



# Parent Guide - Student's Learning Journey

2017-18

*'Achievement Through Caring'*

Morda Road, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 2AR

Telephone: 01691 664400 | Fax: 01691 671515

E-mail: [admin@marchesschool.net](mailto:admin@marchesschool.net) | Website: [www.marchesschool.co.uk](http://www.marchesschool.co.uk)

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# Welcome

Welcome to our new look Parent Guide, given to you as a new parent to our school.

A child joining a new school, whether at the start of Year 7 or part way through a year can be a steep learning experience for parents and carers. We know that being fully informed about systems and ways that you can support your child can do a lot to make the move a positive and more confident experience.

Our vision for all students here – Achievement through caring, is to ensure that every child feels safe and is happy in school, that is when they are free to focus their minds on real learning and taking all the opportunities available here.

We know that the success of the partnership between the school and home is essential to the success and happiness for your child and so we have aimed to produce a guide that gives you all the information you need to be in the best position to support your child through their time learning with us.

This guide is intended to compliment the up-to-date resources that are found on the school website and references and links can be found at key points.

I hope you find this guide useful in the months ahead.

**Alison Pearson – Associate Headteacher**



## Introduction - Vision and Values

The Marches School is an 11 to 18 county community comprehensive co-educational day Academy. We serve the market town of Oswestry and the surrounding villages of the border country where Shropshire meets Wales. Currently there are 1321 students on roll. The Marches School exists on a semi-rural 30-acre site just south west of the town, allowing us to accommodate all of our learners with ease.

We are a confident, forward-thinking, learning community and the first school in Shropshire to become an Academy, as we believe in ensuring that we keep at the forefront of educational thinking.

Academy status gives us the autonomy to make local decisions so that our students and the community we serve get the best educational offer we can provide in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We provide the full range of national curriculum subjects and have an outstanding track record for enhancing English, Maths, Science and ICT across the whole school and throughout the local community. The school has an excellent academic record and adds value to the performance of students of all abilities. We pride ourselves on a disciplined, well-ordered atmosphere within our school.

### Vision and Values

We are a forward-thinking, innovative school, striving to ensure that young people make the very most of their learning adventure and are equipped with the skills required to prosper in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



# Futures Award

Students are encouraged to participate in the Marches Futures Award which opens up opportunities that can be linked to an individual's future professional choices or interests. Awards can be received as part of day to day activities in lessons and through extra-curricular clubs, including First Aid and interview practice. An award is achieved by completing badges in the areas of; leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication.

The Marches Futures Award will travel with a student throughout their time at The Marches School, and when they leave the school they will have a wealth of experience that they can use to their advantage to help them on their future path. It is a great opportunity to help children in furthering their ambitions and pushing them to try new clubs and activities enhancing their experiences and skills whilst at the school.

Information and photos about the Marches Futures Award can be found [here](#).

**LEADERSHIP**      **ORGANISATION**      **COMMUNICATION**

**INITIATIVE**

**RESILIENCE**



# Pastoral and Academic Support

We are prodigiously proud of our pastoral team at The Marches School. To us pastoral care is not merely a complementary practice; we have embedded policy and practices throughout the school. Pastoral care is integrated into everything we do to effectively meet the personal, social, emotional and academic needs of students.

Your child will have a form tutor, this person is your first point of contact in all matters relating to pastoral and academic progress. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Form Tutor. Progress and Wellbeing Leader email addresses can be found [here](#). Below is a diagram explaining the structure of the pastoral support team.

## Governing Body

Contact: o'reilley.g@marchesschool.net



**Associate Headteacher**  
Mrs Pearson



**Associate Assistant Headteacher**  
Mrs Phillips

## Progress Leader

Year 7: Mrs Dean / Year 8: Ms James / Year 9: Mr Pritchard / Year 10 Ms Cooke / Year 11: Mr Kemble



## Form Tutors

Every child has their own Form Tutor.

## Wellbeing Leaders

Every child has their own Wellbeing Leader attached to their year group.

