

Trust News



MAIDEN ERLEGH
TRUST

March 2024



CEO Welcome



Welcome to the spring edition of our newsletter. It would not be possible to do justice to all the excellent things that happen in our schools in one short newsletter, but the contributions below will give you a snippet of just how busy school life has been over the spring term.

I have been privileged to attend several set piece events this term. The simply outstanding production of 'Oliver' at Maiden Erlegh School, and our Year 11 presentation evening at Maiden Erlegh Reading particular highlights, but there have been many more also.



It has been wonderful to spend some time in our schools and to witness first hand our core values of **Aiming High, Being Inclusive and Working Together** being lived out by our children and young people, and our brilliant staff.

On 5 March, I had the pleasure of visiting River Academy with the the project team and seeing the inside of the school building for the first time. It was very pleasing to see the enormous progress that has been made on the interiors and get a feel for the space that the students will have when they start in September.



I hope you enjoy this edition on our newsletter, and I wish you all a wonderful Easter break.

Jonathon Peck
Chief Executive Officer

EDE Reflection



A few weeks ago I was encouraged to **"aim high"**. However it was nothing to do with academic excellence or school performance.... rather, I was challenged by the amazing year 6 pupils

from Birch Hill Primary school to climb a mountain...and get to the top!

I had the privilege to visit pupils and staff at the Rhos-y-gwaliau outdoor education centre in North Wales; it was great to spend a day with them as they took part in some fantastic experiences in the great outdoors. Through these opportunities it was wonderful to see children challenging themselves and succeeding. When we got to the top of the mountain, we reflected that the views and sense of achievement had been worth the climb up. We had aimed high – and through hard work, determination and encouragement, we got there.



Aiming high was also one of the themes of our annual staff conference. This was a real highlight of the term as we gathered together staff from all of the schools and teams across the Trust for a day of inspiration, development and networking. During the day staff shared best practice and learnt from one another, inspired by a collective determination to be the very best we can be in our work and support for pupils and students.





Spring term is also where we see our recruitment efforts accelerate. This has been especially true this year with September's further expansion of Oaktree school and, of course, the imminent opening of River Academy. We have been determined to "**aim high**" and recruit the very best people, and we have been delighted to appoint many excellent and experienced staff to various roles; we look forward to welcoming them to our Trust staff community in the near future.

Finally, we are so proud of our determined pupils and students who choose to "**aim high**". At this time of year we are particularly mindful of those pupils and students facing public examinations and assessments in the near future. We wish them every success and encourage them to remember, that the achievement of getting to the top of the mountain makes the climb worthwhile.



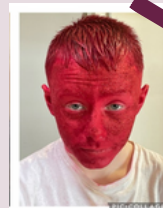
Andy Johnson
Executive Director of Education

Hamilton School



The highlight this term has been the successful parents evening; seeing students proudly show their parents around the school and hearing all the positive conversations around progress and targets.

We had an amazing turn out for both staff and students for **World Book Day** and it really showed the community spirit here at Hamilton.



Our Year 11 students successfully sat their trial exams this term and we are extremely proud of their efforts.

Our theme this term is Environment, and we are so pleased with our students being more aware of recycling and the impact on climate change. Well done Team Hamilton!

Birch Hill Primary School



It has been a very busy and exciting Spring term at Birch Hill Primary. Year 6 have recently returned from their residential in Wales where they enjoyed various activities including mountain climbing and kayaking.



Earlier in the term, we held our annual '**Take One Picture**' Art Week and Exhibition where each year group produced amazing pieces of artwork based on a famous painting.

This year the focus was on '**A Tiger in a Tropical Storm**' by Henri Rousseau. The Exhibition was a great success and parents really enjoyed coming along to view the wonderful artwork.



Year 4 recently performed their play '**Reach for the Stars**', and Year 3 held a poetry recital and mini fashion show based around their topic 'How Can We Look After Our World?' looking at plastic pollution and thinking how we can apply the 3Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

World Book Week was another exciting event starting with a '**Book in a Jar**' competition and finishing with a Pyjama Day inviting children to come to school in their PJs and share their favourite bedtime story.

Great Hollands Primary



It has been another busy term, packed with lots of great learning for all. KS1 had a fantastic visit to **Hampton Court Palace** as part of their termly topic work, finding out about what life was like during the reign of Henry VIII.

World Book Day was celebrated in style by the whole school with a '**PJ Day**' when pupils and staff were encouraged to bring in their favourite bedtime story to share. Each class now also have access to their own 'bookshop' containing lots of new books chosen by the children that they can borrow to read at home.



KS2 held an **Italian Day**, concluding their topic for this term. The children came dressed up either as famous Italians or in the colours of the Italian flag. The day was packed with activities, including making delicious pizzas!



Cranbury College



We have had another great term at Cranbury College with continued development across both sites.

We look forward to our primary building changes over Easter to create more space for learning and continue to work on our plans for the development of the secondary site – very exciting!

We've been very pleased with the roll out of our new reporting system which allows us to provide parents and carers with purposeful and meaningful feedback, in both academic and pastoral areas.

At the secondary site we're pleased that our newly trialled drop-down days have all been a great success. This time has been used for numerous external agencies to visit, including the **Fire Service who delivered water, rail, road, and fire safety for our students, as well as a Careers Day**. The students also hosted a successful Christmas Fair for the community.



