



Friday 2 February

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **MER “Heads Up” News**

As we near the end (1 week to go!) of a short, but no less busy first half of the spring term, I thought I would give you an update on some of the activity and events that have taken place at MER so far, as well as a reminder of some of the key events ahead.

Our students have been their usual magnificent selves, working hard in class and supported so well by our dedicated and committed teachers and support staff. The Trust values of Aiming High, Working Together and Being Inclusive, underpin all that we do at MER, the support and encouragement offered by our staff, to each and every student, is second to none. One plea that I would ask of our parents and carers is this; working hard in class is, of course, so important, but there are two other vital ingredients to ensuring that all of our students aim high and achieve their potential. The first of these is attendance, having the occasional day off school really does have a negative impact on learning and achievement, as does taking holidays within term time. It is so important that we give our students every chance to succeed and being in school, every day, is the first and most important step towards that goal. Secondly, working hard at home, to consolidate the learning done in school, is essential to achieving academic success. Homework is given for that reason, it will help to embed learning in the long term memory and help to practise and master key skills.

Hard work and commitment really does pay off, our Year 11s have been magnificent this week; focused and motivated to do their very best in the first week of their PPE exams. Meanwhile, students in every other year group will shortly be receiving their next round of teacher assessments, which will be sent home to you, as usual through BromCom.

The enrichment programme continues to provide excellent opportunities for every student to get involved in something different, outside of the classroom, Ms Zubairy-Moore has been running drama trips, most recently to the Reading Rep' Theatre; Mr Butchers and Ms Zubairy-Moore are working hard with the cast on the much-anticipated school production of Aladin, while house competitions are underway this week in the PE department. The list of clubs available is extensive, and too long to include here, but from crochet to debating, CCF to chess, there should be something for everyone so if they are not involved in something already, please encourage your children to have a go.

Coming up next half term:

- **22/02:** No after school clubs will run due to staff training.
- **23/02:** school is closed to students due to staff training (across the Maiden Erlegh Trust)
- **27/02:** Year 10 Progress Evening: a letter has been sent home via our Wednesday weekly communications.

Please don't forget School Street operates on Crescent Road from 8:15am-9:00am and again from 2:45pm-3:30pm which means you cannot drive down it during these times. Please remember that the majority of surrounding streets are residential and to ensure you park respectfully without blocking any driveways etc if you are dropping off/picking up your child, thank you. If you are able to volunteer some time to help us with School Streets, or would like further information before deciding, please email [c.swart@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:c.swart@maidenerleghtrust.org) . You don't need to give a daily commitment, but to have more people on our rota would be extremely useful and I am sure we can all agree that having Crescent Road as a School Street does make it much safer for your children.

Please encourage your child to prepare themselves for the school day the night before so they do not forget any items that they might need (eg; PE kit, food tech ingredients, homework etc) – as per the email before Christmas, we are no longer accepting items such as these and will ask you to take them home again. The only thing we will accept if forgotten is a homemade packed lunch.

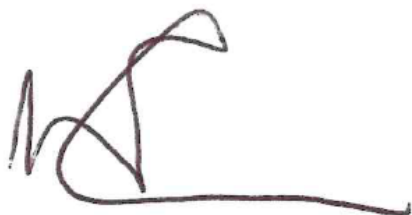
If your child has a medical appointment during school time, please ensure you email [merattendance@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:merattendance@maidenerleghtrust.org) in plenty of time (ideally 48 hrs notice if possible) so that they can be marked accordingly. Also, if you are not collecting your child, but they are going on their own, we MUST have this in writing before we will allow them to leave unaccompanied. Further to this, it is not possible for us to have to fetch students from classes, so if they do need to leave for an appointment during the school day, the onus is on them remembering and coming to meet you.

Please don't forget the new Stevenson's Shop is now open and based in Chatham Place in Reading where you can purchase any of our MER branded uniform items. We will also be launching a second hand uniform shop after half term, so please keep an eye out for future communications regarding this exciting venture that we hope will be helpful to some of you.

My highlight every week is 11.15 on a Friday. I get the chance to meet so many amazing young people who have been nominated by their teachers to come and meet me for a hot chocolate and a chat about their achievements. From: excelling in computational thinking; working so hard to improve their English as their second language; being brave enough to compete in the MER's Got Talent contest; to having their short stories published in an anthology, the quality of work and the range of achievements is staggering. I look forward to meeting your child for hot chocolate soon!

Have a wonderful half term break when it arrives (12-16 February).

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Will Graham', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Will Graham**  
Headteacher  
Maiden Erlegh School in Reading