



MAIDEN ERLEGH  
SCHOOL IN READING

# The Pulse

*Aim High, Be Inclusive and Work Together*



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

## Winter art competition

This year's Winter Art Competition was open to ALL students. The winners were judged by Mr Graham awarding first, second and third place. Some 5 runners up were awarded 'commendation'.

### 1ST PLACE



Maryam 8P1

### CALENDAR

6th January	START OF TERM
14th January	Year 9 Vaccinations
23th January	Think Ahead Day
29th January	Recruitment Event
30th January	GCSE Subject Information Evening
3rd to 7th February	Mental Health Awareness Week
11th February	MEIP Information Event

### 2ND PLACE



Aeiza 9G1

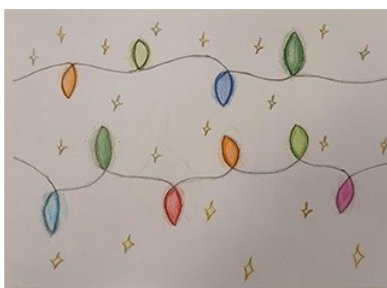
### 3RD PLACE



Julia 11T2

## Winter art competition

### Commendations



## FROM THE HEADTEACHER



As we draw a close to the autumn term and to 2024, I wanted to share some of my reflections and highlights with you from the last eighteen weeks.

It seems a long time ago that we celebrated our latest GCSE results and wished our out-going Year 11s well on their onward journeys to further education and future employment. We were proud and pleased of the achievements of our students in their final exams, and whilst we were quietly confident that their results were comparatively strong, the DFE confirmed this week just how well they had performed. Our overall progress score was positive for the third successive (post Covid) year and placed us in the top two non-selective state schools in Reading; 54% of our students sat the EBAac examination subjects, compared to the local authority average of 47% and national average of 40%; this is testament to the broad and balanced academic curriculum that our students follow at MER, making us the best school in Reading in this regard.

Our current Year 11s are working hard to emulate their predecessors in the summer of 2025, having just completed their Pre-Public Examinations, they followed this with excellent engagement and participation in the Trust Careers Fair and, most recently, had an excellent day working with local employers, who visited MER to give every Year 11 student the opportunity of a practice interview. The foundations are firmly laid once again to give our students every chance of fulfilling their potential for the summer exams and beyond.

But of course, a broad and balanced education is not all about exams and academic study, the wide range of enrichment opportunities that have been afforded to our students, across all year groups, is testament to the commitment of our hard working and dedicated staff who continue to strive to aim high for all our students. As well as the weekly after

school clubs on offer, students have enjoyed a number of opportunities for enrichment

experiences outside of school, including; trips to Harry Potter World, the Houses of Parliament, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Reading Climate Change Conference and, most recently, the Lionhearts Challenge.

In addition, there have been a number of other additional opportunities and events this term that are noteworthy: The National Bebra Computing Competition; Anti-Bullying Week; On-line Safety Parents Information Evening; Young Voice event; Cultural Dress Day and, last but by no means least, our second successive Student Progress Day; it was particularly pleasing to see an increase in the number of appointments booked by parents this year with over 700 booked in for the day. This event was another positive sign that more and more of our community are engaging with the MER dividend, following our best ever attendance at our October Open Evening.

At this time of year we inevitably have to say goodbye to colleagues who have chosen to move onto fresh challenges, Frances Van Heerden (Assistant Phase Leader), Ashleigh Studley (Science Technician) and Zoe Wildman (teacher of Physical Education and Health & Social Care) will leave us at the end of this term. We would like to thank each of them for everything they have done since joining our school to support our young people, and wish them well for the future.

Wishing staff, students, parents and carers a wonderful Christmas break and a happy and healthy 2025!

We look forward to welcoming students back into school on Monday 6th January 2025.

*Will Graham*

## Visitor from Reading Rep

On the 13th and 27th November year 10 and Ms Z-M were very lucky to have Sam Amestoy visit us from Reading Rep. Sam is an experienced actor and director. He also does several voice overs for video games. He was so much fun, and the students really loved his enthusiasm. He taught them lots of practical skills which they can use in their exams. He focused mainly on 'An Inspector Calls' but also went into detail about Rudolph Laban's movement and skills. The students had to move around the room

trying out different techniques and learning very professional drama terms. We look forward to seeing Sam again in 2025! We also hope to see him on television one day soon!

Ms Z-M



**READING  
REP  
THEATRE**

## Year 7

Well done year 7 on making it through one of the harder terms of the year! I am really proud how you have all transitioned to secondary school. You are all making a great effort to make the most of what MER has to offer. Keep showing the MER way, keep attending extra curricular clubs and keep working hard in lessons.

I will never get bored of teachers telling me how brilliant you are in your lessons.