# Academic Support

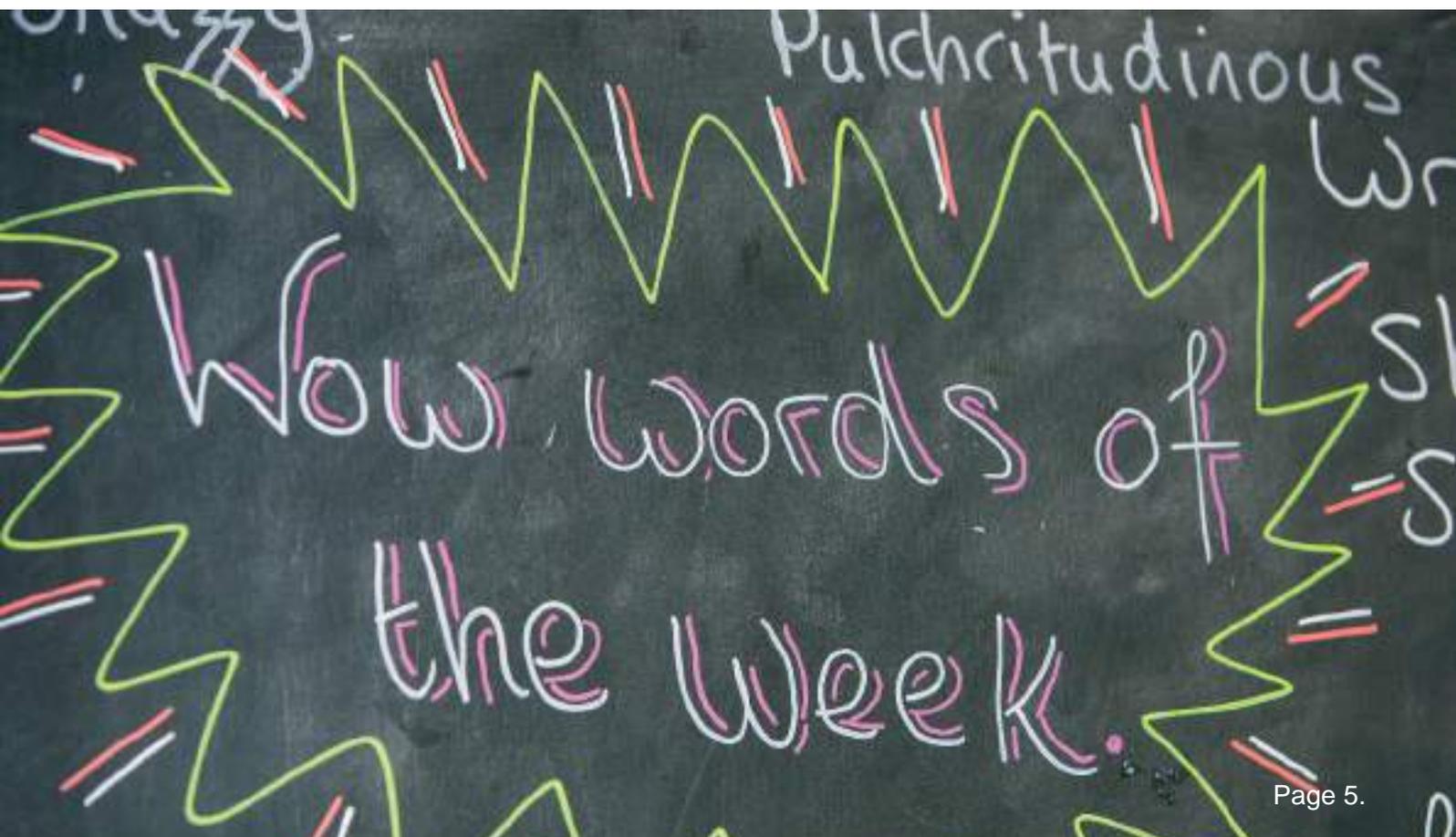
Providing a high standard of education, which personalises the learning experience for each of our students, is at the heart of The Marches School ethos.

Subject specific curriculum information, broken down by year group can be found [here](#). Your child will need to work more independently at secondary school than at primary school. But your interest and input will still be important and will help your child to do well.

Look for opportunities to talk to your child about schoolwork - children enjoy sharing what they are learning. Try to find topics you are both interested in so it is more of a conversation than an interrogation.

Ask your child if there is anything you can do to help with homework. Discuss the organisation of the work. If your child has several assignments due in on the same day, suggest they space the work out rather than leave it all until the night before.

If you have a subject specific enquiry you can always field questions through your child's Form Tutor but do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher directly if you feel this will be most effective.



# School Attendance and Absence

We seek to ensure that all students receive a full-time education, maximising the opportunities for all to realise their true potential. All school staff will work, with students and their families, to support them in meeting their legal duty to ensure that their children achieve maximum possible attendance; and that any problems which may impede full attendance are acted upon quickly.

## Did you know?

90% Attendance means that a student is missing half a day of school a week?