We welcomed our new **Hospitality and Catering Teacher, Mr Bedford**. He's been teaching our students how to make foods from different cuisines around the world, including a **Ramen bowl with egg drop broth and pork dumplings**.

We continue the great work in the hospital supporting many young people and providing a great service to the patients on Dolphin and Lion ward.

We have also had students participate in the **UKMT maths challenges**, welcomed in outside agencies to engage with students on topics such as drugs and exploitation and drinking and held an information evening focused on helping parents of Year 11 students to support them in the run up to exams.

We also had a brilliant afternoon whereby our students engaged in the **MEIP programme**, presenting their projects with their very proud mentor, Mr Tomsett.

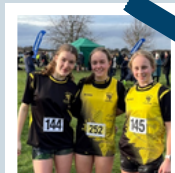


Maiden Erlegh School



The Maiden Erlegh School **Science Fair** was a resounding success, boasting the highest number of entries in the fair's history with 43 entries across all Key Stages. The event displayed a fantastic array of scientific knowledge and fresh, new ideas. Parents attended in full force, adding to the buzz and energy. Huge well done to all students involved in this phenomenal event.

In addition to this, we have achieved amazing results this term in numerous sporting events, showcasing exceptional talent, teamwork, and sportsmanship. From **Year 7 Netball coming 4th in the Wokingham SWIFT League out of 14 local schools, to Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students qualifying for the Southeast England Cross Country Championships**; our athletes displayed determination and skill across many sporting disciplines.



Maiden Erlegh Reading



Maiden Erlegh School in Reading have had a very busy and exciting term! We welcomed our ex-Year 11 students back for their GCSE Certificate Presentation Evening – it was really lovely to see them all again and catch up on what they are up to now. We were lucky enough to have **Miriam Manderson, Head at Rooks Heath School**, give a speech for the second year running and award some special prizes to students who really went above and beyond in demonstrating the 'MER Way' during their time with us.

Science week was a great success, with KS3 students taking part in the **national Baylab Lab coat competition** and KS4 students have been looking into the history of the universe, working on timelines from the beginning to the present day. Our Year 10 science ambassadors also played a great role by going into the KS3 science lessons to do small, fun science demonstrations with the younger students.

We are also extremely pleased to report that our recent **Quality Assurance Review** outlined fantastic results, being recognised, and commended for continuing to demonstrate the high-quality provision that students receive across all key stages. This amazing outcome would not be possible without the dedication and support of our staff, students, and parents.



Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge



Mrs Bowers joined the school as Headteacher in January and has enjoyed many highlights so far including the **Year 9's trip to Bletchley**. This was a great opportunity to get to know the students who were a real credit to the school.

Our PE and Science teams have done some great outreach work with our local primaries, with PE hosting athletics events at MECE and the Head of Science going on the road with some science experiments! The **Science department also organised an innovative and well attended Science Week**.



Students across the school have exhibited real competitive spirit with two teams of geographers shining at the inter school competition at Reading Boys and our Year 8 & 9 Girls Rugby Team, who were thrown in at the deep end with their first competitive game, still managing to come out smiling!

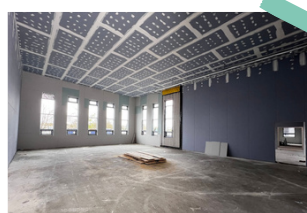
Finally, our students have exercised their rights as citizens to make their voices heard and their letters to the council about the recent bus consultation are full of well-written persuasive arguments and a lot of emotion about the importance of our school.

River Academy



The River Academy project is really starting to take shape now. We have employed all of our teaching staff and have a wonderful set of highly experienced and very well qualified teachers coming to us from across the South of England. It is clear that the teaching community is as excited as the parent community about River Academy as we received large numbers of applicants for each vacancy.

The building is not far from completion now with the **internal fit out continuing apace**. The size and scale of River Academy will become clear once you have walked around the building and it will be a wonderful place to learn and grow for our students.



And lastly, we have been **working hard with our community** links visiting a range of local sports groups, neighbourhood associations and businesses ahead of our grand opening in September.

Oak Tree School



Our secondary students have been embarking on an innovative journey by connecting their core subjects to the world beyond the classroom. By relating their learning to real-life scenarios in the community, they are not only broadening their understanding but also developing their social skills to the world around them. Moreover, the establishment of our school council signifies a significant step towards student empowerment, as we diligently implement the suggestions received with a clear plan for the future.

Meanwhile, our primary students are flourishing through enriching experiences, particularly enjoying visits from the library. Their phonics skills are rapidly developing, evident in their increasing engagement across all subjects. It's immensely gratifying to witness their remarkable progress, as they demonstrate growing independence in both learning and self-help skills.

We recently celebrated both **World Book Day** and **Red Nose Day** with great enthusiasm. These events provided wonderful opportunities for our students to engage with literacy and empathy, fostering a sense of community spirit and social responsibility.



Maiden Erlegh Institute



Maiden Erlegh Institute continue to offer several different CPD opportunities across the organisation. Over the next few months, we will be running HLTA workshops, Designated Safeguarding Lead Course, Behaviour Support Programme, Developing Yourself as a Leader, Developing Classroom Oracy Workshop, Developing a Mental Health Toolkit Course, Youth Mental Health Course and Aspiring Deputy and Headteacher Workshop.

If you are interested in any of our courses, email MElooffice@maidenerleghtrust.org.

