



Friday 1st May 2026

Prefects

Year 10 students, soon to be the oldest students in the school, will have the opportunity to apply to be a prefect later this half term. Whilst there is an expectation that all students should be good role models, this expectation is heightened for those who will become prefects through the positive actions they take, from mentoring younger children to running lunchtime or sports clubs for other students. There will be details shared with students soon about the application process. I am looking forward to reading the applications - from what I know of this year group, I expect they will be of a very high quality.

Numeracy

At the start of the year, the House of Lords appointed the Select Committee on Numeracy for Life. Last month, it published a call for evidence on the importance of numeracy and how national levels can be improved. While evidence shows that students are performing well in Maths, nearly half of the adult population has numeracy levels expected of an 11-year-old. This creates significant barriers to employment, impacts financial management, and can even affect decision making around health and nutrition. To ensure our students are prepared for these real-world challenges, they engage with Marden's Numeracy News each week in form. This collection of local and international stories encourages students to look behind the headlines. For example, if a government grant is awarded, how much actually reaches our local area? What does a 3% wage increase look like in a weekly pay packet? If accidents are reported on a road, over what time period did they occur, and how does that compare to last year? This week the stories included Sabastian Sawe's record breaking London Marathon and that the army had chartered a commercial ferry from North Shields to send troops on a NATO exercise.

Co-opted Governors

Owing to several Governors reaching the end of their term of office, the Governing Body has a number of vacancies for **co-opted** Governors. Governors work with senior leaders in school to define the school's vision and long term goals; to approve and oversee the school budget, and hold the school to account for educational performance. They also ensure that legal duties such as safeguarding are met, and act as a 'critical friend' to school leadership through challenge, questioning and school visits. There are six Governing Body meetings in the school year, and Governors also attend one of four committees, each with four meetings a year. All meetings are held in school at 5pm. In addition, Governors may attend a Governor visit to school, join a staff recruitment panel and on occasion attend a pupil discipline panel. There are no specific qualifications required, and we seek Governors from a wide variety of backgrounds. However, knowledge of governance, how a Board works, finance, safeguarding or data analysis is always

useful. To find out more, please contact Margaret Stewart, Chair of Governors at m.stewart@mardenhigh.net. Please note our quota for parent governors is full, but if you are not a parent or carer we would love to hear from you, and if you are, it may well be that you know of somebody who might be interested.

Literacy

Each week during form time, our Key Stage 3 students take part in *Reflection Time*. This is an opportunity to develop oracy skills and cultural capital beyond the curriculum. Students discuss and debate a different topical theme each week, with the emphasis being on active listening and using the [Talk Tactics](#) in order to build on one another's ideas or challenge perspectives respectfully. This week students explored the theme of [Creativity & Technology](#). We had some very perceptive ideas from students: with Year 7 noting that creativity is about "expressing yourself" and "using your own imagination", recognising that AI is a "useful tool to help, but shouldn't be relied upon as it will de-skill us". Year 8 reflected on the importance of collaborating with other people, and "building off each other's ideas". While Year 9 considered creativity to be "the brain having fun with ideas" and that AI is a "useful tool to spark creativity" but that original ideas have to come first. This insightful consideration of both the opportunities and challenges that technology presents when it comes to learning and creativity, demonstrates our students' ability to think critically and engage in balanced discussions. Each week students are given a [Literacy Challenge](#) connected to the theme, we look forward to seeing their contributions and publishing them on the Literacy Cloud!

Apprenticeship Workshops

This week we were pleased to welcome back staff from the Department for Work and Pensions, who delivered an engaging workshop with Year 10 students interested in exploring the apprenticeship route. The session provided a clear overview of how apprenticeships work, the different levels available and the platforms students can use to search for current vacancies.

Students also took part in a practical activity designed to replicate an apprenticeship assessment day. This gave them valuable insight into the types of tasks, skills and behaviours employers look for during recruitment processes. The workshop supported students in developing a clearer understanding of the wide range of apprenticeship opportunities available both after Year 11 and later in their careers.

Apprenticeships offer an excellent opportunity to "earn while you learn", combining paid employment with employer-led, funded training and the chance to gain nationally recognised qualifications and real industry experience. We strongly encourage students and families to explore all post-16 pathways to ensure informed and ambitious career choices. Further information and guidance can be found on the school website and through Amazing Apprenticeships.

Sports Report

This half term sees the football season draw to a close and several of the Marden teams have been wrapping up their season in the past week. The U15 Girls team played their County Cup semi final last week when they made the short trip to John Spence. The girls played some great football, battling hard throughout the match. However, the hosts proved too strong on this occasion and progressed to the final with a 4-0 victory. The scoreline does not reflect the game as Marden were still in the game at 1-0 until the final 10 minutes, but couldn't seem to convert their chances.

The Year 8 boys team played Valley Gardens Middle School twice this week, once in the league and once in the North Tyneside Cup. The league match was a great display of attacking football, with Marden working hard to break down the Valley defence and come away with a 4-1 win. The cup game was more tense, as the game remained 0-0 until the final 10 minutes. It was Marden that broke the deadlock, capitalising on a rare mix up in the Valley defence, to take the lead and ease some of the pressure. A second goal sealed the win with only 3 minutes left on the clock, taking the team to their second cup final in two years. We wish them the best of luck in the final, which will be played on Wednesday 13th May against Wellfield Middle School, held at John Spence.

And finally, as the football season ends, the tennis season begins. Our U15 girls A and B teams played their first game of the Northumberland Schools competition on Tuesday, making the long trip North to play Longridge Towers School in Berwick-Upon-Tweed. The girls played some fabulous tennis in all of the matches on the day, putting the hosts under pressure in all games. However it was the hosts that secured the victory in this fixture, but the Marden girls gained the admiration of their opponents for their tenacity and skill demonstrated throughout. Well done to all those involved.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher