THE MAYNARD SCHOOL EXETER
MADE FOR GIRLS AGE 4 – 18

#MADEFORGIRLS

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THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Despite the ever-present threat of the new Omicron variant, the Department for Education have given a clear directive that schools should continue to operate as normally as possible. A couple of our year groups have had a small spike in numbers and I must thank those parents who have acted so quickly, flexibly and responsibly to get their children quickly PCR tested as soon as any close contact has occurred. Can I also thank those parents who have acted so intuitively and kept their children at home if they suspected any Covid-like symptoms. This is all such a difficult balancing act and, while we absolutely understand that parents also need to get to work, this team approach is very worth it!

At present, certain events such as Parents' Evenings, Senior Prize Giving and the Carol Concert are all still scheduled to go ahead although we will, of course, be watching the situation carefully and taking advice from the correct authorities at all times. I hope you will understand that there are few other events that have involved the mixing of bubbles where we have some concerns and these have been postponed.

Speaking of continuing with events, we have had another busy week. On Monday, the Year 6 enjoyed their Taster Day in the Senior School and, listening to their feedback, they clearly had a wonderful day of Drama, Science (where, I gather, they made gunpowder!), Classics and PE. I know all of this in particular detail because I spent an hour with them the day after, chatting about everything and anything! They were allowed to ask me any question and certainly put me through my paces from the 'best bits of being the Head' to the design of the senior curriculum! It was, however, a little easier on me than my tea party with Year 2 a few weeks ago when the opening question was, "How old are you?"!







On Tuesday, we held the Upper 5 Parents' Evening which I hope everyone found most useful at this important time when the students are choosing their A-levels. A similar event occurred on Thursday evening when it was the turn of the Upper 4 to come in and discuss their GCSE options for the year ahead. On both occasions, we had a very full house and a lot of positive comments from parents finding it useful to speak to their teachers directly.

I know a lot of you came along to the absolutely superb Christmas Fayre last Saturday and I have to thank the very active Maynard Parents Association for putting this on. It was very ably led by Louise Slimming but assisted by her team of hugely willing and hard-working volunteers including Gemma Rolstone (assistant organiser), Nicola Duncan (hamper designer), Jenny Read and Abi Dixon (grotto designers), Kate Daws (Chief Elf), Helen Grinyer (café proprietor). Sylvia Hepburn and Sarah Clarke (chocolate mountain tombola) and, of course, Santa! It really was a well organised and lovely event. As always, I spent a fortune as there were so many lovely Christmas gifts on offer. I ended up with pottery, jewellery, cheeseboards and a multitude of tree decorations! Christmas presents sorted! We look forward to the next MPA event which, I believe, may well be the famously competitive quiz night!

I treated myself on Thursday and went along to watch one of the GCSE devised drama pieces - as always, I found it incredibly clever with its creativity and dynamism. I always find these short productions quite remarkable considering the students have put them together entirely themselves, including the scripting, acting and choreography. Quite a talent!

I'm delighted to say that quite a few of our Upper 6 have received notification of their Oxford and Cambridge interviews this week and I know they have been putting themselves through many practice interviews recently in preparation. Can I thank any parents who have been involved in this interview process as your input is always so invaluable. I wish these students the very best of luck as getting an Oxbridge place when you are competing against the world is always extremely difficult. To even get this far is a true accolade.



I often wish parents could come along to some of our assemblies as each Monday one of our students will play an instrument or sing to the rest of the student body. This week was no exception with Joey playing her guzheng, which looks extremely complicated! Her recital was an absolutely beautiful sound, almost like an oriental harp. Thank you, Joey, and all of the other students who have performed this term as it's a wonderful way to start a Monday morning assembly. I would like also to applaud all of the Sixth Formers who deliver our Friday assemblies. This has become both the tradition and the norm at The Maynard and one that I look forward to each week. Their assemblies are always packed full of insightful and knowledgeable messages about current issues they feel strongly about and I am very proud of the way that they present their points of view and show such global awareness.

On to the week's news ....





Pre-Prep

Following on from the swimming theme of last week, the Pre-Prep girls have enjoyed another active week and had a wonderful time at Mini-Modern Dance. They have been working hard, developing listening skills to respond to the changes in music with corresponding changes in movement.

Reception

Reception have been learning about colour and light. They have investigated colour mixing to paint some truly beautiful and colourful rainbows.





