



11 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of our first full week of the new academic year, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and to share some of the many positives from what has been an excellent start to the term.

I have been incredibly impressed by the way our students have returned to school. Their attitude, conduct and commitment to learning have been exemplary. By lunchtime on Friday, students had been awarded an incredible **36,398 DREAM points**, with a remarkable **99% ratio of positive to negative points** across the school. This is a fantastic reflection of the standards our students are setting and the positive culture we continue to build together. They should be incredibly proud of themselves.

I would also like to thank parents and carers for your support in ensuring that students have returned to school meeting our uniform expectations. The overwhelming majority of students have got this absolutely right from day one. If you are ever unsure about any aspect of our uniform requirements, please refer to the guidance on our website, which includes examples of acceptable school shoes and answers to frequently asked questions.

I have also been delighted by the enthusiasm shown by our new Year 7 students. Over the summer break, many took part in the Headteacher's Challenge, and I was incredibly impressed by the quality, creativity and effort evident in the entries I received.

This morning, Mr Webb and I had the pleasure of sharing hot chocolate with some of the students whose submissions particularly stood out. They were a delight to spend time with and were keen to tell us about the many positives they have already experienced during their first week at secondary school. I am pleased to report that every student spoke enthusiastically about their lessons, their teachers and the new experiences they have encountered so far. Most importantly, they all told us they were looking forward to learning even more in the weeks and months ahead. It was a wonderful reminder of the excitement, optimism and ambition with which our Year 7 students have started their MER journey.

Over the coming weeks we have a number of important events taking place for parents and carers:

- **15 September** – Year 9 Information Evening
- **16 September** – Year 11 Information Evening
- **29 September** – Year 7 Information Evening and Meet the Tutor Event
- **30 September** – Year 10 Information Evening
- **13 October** – Year 8 Information Evening



These events are an excellent opportunity to learn about the key milestones and priorities for your child's year group, as well as the practical ways you can support them throughout the year. I strongly encourage attendance wherever possible.

One of the highlights of our school calendar takes place on **22 September**, when we welcome prospective Year 6 students and their families to our annual Open Evening. This is one of my favourite events of the year and a wonderful opportunity to showcase our school community. Many of our students will be invited to support the evening as tour guides or departmental helpers, roles which they always undertake with pride and enthusiasm.

To facilitate the event, **students will finish school at 2.10pm on Tuesday 22 September**, and **school will begin later at 9.40am on Wednesday 23 September**.

I would also like to remind parents that **ClassCharts** remains one of our primary methods of communication. We use the platform to share information about attendance, behaviour, homework and key school updates. If you have not yet signed up, please do so as soon as possible. Should you experience any difficulties accessing the platform, please contact us and we will be happy to help.

Looking further ahead, I would also like to draw your attention to two changes to our start time following the longer school holidays. Students will return to school at the later start time of **9.40am on 4 January** and again on **12 April**. We are providing this advance notice to help families plan accordingly.

Finally, I want to say how excited I am about the year ahead. The first week has demonstrated what a fantastic group of young people we have at MER, and I am confident they will achieve great things over the coming months. Thank you, as always, for the support you provide not only to your children but also to the wider school community. Working together, we can ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive.

I wish you all a restful weekend.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Gibbs
Headteacher
Maiden Erlegh School Reading

