March 2017

The Maiden Erlegh Marvel

A £14 million project comes to fruition

Emma Graugnard and Sasha Harper interview Peter Nicholas, Senior Project Manager for the build of your new school

Mr Nicholas has been the project manager of MESiR, and we have had the opportunity to interview him and ask all about the process. Firstly, he told us all about his career in engineering. He said that he wanted to become an engineer because of the 'satisfaction of completing a build', and he 'likes to see people make the most of his builds'. Also, he 'wanted to be involved', and his best subjects at school were maths and physics – probably the best for engineering. Mr Nicholas told us of the struggles of becoming an engineer: the degrees he took involved 'many hours' of studying, unlike some other degrees; and finding work was challenging.

Secondly, he told us about the school itself. 'Our school has cost £14 million, and £1 million of this was spent on the temporary buildings'! Mr Nicholas told us that he has 'already done a few projects of this size', but it was 'tough because of the logistics'. He 'enjoys education projects and believes there are benefits of seeing students use the facilities and learn'.

Mr Nicholas stated that he 'very much' enjoyed working on our school, and the best part was being able to create 'a very good relationship with the staff' of MESiR. He did say that the biggest challenge of the whole build was being so close to two other schools: the UTC and Alfred Sutton.

Finally, we were informed of the number of workers on site. On the busiest day, there were around 130 men on site. Since the start of the building, there have been 950 men, but no women, which Mr Nicholas said he thinks happened because 'women find it more of a manly job'. He encourages girls to look into becoming engineers. Although, there was one woman who helped with the building: the architect, who designed all the interiors and colour schemes.

And lastly, a big thank you to Mr Nicholas and all the other builders and contractors who helped to make our school possible.

Peter Nicholas, 2nd from left, at the official opening of the new school

The School Officially Opens

By Ella Barrett

On the 9th of December, our school had its official opening. We were very fortunate as Rob Wilson, Minister for Civil Society and MP for Reading East, officiated at the ceremony. Others who took part included Ian May, our chair of governors, Peter Nicholas, Chief Project Manager of the construction firm, Kier, our recently retired executive headteacher Dr Thomas, Head of School, Andy Johnson and Julie Dennis, Maiden Erlegh Trust's business manager who has worked tirelessly to oversee the whole project.

The choir performed 'Colours of the Wind' which was said to be their best performance yet! Everyone was then given a tour of our fabulous new building. The evening closed with speeches from Rob Wilson and Dr Thomas. An impressive plaque with the official openings dates was revealed and can now be seen in reception. It was so exciting to see our brand new building being shown off to all our guests!

The Environment

By Jubair Hussain

As you all may know, we had an assembly about how we should keep the environment safe, clean and green. We also learnt about a few world problems so we could help with creating less pollution in the air that we breathe by throwing rubbish in the correct recycling bin. We need to keep the environment nice because we live in it, and it is also everything around us. If you want to help or learn about the environment just head on over to the Environment Club, run on Thursdays by Mr Tsoumparis, where activities about the environment are undertaken every week. I think we would all want our home planet clean and green. Don't you?

Year 8 learned about the views of Native Americans to the environment:

"Treat the earth well; it was not given to you by your parents; it was loaned to you by your children."

Tirabad Outdoor Educational Centre

Jan Rojek 7P1

The Tirabad Outdoor Educational Centre set up in 1971 by three schools: Charters, Emmbrook and Maiden Erlegh Trust. It is located in the village of Tirabad near Llangammarch Wells in the stunning mid-Wales countryside. The building was formerly a hunting lodge and is now run by the Tirabad Trust and serves the needs of students throughout the whole year by providing Outdoor Activities and Field Study Courses. Students stay at the centre for a total of seven days. There are 8 dormitories of which 4 are for boys and the others are for girls. On site there is a small and cosy dining room and a common room where you can play games, read books and take part in activities. There is also a small gift shop that is open after dinner on two days of the week.

Some of the activities undertaken at Tirabad include problem solving, forest adventure walks, orienteering, gully scrambling, gorge scrambling, survival days, climbing, archery, mountain walking, canoeing, kayaking, spy missions, bush craft, mountain biking, abseiling and many others - you get the idea! Some of the activities are on site, for example, orienteering, problem solving and other challenges. Activities like kayaking, canoeing, caving, gully and gorge scrambling take place in places not at the centre. You travel there by mini bus.

I really enjoyed my stay at the Tirabad Outdoor Educational Centre. The staff were all kind and helpful and the activities were challenging but really, really enjoyable and fun at the same time. I recommend that you go if you have the chance!

England Cricket Coach Visit

by May Jackson

On Tuesday 17th January, we had a special visit from Mrs James' younger brother, Mark Robinson, the coach of the England women's cricket team. We were honoured to be given an inspirational assembly by Mr Robinson. We watched a video that showed the women's team losing against Australia at the beginning but finished with the team winning against Pakistan's women's team after some hard work that boosted their fitness and saw them undertaking a gruelling training regime.
Some pupils were selected for a talk by Mr Robinson where he spoke about how we are the first year groups to attend this brand-new school and that we can leave behind a legacy if we work hard to achieve our ambitions.

