



THE GRIFFIN

ISSUE 3: JULY 2019

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Welcome to our Newsletter

As I come to the end of my first two terms as Headteacher, I am impressed and in awe of many of our students and staff and how hard they work to make this an incredible and rewarding place to work. One of my initiatives has been 'Student of the Week', which is nominated by the teachers for any student who goes above and beyond and is rewarded with a hot chocolate during break time. A few weeks ago, over a hot chocolate, a student explained his interests included poetry. Never a man to miss an opportunity, I asked him if he could write a Maiden Erlegh poem. With no other instruction, below is what he produced. I am sure you will all agree it is superb and reflects what I hope a lot of our students and Alumni feel about #TeamMaidenErlegh.

Mr Paul Gibson
Headteacher

'A Student To His School' by Chris, Year 12

I can't describe how much I've changed,
Since I arrived in this new place.
For the very first time, with a bag too big,
And an anxious, slightly rounder face.

It isn't just the things we know,
It's the people we meet and the imprint we make,
Recollections that follow us as we grow,
And a life based around the decisions we take.

This school: It gave me all of that,
The people I hope never leave,
Who've always kept my mind on track,
In the difficult times and the moments of need.

The teachers, who always worked so hard,
Who cared even more than all the rest,
On a Sunday night with a favourite mug,
Putting one last mark on a student's test.

Of course, there will always be the days,
When things can get a little tense,
When the books pile up, and the pens run out,
And the smallest workload seems immense.

But I'm still glad to find myself,
Outside that gate as the cars come in,
When the birds sing in the courtyard trees,
And where the day isn't hard to win.

And I'm still glad to call this school,
The one I went to; the one I knew,
Because the overwhelming truth,
Is that this place grows up – with you.

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RIVER ACADEMY

Maiden Erlegh River Academy

Maiden Erlegh Trust is delighted to announce that the Department for Education (DfE) has approved our application to open a new secondary school in north Reading.

Maiden Erlegh River Academy will be a high quality, inclusive school for students of all abilities and aspirations, and from all backgrounds. Through the school's rich and broad curriculum, we will provide opportunities to study a range of GCSE and vocational courses. The school will not only equip students with skills and qualifications that will enable them to access high quality post-16 study or apprenticeships, but will also prepare them for a range of career opportunities both locally and further afield. Finally, it will also increase parental choice in north Reading and address the current shortfall in secondary places within the borough.

Mary Davies, CEO of Maiden Erlegh Trust, said "we are delighted and very proud to have been awarded this project. Maiden Erlegh River Academy will aim high in all aspects of its work. Community and inclusion are key to the Maiden Erlegh ethos and this new school will prepare students, from all backgrounds and of all abilities, to fulfil their aspirations. The new school's curriculum will deliver high quality academic and vocational courses, as well as a range of enrichment opportunities. This will mean that our students will leave us ready to take their place in the community as well-rounded and confident young adults. We also want Maiden Erlegh River Academy to be a leading educational establishment in the local area supporting the training and development of teachers and support staff".

Chair of Maiden Erlegh Trust, Nick Jones added "partnership plays an important part in our work and so, in delivering our unapologetically ambitious aims for this school, we will work closely with parents, the community, local businesses and Reading Borough Council."

Maiden Erlegh Trust would like to thank all staff and stakeholders who have worked tirelessly on putting together what was a very strong application. We look forward to welcoming the parents and students of Maiden Erlegh River Academy into the Maiden Erlegh family of schools, and to working closely with the community, the local authority and other schools in the area to ensure that we can shape our vision for Maiden Erlegh River Academy to meet the needs and ambitions of the community it will serve.

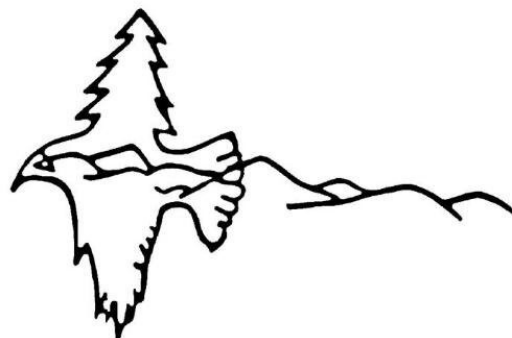




Tyr Abad Outdoor Education Centre

Maiden Erlegh School is proud and privileged to be joint owner of Tirabad. Together with Charters and Emmbrook schools, Tirabad has become an incredibly successful centre that has been educating students for over 40 years. Many alumni have mentioned their fond memories of their time at Tirabad whilst students at Maiden Erlegh School.

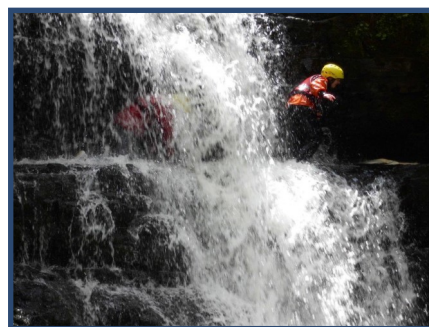
Tirabad Residential Education Centre is situated in the village of Tirabad near Llangammarch Wells. It serves the needs of students throughout the year providing outdoor activities and field study courses as well as more specialised courses as the need arises. Three full time teachers staff the centre, all experienced and qualified to lead outdoor activities along with three student instructors.



The centre achieves its aim through numerous outdoor pursuits including: climbing, mountain walking, caving kayaking and canoeing, problem solving shelter building, along with many other activities.

Students benefit from attending Tirabad courses in many ways. Due to the nature of the courses students are able to make new friends and enjoy time with other students. They are also able to push their independence to levels they are confident with, in doing that self esteem and confidence levels are raised. They take part in sports that are not readily available on the doorstep in Reading and the surrounding areas. This introduction to activities can sometimes lead to lifelong pursuits in areas such as caving, climbing and kayaking.

The students at Maiden Erlegh School are incredibly lucky to have such an opportunity available to them, it certainly is a unique part of Maiden Erlegh life.





Maiden Erlegh News and Awards

Maiden Erlegh Trust joins over 450 organisations that have signed up to the **‘Time to Change’** pledge. The Trust is committed to help change the way we think and act about mental illness in the workplace.



March and April saw Maiden Erlegh School collaborate with Waingels College and The Bulmershe School to deliver three information conferences aimed at parents. Presented by Elizabeth Burton-Phillips, MBE, At Maiden Erlegh School, the conference on **Drug Abuse** was a huge success with over 100 parents in attendance.

Our ethos is never to be complacent, and to test our work against external benchmarks. This term the quality of our work has been acknowledged by Ofsted, but also with a **Berkshire Apprenticeship Award** for “most innovative education-based apprenticeship promotion initiative” This, again, shows our determination to provide a well-rounded education in a positive and respectful environment.





Proud sponsors of The Nick Stamp Trophy at the Sports Personality Awards



Preparations are underway for the 12th Annual Sports Personality evening. During the evening, one of the many awards that are being presented will be the Nick Stamp Trophy. We are very proud to have former student Charlie Hiscox returning to sponsor this trophy for the event.

Charlie now runs uSports - delivering high quality sports coaching sessions in and around Reading. His journey to running uSports today has been very interesting, as he tells us below...

During my final year at Maiden Erlegh, in 2014, I was faced with the decision of whether or not to go to University to study Sports Science. Throughout my school years I had been an active member of the sporting community within the school and knew that I wanted to follow this passion as I left school. I took the decision to defer my place at Birmingham University and to travel. On my return, I worked at a number of coaching companies and built up my coaching experience, achieving a UEFA B licence during this time. Sports will always be my passion, but these initial years of experience highlighted to me the need to follow another passion of mine: business. I began taking on more leadership roles in the companies I worked within and once I left the final coaching company I decided to take the leap and start my own coaching company.

This is how I began uSports. I ran my first clubs in January 2018 at Aldryngton Primary School, my old primary school. These first days were tiring and testing. I worked late into the evenings to develop my own website and to begin developing the skills I would need to run a successful business. Fast forward 18 months to today and uSports has moved on leaps and bounds. I employ 10 full time members of staff, alongside an additional 24 part time coaches. I even run holiday courses from Maiden Erlegh in the school holidays.

My time at school has not only shaped my career, but my personal life also. My girlfriend and I have recently bought our first home together after first dating at Sixth Form and are now waiting for our new puppy to join us this summer. I have made life-long friends and have even been able to connect with past teachers to help develop uSports.

My experiences at school significantly shaped what I do to this day, and I am very proud to sponsor the Nick Stamp Trophy at the Sports Personality Awards at Maiden Erlegh this year. Not only did I love sport at school, but this is also at the heart of uSports: providing sporting opportunities to young people.





Student Profiles

Chloe Bateman (2012)

I am afraid my story of what I did after leaving Maiden Erlegh involves returning to Maiden Erlegh (twice!).

I left Maiden Erlegh School to go to the University of Oxford to study History in 2012. I graduated in 2015 and decided to remain at the University to study a masters in Modern British and European History. This gave me the opportunity to specialise in the history of education, class, and social mobility. The highlight of this was completing my dissertation which was based on oral history interviews with men and women who had been the first generation of their families to attend university in the 1950s and 1960s.

I had known that I wanted to be a teacher ever since I was a primary school student myself. However, I did not want to rush into what I knew was a challenging profession without having gained experience of working in education. I therefore returned to Maiden Erlegh in the September of 2017 to work as a Teaching Assistant. Not only did this give me the invaluable opportunity to observe and work with so many experienced teachers, it was also hugely rewarding to build relationships with so many wonderful students.

During my year as a Teaching Assistant, I made a successful application to study for a PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate of Education) at the University of Oxford to become a History teacher. This was a fantastic year in which I worked at two placement schools in Oxfordshire and greatly enhanced my understanding of teaching and learning.



Although I did briefly consider applying for jobs at other schools, I always knew that I would be very tempted to return to Maiden Erlegh. My education at Maiden Erlegh gave me the confidence to embrace new opportunities, the resilience needed to manage challenges, and, most importantly, the principle that I should always try my best at whatever I turned my hand to. I wanted the opportunity to give something back to the school which has equipped me so well for life beyond it. So, in September 2018, I did indeed return to Maiden Erlegh (again!) as a teacher of History and Religion and Philosophy. The last year has been, without a doubt, the most challenging and most rewarding of my life, and I am excited to see what my future career holds.





Jade Bradley (2013)



'Footballer.' ... was my response to anyone that ever asked what I wanted to do when I grew up. I was always aware that football would more than likely have to be just one of several jobs due to the lack of funding in women's football. So, I kept my options open and focussed on my education as well as my passion.

I finished my GCSEs at Maiden Erlegh in 2013, and went on to take my A-Levels at John Madejski Academy, as I could train and play football full time whilst there. I gained 3 A-Levels in PE, Psychology and Geography, and went on to Buckinghamshire New University to study Sport and Exercise Science. Again, I chose my university based on my then club, Reading FC, having a full-time football and education scheme. I chose Sport and Exercise Science as I knew I wanted to get into strength and conditioning for athletes.

During my time at sixth form and university I picked up some major injuries. At 18, I had reconstruction surgery on my ankle, an ongoing injury for a few years. I felt close to quitting at times but at the end of the day, the one thing that took my mind off everything else was football. I'd been at Reading Academy from ages 8 to 16, and then straight into the women's set-up until age 20. What was the point in quitting something that I'd spent my whole life planning and trying to achieve? I decided to take 3 months off, really focus on myself, my body, my injury and my mental health and get to a place where I felt ready to compete to a high standard again. In that time, QPR Women contacted me and I signed for them for the following 6 months, building my match fitness, improving on technical aspects, and getting better at anything I could. Portsmouth then contacted me at the end of the 17/18 season and I signed for them for the 18/19 season.