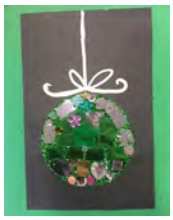
Year 3

Twelve of the Year 3s went to their first hockey festival yesterday and enjoyed lovely games against Exeter School, Exeter Cathedral School and St Peter's Lympstone. The girls have really improved this term and had a wonderful afternoon out in the sunshine!

Meanwhile, back at base, the rest of the Year 3s played an exciting Panthers vs Wildcats hockey match at school where they impressed with skills they had learned this term in their lessons. Quite a few goals were scored and the girls demonstrated some brilliant defending. Everyone tried really hard and finishing with fabulous Maynard cookies certainly cemented the joy of the afternoon! Well done, girls!

Year 5

5G have had a productive week in Junior School. We are excited that it is December and have really enjoyed our interactive advent calendar. We are thinking about writing instructions in our English lesson and followed some quite complicated instructions to make paper snowflakes to decorate our classroom. In Maths, we have been thinking about 12 and 24-hour clocks and all the different units we use to measure time. In Geography, we took part in an Atlas scavenger hunt in order to improve our atlas skills. We also used dictionaries a lot this week and played some fun spelling games.


On top of all of this, we also made some lovely Christmas cards yesterday. Our Christmas baubles required careful cutting out as well as an abundance of sequins and glitter!






Year 6

There was a lot of excitement in class this week when the Year 6 had the opportunity to quiz Miss Dunn all about life in the Senior School! They certainly kept her on her toes with their interesting questions, such as: What subjects would she recommend taking (Miss Dunn's own subject, Science, was subtly hinted at!)? What might you get a red for (they felt reassured that these weren't given out freely!)? And we all enjoyed listening to her answer to the question about what she loves most about the Maynard. Even after an hour of grilling, there was still plenty of girls with further questions and I feel Miss Dunn might have a line at her door all week!



Lots of fun (and mess!) was made in our Geography lesson where we learned all about the formation of different mountains types. We pumped magma into the Earth crust to make dome mountains, pushed together the Earth's crust to make fold mountains, we used triangular prisms to help demonstrate fault-block mountains and we pinched sand from the Pre-Prep to make our plateau mountains! However, the definite favourite was recreating the process of volcanic mountains with cream and biscuits - a lot of the earth's crust was eaten that afternoon!






Fabulous trip to Escot for the Lower 4s

On a beautifully sunny winter's day, Lower 4 and the tutor team had a lovely time out in the countryside yesterday, enjoying a variety of activities!



They warmed themselves up hastily on arrival at Escot by racing to complete the maze. Many got lost (including the teachers!) but we all managed to get to the centre eventually – largely through some helpful guidance from those waiting at the finish line. Well done to Jemima and Tala from L4N who managed to complete it in about three minutes!

The day was split between team-building activities and orienteering. The highly competitive Lower 4's were split into teams (complete with very creative team names) and were tasked with tackling: a toxic river stepping-stone challenge; an aggressive game of giant noughts and crosses; hilarious team skiing; and building a golf-ball channel.

Lunch time was spent in the Saxon village, with girls eating their packed lunches in the huts and then venturing out and exploring the different activities, we had some with their heads in the stocks, whilst others sat proudly on the thrones.

Orienteering included some extra challenges (and even more competitiveness!), such as building up the courage to go down the death slide and have a go on the zip wire. The orienteering was made even harder when one of the clues fell into an animal enclosure! We got glimpses of the wolves, the wild boars, and the arctic fox made an appearance in all it's cute and fluffy splendour. The ever-elusive lynx still remains unspotted!

All in all, it was a fantastic, fun-filled day at Escot for Lower 4!













Senior Maths Challenge

Huge congratulations to all those who competed in this year's Senior Maths Challenge. The students were extremely successful achieving two gold certificates, four silver and an incredible 13 bronze certificates.

A special well done to Hannah and Gloria who were invited to compete in the next round – the Senior Kangaroo.

Music news

It has been a busy week in the Music Department as preparations for Christmas start in earnest. On Monday, the Middle School choir recorded four carols for the Lord Mayor. The city's annual carol service has been cancelled due to covid and we were asked to record music, if possible, to send out for the Lord Mayor's digital message to the city. The choir rose to the challenge and sang beautifully. We look forward to sharing the link to their performance with everyone once the message has been finally edited.



Following the new restrictions, their performance was moved outside and the girls sang to greet the large number of visitors. Their singing was hugely appreciated and very well received (& much of the food on offer was then sampled by the choir!). Both choirs are now working hard preparing for the school Carol Service on Thursday 16 December at St. Matt's Church (7.00pm) alongside the Senior Choir and Staff Choir. We hope to see you there!