95% Attendance means that a student will miss two weeks of school in a year?

93% Attendance or better gives a student a 73% chance of achieving 5 GCSEs, Grades A-C, whatever their ability?

The Local Authority will become involved where a student's attendance falls to 90%.

There are 190 school days in a year leaving 175 in which to take Holiday?

## Frequently Asked Questions...

### Q: My child is unwell, what should I do?

**A:** Please call the school absence line no later than 8.30am, 01691 664400 (Option 1), leaving a message stating your child's Name, Tutor Group and a brief explanation of the nature of the illness. A call is requested for every day of absence unless you have spoken directly with the Attendance Officer.

### Q: Why do I need to call every day?

**A:** We cannot assume that a student is unwell just because they were off school the previous day. If you believe an absence due to illness may be prolonged, please contact us so that we can make arrangements to avoid you calling daily.

### Q: I know in advance that my child needs to leave school early for an appointment, what should I do?

**A:** Send your child to school with a note in their planner stating the reason they need to leave school and the time you wish to collect them. The note should be handed in at Reception. A Signing-Out Slip can be then be prepared.

### Q: I have just remembered that I need to collect my child during the school day, or I have forgotten to send a note in his/her planner, what should I do?

**A:** In the first instance, please call us, 01691 664400. We will endeavour to raise a Signing-Out Slip and pass a message to your child within your given timescale. However, it is not always possible to locate students straight away, for example during lunch or break times.

### Q: I wish to take my child out of school for a family holiday (or other reason) during term time.

**A:** Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Exceptional circumstances are defined as 'one-off' occasions where a request for leave of absence is unavoidable and does not cover annually occurring family holiday. Please complete a Leave of Absence Request Form, available from the Attendance Officer, and submit no later than two weeks prior to the start of the leave. In order for the Headteacher to reach an informed decision please include as much detail as possible to explain why exceptional circumstances apply.

## Contact Us:

**Attendance Officer**, Mr A Lowe, 01691 664400

**Attendance Assistant** (Reception), Mr J Pearce, 01691 664400

## Class Groups and Setting

In Year 7 our students are taught in broad ability bands. For those whose specific learning needs are such that they require additional specialist teaching or support, this is made available to them through Student Support Services. Also, we deliver a phonics programme for students in Set 5 in English. As students move up through the school they are increasingly taught in sets based on their ability. Students in Key Stage 4 are placed in either the E-Bacc Route or the Extended Route. As part of their core curriculum, students in the E-Bacc Route take: English/ Maths/ Science/ MFL/ History or Geography/ IT/ Citizenship and Core PE, plus 2 Option subjects. As part of their core curriculum, students in the Extended Route take: English/ Maths/ Science/IT/ Citizenship and Core PE, plus 3 Option subjects.

Students have a wide range of subjects to choose from in Years 10 and 11. The following subjects are offered; Art, Business Studies, Computer Science, Drama, Food, Geography, Graphics, History, ICT, Media, Music, PE, Photography, RE, Resistant Materials, Textiles, BTEC Health and Social Care\* and Marches Apprenticeship\* (\*only available in the Extended Route).

The teaching week, excluding assemblies, registration, all breaks and extra-curricular activities is 25 hours. There are 25 lessons per week:

<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Year 11</b>
<b>English</b>	4	4	4	<b>English</b>	4	4
<b>Maths</b>	4	3	3	<b>Maths</b>	4	4
<b>Science</b>	3	3	3	<b>Science</b>	5	5
<b>ICAT</b>	3	3	3	<b>Geography/History</b>	2	3
<b>Geography/History</b>	2	4	4	<b>Modern Languages French/German/Spanish (EBacc Route)</b>	2	3
<b>Religious Education/</b>	1	1	1	<b>Option A</b>	0 or 3	0 or 2
<b>Citizenship</b>	0.5	0.5	0.5	<b>Option B</b>	3	2
<b>Modern Languages French/German/Spanish</b>	3	2	2	<b>Option C</b>	0 or 3	0 or 2
<b>Performing Arts Art/Music/Drama</b>	3	3	3	<b>Option D</b>	0 or 2	0 or 2
<b>Physical Education</b>	2	2	2	<b>Citizenship</b>	0.5	0.5
				<b>Physical Education</b>	2	2

The curriculum for Key Stage 4 continues to develop at The Marches School. Some courses are offered as part of our collaboration with other local employers, training agencies and North Shropshire College. The number of these courses that are available each year will vary dependent upon the availability of staff expertise and student demand. The choice of collaborative courses adjusts the balance of lessons that those students involved follow in their Key Stage 4 course.