Enjoy your break with family and friends and come back in January well rested. Try and think of a new years resolution that will help you to continue being the best version of yourself.

Mr Hibbins

**D** DETERMINATION IN ALL WE DO  
**R** RESPECT FOR OTHERS  
**E** EXCELLENCE IN OUR WORK  
**A** ATTITUDE FOR SUCCESS  
**M** MATURITY IN OUR CHOICES

We are excited to share that we have been selected to participate in the  
**TESCO STRONGER STARTS CHARITABLE INITIATIVE**

We hope to be able to expand our **Breakfast Club**, offering free, healthy snacks to any family who is unable to provide this for themselves.

Just use the **blue coin** provided at the checkout to vote for Maiden Erlegh School in Reading – every little helps!



**Vote in any Reading Tesco Express or Extra store**



**MAIDEN ERLEGH  
SCHOOL IN READING**





## Y11 MET Higher Education Fair

Year 11 attended the annual MET Higher Education Fair on Friday 22nd November at Maiden Erlegh School. It was incredible to see our students engaging with representatives from a range of apprenticeship organisations, colleges and universities - aspirations were certainly flying high! Students were supported by

staff to seek advice on next steps and their futures beyond Post 16, drawing new destination points on their individual plans.

We wish our Year 11 cohort the very best as they plan the next few years of their education, reminding them to always aim high.

*Mrs Cotton*





“ Great opportunity to help with any stress in relation to interviews. Gives a clear idea of what is expected. ”

“ Very knowledgeable and fun to speak with them and also helped with my confidence in speaking about myself. ”

## Year 11 EBP Workshops

On Monday 2nd December, Year 11 took part in a workshop exploring the wide world of Post 16 - specifically thinking about how to interview for new educational and professional, workplace settings. Students were guided in the art of handshaking, the conduct to show during an interview and how to ensure their answers were in every way - perfect! Their workshops lead to an individual, 1:1 interview with a Business Volunteer on Friday 6th December - with every interview held being a huge success!

“ Great chance to gain some experience and learn what is expected of me in an interview. Also went very well. ”

Our 18 Business Volunteers all varied in their professional background and ventures - from Insurance, to the RAF to

Hospitality. All students conducted a 10 minute interview, putting their workshop skills and tuition to practice. Our EBP volunteers said that our students has 'resounding character', with one pair of volunteers saying with absolute certainty that a job would be offered to every individual they met with.

The professionalism, maturity and engagement from Year 11 was outstanding. Myself and the colleagues supporting the interviews were so incredibly proud of how they approached the challenge. In every way, Year 11 showcased the MER Way.

*Mrs Cotton*





# 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@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:merlettings@maidenerleghtrust.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**



0118 966 8065



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



**MAIDEN ERLEGH**  
SCHOOL IN READING

## Year 8

Where is the time going? I cannot believe that we have already finished our 4th Term since we started at MER together in September 2023. I am so pleased with the progress that we have made since last year. I have been blown away by the maturity that we are starting to show as a Year group and the resilience that we are developing together. We have been focusing on RESPECT within our school community, and it has been incredible to see that Year 8 have been awarded over 59,000 DREAM points since the start of the Year.

I have also loved seeing more and more

Year 8's getting involved in the schools' extracurricular offer including - A trip to Harry Potter World, A trip to watch Snow Queen, Matilda - The School Production, The Christmas Concert, Year 8 Girl's Football and Handball/Basketball Clubs plus many more.

We are really starting to build a community ethos within Year 8 and are working together to strive for the best. I am looking forward to watching you all thrive in 2025.

In the words of Jose Feliciano (and an ode to my Spanish teaching) "a Feliz Navidad próspero año y felicidad" *Mr Carpenter.*

## Students busy rehearsing for the Christmas Concert



## Lionheart Challenge

On Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 26 of our Y9 and Y10 students took part in the Lionheart Challenge, which involves students from three of the secondary schools in the trust (Maiden Erlegh and Chiltern Edge being the other two) working in teams to create a local business/ project plan for a community initiative designed to help deal with local community problems. These initiatives can target challenges such as homelessness, local climate change action, loneliness amongst the elderly, and poverty. Students presented to a panel of judges which included Andy Briggs, the managing director of the Oracle Shopping Centre, who sponsor the Challenge, and our own Anna Finlason who is the Trust's careers lead. Our students took the role of team leaders in many cases and were responsible

for winning several of the awards on offer. Notable contributions included the artistic design and visual representation award, won by Yolanda's team (with her artistic contributions being praised by the whole panel) and best presentation award, won by Luca's team with his presentation skills also widely acclaimed by the judges. The overall winning team were also strongly represented by our school, with Johnson, Deborah, Luca, Taulant and Hector playing a key role in their success. Well done to all students involved; I look forward to seeing many of you back for next year's challenge!

*Mr Tomsett*





**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 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**
-  **Cranbury College**
  -  **GREAT HOLLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**
  -  **HamiltonSchool**  
A PLACE OF EDUCATION, GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY
  -  **MAIDEN ERLEGH CHILTERN EDGE**
  -  **MAIDEN ERLEGH SCHOOL**
  -  **MAIDEN ERLEGH SCHOOL IN READING**
  -  **OAK TREE SCHOOL**
  -  **RIVER ACADEMY**



## Return to Hogwarts - A magical day out!

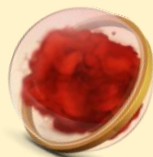


On 26 November I, along with Mrs Lone, Mrs Cotton and Miss Hancock, had the privilege of taking 50 of our year 7 and 8 students to Warner Bros Studio London – The Making of Harry Potter. All the students were impeccably behaved throughout the day and fully engrossed in all things Harry Potter! We visited during the Hogwarts in the Snow event so we got to see a snow covered Hogwarts and the students got to see the different ways the film makers made the snow for the movies. They saw all the brilliant props that were used in the film, ride broomsticks and some got to taste Butterbeer.



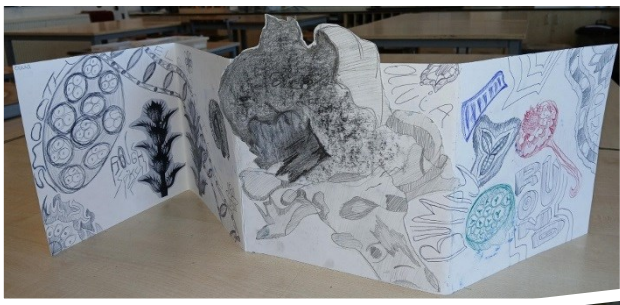
This is always one of my favourite days of the school year and this trip didn't disappoint!

Miss Davies



## Art Years 8 & 9

Year 8 have been inspired by the Architecture of Gaudi and Hunderwasser this term. They researched and responded to the theme of nature in Architecture.



Year 9 students have been exploring Natural Forms over the last term. They created beautiful observations and created dynamic prints inspired by the work of different artists.



## Year 10 Art and Photography trip to the V&A Museum,

On Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December, Year 10 Art and Photography students went on a trip to the V&A Museum. The students were very excited as for some this was their first visit to a museum such as this. Both groups of students were able to explore the various galleries looking at artefacts from different cultures and soaking up all the museum had to offer. The Photography students visited the Photography galleries and got to see famous photographs first hand, while exploring the ideas of storytelling through this medium. They also got set activities to photograph structures and people outside the museum and outside on the street. Both Art and Photography students were able to research different ideas and collect a range of images and observations to support their current GCSE portfolios. We are looking forward to bringing this research back into the classroom and developing it into some creative pieces. Thank you Year 10 for such a great day out!

*Miss Jordan and the Arts Team*



### Staff Lino Printing Workshop

MER Staff enjoyed a Lino Printing Workshop on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December! Staff were able to make festive cards and explore creating multiple layered prints from their own designs! It was a lovely session and we hope to be able to do some more throughout the year.



## Year 9

### Continuing the trend of my Christmas song!

On the 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas, Year 9 gave to me:

- (Over) 12 different extra-curricular clubs attended
- 11 golden tickets awarded
- 10 amazing members of the Year 9 tutor/support team
- 9 new starters
- 8 morning marshals
- 7 wonderful assemblies
- 6 fantastic tutor groups
- (Over) 50,000 DREAM point
- 4 months of being role models to the younger students
- 3 year groups lining up in the morning
- 2 more terms to go in Y9...
- 1 fabulous year group!

*Miss Ryan*



### Chess Club

Akindu year 10, an amazing chess player, definitely an asset and a gem for the whole Chess Team! Thank you so much for being such a valid member. You are a STAR!

*Mr Kaloudis*



### SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Click button for our latest Safeguarding Newsletter



## Annual Cultural Dress Day



On November 21st we held our annual Cultural Dress Day. This is a day when students and staff alike shake off their school uniform and put on the best and brightest of their culture dress for the day.

It was wonderful to see so many taking part this year and we were blown away by the many beautiful outfits on the day. The day sparks some fantastic conversations

about our cultural background and heritage. It is brilliant to see students engaging in and celebrating what makes them unique - and what makes MER such a diverse and special school.

Our next Cultural event (the Cultural Fair) will be held in the summer term.

*Mrs A Harvey*



## Young Voices Online Safety Summit

On 20<sup>th</sup> November a small group of Y11 students attended the Young Voices Online Safety



Summit held at Reading Town Hall. This was a great event where the students were able to share their views on a variety of topics to help the organisers think about "What do adults need to know" and "What do adults need to ask" in order to support young people. There was a variety of guests in attendance such as the Reading Youth Council, The Breck Foundation and Molly Rose Foundation amongst others.



