the importance of Moses within the Abrahamic religions. It has been wonderful to see students engaging thoughtfully with such a diverse range of subjects and developing their understanding of the wider world.



This week has also been a busy one for welcoming prospective families to our Year 6 Open Mornings. It has been wonderful to meet so many parents and pupils and to showcase the school on a normal working day. A number of visitors commented on the positive stories they have seen on our social media channels, as well as the kind words they have heard through local community groups and through word of mouth. Thank you to everyone who helps champion the school and share our successes. It really does make a difference.

As ever, our students did us proud. Their confidence, enthusiasm and genuine pride in the school shone through as they guided visitors around the site and spoke about their experiences. A particular thank you goes to our Year 7 students many of whom took on their first ambassador role - they represented the school brilliantly and should be very proud of themselves.

Today, students in Year 7 had the opportunity to take part in *Restart a Heart Day*, learning the hugely important skills of CPR and the safe use of defibrillators. Sadly, heart disease remains one of the leading causes of death and knowing what to do in an emergency could one day save a life. We are incredibly grateful to the volunteers who gave their time to deliver these sessions and to Mrs Stewart for organising and overseeing the event.







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Finally, our Year 10 and Year 11 students working towards their Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Awards have been busy getting their various sections signed off ahead of submitting their final portfolios for certification. It has been inspiring to see the breadth of activities, service opportunities, physical challenges and skills they have undertaken as part of the award.

Over the coming weeks, you will notice a new display celebrating their achievements. As part of this, we will be highlighting the wide range of skills and experiences students have developed through the programme, from volunteering and sports coaching to learning new instruments and outdoor pursuits. We hope this will inspire the next generation of participants as we prepare to launch the 2026-27 programme.



Mr Caldwell will be sharing some initial information with current Year 9 students about the Bronze Award next week, and parents will also receive introductory information shortly. I would strongly encourage families to consider the programme. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a fantastic opportunity for young people to challenge themselves,

develop independence, build confidence and create memories that stay with them long after they leave school.

As we look ahead to the weekend, I would also like to thank in advance the students who are giving up their time tomorrow afternoon to support the Primary School Cross Country event. We know this is a hugely popular fixture in the local calendar and, for many of our current students, their very first experience of MECE was running around our field and through the woods whilst they were still at primary school. I am extremely grateful to those students who have volunteered to help marshal and support the event. Fingers crossed the sunshine continues for one more day!

Finally, a reminder to our Year 11 students and families that the first of the CESA Prom Dress and Suit Sales takes place on Saturday. This has become a hugely popular event, attracting visitors from across South Oxfordshire and Reading. With more than 300 dresses and suits available, and prices ranging from just £5 to £55, it provides an affordable and sustainable option for students preparing for prom.

The sale runs from **2.00pm to 4.00pm**, with **exclusive access for MECE students from 1.00pm**. All proceeds go directly to CESA to support the school and our students. Further information can be found on the CESA Facebook page, and details have also been shared with Year 11 students via ClassCharts.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the school, its staff and, most importantly, its students.

I wish you all a restful and enjoyable weekend.



Miss E Bliss
Headteacher