# Assessment, Reporting and Recording

We have developed a whole school assessment policy for all children. GCSE targets and grading are used in all years to help parents and carers have a clear picture of the outcomes for their child. Regular formal assessment should result in a level or a grade being shared with students. All students should be clear about what their targets are and which grade they are currently working at or are on target for as well as the steps they need to take to move their work on. Targets will be recorded in each student's planner.

You will receive three school reports across the academic year. All of these reports will show the progress your child is making towards their target grades and their attitude to learning; one of these will have a set of written comments by all your child's teachers. Reports are for all year groups in the last 2 weeks for each full term – Christmas, Easter and July.

When you receive your child's report read it carefully and note your child's strengths and weaknesses and work out what they need to do to improve in weak areas. Give praise when your child has done well, but for areas of concern agree on specific things that can be done to improve. Compare reports across the year and from year to year to highlight areas of improvement and concern.

## Target Setting

Our target setting is ambitious, placing no categories, barriers or ceilings on any student, all students can achieve beyond their current potential. The assessment and target setting process is designed to support this belief.

Our aspiration is that all learners should leave Key Stage 4 with level 2 qualifications in English, Maths, Science, and at least three additional subjects, with the majority of students studying the English Baccalaureate and all students monitored to achieve at least 8 qualifications.

In the Autumn term, targets are set for all Year 7 students and confirmed for Year 10 students. In the Summer term adjustments can be made in all year groups if necessary where a student is regularly performing above the minimum GCSE target grade.

Targets are set using KS2 assessment data or teacher assessment where this data is not available. Our current minimum targets use the following table. As the data is refined by government data sets for students in Year 9, these boundaries will be re-evaluated each year. Our minimum GCSE targets are designed to ensure all students make AT LEAST expected progress, with the majority set above this level.

Students will be set a separate target for English, Maths and "all other" subjects.

Key Stage 2 Score (Currently old levels)	Minimum GCSE Target Grade
5.7	9
5.4	8
4.9	7
4.4	6
3.5	5
1.5	4

Where a student does not have KS2 scores, targets are influenced by a combination of Welsh levels, monitoring current work, reading and spelling baseline testing.

More information on target setting and assessment can be found [here](#).

# Literacy

At The Marches School we want our students to be free. We want them to be able to choose whatever future they desire and have the necessary skills to be successful. Literacy is fundamental to our students' wellbeing, enabling them to function in their everyday lives whilst giving them the lifelong skills to be able to communicate and create, articulate their ideas and understand and interpret the ideas of others.

The simplest definition for literacy is the ability to read and write, but in total there are four strands of literacy:

- Speaking
- Listening
- Reading
- Writing

## Reading School

We believe that literacy begins with reading. At the heart of our approach to literacy is 'reading for pleasure'. We expect all of our students to read in their own time and to bring their current reading book to school every day. We promote reading through a range of events and, most importantly, through our 'Reading School' initiative. We talk to our students about what they are reading and what we are reading. Having adults as literacy role models is essential to a child's development. We will also be providing reading recommendations for both students and parents.

Our Learning Resource Centre (LRC) is at the heart of the school and at the heart of literacy learning in The Marches School. It is an outstanding resource where students can borrow a wide range of reading material and find a space to work and read. All of the fiction texts have been coded to fit in with our Accelerated Reader scheme so that students are choosing books that match their reading ability more effectively.

## What is Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a computer program that helps teachers and librarians manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Renaissance Learning, the manufacturer of AR, claim that the program can produce an average of two years' reading age growth whilst promoting a culture of reading for pleasure. Our students will select a book at his or her own level and read it at their own pace. When finished, they will take a short quiz on the computer. Passing the quiz is an indication that our students have understood what was read and we expect all students to achieve at least 85% in these tests. From September 2017, Year 7 will be the main focus of Accelerated Reader as a way to get students fully engaged in our Reading School, use of the library and a way to enjoy reading even more.

# Reading Ages

## Reading Ages and Spelling Ages

From September 2017, we are also implementing a new piece of software called Lucid Exact. Lucid Exact analyses students' skills in reading comprehension and spelling, following a short online test, that will provide us with accurate levels of ability with literacy skills. This information will help us to identify any students that may require further support as they make their transition into the secondary curriculum. This testing will be repeated at various points through the academic year to determine what progress is being made, and if any further support is needed.

