



# The Pulse

Opportunity, Diversity & Success For All

Maiden Erlegh School | 81 Crescent Road | Reading RG31 5SL | T. 0118 966 8065 | www.maidenerleghschoolreading.co.uk | @MESReading

## FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

I recently led an assembly with our students with the title "Attitude determines your Altitude". We considered together how our frame of mind and attitude towards life, school work and friendships is often the biggest determinant of success. If we 'slouch' into a lesson expecting it to not go very well, then we won't get the most from it. If we approach lessons with optimism, then we are much more likely to succeed in our learning. An optimistic attitude really can help an individual overcome tough times and disappointments.

One characteristic of our school is the generous spirit shown by so many of our students and staff. I was delighted to see how our Boxtober campaign has been a great success, delivering real practical help to people in need and helping our students consider the importance of thinking beyond themselves. We regularly consider what it means to be one community, however diverse our backgrounds and I am impressed with the way so many of our students show tolerance of difference, respect for one another and a great capacity for selflessness and compassion.

Since January 2017 and the retirement of our first Headteacher Dr Peter Thomas, Miss Mary Davies has been overseeing the school as Executive Headteacher (alongside her leadership of our sister school and of the expanding Maiden Erlegh Trust). I have worked very closely

with Miss Davies as Head of School, leading our school on a day to day basis and I would like to take the opportunity to thank Miss Davies for her help and support as we have grown and developed the school over the last year. Her experience and advice has been invaluable and will continue to be so. As you are probably aware, from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, I have been given the absolute privilege of leading the school as Headteacher. It is a tremendous honour to build on the work of my predecessors. Rest assured, in many ways I represent continuity – to the values and vision of the Maiden Erlegh Trust and to our goal of having a thriving and successful 11-16 school for the local community. My commitment is to ensure that every student has the best possible experience at school, fulfilling their potential in terms of their own personal growth and achievement. I will work tirelessly with my excellent leadership team and first class staff team to ensure that happens and will be very pleased to do so.

On behalf of the staff and Governors, may I wish you all a peaceful break over the Christmas holidays and we look forward to seeing our students refreshed and ready to go in the new year.

**Mr A Johnson**



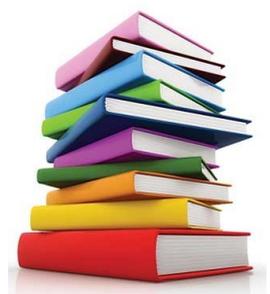
## CALENDAR

Start of term	3 January 2018
17 Jan	Staff Professional Development Day (school closed for students)
22 Jan	Year 8 Assessment week
1 Feb	UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge
6 Feb	Careers fair with MES
9 Feb	Arts Day
<b>12 Feb - 16 Feb</b>	<b>Half Term</b>

## Reading Hive

On Thursday mornings, during registration time, a group of Year 9 students have started a "reading hive", listening to Year 7 pupils read to them, one-to-one, sharing a book together, supervised by a member of staff. It is hoped that both groups of pupils will gain from the experience: the Year 7 students from vital extra reading practice, and the Year 9 students from the experience of working with younger children, developing a skillset to support them and taking responsibility for organising the reading books and cards.

The "buzz" of pupils reading together is very encouraging, from both an academic and a social perspective. If you would like further information about the "reading hive" and how your child might get involved, please contact the SENCO,





## Future Architects

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November a number of students participated in research that the school's architects, Stride-Treglown, are conducting. The aim of the research is to improve school building design in the future and specifically focuses on the way that school design aids student circulation. The school welcomed Eilish Barry, Architect at Stride and she facilitated a student focus group and conducted interviews. Following the research session, Ms Barry hosted a popular careers talk for students



interested in architecture, design and careers in associated industries and professions. The students that participated had an interesting time and a number of students are now thinking about the new schools THEY will design!

## Peer Mediators

Year 9 students were offered the opportunity of applying for the role of Peer Mediator. Peer Mediators will be used to help other students with any concerns, and offer support where needed. Peer Mediators will be linked with a Year 7 tutor group, and will attend one day a week. Peer Mediators will also have two training sessions throughout the year, where they

will learn about supporting young people, positive behaviour, leadership and guidance, mental health and much more. We had a significant number of applicants, but are pleased to announce the final twelve have been chosen. Congratulations to these students, but also a huge 'well done' to those who applied – it made for a very difficult selection process. I am sure other students will gain great benefit from this programme.

## School Uniform

We are very proud of our school uniform. The vast majority of students wear their uniform correctly and look very smart indeed.

We believe that uniform supports our culture of high standards, high achievement and good behaviour. When students put on their uniform, it helps them shift into "school" mode and a uniform avoids any issues around what to wear to school. It also reduces opportunities for bullying, acts as a safeguarding measure and enhances the idea that we are one community.

Over the Christmas break we would like to ask parents to ensure that students have the correct uniform for the new term. One area where we would like to see an improvement is that students should wear the appropriate shoes. Our website page has all the detail on this. For parents and carers of students who attract Pupil Premium money, we may be able to assist with some of the cost of uniform. Please contact the school office.

<http://www.maidenerleghschoolreading.co.uk/page/?title=School+Uniform&pid=29>

 MAIDEN ERLEGH TRUST  
[Click here to access the @METCompSci Twitter account](#)



## School Council

School Council is up and running! School Council includes representatives from all years, and from every tutor group. School Council allows a student voice, for students to share thoughts on what they feel is working well in the school, and to contribute suggestions for further improvement and provision. They have had their first meeting in November, and have been incredibly successful in directing and leading tutor discussions to help improve and develop the school further. They have been successful in

their first suggestion of having bags under tables in the canteen! A great win for School Council. We look forward to seeing what the next agenda brings!



## SweetScience

A number of students have been selected to trial an initiative with the company SweetScience. This company focuses on mentoring and character building through boxing for a period of 10 weeks. The first session has taken place, with some great feedback from the students involved. We look forward to seeing the positive outcomes of this initiative!





## Science Club



Science Club on Wednesdays after school has got off to a great start this year. So far around 25 students have enjoyed the activities on offer.

We started the year planning what we wanted to do, and the Elephant's Toothpaste chemical reaction was a popular choice. We started with that last week, and learned about the decomposition of Hydrogen Peroxide and how catalysts can speed up the reaction producing very interesting results!

This week the challenge was to make square and cube shaped bubbles. The students constructed their own cube shapes and made their own bubble mix.



They then had great fun making a vast number of different shaped bubbles with almost everyone perfecting the art of making a cube shaped bubble! We will be using Chemistry to make indoor fireworks after half term, something the students are very much looking forward to.



## First School Disco

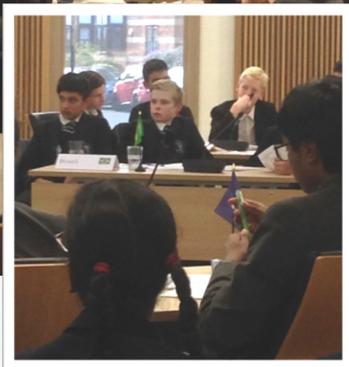
On Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, Maiden Erlegh School in Reading had its first school disco. The tickets were popular with the children and approximately 150 students attended. A committee of seven year 9 students helped Ms. Langille to organise the disco including creating decorations and designing tickets and posters to put up around the school. Their hard work paid off

as the atrium looked wonderful with neon balloons and pictures flashing on the screens designed by one of our very own students. All of the students and teachers enjoyed spending time together and dancing. The teachers even danced the macarena and led a conga line. Overall it was a lovely night to celebrate the end of this term.





## Model Climate Conference



On Friday, 1st December, 29 Year 8 Silver Programme students, accompanied by Mr Harrison and Mr Jackson, attended the UN (United Nations) Model Climate Change Conference and Local Action Summit at the Reading Civic Centre. They even travelled sustainably on the bus to keep down their personal carbon emissions! This is the second year students from Maiden Erlegh School in Reading have attended the event and this year they represented 5 nations: Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Russia and the United Kingdom.



The conference is designed to replicate the proper UN COPs (Conference of Parties) which take place every year in November/December. This year's took place in Bonn, Germany and was attended by the vast majority of the world's nations. The conference in Reading was attended by

schools from different parts of Reading and represented 16 nations in total. The Mayor of Reading, Rose Williams, opened the proceedings with students then delivering high level speeches from the point of view of the countries they were representing. There was then healthy and respectful debate about each country's carbon emissions and what they were doing to mitigate and adapt to the effects of Climate Change. Students, on behalf of their nations, then had to make alliances with other countries in an attempt to secure a low carbon future for generations to come. Finally, students attended workshops designed to make them think of how climate change can be mitigated. These ranged from food waste discussions to sustainable transport and outdoor nature spaces locally in Reading.

Our students were amongst the youngest there but did themselves and our school proud. They were knowledgeable, assertive and persistent in their approach and attitude. I am sure they will return to school wishing to put many of their ideas into practice. Well done to our future UN ambassadors!



## Gurdwara trip

On Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November Year 7 Purple Pathway students, accompanied by the Year 9 ASDAN group went to the Gurdwara on the Cumberland Road.

We could tell the Gurdwara from the bottom of the road as it had an orange flag flying from it with the Khanda, (the Sikh symbol) letting everyone know it was the Sikh place of worship.

The Year 7s saw the prayer hall and were mindful not to sit with their feet facing the Granth.

We watched as a number of Sikhs came to worship. The prayer hall was beautifully decorated with the Granth hidden under a cover. We also saw the bedroom for the Granth but had to be very quiet as a sign of respect.

We had a presentation where the Year 7s were impressive in how much they had learnt about Sikhism. We then went to the Langar, Free kitchen. Here some Sikh ladies had bought, prepared, cooked and then served us a meal. The food was delicious and their generosity went beyond this as they gave everyone a lolly!

The trip was over all too quickly and we had to return to school and lessons.

A good time was had by all.



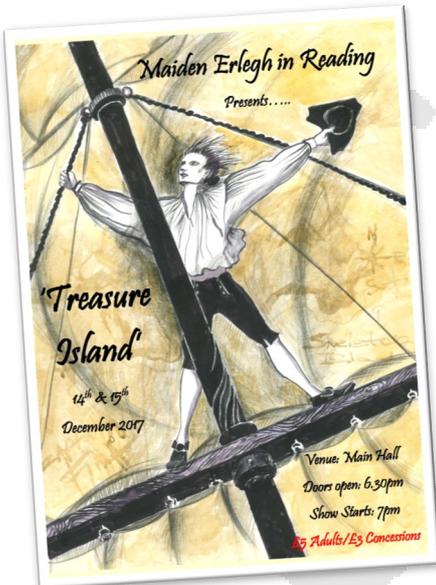


# Treasure Island Rehearsal Update



As we near the performance, rehearsals have been going full speed ahead and with some wonderful characters being brought from page to stage.

During one of the rehearsals students completed a characterisation workshop so they could focus on the way that their character stands, walks and talks. This range of activities involved feedback from the cast on the characters presented, resulting in the room soon becoming filled with swash-buckling pirates and others characters thirsty for treasure hunting and adventure.



In the Art and Technology departments, staff and students alike have been hard at work supporting the school show by either building pieces of the set which our stage hands will move about the stage or developing a wonderful backdrop to help transform the school's Main Hall into a space fit for performance. In Music, Mr Butchers has been working with the choir and 'Shanty Crew' to develop key songs from the script to help bring the old sea folk-lore to life.

Please come along and support the students in this performance at 7pm on either Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> or Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December. Tickets are £5 adults, £3 for students and concessions. Doors open at 6.30pm for seating on a first come first serve basis. Tickets must be purchased in advance with slips returned to Student Services before Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

## This is a gift. A gift to someone at Christmas.

In fact, it is just one of 60 similar gifts that will be given from our students and staff to the homeless people on the streets of Reading this year.

Each box contains items such as a pair of socks, a scarf, gloves, a tooth brush and toothpaste, a comb, and, because it's Christmas, sweets of some kind or other!

Each form has collected and lots of our staff, teachers and support staff, have



contributed. Teams of volunteers have checked each box and wrapped them up.

So this might just be one gift but it is a gift that says that someone cares. That we have been thinking of someone who has absolutely nothing at a time when many of us get so much.

Mrs K. James

## Year 9 Options

The Year 9s have almost completed a whole term of their GCSEs. As a year group they have settled into the rigours of the courses very well but are having to work hard. A successful Parent's Information Evening was held in October to outline the expectations of the core subjects which was very well attended.

Now students and their parents understand what they are doing it is down to the hard work of learning, practising, revising and reflecting on what they know and what they need to know.



## What's been going on in Art?

In the Art department we have been very busy! Over the past year students have had many opportunities to stretch their artistic wings, including a trip to the V&A Museum in London. The Year 9's once again took part in the 'Stellar Space Project' in collaboration with Reading University. This was a Science and Art project that has been running for two years and this year's theme was, 'Life on Mars'. Maiden Erlegh students had sessions leading up to the project with graphic designers and an Astrophysicists from Reading University. The project itself, was held at the Reading University Art Department and was a day exploring digital technology, video installations, 3D printing and much more. We are very excited to announce that this year's project will be in collaboration with Reading University and the Tate Modern, so watch this space!

## Arts Award

A group of Year 9 Students have been visiting the Museum of English Rural Life, every Monday this term. They have been studying the collections and artefacts in order to complete their Arts Award. The students have been sketching, painting and photographing the collection and have been learning the importance of seeing objects first hand, in order to aid their studies. All students have been entered for the Arts Award and we hope they will have an exhibition at the Museum in the new year!



## Treasure Island

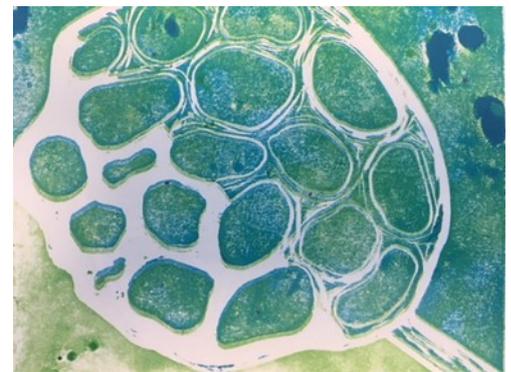
It is with great delight, that the Art department are able to support Drama and Music in the Winter production of 'Treasure Island'. Year 8 students have been busying creating the backdrop for the performance, with treasure chests, sea monsters, ships and guns. Its set to be a spectacular finish to the set!



Year 9 Paintings

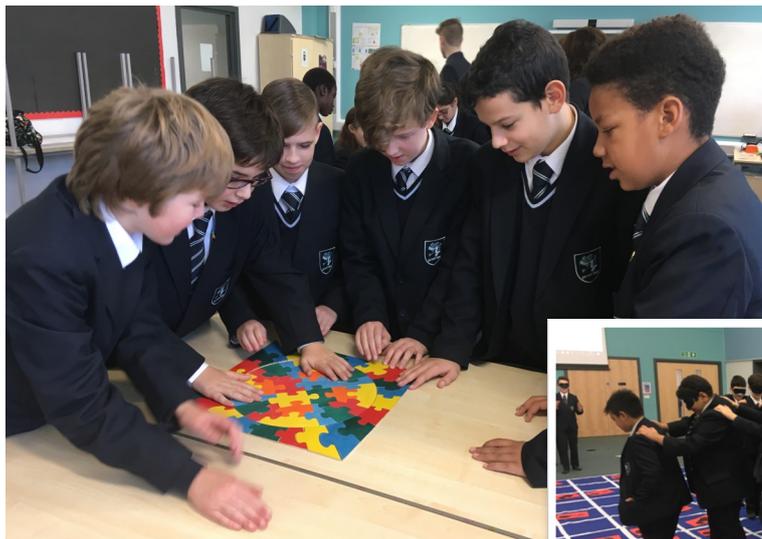


Year 9 Artwork - Lino prints



Year 8 Art





## Mathematics Enrichment Puzzle Day

On Wednesday November 29th, Year 7 students took part in a mathematics enrichment puzzle day, delivered by the department teaching team as well as a guest from the Happy Puzzle Company.

The students took part in a carousel of activities all centred around improving the students' appreciation and enjoyment of mathematics. Students worked in small groups with their peers to discover the Indian multiplication grid and how this links to creating Islamic art, crack World War II codes and learn about the important work of Bletchley Park during the war, as well as a logical investigation of real-life problems and scenarios requiring application of mathematical skills. Students were also fortunate to take part in a session delivered by the Happy Puzzle Company, which focussed on hands-on puzzles and

problems requiring efficient team work, cooperation, and application of logical reasoning. The presenter spoke very highly of our students who were superb ambassadors for the school.

Students responded positively about their experiences during the day, stating that working collaboratively helped them to 'share ideas' and 'learn new ways to approach tasks'.



