



Marden High School

Friday 19th September 2025

Dear all

Parent Teacher Association

Over the past few years we have had a strong PTA at Marden High with lots of events organised ranging from quizzes to raffles to organising refreshments and even a summer fete. The aim of the PTA has always been to help support the educational experience of our children, in particular with funding extra-curricular resources, as well as helping to foster that great sense of community we enjoy here at Marden. Our next PTA meeting will be on Tuesday 30th September at 5pm, when we will be discussing what to spend our money on, as well as making arrangements for the annual Halloween Quiz which takes place on the evening of Thursday 23 October. At the meeting on the 30th we will also be considering what other future fund raising events we would like to hold to raise money for our children. Even if you have not been to one of our meetings before, why not come along, have a cup of tea and contribute your thoughts or just listen. The meeting will be in the Learning Resource Centre, the first space you come to when entering the school.

Open Evening

On Wednesday evening students and staff enjoyed welcoming the community for our Open Evening. Nearly one thousand parents, carers and children attended to look around the school taking part in the many exciting activities taking place. As well as presentations in the auditorium about who we are as a school and what children could expect if they come to Marden, prospective parents and their children enjoyed talking to students and staff about life at Marden. Our Head Prefects, Courtney and Lucas spoke articulately and passionately about their time at Marden. This was their first time speaking publicly in their new roles and they really were exceptional. The resounding feedback from our visitors was how well our students communicated with them and how friendly and welcoming the school felt. We look forward to welcoming parents, carers and prospective students to tour the school as part of our open mornings.

Student Development Programme

I often refer to the quote "100% of the shots you don't take don't go in". Providing a wide range of quality opportunities for students outside of lessons, to support the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom is part of the brilliant extra curricular offer we have for all students. On Monday evening, we held our first Student Development Programme parent's information evening. Parents and carers were invited into school to meet the external providers involved in delivering the Student Development Programme and learn more about the exciting workshops that will take place. The programme combines workshops from Hand Of, M10, and Worth Educating with the aim of building confidence and a range of skills that will

support students to achieve success. We look forward to seeing the progress that students make throughout the year and inviting parents and carers back at the end of the year to celebrate students' accomplishments.

Reading

Recent research has shown that many teenagers have been able to increase their reading age much more quickly than expected by the very simple method of reading challenging, complex novels aloud and at a fast pace. The key to this phenomenon was giving them a more engaged uninterrupted reading experience over a sustained period, which is very similar to what happened in our Reading for Pleasure lessons in English. Offering children this sort of challenge is important when they are developing their skills in a wide variety of areas, and is something that children can and should also be doing at home. Reading for pleasure offers significant academic benefits by boosting overall performance, enhancing key literacy skills like comprehension and vocabulary, fostering critical thinking, and even improving mathematical and spelling abilities. This engagement creates a positive cycle where improved skills lead to greater enjoyment, leading to further reading and cognitive growth.

Careers and futures

- Next week, our year 11 students will be engaging in a series of informative assemblies featuring a variety of post-16 providers including; local sixth forms, colleges and apprenticeship organisations. These sessions are designed to give students a clear picture of the diverse opportunities available to them after Year 11 and help them make informed decisions about their futures.
- We are happy to welcome back representatives from St Anne's College, Oxford University on Monday this coming week. We have worked with St Anne's College for a number of years and they always host an insightful session, giving students an exciting glimpse into higher education and spark many thoughtful questions about applications, courses and student experiences.
- We are excited to launch this year's Career Conversations programme. These sessions proved very popular last year, with involvement from a wide range of industry sectors, including; a Heart Surgeon, a Vet, a DJ and an Architect. These sessions offer real-world insights and allow students to connect with professionals from a variety of fields. This year we start with a very interesting talk from a parent who works for the Coroners Office. Thank you to all parents and carers who have expressed interest in participating. We are always keen to expand our network, particularly welcoming those with experience in: Paramedic services, Law, Fire Brigade, Creative Arts.

Sport

The Year 8 boys football team continued where they left off last week with another fantastic performance in their league game at John Spence on Wednesday afternoon. In perfect conditions for football, the Marden team took the game to their opponents from the first whistle, putting pressure on the home defence and creating lots of opportunities to score. This eventually led to the visitors finding three first half goals through some fine interplay and individual effort. After the break, Marden kept up their relentless attack on the John

Spence goal, finding the net another 4 times to make the final score 7-0 to Marden. A wonderful team performance and a game played with great sportsmanship throughout.

The extracurricular programme has now started, with a wide variety of sports and activities on offer to our students. The ever popular football and netball clubs have been extremely well attended, as have the rugby, fitness and table tennis clubs offered by the PE department. The lunchtime clubs in the sports hall have seen pupils from all year groups enjoying recreational games of badminton, volleyball, table tennis and futsal. Trials for our representative teams have also commenced, with fixtures in football, rugby and netball commencing in the next week. Pupils are encouraged to check the posters around school for information on the full programme offer. Parents can sign pupils up for before and after school clubs via the School Gateway app.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher