



# ThePulse

*Opportunity, Diversity & Success For All*

Maiden Erleigh School | 81 Crescent Road | Reading RG31 5SL | T. 0118 966 8065 | [www.maidenerleghschoolreading.co.uk](http://www.maidenerleghschoolreading.co.uk) | @MESReading

## FROM THE HEADTEACHER

As we approach the end of another half term that has been hugely affected by the ongoing COVID emergency, I am proud to report that the Maiden Erleigh School in Reading community is rising to the challenges and showing our typical grit and determination to keep learning and keep caring for one another.

Many of our students have been putting our DREAM acronym into action during their "Live" and "non-live" lessons and it has been heartening to see so many of them receiving house points and recognition for showing these important characteristics. After all, going to school isn't just about learning facts but is also about experiencing an environment that nurtures personal development and growth in character. So many of our students have grown and matured in the face of the difficulties put in their way by the lockdown and it is heartening to recognise the resilience and resourcefulness of MER students.

With one day's notice the whole school switched to our remote learning programme – and it has been hugely impressive to see how our students have coped with this. We have certainly all developed and improved in the way we deliver and engage with online learning; both teachers and student have learnt a raft of new skills to support learning and feedback and to ensure that our fantastic curriculum continues. Thank you to all stakeholders for your comments and suggestions. As long as we have to continue in this remote phase, we will look to improve our provision. I am also pleased to report that the school has distributed in excess of 100 laptops/tablets and SIM cards to students across the school to ensure that everyone has access to learning.

I must continue to pay tribute to our fantastic staff team who have adjusted so well to the challenge of the current lockdown. While we would all much prefer to be in the same classrooms together, we have made the best possible response to moving to remote delivery. So many of my colleagues are desperate to do anything they can to support our families and to ensure that students are supported in their learning and wellbeing. As a result, we have made thousands of welfare and learning support phone calls and tried to

ensure that students who need it get the help and support they require.

While the school may be physically closed to the majority of students, the building is still very much open with around 50 students per day using our special provision. This requires significant staffing (all the more so as we have implemented greater social distancing for those in school) and I would like to thank both teaching and, in particular, many of our support staff who have been in school to ensure that we are able to cater for children of critical workers and some of our more vulnerable students. Many staff have overcome their own domestic challenges of home-schooling their children or caring for others to maintain and support both our special provision and the remote curriculum.

Our students in Year 11 have faced particular uncertainty as the government concludes its planning for the processes that will be introduced in the summer to replace the normal GCSE examinations. We know that many students are understandably anxious, but I am proud of the way so many in year 11 have been determined to keep learning and keep preparing for their qualifications whatever the specific plans look like. Moreover this year group is determined to get to where they want to go and it is encouraging that around 80% of students have already secured provisional places at 6<sup>th</sup> forms and colleges or on apprenticeship programmes.

The cold and dark winter months have been difficult for all of us this year, but with the lengthening of the days and the promise of spring, perhaps we can be forgiven for feeling more optimistic as we look into 2021. The vaccine programme continues apace and the COVID transmission rates appear to be falling. We hope that as soon as it is safe to do so, schools will reopen and we can all get back to doing the things we enjoy and see the ones we love. Until then we must continue to support the national effort to combat COVID and follow the safety advice we have been given. I wish all our students and their families a peaceful and restful half term break.

Mr A Johnson



## AQA Unlocking Potential – Dame Kelly Holmes Trust

Miss Hancock and Miss Davies have recently nominated 4 students for the AQA Unlocking Potential Scheme. Working in partnership with AQA, the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust has developed an innovative and unique mentoring programme for young people aged between 11 – 19. The Athlete Mentor Team consist of a range of Olympians, Paralympians and World Champions who have a wealth of skills and experience gained throughout their careers. This is an outstanding achievement for Jay, Delsy, Khadijah and Bernard! They are 4 of only 80 successful students accepted on the programme across the UK! We are very proud of them and hope they enjoy this invaluable experience!

To find out more about this excellent opportunity please visit [here](#).



**DAME KELLY  
HOLMES TRUST**

**AQA**  
Realising potential

## AQA Entry level units

To develop our Inclusion offer and allow more students who are struggling to access mainstream lessons, we have introduced AQA Entry Level Units. For more information and to see the variety of topics on offer please see <https://www.aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme>. In summary, this is project-based work that is submitted for certification.

This has allowed students to re-engage, enabling them to refocus in lessons, as well as gaining certification for entry level or pre entry level. We have already had a successful start with a course in learning how to tattoo! Very creative!





## All Change

### A look into online teaching

Three national lockdowns have caused a huge change in how teachers teach. A new type of teaching has come into play – blended learning – and no doubt, it's here to stay.

Like all schools, staff – both teachers and those in supporting roles – at Maiden Erlegh Reading have been grappling with a whole new set of challenges since Covid-19 hit. But our chief concern has been to keep students learning. How could we give them the lesson content they need, offer feedback on their work and all without seeing them in the classroom?

### Challenges

One first challenge has been to make sure students have access to the technology on which to do their lessons; the school has loaned out 83 devices and provided some families with unlimited data allowances to allow students to participate in live lessons with their classmates.

Then the way we give students lesson content has changed. Teachers have been, and still are, on steep learning curves themselves, getting to grips with new platforms and software – Pear Deck, Loom, GCSE POD, Google Apps, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams. How can we encourage student participation in lessons? Load up a Jam board to record ideas generated in an online discussion. Record a Loom (audio file) to explain the work as students look at it on a PowerPoint. Share a Google slides file so that students can all edit a document together – much like doing group work in class and recording ideas on a big piece of paper. Need to assess their work? Use an online rubric to award a mark to a piece of work. Have the lesson in Google Meet open on your phone as well as your computer so you can monitor students' questions and answers at the same time as presenting. Much of the training in this has happened after school when students have finished lessons, and has been led by Miss Hind, our in-house EdTech expert, and one of our assistant head teachers. Teachers are having to be nimble and adaptable – but we're doing it! As I write this, my colleagues are participating in a virtual professional development day logging into Zoom sessions to undertake training delivered by members of the Trust.



### Student Welfare

School is more than just lessons in National Curriculum subjects: the pastoral and inclusion teams, led by the very capable Mr Hood and Miss Burns, our pastoral leaders, are working extremely hard to ensure student welfare is taken care of. We are aware of how mental health can be affected by working alone so calls to check in on how students are doing are being made by a number of staff, and heads of year are working with those students who are finding it more difficult to engage in this type of remote learning. Every day starts for students with a tutor period so important routines are preserved and there is some social contact with friends and classmates. Heads of year are still taking assemblies – dozens of students and numerous staff all join an online meeting – quite a sight to behold. Support staff are getting to grips with providing a Covid testing programme. Sadly, some staff and students have suffered bereavements and there is a great effort made to ensure the welfare of these members of the school community.

### Special Provision

And of course, while all this is going on, school is OPEN! Every day, we welcome between 50 or 60 students, whose parents are key workers, into our Special Provision classes – a sort of pop-up school within the main school. These students join their classmates in online lessons but also have the chance to take a break away from their screens to participate in an actual PE or Art lesson. Staff are supervising these classes at the same time as planning and delivering their online lessons, attending meetings and of course, some are doing all this as well as home-schooling their own children.



Online learning cannot replace face-to-face teaching but we are learning how to deliver a different type of education and our students have embraced it with us. There is no doubt that some aspects of what teachers are learning will be used to complement our more usual teaching strategies as we return to school when the lockdown is over. While much about the Pandemic is out of our control, we can make sure there is a positive legacy: a greater teaching method repertoire, a flexible and upskilled workforce and an ability to quickly adapt and change as new government guidelines are produced and the effects of the pandemic cause unpredictable fluctuations. We've had to all change – but we've done it, and a lot of those changes are here to stay.

Mrs Escott-New, Assistant Head Teacher



## Foundation Stage Lockdown Week 3 – Completed It!

Our Key Stage 3 year groups continue to work exceptionally hard. Mr Bandy and Mr Rabin continue to be amazed at how the year groups rise to the challenges they are presented. Let's be honest: they haven't had it easy. The majority of Year 6 and of Year 7 has been spent behind the computer and they have handled it with great credit. Together, Year 7 and 8 have amassed a whopping 19,000 house points since the beginning of January which is truly astounding. The leading students achieving 149 (Jennifer Yr 7) and 127 (Rose Yr 8) house points each. To round it off, both the year groups have received a wealth of shout outs from teachers displaying, once again, how ready to learn they are. Huge



congratulations to Callum and Martin (Year 7) and Rose, Rafael and Amy (Year 8) for their successes so far and being awarded Hot Chocolate Friday!

Special Provision continues to run and it's been fantastic to see some of the work

that students are producing as they adjust to our new normal (for now).

Options Evening was held on 28<sup>th</sup> January and was attended by a huge proportion of Year 8. The stream of questions was so welcome as it reinforced how committed the year group are to their futures and the choices they will soon be making. Reminder – Options Forms are due in 5<sup>th</sup> March.



For Key Stage 3 the DCPs are now in and will be available for students to access from February 8<sup>th</sup>. For the large majority, the DCPs will reflect the consistent hard work, perseverance and engagement that has been showcased and are fully deserved. Further to this, year 7 and 8 progress meetings are taking place this month and we look forward to being able to discuss each student's progress. Please look out for information around booking appointments.

Mr Rabin

**Year 11**

*I miss you!*



**Can you believe what is happening in the world AGAIN at the moment?! It has been a bumpy road so far BUT you continue to make me so proud. Remember if you have any worries ..... talk to your tutors, talk to me - we are here for you.**

We now have the changes to the GCSEs and even though it is a MASSIVE question mark at the moment, I am confident that we can continue to support each other and get through this.

Even though we are at home - the hard work continues so please ensure you are completing all work set. Remember you are Year 11, so you should expect an increase in work load – just take it day by day. **YOU CAN DO IT!**

Also make sure you are revising.



Remember you will have PPEs at some point, so be prepared.

Even though times have changed - the most important thing is for you to believe in yourself: you CAN succeed and you CAN do well.

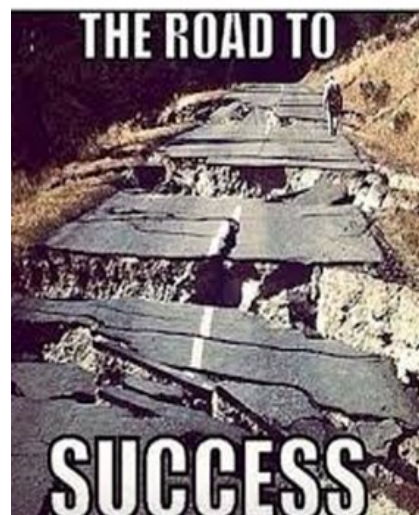
I miss you all! I miss the smiles in the corridors, the conversations, the knocks on my office door, the laughs and the banter! Remember that even though we are not in school, I am at the end of an email to support you. Please keep

working hard and stay safe!

**I continue to be the proudest Head of Year and feel so lucky to work with you all!**

*Keep Smiling and Keep Safe!*

Miss Hancock

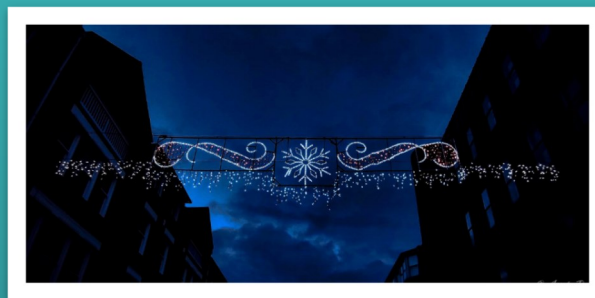
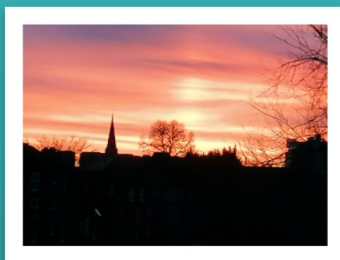
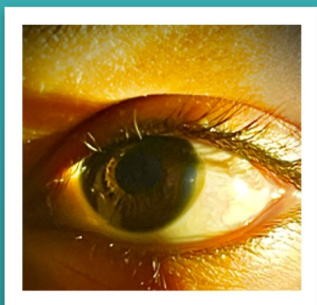
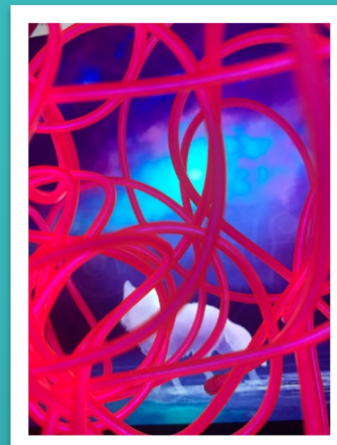
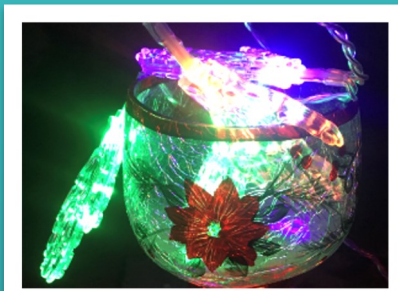




# Winners of the House Arts Competiton!

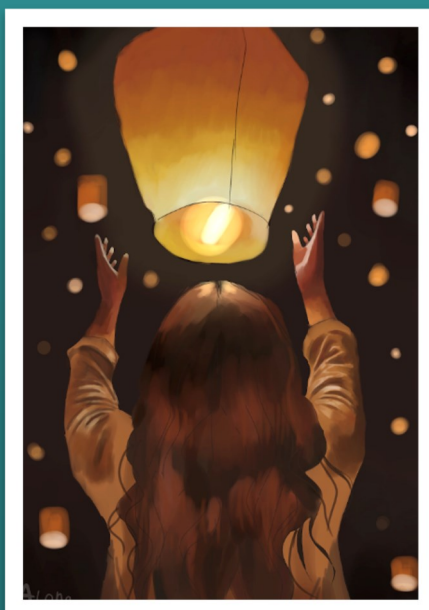
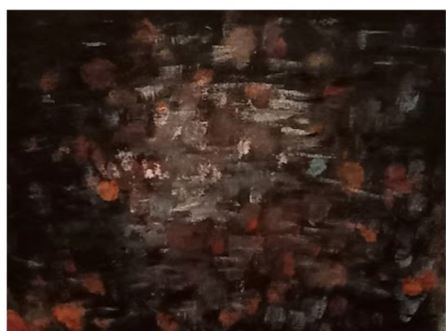
## INTO THE LIGHT

All entries will be awarded with 3 House Points



Runners up will receive 5 House Points and a Voucher

Hiu Lau, Alona and Zainab



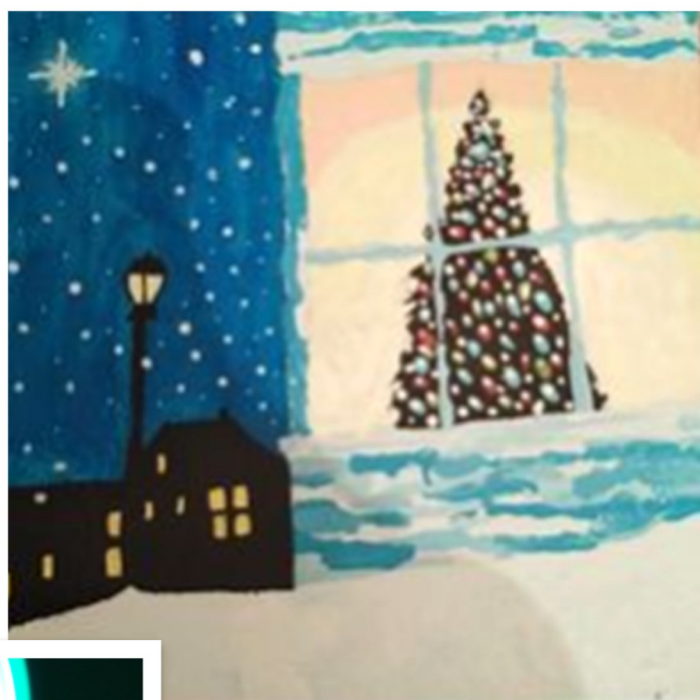


## 3RD PLACE ▶

5 House Points and a Voucher



Andreea - 7G1



## ◀ 2ND PLACE

5 House Points and a Voucher

Aiysha - 10P1



## 1ST PLACE ▶

10 House Points and a Voucher



Well done to  
Shaaswatha! 10P1





## Y11 Spanish

This term our Year 11 Spanish students submitted some fabulous poems to talk about their lives and what is important to them. Here are some examples of the best submissions! Well done to everyone who sent in an entry.



### Shehwar

Me llamo Shehwar y me gusta trabajar  
Soy muy trabajador pero no me gusta la gente de Ecuador  
Me encanta España la gente allí realmente puede cantar  
Pero lo que mas me ha favorito es bailar.

No soy bueno dibujando  
Me acusan de algo malo y digo cuando  
Algunas personas me llaman estúpido, otros me llaman  
inteligente  
Pero cuando me miran dicen lo caliente.

La vida no es todo sobre el dinero  
Se trata de divertirse y jugar con mi perro  
Me encanta estudiar es muy divertido  
Pero lo mejor es jugar con mis amigos.