The students engaged brilliantly in the discussions throughout the day and provided valuable insight into the topics.

*Miss B Davies*

## The Snow Queen



On the 11<sup>th</sup> December Ms Z-M, Mrs Simpson and Ms Camilleri took 50 students from year 8 and 9 to see 'The Snow Queen'. It was a fantastic afternoon with lots of funny and 'icy' moments in the theatre. The students were brilliant and all had a great time.

*Mrs Z-M*





## SCHEME AT RISK OF ENDING DUE TO LACK OF VOLUNTEERS

### Be a School Street marshal

Crescent Road is closed to traffic from 8.15–9am + 2.45–3.30pm, Monday to Friday, during term time.

Volunteers have been closing the road since February 2022, supported by the council. Around 2000 children attend three schools on Crescent Road and accidents were happening to pedestrians. It is now **quieter, safer and calmer** for everyone.

Marta O'Brien from the University of Reading measured air quality in the area. She said the School Street: '...helps reduce the air pollution, which is dangerous to health, especially to the younger population that is still growing and developing. A School Street scheme is also encouraging a healthier lifestyle and active travel.' She confirmed that the **Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) levels dropped** on average by over 40% between January to March and April to May 2022.

Alfred Sutton school asked parents and carers what their thoughts were on the School Street and 98% responded that it made them feel 'good, positive, happy, relieved and safer'.

Volunteers receive training and generally do one shift (morning or afternoon) each week. More volunteers are needed to keep the scheme going. Chat to a marshal or email [meroffice@maidenerleghtrust.org](mailto:meroffice@maidenerleghtrust.org) to find out more.



## Climate Conference 2024

On Tuesday 12th November 7 of our students attended the InterClimate Climate Conference 2024, a mock version of the real Cop-29 conference taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan. Schools from across Reading took part in the debate which also saw the students discuss local climate action and question a climate change panel in the afternoon session. Serene, Bo and Abeeha (pictured) were representing Barbados, with Tanveer, Shivi, Adrian and Harshil representing Australia. *Mr Tomsett*



## Sport

During this half term we have had a range of sports and exciting news go on for some of our students.



Year 7 girls football got off to a tough start losing their opening 2 games but in the following 7 games got 4 draws. They grew in confidence and learnt a lot to take into future football competitions, they had some good chances to turn the draws into victories but unfortunately not to be this time round, however they turned out to be a tough team to face, they kept many clean sheets along the way so a big shout out to Gracie the year 7 goalkeeper who made herself a tough opposition and the stand out player.

Year 7 boys football had a 5 aside tournament taking on the local schools, which they got off to a flying start in the



tournament, not conceding any goals until the semi-finals. The year 7 team topped

the group winning both of their games and winning their quarter final tie. In the semi-final against Theale school, they conceded early on but fought through the game to get back into it and even had a last-minute goal ruled out. But a fantastic first outing for the team leaving them in a good place for

future games later this year.

Year 11 boys' football had a 5 aside tournament as well against local teams, however, were not as fortunate as the year 7. Tough opposition early on left us fighting from the very start and two narrow 1-0 losses meant it was an early exit for the year 11s, but still, they have the league to focus on after Christmas.

Year 10s' have had two handball fixtures playing a friendly game and a league game. In the friendly game we played a year 11 team from Reading boys' school in a tough physical battle but coming away with a 8-7 win against them. In the league game against Maiden Erlegh School they came out winning 22-12 a much freer flowing game. Stand out performers being Ezra and Henij so far. Looking into the new year they will have national cup and league games for the year 10s and all other year groups in the school.

Onto some exciting news Arnav in year 8 has just signed for Oxford United after passing his trial and Salim in year 8 is excelling in Athletics after an impressive display in the indoor competition where he came 1st place in 5 of his 6 events.



Onto the new year we have the Netball, Handball and football season all about to go in to full flow as we return please look out for updates on this into the new year.

*Mr Blakeway*

## Year 10

Well... what can I say. What a fantastic term this one has been.

Year 10 have started their work experience journey, completed their first PPE and have been competing with Year 7 to have the best attendance in the school.

The strong start to this year has been overwhelmingly positive and I am beyond excited to see the determination, resilience and enthusiasm, that I have no doubt Year 10 will bring to the rest of this academic year.

Bring on 2025!!! *Mr Sparks*

## Year 11

Year 11, what an eventful term you have had with workshops, interviews and PPE exams and results. You are no doubt, feeling a little weary but I know that you will come back, ready and determined for the term ahead. Be kind to yourself, resting as well as revising over the Christmas period. Ensure you seek support, have a sense of balance and always wake up each day with a fresh start and resilience in your heart.

*Mrs A Cotton*



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



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