

*Aim high, Be inclusive, Work together*

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

## FROM THE HEADTEACHER

It certainly has been a term to remember for students and for staff at MER and one where we have truly embodied our new Trust values of “**Aiming High**”, “**Being Inclusive**” and “**Working Together**”.

We have faced several challenges over the last 14 weeks but, as a community, we have come together, supported each other, and achieved great things. The cyber attack in the summer holiday forced us to adapt and show huge resilience to provide the quality of education which we always strive for, and our students deserve. As ever, our staff have been more than a match for the challenge, finding creative and innovative ways to overcome any obstacles they have faced.

Hot on the heels of the tumultuous start to the term came the Ofsted call; the cyber attack meant that staff were still playing “catch up” in terms of planning and preparing resources when the Inspection team arrived. However, in the two days they were in the building, the two HMI Inspectors were flabbergasted by the quality of what they saw; having visited many lessons, spoken to many staff and students, looked through a range of student work and surveyed parents, they concluded that Maiden Erlegh School in Reading was a **Good school**. I am hugely proud of our staff and our students that our school received this positive and richly deserved final judgement.

In October we received more good news with the publication of the Department for Education progress results for schools, which were based on the results of the GCSE results for 2023. These results provided confirmation that MER really does “Aim High” and that our school is true to its motto “Qui Veut Peut”, (“If you want to you can”). Our Progress 8 score (which shows how much progress overall has been made by students since joining in Year 7) was a very pleasing +0.2, well above the national average. These results also meant we were the strongest performing (coeducational) state comprehensive school in Reading.

I was fortunate enough to be asked by Miss

Thompson-Delpeche to be part of the staff v students debate on the motion of “the curriculum prepares students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. Whilst our team put up a very robust argument in opposing the motion, our student team prevailed on the day, with a series of robust and persuasive arguments supporting the motion. It is events like this, which are, in my humble opinion, the hallmark of a great school. The opportunities which our staff provide outside the formal and assessed curriculum are equally important to the development of confident, caring and articulate young people who can make a positive contribution to the world once they leave school. So, at the end of a very busy and very long term, I am always so grateful to those staff who so willingly give up their time to run our enrichment programme. In the run up to Christmas we have already had a wonderful range and variety of performances on display in our very first “MER’s Got Talent” show, we are looking forward with great anticipation to our Christmas concert in the final week, as well as to the final Christmas assembly.

We are also indebted to our parents and carers for the support given to the school and the students, it was wonderful to see so many parents and students join us for our inaugural Student Progress Day on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, with over 600 families through the door for face-to-face meetings with staff, I think that this event is here to stay.

As ever at the end of term, we are sad to say farewell to staff that are moving onto pastures new in January. Mr Redrup, Miss Bruna, Ms Bourienne, Dr Davies and Miss Periquito will be leaving us at the end of the term, we wish them every success in their next venture.

Finally, may I wish you a very peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming students back into school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024!



## CALENDAR

21st December to 8th January	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY
8th to 26th January	Year 11 Revision Corridors
17th January	Year 9 & 11 GCSE Drama Lighting, Sound & Directing Workshop
29th January to 9th February	Year 11 PPE's
31st January	Year 9 & 10 UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge

## Ballroom Championships

Sharika in Year 8 won the Ballroom Championships in Blackpool, and placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in Latin. Well done Sharika!





*Aim high, Be inclusive, Work together*

### Anti-racism poem

*I am black  
Watch your back  
That's what they say  
When I walk their way*

*Being black isn't a crime  
People being racist, I don't got the time  
The pen is black  
The page is white  
Together we learn to read and write.*

*The colour of skin  
Lies within  
Race is not a sin  
So let's chuck racism in the bin.*

*Things need to change  
Some things need to start  
It's not the colour of your skin  
It's what's in your heart.*

By Marvi, Year 8

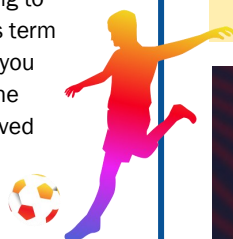
### Year 7

WOW! What an amazing first term at Maiden Erlegh School in Reading. I can't believe how well and quickly you have all settled into the MER WAY. I have been so impressed by how you have all managed the transition to secondary school and am proud to be able to call myself your Head of Year. I have really enjoyed getting to know so many of you this term and I can't wait to watch you all continue to grow for the rest of the year. I have loved seeing lots of you joining in with extra-curricular activities, shout-out to both the boys and girls football teams and hope to see more you sign up for clubs next term.