Creo que debería conseguir diez puntos de casa  
Mi palabra española favorita tiene que ser tapa  
Este es el último verso que no tengo nada más que escribir  
Mi consejo es que debe disfrutar de su vida y sólo vivir.

### Juna

Anoche

Anoche, miré las estrellas  
y parecían tan bellas

la forma en que están brillando  
es algo que estoy admirando

solo mira cómo se iluminan  
no quiero que se vayan

no quiero fingir  
y no quiero decir

que hay alguna cosa que es más  
bonita porque eso estaría lejos de ser cierto.

### Edara

#### Mi vida en seis palabras

Dulces, amigas, Dios, familia, películas,  
paz

Insectos, verano, física, grosería,  
exámenes, enfermedad

### Pallavi

#### Mi Haiku

Repaso mucho

Me encanta viajar

Con familia

### Emma

Hola...Adiós...

Hola 16 años, adiós 15 años

Hola 2021, adiós 2020

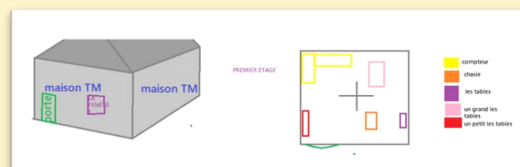
Hola casa, adiós colegio

Hola estudiar, adiós Netflix

Hola trabajador, adiós vacaciones

## Y7 French

Didar and Yuvraj in Y7 drew and labelled their dream homes in French as we learn about the topic of 'home and town'.







www.parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

We are running the following events online via Zoom. They are free for Berkshire families or at a nominal cost. Some events have a small number of tickets available for non-Berkshire families. Please click on the highlighted event title for further information and to book.

\*Please note that due to changes in our funding some events now have restrictions by location. Please make sure you book the correct ticket\*

## ON DEMAND PRESENTATIONS

### Sleep Tips for Children and Young People (age 8+)

A 12 minute presentation for children and young people (age 8+).

Available to view on demand until 30 April. £2 per download.

### Sleep Tips for Teens

A 40 minute presentation for teenagers who struggle with their sleep.

Available to view on demand until 30 April. £2 per download.

### For help and advice or if you just need to talk:

#### Helpline and Diagnosis Support Service

(Mon – Thur, 10am – 2.30pm)

Tel: 0118 9863532, email: dss@parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

#### Trauma and Attachment Service

Tel: 07557 102623, email: tas@parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

#### Sleep Service

Email: sleep@parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

#### Community Support Groups

Tel: 07810 689679, email:

supportgroups@parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

#### For any other enquiries please email

admin@parentingspecialchildren.co.uk

## Year 10

Well...that wasn't quite the start to the term that we were hoping for! We have had to adapt again to online learning during this new national lockdown, and whilst I think we would all agree that it would be better to be back at school, I am SO incredibly proud of how well Year 10 have switched to online learning! Dealing with the challenges of technical issues (from teachers and students), having to motivate themselves from home, sharing equipment, and for a number of students you are having to do all this whilst also helping siblings and family members! This just goes to show how determined you all are, and I am so proud of you for this!

The majority of students are engaging with the work and joining live lessons and live tutor times, and it is great to see so many students joining me for the live assemblies on a Thursday. The high level of engagement with the work has translated into an incredible number of house points – and as my year group



knows (and is probably sick of hearing!) I love seeing how many house points Year 10 has gained – and beating other year groups, because I know we are the best! When I wrote this on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January, Year 10 had achieved over 7000 house points in 3 weeks!!! This is a phenomenal number and again highlights just how much effort you are all putting in!

I'm really looking forward to having you all back in school as soon as we can, and I know that you will continue to show this incredible engagement with your lessons when you are back as we continue our journey towards Year 11 GCSEs. I have said it before – it is not going to be an easy journey to get there, but the best things are never easy, and I know you will continue to rise to the challenge!

Miss B Davies

## English Stars of January:



In what has been a very difficult and challenging start to 2021, this award recognises students who have worked incredibly diligently, demonstrating very high levels of effort and resolve. While there have certainly been many students worthy of praise during these most recent weeks of lockdown, the English Department nominated only the very top performers on this occasion to receive this award.

Lena – 7P2

Simra 8T1

Kasim – 7P2

Alina – 8P2

Daniella – 9G1

Hassan – 9T1

Finley – 10T1

Sri – 11G1

Ben – 11G2

Helene – 11T2



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP

## Brew Monday

Why not organise to have a virtual catch up with your friends or family every Monday evening? This could be over a cup of tea or a warming hot chocolate. The blues you may experience on a Monday can be based on a direct comparison to the day before. To explain this with a more extreme example, consider your birthday. Friends and family making you feel special, sending you cards and feeding you cake is usually a beloved childhood memory, particularly when it involves unwrapping that one gift which was at the top of your wish list (BBC Bitesize).



## Pancake Day

Get creative with your pancake skills and upload a photo of your creation to your year group google classroom.



## Come Dine With Me

For the week of half term, why not decide that each member of your household will cook on a certain night. Rate the food and evening out of ten and the winner doesn't have to do the washing up for the rest of the month.



## Valentine's Day February 14th

Spread some love and joy to those around you.

Remember to keep checking that your friends and family are okay, even the friends or family who always seem super strong.

Some ideas for a lockdown valentines (please adhere to government guidelines)

- Set up a restaurant in your kitchen. Make a menu and cook your favourite dishes – candles are optional.
- Host a virtual home cinema and watch the same film at the same time as friends/family/your valentine. Popcorn and blankets are a must. Take a look at the list we have.
- Spa day. Enjoy an at-home spa with a bath bomb, face mask and a calming playlist on Spotify.

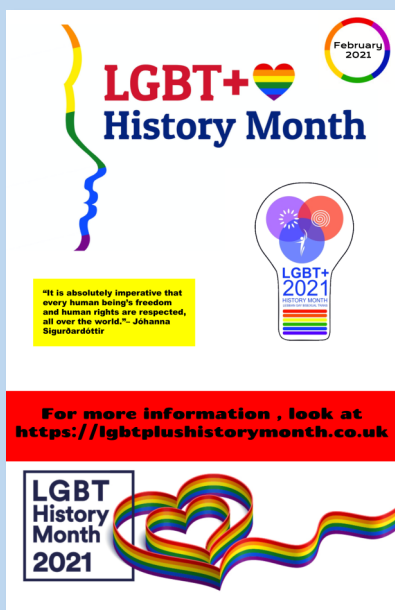




## STUDENT LEADERSHIP

### LGBTQ+ month

We want everyone in our school to feel welcome and feel that they can be their true self without judgement.



### Chinese New Year February 12<sup>th</sup>

We wish everyone a wonderful, peaceful and prosperous year. It is the year of the ox. Oxen are the hard workers in the background, intelligent and reliable, but never demanding praise.



## Year 9

The start of Year 9 marks an important milestone; it's saying goodbye to the end of Foundation Stage and it's the leap of faith into the start of Key Stage 4... and whilst it's fair to say Year 9 are still finding their feet with the demands of KS4, the first 2 terms have been both a challenge and a cause for celebration.

I am very proud of the maturity and dedication Year 9 have demonstrated so far this year, starting with their 'mind-over-matter' approach to having their HPV vaccines – the boys are now among some of the first in the country to also be receiving the HPV vaccine. Year 9 have stepped up to the mark this year in their invaluable contributions to the school community; donations to charity events, participation in House Competitions and the numerous applications to become House Captains and School Council Reps.



Rukhsar, Alhagie, Saurya and Vishnupriya celebrating their success at #HotChocFri with Mary Davis

We have joined in celebrating their success including all those with Tutee of the Week nominations, those awarded Head Teacher Commendations at #HotChocFri with Mr Johnson and not forgetting those who were nominated for whole school awards Term 1. Sasha and

Mohammed were nominated for the Diversity and Success awards, and a special mention must go to Klaudia, who was winner of the whole school award for Opportunity!

Despite the continued challenges or self-isolation, social distancing, new timetables and increased demands from their KS4 teachers, Year 9 continue to impress me with their support of one another and their perseverance with remote learning during yet another lockdown. We will continue this year as we started: on that all-important countdown to GCSEs and on the journey from #AverageToAwesome.

Miss Wildman



Klaudia, Opportunity Award Winner



Fawzan, Head of Year Award



Barona taking on Mr Hood at table tennis during Special Provision PE



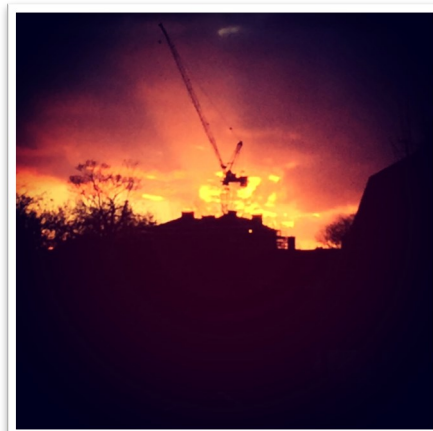
## Geography Department January 2021 House Competition



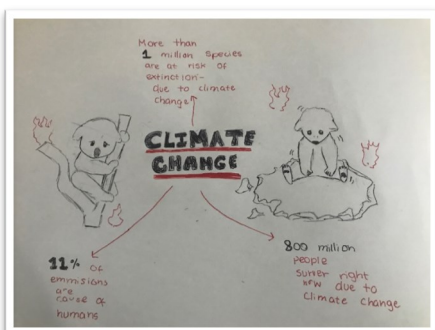
During January, the Geography Department ran their House Challenge. They wanted to know what climate change meant to our students and how they saw it affecting their lives. The task was to produce a piece of work which demonstrated this.

Students could submit a speech, a video, photographs, artwork, a poster or any other format of their choice. Plenty of students took up the challenge and produced some brilliant examples!

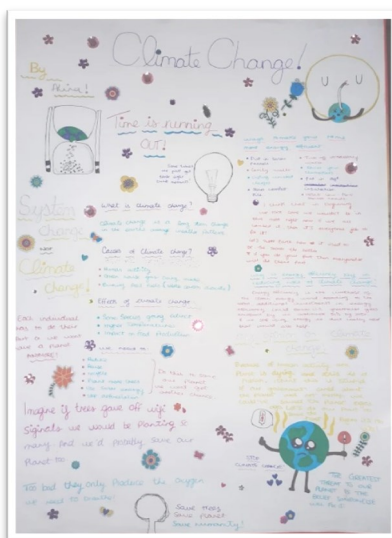
The winners have not yet been announced at the time of going to press, but with a huge number of excellent entries, the Geography Department has some tough decisions ahead of them!



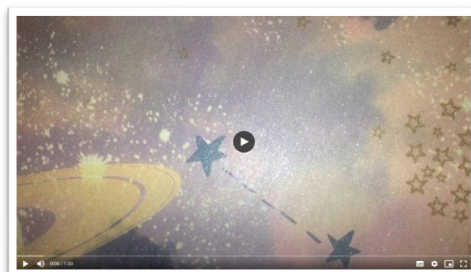
Maya 11P1



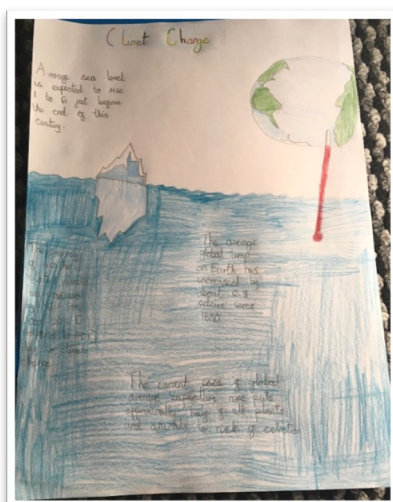
Persheh 11T1



Alina 8P2



Simra 8T1



Yasmin 7T2



Aparajita 8G1



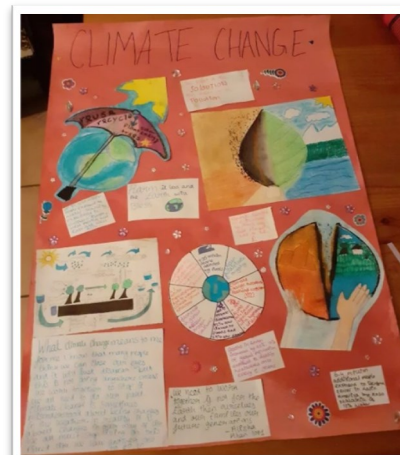
Praneeta 9G1



Sri Bhavya 9T2



Serah 8P2



Alisha 10P2





**A new regular House Competition has been launched this term - 'FROST BITES' with Miss Frost!**

FROST BITES is a brand new and exciting weekly competition which will enhance your culinary skills in the kitchen.

Every Friday, a tasty recipe is posted onto the HOUSE Google Classrooms. Students can attempt to make the dish at home and upload a photograph of their finished creation.

There are many house points and prizes on offer each week. The first challenge was a 'Beetroot, Chicken and Potato Salad.' There were some fantastic entries, but a joint effort from Vishnupriya and Srilakshmi was awarded the first 'Frost Bites' winner's trophy - a high standard already! There is plenty of excitement to see what students (and staff) can produce over the next few weeks.

**WINNERS**



Vishnupriya 9G2 and Srilakshmi 7T2



Friya 9P2



Saurya 9T2



Arnav 7G1



Sri Bhavya 9T2



Jennifer 7T2





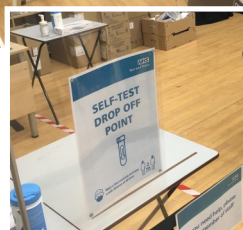
## MAIDEN ERLEGH TRUST CONFERENCE 2021

DIVERSE: INCLUSIVE 27 JANUARY 2021

On 27<sup>th</sup> January, staff across Maiden Erlegh Trust participated in an online training and development conference. This was a very successful day enabling staff from different teams across the organisation to work together, learn from one another and consider how we can improve different aspects of our work. The overarching theme of the day was diversity and inclusion and staff were encouraged to consider how we can be an more inclusive group of schools than we already are. Many staff were appreciative of the day and have been freshly inspired for the work ahead.

## Testing times

The school has responded magnificently to the government's request that we provide on site "rapid" COVID testing. The drama studio has been temporarily converted to our own testing centre and a team of dedicated staff volunteers have engaged with training and planning to ensure that we can offer all staff regular tests (along with the students currently attending the special provision). We envisage that the testing work will continue as students return to school and we are currently working out how we scale-up our testing capacity, all part of our school's contribution to keeping our school community as safe as possible.



# January

TOP  
TUTOR GP

TOP  
STUDENT

TOP  
HOUSE

YEAR 11

11GI

ANAS  
11G1 99 HP

GRIFFIN

YEAR 10

10G2

AARON  
10G1 104 HP

GRIFFIN

YEAR 9

9TI

VISHNUPRIYA  
9G2 108 HP

TRITON

YEAR 8

8T2

ROSE  
8P1 127 HP

PHOENIX

YEAR 7

7GI

JENNIFER  
7T2 143 HP

GRIFFIN

### WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR SO FAR:

#### LEADERS:

66,669 HOUSE POINTS:

GRIFFIN

#### SECOND:

66,440 HOUSE POINTS:

PHOENIX

#### THIRD:

65,204 HOUSE POINTS:

TRITON



## STAFF V STUDENTS DISTANCE CHALLENGE

Walk, run, cycle, propel yourself over any distance. Record your activity on Strava, Fitbit, MapMyRun etc. for evidence.

Entry through your PE Google Classroom.

Who will go further - students or staff?

*The Challenge is on!*

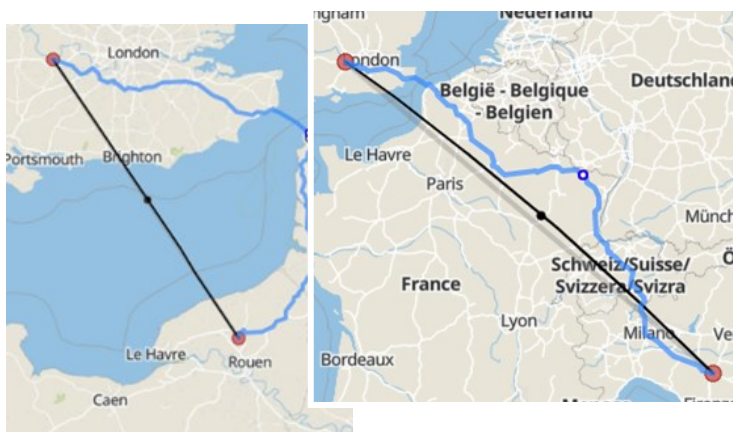


This great competition started just over a week ago and the responses so far have been awesome (from the teachers that is!!) After a busy day working on the computer, staff and students are encouraged to get out in the fresh air with a socially distanced walk, jog, cycle, taking that well deserved break from screens and re-vitalising the mind, ready for the next day. And, obviously, ranking up those km to see who will win. Deadline is Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February.

### Totals so far from Reading

**STUDENT TOTAL** – 251.42km which is Sainte-Austreberthe, Seine-Maritime, Normandie, FRA,

**STAFF TOTAL** – 1210km which is Italy Bologna, ITA



## Pancake Day

To celebrate pancake day and the origin of crêpes being Brittany, France, some of our students followed a tutorial in French to make their own crêpes.

How delicious do they look! These are from Javan, Maja, Lulu and Pedro.



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