The first season with Portsmouth couldn't have gone any better. I'd played 90% of the games, had no major injuries, had good performances, goals, assists and felt the fittest I'd ever felt. But we lost too many games for my liking, we're a team that should've been competing for the title but we had a bad run that left us a gap too big to close down the top 3.





Despite the anti-climax of a midtable finish, I managed to scoop up Player of the Year and Player's Player of the Year this season which is by far my biggest achievement to date. To be recognised by the management and my teammates is the biggest compliment I think you can receive in football. I've also been given the vice-captaincy for the club. At 22, again, this is massive as most the team are older than me!

I've also worked at Reading FC as a coach for 4 years now. It's a great working environment, where you can pass on what you know to the younger generation. It's also great being surrounded by people who know how much I value my playing career and will help me at any point if I need it. I've learnt little aspects of the game off other coaches, in terms of



coaching and in playing. One thing I'm massive on is 'growing' as a person. If it doesn't help me grow as a person, then I'm not interested.



Since graduating, I have set up my own Strength & Conditioning/Personal Training business called OneTen Life. On that note, shout out to my business teachers for the help when it came to all the business jargon! Running a business is hard work but I love it and work never feels like work when you love what you do. I'm currently working with male and female footballers, triathletes, marathon runners and casual fitness lovers. I'm still learning a lot but like I said, if I'm growing as a person, businesswomen and athlete then I'm happy

Where are YOU now?

Every newsletter we would like to feature profiles on former students to share where they are now, along with any fond memories of their time at the school. If you would like to be featured please contact us on alumni@maidenerleghschool.co.uk. It has been an absolute pleasure to read about the journeys of our students once they leave Maiden Erlegh School and we would love to hear from you!

We would also welcome visits from alumni and would be delighted to welcome you back to talk to our current students or attend events at the school. Please email alumni@maidenerleghschool.co.uk and let us know how you would like to help.



In February the Performing Arts Department put on a highly successful performance of Grease. This was the culmination of 5 months' work and involved students from Years 7 to 13 and staff from across the school. The cast performed three sell out performances as well as performing to students from Whiteknights Primary School. Students were involved in a variety of roles from onstage to backstage, lighting, sound and in the band. Every aspect of the production was fantastic from the acting, singing and dancing to the music, the props and staging. The full size car was a highlight of the show and audiences came away wowed! The students involved were dedicated and enthusiastic from the very first audition to the final curtain call.

If you have memories of a production you were involved in and would like to share these fantastic memories please send these to alumni@maidenerleghschool.co.uk, don't forget to include some pictures!





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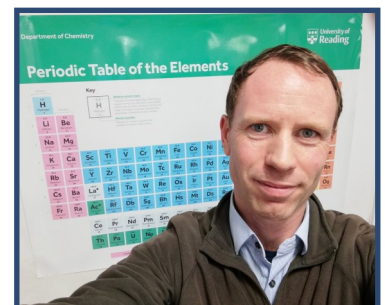
Earlier this year, Maiden Erlegh School hosted the first Trust wide Careers Fair. Maiden Erlegh School has hosted an annual careers fair for over 15 years, but this was the first which invited all the students across 3 secondary schools within the Trust - reaching a potential audience of 2400 students.



This was a hugely successful event with the largest number and most diverse range of delegates ever to attend from local, national and international businesses. We also had representatives from apprenticeship providers, universities, and colleges. Several alumni joined us to share their careers paths since leaving Maiden Erlegh and this was very much recognised and appreciated by the attendees.