As a team so far this term we have amassed an incredible 43,000 DREAM points. Now that is a great target for us to try and beat next term.

I want to wish you all a safe, fun-filled and relaxing festive period and I am looking forward to seeing what 2024 has in store for us.

Mr Carpenter



## Alfred Sutton Primary School Visit

On a crisp Autumn afternoon in November, the year 9 GCSE drama group went to visit Alfred Sutton primary school. 10<sup>th</sup> November was marked in our calendars as the day that year 9 took their first theatre performance out to school!

They were taking their exciting T.I.E pieces to show year 5 and 6, which they had been preparing since mid October. Theatre in Education is an element of forum theatre and the students also used Brechtian techniques which show the value of informing and influencing audiences with impactful information, in an objective way. The year 9 chose to give the important message of saying no to drugs and how harmful it can be to engage in a life of misusing harmful substances.

It was a great afternoon, and the younger children were really enthralled. They had so many questions to ask and afterwards the year 9 heard some great comments.



The afternoon was finished off with drama games, thoughtful discussions and lots of applause for our young actors. Well done year 9, we are all very proud of you!

Ms Zubairy-Moore



**WEAR  
RED  
DAY<sup>23</sup>**

SHOW  
RACISM  
THE  
RED  
CARD

**Thank you for  
helping raise a  
grand total of**

**£692.50**

*Well done to everyone who took part*





## Year 8

Just like that, the first term of Year 8 is over! Unlike my usual article, I have decided this term to create a song. You may recognise the theme and be able to sing along to the well known tune...

On the 12th day of Christmas,  
Year 8 gave to me:

(Over) 12 different extra-curricular  
clubs attended

11 golden tickets awarded

10 amazing members of the Year 8  
tutor/support team

9 students with over 400 dream  
points!!

8 Cyber Fest winners

7 wonderful assemblies

6 fantastic tutor groups

5 students with over 10,000 XP on  
Sparx maths

(Over) 40,000 DREAM points

3 Finalist's for MER's got talent

2 U14 Badminton Championships  
players

1 Ballroom dancing champion

Miss Ryan

## Year 9

What an incredible start to the year.  
Year 9 have been living the DREAM,  
immersing themselves into their  
GCSE's and striving to succeed.

This has been shown with over  
38000 DREAM points so far.

Progress day, was a great way to  
speak to parents and students about  
their successes and their  
achievements so far. Looking forward  
to seeing what the new year brings.

Mr Sparks



## News from the Reading Ambassadors

Our library club, running every Thursday after school, continues to grow and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the student librarians who maintain our popular bookshelves. It has been pleasing to see so many more students visit the library before and after school.

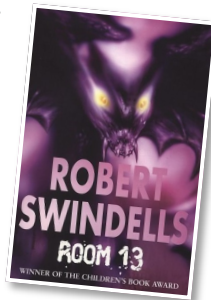
In this edition of The Pulse, we receive some holiday **reading recommendations** from one of our reading ambassadors, **Palak, year 7.**

**Palak has said the following:**

### **Room 13 by Robert Swindells**

Before Fliss and her friends start their trip to the hotel, Fliss has already had a strange premonition. Everything seems to get stranger when they arrive at the creepy Crow's Nest Hotel. There is no room thirteen, or is there? For at the stroke of midnight, something peculiar happens to the door of the cupboard next to room 12.

This spooky thriller is so creatively crafted by Robert Swindells that you will be scared to turn the page. Just make sure that you don't read this at midnight or the monster is sure to find you...



I recommend this to curious readers who enjoy thrillers and a scare now and then.

### **Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger**

A girl named Sophie starts to feel a divide between her and her family. She soon realises that she is an elf and not the only one. Fitz Vacker helps her find her true identity but, as she starts to settle into her new home, she needs to stay alert as there are enemies who are trying to kill her.



This is a story of hope, courage and perseverance. I have read many books, but I have never been as excited to read this book in my life. Overall, this is a 'must read' for anyone who enjoys reading fantasy books and likes looking at the world from a different perspective.

## Year 10

Year 10 have had an exciting half term. They worked incredibly hard in their first PPE exam for Religious Studies at the end of October. Although the students were nervous about their first experience working in the Main Hall, they all showed great resilience and put in a great effort with their work. Myself, Mr Greener and Mrs Gibbs were all incredibly impressed with them.

