



MAIDEN ERLEGH

CHILTERN EDGE

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Dear Parent/Guardian

Please forgive the slightly shortened version of my usual Friday bulletin. As you can imagine it has been an incredibly busy week!

For the last three weeks we have been working hard to ensure our systems, procedures and risk mitigation are all in place and in addition we have very much focused upon making sure we take our teaching and learning to the next level.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, we had two very busy INSET days and the Senior Team and I laid out the expectations to staff and gave training on the new initiatives for this academic year. There will be a real push on knowledge and knowledge recall and many homeworks will be based on this theme. Over lockdown we undertook a lengthy curriculum review and many departments have re-ordered their curricula to ensure the students experience a more sequenced five-year learning journey. The skills and knowledge of many units will build upon previous learning so the school's push to ensure that the work covered becomes part of the long-term memory is so important. This will also help with GCSE success which has a strong element of knowledge recall since the new syllabi were introduced three years ago.

I am also delighted to be working with such a strong and stable staffing body this year. Our new Assistant Head, Mrs Hills (Our congratulations go to her, as she was Miss Gleen on appointment in May!), delivered some great training to our staff on Wednesday morning and already looks a key part of my leadership team. Mrs Hills will be leading on the teaching and learning in the classroom primarily, alongside the enrichment work beyond the classroom. Mrs Hills joins Mrs Benham, our Assistant Headteacher in charge of the Pastoral system and SEND. The final member of the team is Miss Bliss who is the Deputy Headteacher in charge of the curriculum and the many thousands of elements that feed in to this such as data and examinations. Our four new classroom teachers, Mrs Gopal, Miss Jackson, Miss Shepherd and Mr Jones have all begun with a real flourish and I look forward to see them contribute to our successful journey.

Year 7 began their time as part of the MECE family on Thursday and they made a wonderful start. It was great to have students back on site again and see them all sat together with their packed lunches chatting amiably with new friends and tentatively making those social connections. I dropped in to the different sessions across the day and there was a lovely calm focus about all of the activities. They also looked so smart!

Our first two days back have been slightly more memorable because of the roadworks on Reades Lane. Having been told with consistency all summer that these works would be finished by today we have now been told September 18th. This means that staff will be walking up the lane at the start and end of the day to ensure the students stay safe on their way to the buses. Reading Buses have been good enough to adjust their pick up to the school side of Kennylands Lane to ensure we do not need to supervise 250 students crossing the road at a busy time.

The students arrived this morning as a whole school community and it has been wonderful to be out and about at lunch observing them together. It has been lovely and calm despite the whole set of new routines that we need our students to follow. Uniform has been, on the whole superb. Form tutors and heads of year will be contacting home for any students that require an adjustment. Can I remind parents that it is black shoes, and any form of trainer is not acceptable? In addition, please can the parents of girls ensure that skirts are sitting on the knee as it clearly states in the uniform policy. There seem to be a few that are too short. Apart from one or two other individual inconsistencies I have been delighted at how the students have looked today and I thank you wholeheartedly for your support in our work on this.

This morning I delivered assemblies to each year group (running between venues to preserve key stage bubbles!). The messages were clear regarding behaviour and expectations. The overarching principle is that no child should be disturbing the learning of others and there will always be a consequence for such actions. In contrast, I also talked through our exciting foci on reading and knowledge recall as well as consistency of high expectations of work. The students looked wonderful and listened impeccably and I hope that the messages have been clearly understood. It certainly felt this was the case.

Lastly, can I remind you that the students will be having their individual photographs taken on Thursday 10th September and we clearly want everyone in our student community to look sparkling for this event.

Have a great weekend and stay safe



Andrew Hartley
Headteacher