

3 April 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

End of Spring Term

In the absence of a Newsblast this term I wanted to write and update you on things going on at Maiden Erleigh and the virtual MES that is now in place. In these unprecedented times it is clear that much of society is having to adapt quite dramatically to the current climate and all of our priorities must be focused around keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe. It would also be wrong of me not to acknowledge the work of all the key workers in society who often go unnoticed and on behalf of Maiden Erleigh School we want to send our heartfelt thanks for all they are doing.

School Provision

As you are aware, we are operating a school provision for a limited number of children. These are:

- Children of key workers who cannot be safely cared for at home.
- Children with an EHCP who cannot be safely cared for at home.
- Children with a social worker.

If you have not accessed a school place, but believe that your child is now eligible for one, please contact the school office on office@maidenerleghschool.co.uk.

Supporting children and young people with worries about COVID-19

The internet is full of so much advice for parents that it can be overwhelming.

The government have issued advice [here](#).

In conjunction with Oxford University, our friends at Reading University have pulled together lots of the information into one advice sheet that we hope parents and carers will find it useful. Please click [here](#) to view this information.

It would be sensible to mention to your child that the Childline website has lots of useful information and advice. Even the most resilient children have worries and concerns.

The one recurring theme in all the advice is about connectivity – encourage your children to communicate with their friends and stay in touch using any means available to them.

I have been incredibly impressed with the resilience demonstrated by our students. In a period where there is so much uncertainty they have settled down to carry on with work in a determined fashion, a trait that Maiden Erleigh students always show and one that makes me exceptionally proud of them. I have watched the Year 11 and 13 students carry on with their studies despite the uncertainties around their grades this summer, and I will be writing to the parents and students in these year groups today to update them on the most recent announcement. For Year 10 students due to sit RP this summer, we will be in touch in due course regarding options.

With the ongoing fight against COVID-19 the school has donated 20 pairs of science goggles to the Woodley Centre GP surgery following a request from them. I have also contacted the Royal Berkshire Hospital to offer these and I am pleased to say that on Monday I will be picking up goggles from all 3 Maiden Erleigh Trust secondary schools and delivering over 100 pairs to protect the frontline staff.

Your child has had an assembly uploaded to their Year Group Google Classroom as we believe it is nice to hear someone else's voice outside of those the students live with. We would normally have an assembly at Easter with key messages and we hope that this goes some way to replacing that. Please do keep following our twitter feed for updates from the school.

We are starting to look at student recognition over this difficult period and after Easter we will be doing a virtual student of the week alongside writing to those who have been identified for going above and beyond. We are also monitoring in more detail the work being submitted and teachers will be following the same guidelines for marking as highlighted in Annex 1 in the document below:

<https://www.maidenerleghschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=1100&type=pdf>

I would also like to give you an update on the provision of work being set by teachers. We have listened to the feedback so far and from the survey this week, it seems as though the overwhelmingly majority of students and parents are happy with what is being set. We do appreciate that there have been some access issues for a very small minority but this has now been resolved. Should you have any Google Classroom or access issues please email office@maidenerleghschool.co.uk in the first instance.

For the first two weeks since closure the priority of staff has been ensuring that we have work available for students via Google Classroom and this has given structure to the day for many. The feedback from the survey suggests that this is mainly pitched to the right level and in the right quantity. We have had some requests for live teacher led lessons and whilst we are happy for this to occur (I know many schools are advising staff not to do this) we are also not in a position to make this common practice for a variety of reasons and we hope you will support us on this front. I have asked staff to look at ways in which variety can be added to the work set and I hope you will see an even further improvement in this area after Easter. I would like to acknowledge the work of the staff here at the school who are working incredibly hard to bring some stability to our students' lives. Please remember that school staff are also juggling the impact of COVID-19 with family life, illness and the pressure this has brought on everyone and they have been nothing short of fantastic in their response so far.