Year 10 have also been working hard on preparing for their work experience in June. They will be on work experience placements from the 17<sup>th</sup> June to the 21<sup>st</sup> June. Students have been buzzing with the thought of getting to experience what life is like after they leave school.

Mrs Langille





## Climate conference 2023



8 of our students attended the InterClimate Reading Model Climate Conference 2023, representing the country of Uganda and the European Union in heated debates and decision making on cutting fossil fuels and providing climate finance to the poorest countries. They did superbly presenting their countries viewpoints, having spent time after school preparing their speeches and

debate points for the model conference that closely resembles the real COP-28 currently coming to a close in the United Arab Emirates.

Well done to **Laura, Heyvis, Sophie, Ganesh, Adrian, Aarush, Nenyasha and Joshita**.

*Mr Tomsett*



## Cyber Girls

Congratulations to our year 8 girls who entered this years CyberFirst Girls Competition, run by GCHQ's National Cyber Security Centre.

The students used range of cyber skills to compete in cracking codes, decrypting messages and solving puzzles in a contest which seeks to inspire young women to pursue careers in cyber security.

The two teams who entered have shown some incredible talent, teamwork and dedication, spending their time after school and at lunchtime to work on the cyber challenges.

The top three performers in the cyber challenges were:

**1<sup>st</sup> Lana 2<sup>nd</sup> Jyena 3<sup>rd</sup> Sophie**

We are really proud of their achievements. Well done.

*Miss Hind*



## Competition Success

Following the recent publication of several of our year 9s in the fabulous 'Twisted Tales' anthology, we were delighted to hear that several of our year 7 and 8 students had achieved similar success in the recent Young Writers' competition 'This is Me. I Am.' Students were invited to enter poems about themselves and they wrote on a wide range of topics from their identity, feelings, hopes and hobbies. The panel, who reads entries from across the country, selected the following winners:

**Kyle 7G2 Ben 7G2 Asher 8T2**  
**Marina 7G1 Aimen 8P1 Bryant 8G1**  
**Elena 7P2**

## Year 11

Year 11 have had a very reflective term, looking at their recent PPEs and how they have achieved in their examinations. Many are target setting for their next exams in January and are keen to improve and obtain even greater success which is fantastic!

*Mrs A Cotton*



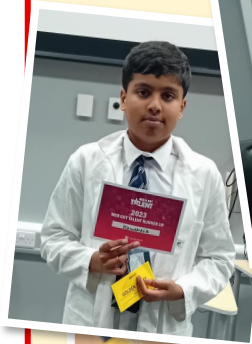


# MER'S GOT ★ TALENT



We hosted the very first 'MER's Got Talent' this half term which was an incredible success. Closed door auditions took place with over 20 applications, and the judges had the tough decision to narrow it down to 11 finalists. We had singers, street dancers, artists, linguists, scientists, ballroom dancers, ukelele players and cubers to name a few, who all showcased their outstanding talents. There had to be a winner though, and after many debates between the judges, the overall winner of MER's Got Talent 2023 was **Olivia** in year 7. The Parent Teacher Association donated prizes for the winners. Congratulations to all involved, and we already can't wait for MER's Got Talent 2024!

Miss Ryan & Miss Hancock







MAIDEN ERLEGH  
TRUST

If you are interested in any of these roles, please email Maia Hill, Clerk to the Board of Trustees via [governors@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:governors@maidenerleghtrust.org)

THERE ARE  
TYPICALLY 3 SAB  
MEETINGS PER  
YEAR PLUS 3  
TRAINING  
SESSIONS TO  
SUPPORT  
DEVELOPMENT

# BE PART OF OUR GOVERNANCE TEAM OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

## Who are SAB Members?

School Advisory Boards (SABs) are crucial elements of our work with schools and communities.

SAB members are ambassadors of the school, engaging with stakeholders and ensuring the school is a safe and happy place to learn and work.

The role description and person specification for School Advisory Board Members can be found on our website.

## Our School Advisory Board

The SAB works closely with the Headteacher to provide support, challenge and a critical friendship in the context of the Trust's strategic vision and values and the school's culture.

SAB members also support the school by attending school events, providing support and encouragement to staff and pupils, developing links with the wider community and participating in panels for recruitment, exclusions, and admissions.

## How can you get involved in a role?

We have a variety of School Advisory Board Member openings available across our schools in Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell. We are especially keen to hear from anyone who has an interest or experience within **Safeguarding and/or SEN** as we have vacancies for Link SAB Members covering these areas.

Experience of school governance or related fields would be helpful but is NOT essential as we would provide training.

## Maiden Erlegh Trust Schools



[www.maidenerleghtrust.org](http://www.maidenerleghtrust.org)



0118 929 6020



[governors@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:governors@maidenerleghtrust.org)



## Combined Cadet Force Remembrance Parade



A number of cadets participated in the Remembrance march and parade in Reading town centre in November. Following a service at Reading Minister, service personnel and public sector volunteers of all ages marched to Forbury Gardens for a time of remembrance as speeches were given and wreaths laid. Within school the cadets also helped mark 11<sup>th</sup> November with two minutes of silence in the atrium alongside members of staff.

Mr Greener



## Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge Results

The results for 2023's Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge have arrived. All students in Year 7 and Year 8 plus GCSE Computer Scientists were given certificates to take home

before the end of term, so hopefully parents have seen these. There were numerous excellent scores, and lots of students were awarded house points.



Three students in particular performed brilliantly, and were awarded 'Best in School' for their particular age group. These are Marina in Year 7, Felix in Year 9 and Zinovy in Year 10 (who also won in 2020 and 2023), who all won a Golden Ticket and hot chocolate with the Head. I have put thousands of students through Bebras over the last 10 years and once again these were some of the very highest scores I have ever seen, testament to some of the outstanding students we have here at Maiden Erlegh School in Reading.

Mr Redrup –  
Strategic Lead for  
Computer Science







## Sports

### Maiden Erlegh Reading PE fixtures Sept – Dec 2023

#### U12 & U16 boys 5-aside

Mr Blakeway selected seven Year 7 boys for the U12 5-aside (Logan, Opoku, Irfan, Danilo, Arnav, Jayden and Aahil). They had a great start to the tournament winning all their group games, scoring over 10 goals in the process. They managed to win their Quarter final 5-2 v The Wren. They were then handed a tough Semi-final draw against Bohunt in which they narrowly lost 2-1 having lost player of the tournament and top scorer Arnav to an injury. Bohunt went on to win the tournament after beating MER. The boys should be very proud of themselves for their first outing in MER colours.

The U16 side (Emmanuel, Abdul, Jayden, Tom, Ben, Krishan, Nihal, Toprak and coach Akwasi) had a tough group draw being drawn against Bohunt, Theale and The Wren. The boys narrowly lost games against Bohunt (eventual tournament winners) and The Wren. After an inspiring team talk from Mr Hibbins, the boys managed a 3-0 win against Theale. The tournament came to a premature end after losing 2-0 to High down. It was an unfortunate end to their tournament, but the boys were pleased with beating Theale and hope to use this as a springboard for their U16 11aside season after February half term.

#### U16 boys' basketball

The frantic sport of basketball was tough on our boys at the start of the season. They came to two narrow defeats v Maiden Erlegh and Reading boys early on the season. Both games were frustrating as we had held leads for a good length of time in both games. The Reading Boys game provided a real test as they had an England youth basketball international in their



starting team. After going back to the drawing board in training the boys managed to find a great performance to beat Bulmershe school, which even included a short appearance from the Y11 coach Costel who is still recovering from a serious injury. With still one game to go against JMA, the boys are looking to finish the season and their MER basketball career off in style.

#### U12 Girls football

The girls have had a tough start to football at MER with some tricky games and tough defeats early on. However, as the competition progressed the girls learnt from previous errors



and managed to beat JMA B and hold JMA to a draw. They also suffered some narrow defeats against two of the four finalists. The girls will take a lot from their games and hope to use the losses and lessons learnt when they take to the field as part of the U14 squad in the 2024 season. Well done to all involved!

#### U14 Girls football

The U14 girls were in an uphill battle before the league started with the only team in their round of fixtures to not have a player that played for a club outside of school. The girls battled hard throughout a season where games were postponed and cancelled due to horrific weather. After a few early season losses, the girls managed a brilliant 3-0-win v Reading Girls School. It was a tough season for the girls with several new faces from the U12 team in the 2022 season. This season will have given them a closer bond, ready to battle it out in the 2024 season. Well done, Girls, great effort!