## Homework Club



Homework Club continues to be well attended on:

**Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays**

in the

**Learning Resource Centre, from 3-4pm.**

Our team of Teaching Assistants are on hand to supervise and support pupils getting ahead with their homework, researching around the subject, and printing off their work.

From January 2018 we are pleased to welcome two y12 students from Maiden Erlegh School in Silverdale Road, who will help the TAs in Homework Club and serve as good role models for our pupils. If you would like further information about Homework Club, or how you can best support your children with their homework, please contact the SENCO, Mrs Becky Clarke, via the school office.

## TERM DATES

Term 1	6 September – 20 October 2017
	30 October – 19 December 2017
Term 2	3 January – 9 February 2018
	19 February – 29 March 2018
Term 3	16 April - 25 May 2018 (Bank Holiday 7 May 2018)
	4 June – 24 July 2018 (Open Evening 4 July 2018)
CPD Days	4 September 2017
	5 September 2017
	13 November 2017
	17 January 2018
	5 July 2018

## Young Philosophers

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November our Year 7 Silver Programme students came off timetable to take part in a philosophy enrichment day.

The first part of the day concentrated on developing and deepening students' conceptual thinking through such tasks as drawing representations of words like evil, freedom and faith; and mind-mapping the various interpretations, associations,

emotions and ideas related to different concepts.

The second part of the day required students to use their concept mind-maps to explore a range of views on terrorism.

The students all demonstrated great maturity and sensitivity throughout the day, and should feel very proud of their comments and reflections.



## U13 Rugby Roundup

Congratulations to the U13 boys Rugby team who gave a very good account of themselves in the semi-final playoff at Highdown. After a very close game on a small pitch we narrowly lost to a very well organised Langtree team. After a positive start and an opening try by Wasim following a direct run by Siyar, our defence was tested fully and eventually Langtree broke through scoring three tries. We finished strongly and managed work some space for Tyron to score out wide. Final score 15-10. The size of the pitch inhibited our runners out wide, but all of the team stood up to the mark.

Our second match was against Highdown and the team responded very well with some sharp play in all areas. Tyron scored again with further tries from Sathyam, John and Adam. This was another tough game but everyone played their part. Ibbly showed some great attacking play and was at the heart of the defensive play.



Final score was a solid 20-0 win and that rounded off the season finishing 3rd in the table.

Our final game was a friendly away to St Josephs. This was a good test of our team's strength in depth, with a few key players absent. Again a solid team performance gave us a solid victory in the disappearing light.

Well done to all the players and the squad is shaping up well for next season.

**Mr Bradley**

## Basketball Club

The eagerly anticipated basketball club started just after half term with 68 year 8s and 9s turning up to the first training session, beating the record of students attending a sports club! This meant we had to create two sessions to fit everyone in.

Basketball has been very well attended throughout the half term and the progression made by the students has been fantastic. We have upcoming fixtures against JMA and Maiden Erlegh Wokingham to test out our skills on the court.



**Mr Bandy**

## Extra-curricular Activities

[Click here to find a list of after school clubs](#)



## U12 Reading Schools Football League - Girls

### 1st Round

WON 1 - 0 v JMA  
GOAL SCORED BY  
Sasha Griffiths

LOST 0-1 v Prospect

LOST 0-1 v Oakbank

DREW 0-0 v Chiltern Edge

### 2nd Round

LOST 0-3 Bohunt

LOST 0-3 Highdown

LOST 0-3 Oakbank

LOST 1-0 Wren

The U12 girls have been practising really hard every Thursday for the Reading Schools Football League and have shown true determination throughout both mini tournaments so far. Even though the

scores in the 2nd round were all losses, it really didn't reflect the amount of hard work they were putting in. In blisteringly cold weather, the girls still managed to fight through player after player with some excellent shots being fired at goal. The score line would have been even greater if it hadn't been for Zahraa Alshweli in goal making amazing saves.



## Facilities Hire



**Our fantastic school facilities are available for hire to the general public.** Please click on photo above for details

Click on envelope to view recent communications



Click on the ParentPay logo to login and register your account.

Email queries to: [parentpay@maidenerleghschool.co.uk](mailto:parentpay@maidenerleghschool.co.uk)



Click on the logo to log on to the Learning Gateway