Mrs Morgan has shared the following link with all students today via their year group Google Classrooms. It provides a short video on downloading documents and submitting documents on Google Classroom. Please note that many of the documents that are shared for students to complete are editable.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=9D50DBi1_x8&feature=emb_logo

Students in Year 7 and Year 8 will see a change to their work after Easter. Moving forwards we will run the timetable shown below, with subjects setting a larger piece of project work each week (approx. 3hrs). This is part in response to your feedback on helping students to manage their work during the school closure in Foundation. We also feel it allows students to explore topics in a greater depth whilst working at home.

Year 7

Week 1	Week 2
English Geography Technology Drama RE Languages	Maths Science History Music Art Computing

PE continue with guidance on daily exercise

Year 8

Week 1	Week 2
Maths Science History Music Art Computing	English Geography Technology Drama RE Languages

PE continue with guidance on daily exercise

On the topic of set work I have asked staff to not set work over the Easter break unless they feel some homework is required. This is to ensure everyone in our community can have a well-deserved break following on from a very challenging term.

Competition Alerts!

House Easter Competition-

We need you to get '*egg-stremely*' creative by **taking a picture or video**, showing us the **most creative way you can use an Easter egg**. Don't forget to **tell us the house you are in** so we can see whether it is Team Attenborough, Bolt, Curie, Roddick, Wilde or Yousafzai that comes out on top. It could be making a cake, building a tower or having an Easter egg hunt in your house - be creative. Using dog-friendly Easter chocolate, of course



Mary Berry would be impressed.

One house point will be awarded to all entrants and winning entries will gain even more house points, as well as have their ideas posted on the school Twitter and House Instagram pages.

Enter by posting it on your House Google Classrooms page OR tag us using @MESHouses on twitter & meshouses on instagram!

Google Classrooms codes:

ATTENBOROUGH: qwfzhhc

BOLT: ifryc7u

CURIE: mi3ntk

RODDICK: w36x0ro

WILDE: eib5gew

YOUSAFZAI: a2e4j4l

You'd better get **CRACKING!** Deadline - Friday 24 April.

House Easter Good Deed

Local Reading care homes are seeking art work and nice letters to decorate their walls, to bring a smile to the residents' faces who cannot see their loved ones during this difficult time.

To help spread some Easter cheer, create some Easter art for them, send them an Easter card or maybe even write the residents a letter. Send us a photo of your work, alongside a photo of you posting it off to your chosen destination.

Don't forget to let us know which House you are in and send photos of what you are doing on twitter, tagging **@MESHouses on twitter** and sharing it with **meshouses on instagram!** Then we can award you lots of house points for your good deed.



Art Competition

Art have also created a competition and we will see if the students can beat the staff! This information is found below and via our social media.

FAMILY ART PROJECT

In the comfort of your own home create a living painting of any famous Work of Art and take a photo of it.

Be creative with the whole family

By submitting an image for this competition, You give permission for Maiden Erlegh School to use the image to create a compilation file to be shared. Feel free to tweet the best to @maidenerleghsch

Upload your images along with a copy of the original onto this Google classroom k46lkom by Tues 28th April.

At the end of any term we have to say goodbye to staff members who are leaving us for pastures new and this one is no different. Firstly, Mr Lewis from our Maths Department is leaving us to join Fulham Girls College as a Maths teacher. From Maths and English we also say goodbye to Mr Beswick who has understandably cut short his stay with us to be back home in Canada with family and friends. Finally, we say goodbye to Mrs Sargent from the canteen who has been a fantastic member of our support staff. We wish all 3 members of staff the very best of luck in their new ventures, stay safe and keep in touch.

My final message to all of you is please stay safe. I am so privileged to be Headteacher of this marvelous school but what makes the job worthwhile every single day is the interactions with students, parents and staff – our team, #TeamMaidenErlegh. I look forward to the day when we can all walk back through the gates of school but until then please look after each other and I wish you a happy and healthy Easter.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Gibson
Headteacher