A third Grade 8 Distinction for Kristina

Huge congratulations to Kristina (Lower 5) who we have just heard has been awarded a Grade 8 Distinction on the piano. This is a tremendous achievement and adds to those she has already bagged on the saxophone and violin. As Mrs Smith remarked on hearing the news, "Wow - that is some achievement for a 15-year-old!"

Charity





Huge thanks to all those who so kindly donated a shoebox (or two/three/ thirteen!) to our annual Moldovan appeal. The Maynard sent off a small mountain of them again and we are so grateful for your generosity!

Next week, we would love your donations of items for the Exeter Foodbank – the students know what is required and we will be collecting everything up during tutor time. But the fundraising doesn't stop there and we also have a very exciting Elves and Angels Obstacle Race (with tutor groups each nominating a member of staff to dress up and participate) on Tuesday in aid of the Exeter Leukaemia Fund and, of course, the Christmas Jumper Day on Friday for Save the Children (£2 donation).









Ten Tors residential weekend: Pixies Holt

Mr Tabb reports

After much close-monitoring of the weather, we were quietly confident that Storm Arwen would allow our Ten Tors training to go ahead. So we set off bright and early on Saturday morning, with contingency plans at the ready.

Our base for the weekend was Pixies Holt, a Dartmoor training centre near Dartmeet. Saturday morning was spent 'in the classroom' going through navigation challenges, what to do in emergencies and getting ready to head out on to the moor. Then our four training teams were taken by minibus and dropped at various locations and given the challenge of completing their training routes before nightfall. Each team excelled and completed their routes successfully in the face of fierce winds and sub-zero wind-chill. Having the right kit made a big difference and everyone came back to Pixies Holt in good time and in good spirits, partly helped by the enormous quantities of cake that awaited them on their return!



By Sunday the wind had eased and we were lucky enough to have a clear, bright day ahead of us to tackle a full day on the moor. Our teams had an early start, a big breakfast and then headed out to Postbridge to begin. All four teams excelled once again, overcoming their own individual challenges, whether navigating across bogs or summiting high tors, but they all came in ahead of time and in good shape – with only one or two grumbles about 'never doing that again' whilst finishing off the last of the weekend's cake. However, I suspect they will all be back for more in our next training in the New Year!

Can I finish by adding my own thanks to that of our students and say an enormous "thank you" to our excellent volunteer staff. The weekend was a real success, despite some challenging conditions, and this was only possible because of everyone's time, effort and energy. Have a great Christmas and see you all in January!







Support Miss Hartopp in her festive marathon bid for the homeless



"We all hate the echo bike. But I'd hate being homeless even more. Christmas is coming and I would like to do something to support all those who have nowhere warm and comfortable to sleep this year.

At some point last week, as I was snuggling down into my cosy little bed and swaddling myself in cats, lavender scented hotties and knitted blankets like some kind of hedonistic Icelandic queen, I thought, "I'm going to do a marathon on the echo bike to raise some money for homeless people. What a great idea." I'm not even sure this is possible and I've never spent more than about 30 seconds on an echo bike but if my suffering can raise money for people who have no home, I'm willing to give it a try!

Please donate if you can; it'll mean an awful lot to me to be able to donate some money to this worthy cause."

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/elise-hartoppecho

A message from the MPA

Huge thanks to everyone that came and supported the Christmas Fayre on Saturday. It was so lovely to unite our wonderful school community on this festive occasion.

Your generous donations have produced 14 beautifully abundant hampers. To be in with a chance of winning one, please look out for raffle tickets that will come home with your daughters today or on Monday. Please return stubs and the correct money in the envelope provided and hand in to Main School Reception by Friday 10 December. 25% of the takings will be donated to Children's Hospice SW. Winners will be drawn and announced on Monday 13th December. Good luck!







WORDS of the Week

1. **GREGARIOUS** (adjective): fond of company; sociable

*"Belinda was very **gregarious**, making the most of the Christmas season to see her friends."*

2. **JOCUND** (adjective): cheerful and light-hearted.

*"Choir practice put everyone in a **jocund** and happy mood."*



Don't forget the Christmas Tree Decoration Competition

Entries are still open for our first ever Christmas Tree Decoration Competition and we need your help to make the four House trees look magnificent. You can make your decoration out of anything (eco-friendly is encouraged) and it would be great if you could use your House colours in order to dress your tree appropriately. There's a prize for the best decoration and we will also be judging the overall House tree. Please bring your labelled decoration to Reception and pop it in the box with your House name.

Have a fabulous weekend!