Selected students were then given the opportunity to have an exclusive coaching session with the coach of the women's cricket team himself. We started off working with a partner throwing and catching a ball at different levels. Then we were divided into two groups and played for either England or Australia; we played a normal cricket game swapping sides every so often. The last game was "Last Kid Standing", where if you didn't catch the ball you were sent out.

We ended the session with a photo of the pupils and Mr Robinson. Everyone was very grateful to Mr Robinson giving up his time to come and visit Maiden Erlegh school in Reading and giving us the benefit of his experience of motivating and coaching for success.

Mark Robinson coaches our promising cricketers in the sports hall.

Girls Football

By Inès Couturier

The girl's football club has been very successful, with around 20 people taking part. Mrs Roberts ran the club on Wednesdays with year 7 and 8 girls attending.

Year 7s were fortunate enough to take part in a league against a number of schools. They had matches for several weeks and in the end they managed to get in the final and bag 3rd place. A few friendlies for year 8 & 7 have been organized. Year 8s haven't had a league match yet.

Anne-Marie was the captain of the year 7 team. The top two scorers were Annemarie and Ines. Goalkeepers were Daniella and Nik.

The hardest schools we played were Bohunt, Oakbank and Prospect.

Netball club is a new club run by Mrs Roberts on a Wednesday. All girls are welcome.

Who are your sports representatives?

By Emma Graugnard
Alongside our tutor reps, we also have sports reps. There are 2 sports reps in each tutor group, a boy and a girl, and there are now 3 head sports reps. Sports reps help decide teams for any games. The head sports reps are: Miriam Boasiako, Nathaniel Deshong and Emma Graugnard.
The sports reps for each tutor group are:

- 7G1 – Ibby Sankoh & Emily Rose
  8G1 – Emma Graugnard & Nathaniel Deshong
- 7G2 – Rio Reid & Ria Mander
  8G2 – Leslie Boateng & Zara Chaudhry
- 7T1 – Anne-Mary Pejcic & Jonathon Kabin
- 8T1 – Natasha Kimbinyi & Kajae Burton
- 7T2 – Nik Pejcic & Billy Firth
  8T2 – Jessica Onwuneme & Prannoy Saha
- 7P1 – Kayden Kenny & Abi Diodd
  8P1 – Bethan Phipps & Denzel Awuau
- 7P2 – Jasmina Jankowsaka & Alfie Mann
- 8P2 – Miriam Boasiako & Fahouaz Kanon

Football Results

MER beat Willink 4-0
Lost to Little Heath School 1-0
MOM: Ibby Sankoh

MER beat Theale Green 5-1
Drew to Denefield 0-0
MOM: Ayush Ghandi

Our New Head Teacher

By Laiba Shafiq

As we all are aware, after Dr Thomas' retirement, a new Head Teacher has stepped in to lead our school! So let's find out more about our remarkable head teacher, Mr Johnson.

Q: How does it feel to go from being the deputy head, to the Head teacher?

A: It is a great honour to be the head teacher of Maiden Erlegh School in Reading. I have helped Dr Thomas make this school happen and I have watched the progress of the building. It is a privilege to work here.

Q: What did you do before you were head teacher??

A: I taught all of my teaching career at Maiden Erlegh in Reading. I was the Head of Humanities at the other Maiden Erlegh and I also taught Mathematics.

Q: What were your favourite subjects when you were at school?

A: History and Maths.

Q: Can you say a few words about the aspirations that you have for this school?

A: I want this school to be a place where the students achieve and get good qualifications, and progress further. I also want this place to be a joyful place that the students love to attend. Furthermore, I want this school to have a good reputation and to be an enjoyable place for the staff to work.

Q: Did you always want to be a head teacher?

A: No, not until after University. Dr Thomas was the one who gave me the idea of working in schools.

Q: What football team do you support?

A: Take a guess, (hint, it is in the name of our school!)

We all know that Mr Johnson is going to do a spectacular job in leading this school. He will give us all of the opportunities we need to succeed in our time at our brand new school, Maiden Erlegh in Reading.

Mr Johnson at the official opening with Dr Thomas, previous headteacher, and Ian May, vice chair of the Trust.

Look what our students can do in French !

All About Me

Bonjour, je m'appelle Joanna et j'ai douze ans. Je suis de taille moyenne et assez bavarde et très paresseuse. J'ai les yeux bleus mais je voudrais les yeux verts car c'est ma couleur préférée. J'ai les cheveux blonds et raides. Mon anniversaire c'est le trente et un décembre. J'habite à Reading avec mes parents et mes deux sœurs, qui s'appellent Karolina et Aleksandra. Nous habitons dans une maison jumelle. Je voudrais habiter à Paris parce que c'est super fantastique. Par contre maintenant je suis très active et assez gourmande. Quand j'étais jeune, j'étais sportive et vraiment timide. J'aime jouer au foot et écouter de la musique. Je n'aime pas mon chien car c'est ennuyeux. Quand il fait froid, je reste chez moi. Je n'aime pas jouer au badminton et au tennis.

Joanna Stanislowska