The Careers Fair helps all our students to focus on the world of work, to begin to develop their ideas about employment and to make important choices about their futures. Year 10 and Year 11 students are planning for entry to Maiden Erlegh Sixth Form or alternative routes; Sixth Formers are preparing for further studies at university or elsewhere, or for training or employment. The Careers Fair can help in speaking to industry experts and exploring the opportunities available to them so that they take control of their own career destinations.

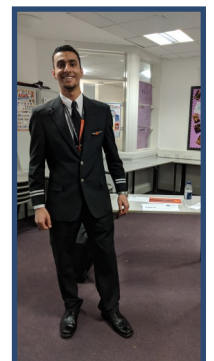


Some of the feedback we received :-

"I think it was very interesting because I saw there are more careers that I am interested in."

"Very interesting, lots of different opportunities and very friendly people."

"Excellent insight into future opportunities and what I need to think about now in order to get there."



If you would like to represent your career or company at the next Careers Fair in February 2020, please email office@maidenerleghschool.co.uk.



New Head Boy and Head Girl Appointed

Congratulations to Emma Jones and Wesley Moon for being appointed the new Head Boy and Head Girl. Together they will lead the Senior Team in addressing issues raised by the student body. We wish you the best of luck in your new roles.

Emma Jones



I'm very excited to take on the role of Head Girl and I cannot wait to work closely with our amazing Senior Team in the coming year. With representatives for Wellbeing, Equalities and House Captains, I am sure that this year's Senior Team can offer new and creative ideas to celebrate 'opportunity, diversity and success' at Maiden Erlegh.

We hope to continue the growth of the LGBTQ+ Safe Space, improve our environmental impact as a school and bring mental health awareness to the forefront of the discussion. With the re-launch of the House System, we plan to celebrate success across all subjects and year groups, giving our students and their extensive range of talents the full recognition that they deserve.

Wesley Moon

I am very grateful to have the opportunity of the role as head boy and I am thrilled to be given the chance to help and support the school and all students, positively, in as many ways a possible.

The Senior Team and I intend to put emphasis on helping to improve the students' attitudes towards environmental problems that impact their lives in and outside of school. As well as this, we endeavour to help to support students with their wellbeing and mental health, which may arise from exam stress and students beginning to feel the pressures that they face in today's modern world.



New House Structure

In September, Maiden Erlegh launches a brand new house structure. Votes were cast by the student body to choose house representatives from a long list of inspirational personalities from various different disciplines. The final choice was:

- Wilde, Yousafzai, Roddick, Curie, Bolt and Attenborough. We can't wait to initiate the new house events and see which house can earn the most points in the new academic year! **#TeamMaidenErlegh**



Young Innovators Challenge



STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths) Club won 3rd place in the 'Practical Action - Fragile Freight Challenge' at 3M group headquarters at the 3M innovation centre in Bracknell. The competition had an entry of nearly 2000 students from some 17 schools locally with 52 groups entering in various categories. The students were tasked with designing and building a model/system to move the greatest possible weight of cherry tomatoes in a controlled manner from a height of 85cm to ground level - a scaled down version of a very real logistical problem faced by communities in Nepal. Following a presentation, the students had to demonstrate their idea and give a five minute presentation and then take questions, in front of guest judges from various engineering disciplines. The judges were

very taken at how maturely the boys presented themselves and were suitably impressed with the concept. The judges also commented how high the level of competition had been this year. So for a first attempt it was an amazing achievement considering the short time frame they had to design and make their model. The level of dedication and application the boys showed meant this was a worthy recognition for their efforts. The aim now is to go one higher and win next year's event!



Keep in touch

Website: [click here](#)

Email: alumni@maidenerleghschool.co.uk

We enjoy hearing from all our Alumni and would love to hear from you. Please email with any memories of your time here, or any news of what you are doing now and you could be part of the next issue. **@MaidenErleghSch**



#TeamMaidenErlegh