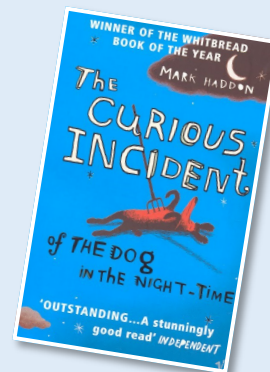
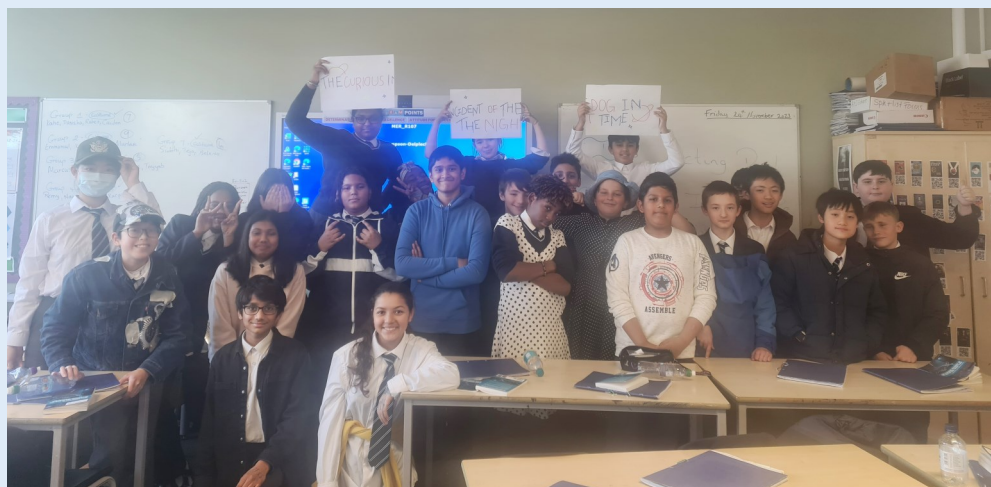
#### U16 Girls football

The girls entered the final season of their MER football career in high spirits. It was a particularly long season with the girls playing 8 games in total, plus an end of season friendly against Leighton Park School. The girls finished mid-table after 3 wins and 5 defeats. Ayana was very influential in midfield and Aoife kept her hands warm throughout with a string of impressive saves. The girls rounded off the season with an impressive victory v Leighton Park with a stand-out performance from Sara who filled in for Leighton Park in the first half scoring against MER and then managed to score 2 more goals past Leighton Park in the second half when she switched back to her true MER colours.





## Year 8 - 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time'



On Friday 24th November 2023, both Year 8 classes 8m/En3 and 8e/En2, under the guidance of their English teacher Mrs Thompson-Delpheche, showed off their acting skills through a series of self-directed performances inspired by the play that they were reading in class, 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time'. The competition hosted by their teacher displayed the hard work and efforts put in by the students as well as newly built teamwork skills and even some future actors in the making! The students had great fun dressing up in costumes according to their roles and they were very much into the competitive spirit. Congratulations on



their fantastic performances and kudos to the winning teams- Joel, Mai and Raniyah ( 8m/En3) and Remy, Nate,

Kacper, Navaneeth, Ke-Shai, Emmanuel, Abdullah and Murtaza (8e/En2).



### Facilities Hire

Our fantastic school facilities are available for hire to the general public. For information on lettings for the next academic year please contact the school.

### TERM DATES 2024

#### Spring Term

8th January -  
9th February

19th February -  
28 March

#### Summer Term

15th April -  
24th May

3rd June -  
23 July



## AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS



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

Click on envelope to view recent communications



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



### MCAS -

Please contact us at [MERoffice@maidenrightrust.org](mailto:MERoffice@maidenrightrust.org) for support.





# ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FACILITIES TO HIRE?

We welcome enquiries about the private use of our facilities. If you would like to come and see what facilities we have to offer, please arrange a visit via Reception or contact us by emailing [merlettings@maidenerleghttrust.org](mailto:merlettings@maidenerleghttrust.org)

A full list of our facilities and hire charges can be found on our website or by contacting our school Business Manager.



SPORTS HALL – NETBALL COURTS – TENNIS COURTS – DANCE STUDIO –  
MUSIC STUDIO – MAIN SCHOOL HALL – DINING AREA – ATRIUM – MULTI USE  
GAMES AREA (MUGA) – CLASSROOMS – MEETING ROOMS



**81 CRESCENT ROAD, READING, RG1 5SL**



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SCHOOL IN READING