



Marden High School

Friday 28th November 2025

Parents and carers survey

The response to our recent parents and carers survey has been excellent with hundreds of people taking part. Once again, the most recent parent/carer survey data demonstrates widespread endorsement of the school's core culture, high expectations, and commitment to wider student development. Parents and carers overwhelmingly report that their children are happy and feel safe at school. This aligns strongly with our positive and open culture where students themselves say they feel safe. Our safe and calm environment means that the vast majority of parents and carers agree or strongly agree that the school ensures students are well behaved, and almost all parents would recommend the school to another parent. There are many other areas of the survey where parents and carers are highly satisfied and very complimentary, but we are also interested in responses which reflect a need to review practices. While 72.8% of parents and carers agree or strongly agree that reporting lets them know how their child is doing, this is the lowest percentage agreement, reflecting the need for us to reflect and review whether we can make improvements to this system. Access to Parents' Evenings is another area where, whilst a large majority agree they worked well, there are some comments we will need to have a closer look at. Thank you to all those parents and carers who engaged with this survey. Your views really do mean a lot to us and are very useful in informing future decisions.

Retrieval practice

"Is this a test?" This question is often asked by students. It is usually asked when students are handed a piece of paper containing a collection of questions. What students are experiencing through this sort of work is opportunities for retrieval practice. This is a regular feature of lessons in most subjects and it has two main purposes. Firstly, successfully retrieving information from memory strengthens the neural pathway to that knowledge, making it easier to remember in the future. So retrieval is a vital part of learning - we simply must practice retrieving it if we are to sustain knowledge. Secondly, retrieval practice allows the teacher to see what has not been successfully retrieved. This is crucial as it ensures that the teacher can focus on aspects previously taught that might need to be revisited, as well as see what has been successfully retrieved so they know not to spend time on this at that particular time. So the answer to the question "is this a test" is "no, it's more important than that!"

At home, parents and carers can support with this. Most homework will include some retrieval, particularly Sparx Maths and Sparx Science which is all retrieval. It is difficult to ask retrieval questions on topics you are not familiar with, but here are two things that might be done even if you have no knowledge of the content:

- 1) Ask your child to tell you about a question they have found difficult. What was the question and what are the things they need to remember the next time they see that question.
- 2) Work with your child to produce a series (5-10) of key questions relating to a topic. These can be written on flashcards and practised in the future.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

We extend our warmest congratulations to the 79 students who successfully achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award at the presentation evening this week. Their dedication, perseverance, and sustained commitment throughout the programme are truly commendable. We were pleased to welcome so many families and supporters who joined us to recognise and celebrate the hard work and accomplishments of our young people. We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Mr. Wallace, DofE Manager, and his dedicated team of support staff, who volunteer their time to deliver and facilitate this most valuable programme. Their guidance, encouragement, and commitment play a vital role in enabling our students to thrive and succeed. Congratulations to all involved on this outstanding achievement.

Connect

Justine Carmichael from Connect will be coming into school every Thursday lunchtime now starting this week. We have worked with Justine for a number of years now, and students past and present have appreciated her support. She will be based in the Pavilion, with the purpose of offering "drop in sessions" for students or groups of students who have a worry and need some support. This is an additional layer of support that we are offering, and form tutors, heads of year, and indeed any member of staff at Marden High are still available for children to speak to when they need that.

Church visit

With our upcoming visit to the church, on Friday 19th December, we are preparing students with a hymn practice, in assembly, during the Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 assemblies next week. Should you wish for your child not to partake in these assemblies, please let the Head of Year know by Tuesday morning so alternative arrangements can be made.

Sports Report

The Year 11 boys football team were in cup action against North Gosforth Academy last week. The boys were in high spirits going into the game, looking to progress in the competition and hopefully end their Marden career with some silverware. The game was played at a frenetic pace, with Marden enjoying the lion's share of possession and putting pressure on their opponents throughout the game. Their persistence paid off with Marden leading 2-0 at half time. The second half was more of the same, with Marden showing hard work and skill in equal measure to score a further 4 goals and take the victory comfortably 6-0. They look forward to the next round in the new year. Well done to all those involved.

On Tuesday this week, our Year 8 girls Athletics team attended the indoor competition at Marden Bridge Middle school. The athletes competed in a variety of events, including running, shot put and long jump. The girls performed brilliantly and enjoyed the experience, finishing in 6th place overall.

Wednesday saw the U15 girls football teams compete in the Central Venue League at John Spence. The two teams performed very well in cold and wet conditions, with the Year 10 team winning all of their games. The Year 9 team lost out to St Thomas More in the other game. Despite the horrendous weather, all of the girls enjoyed the games and showed great sportsmanship throughout. Well done to all players.

Finally, the Year 7 boys Futsal team played in the North Tyneside leg of the County Competition on Wednesday. They played three games on the night, losing narrowly to St Thomas More and North Gosforth, before battling back to draw 5-5 with John Spence in the final game.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher