

MEI News

March 2024

Director Welcome



With the Easter break around the corner, I am pleased to be able to write to you with an update as to what The Institute has been doing since February. After the February half term break, colleagues from across Maiden Erlegh Trust participated in our annual Conference.

The theme of the conference was "Nurturing Potential, Unlocking Success," with a particular focus on SEND permeating through the day. The feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive.

We continue to offer several different CPD opportunities across the organisation. Over the next few months, we will be running Higher Level Teaching Assistant 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 participating in any of our courses, please email us.

We are also putting the finishing touches to our Thames Valley Challenge Partners Conference – looking specifically at behaviour, attendance, and classroom oracy themes. This year we are coming together as a Hub of schools at The Hilton Reading – we are excited to hear from different keynotes and participate in workshops to share knowledge, expertise and best practice.

We also recently delivered another Behaviour Hub Open Day – sharing with other schools our approach to behaviour, routines and building culture.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a relaxing Easter break.

Get Into Teaching Event

The MEI team was recently invited to the Department of Education Get into Teaching event, at the University of Reading. It was a great opportunity to speak to prospective applicants about a career in teaching and the next steps. Attendees found out about applying, booking school experience and learn about bursaries available.



There are lots of ways to develop your skills and progress your career within the teaching profession. We work with a variety of schools to offer training, so if you are interested, please get in touch.



Grow your own



As an averagely competent gardener, my experience has been that there is nothing more satisfying than growing your own fruit and veg. No plum crumble tastes better than the one made with fruit straight from the tree. When it comes to school life, I think "growing your own" is also hugely satisfying!

Last week I read in the newspaper that nationally we have failed to recruit the number of teachers we need. A few days later I also read that the DfE have lowered their teacher recruitment targets for next year..... Beyond the political scene, there are not many school leaders who aren't worried about the recruitment challenges. We know that the biggest impact on children's educational outcomes is a highly professional and well qualified teacher workforce. The lack of specialist staff in certain subjects and phases is, therefore, a real concern. It is why we are trying to play our part in addressing the teacher shortage.

For a number of years MEI has been at the forefront of developing teachers at every stage of their career and we are particularly pleased that we continue to attract trainee teachers or those who are in the early stages of their career. Many of our trainee teachers secure their first teaching post in the partnership school they trained in. This is great for the teacher, but also the best strategy that schools have for addressing the teacher shortage – grow your own!

Growth isn't just about filling teacher vacancies, but about professional and career-long development. So, beyond the ECT programme, we want to ensure that the teaching staff we work with have the professional support and development opportunities they need to progress and become ever more effective practitioners. Our many MEI courses and programmes are offering staff the opportunity to do exactly this.



Andy Johnson
Executive Director of Education

Apprenticeship Spotlight



Colleagues from across the Trust have enrolled on a variety of Apprenticeship programmes, allowing them to gain qualifications on the job.

In this issue, we talk to Tunde, Senior Finance Assistant at Maiden Erlegh Trust.

How long have you been with the Maiden Erlegh Trust?

I have been with the Trust for 6 years

What is the name of your apprenticeship?

Assistant Accountant AAT Apprenticeship Level 3

What inspired you to enrol on the apprenticeship?

I wanted to upskill in my role and gain a nationally recognised qualification

What are you enjoying most?

I enjoy my online sessions and I'm lucky to have a brilliant tutor

What challenges have you faced?

The course required me to complete the Functional Skill English Level 2 (an extra 3 exams!) and I have successfully passed.

What advice would you give someone who is starting an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship requires commitment and hard work. Do your research and find the right one for you.



Tunde Obreja-Fulop
Senior Finance Assistant

TSH Berkshire Redesignation



We are pleased to hear about TSH Berkshire's re-designation as our local Teaching School Hub for Berkshire. We will continue to collaborate and deliver the best teacher and leader development and feel incredibly privileged to continue to support the professional learning journey of colleagues. This includes the delivery of Initial Teacher Training (ITT), the Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications, as set out in the DfE's Teacher Retention and Recruitment Strategy.



MET Conference 2024

The MET Admin and Marketing Team, together with Maiden Erlegh Institute recently delivered the Maiden Erlegh Trust (MET) Conference. After 5 months of rigorous planning and preparation delivered by the Conference Planning Team, MET colleagues came together on 23 February for our first in-person conference since 2020.

It was great to see 550+ staff from across the organisation in the same space, connecting and developing relationships through the rich opportunities on offer. We had a programme of 80 sessions to choose from and this would not have been possible without the willingness of Trust colleagues to deliver relevant, engaging presentations and workshops.

On behalf of the entire planning team, it was a privilege to organise this meaningful event that saw everyone come together as 'One Trust, One Team'. The positive energy bounced off the walls and it was a rewarding sight to see.

The team have already regrouped following the event to reflect on the overwhelmingly positive and constructive feedback received and we look forward to developing the CPD offering further ready for the next conference!



Vicky Boatman
Executive Assistant to CEO

Mental Health Toolkit Course



The Mental Health Toolkit Course took place on 26 February and is designed to raise awareness about mental health and wellbeing and explores some of the challenges that young people face today and the ways in which we can all be mental health champions.

There is a focus on the cognitive behaviour approach to understanding depression and anxiety and we looked at some of the practical strategies that can be used to support individuals who may be struggling. There is a focus on the behaviour activation approach to help lift low mood and a focus on mindful approaches to help calm the body in stressful situations.

One of the delegates said, "the course provided me with a fantastic toolkit of strategies that I can use to support students with anxiety, depression and low mood."

I have thoroughly loved planning and delivering this course and look forward to the next one on 20 May 2024.



Laura Garner
Co-Head of Year 13

Upcoming Courses

- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Developing A Mental Health Toolkit
- Behaviour Support Programme
- Developing Classroom Oracy
- Aspiring DHT & HT
- Develop Yourself As A Leader
- Alternative Provision Ready Package

Booking via MEIoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org

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