## Improving Writing

From September 2015, the quality of written communication has been a key part of the assessment of some courses at GCSE and A Level. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) has been implemented in the assessment of most qualifications in Key Stage 4 and 5 to develop upon the work and testing that students now complete in Key Stage 2. Developing and improving writing skills will be a key focus throughout the school from September 2017 as part of our School Development Plan. Further information will be shared in September about resources, activities and specific aims for improving writing to coincide with the launch of our new Literacy strategy.

## Parents' Evenings

At The Marches School we value every opportunity to work with parents. Students in Years 7 – 10 will all have one Parents' Evening in the academic year. Students in Years 11 – 13 will have two evenings and dates for these can be found [here](#). Parents' Evenings give you an opportunity to ask questions and share information about your child and their learning. You can strengthen your partnership with your child's teacher. This helps our teachers to help your child.

Before the evening spend some time with your child discussing their strengths, weaknesses and any problems at school. Make a list of questions to ask teachers about your child's work, how they get along with classmates and their general attitude towards school. Be prepared to listen when meeting teachers, there may be key areas for development in your child's work or behaviour. Ask questions, especially if you do not understand or agree with something. Try to take away from the meeting some positive steps that you, your child and our teachers can take to help your child succeed.



# The School Day

The beginning of the school day can be a rush for everyone. Your child will need to be far more organised at secondary school than he or she was at primary school. Establishing a routine in the morning and evening will help the day start smoothly and with minimum stress.

Tips for a positive start to the school day:

- Encourage your child to pack their school bag and lay out their uniform before going to bed each evening. Does your child need their PE kit or cooking ingredients? Checking these things the night before will help avoid early morning panic and items being forgotten
- Try to make sure your child eats breakfast - this provides essential energy and will help him or her perform better at school
- Allow plenty of time for your child to get to school - build extra time into your morning routine so that if there are transport or other problems he or she won't be late for period 1
- You will be required to sign your child's planner each week

## Timings of The School Day

Students should be at school by 8:30am every day.

<b>P1 Lesson</b>	08:40 - 09:35
<b>P2 Lesson</b>	09:35 - 10:30
<b>Academic Mentoring / Year Group Assembly</b>	10:30 - 10:55
<b>Break</b>	10:55 - 11:10
<b>P3 Lesson</b>	11:10 - 12:05
<b>P4 Lesson</b>	12:05 - 13:00
<b>Lunch</b>	13:00 - 13:40
<b>Reading School</b>	13:40 - 14:05
<b>P5 Lesson</b>	14:05 - 15:00
Enrichment Clubs – 15: 00 – 16:00 (sports fixtures will be longer)	



# Extra-curricular Activities

The extensive range of clubs and extra-curricular activities take place during lunchtimes and after school and include the school choir, school band, girls rugby, boys hockey, art, drama and history club, to name just a few.

A table of current extra-curricular activities can be found [here](#).



# Homework - Home Learning

It is school policy to set homework. All students must record their tasks in their Student Planners. Parents and carers are asked to check and sign the Student Planners on a weekly basis. Home learning is reviewed at regular intervals throughout the year.

Home learning is set for a number of reasons:

- It encourages students to work independently and develops the skills of lifelong learning
- It allows for activities which we could not easily cover in school time
- It links school to home life
- It helps to keep parents and carers in touch with school work
- It is essential for older children if they are to cover examination courses



## What is Milk?

Milk is a student planner that you can use on your smartphone and computer.

No more lost planners and **no more excuses!**

All homework will be set using Milk and can be accessed from a smart phone, tablet or pc in or out of school.

Teachers can see whether or not you have looked at your homework and if you need any **extra support.**

Milk **does not mean** all homeworks are done online or on computer but you must use Milk to log that you have completed your work.

When you log a homework as complete you must **rate how difficult you found it.** This is crucial for your teacher to see how they can further support you.

Through the **dashboard** can see what is going on at all times – you can act on it!

The dashboard shows attendance, punctuality, subject **targets and progress.**

You can also receive messages through Milk, for example, telling you if an after school has been cancelled.



## How does it work?

- On your phone **just like any app.** Tap it and it launches!
- On any computer login to [milkstudentplanner.com](http://milkstudentplanner.com).

Use the menu to navigate between homework tasks, messages, your timetable and dashboard.

In the first instance you will **still use your** **milk.** **paper planner** for recording homework. But you must log all homework as complete using Milk.

To make the most of this new system **use it.**



## Does this mean I can have my phone out at school?

No! Milk is only accessible at certain times as instructed by your teachers. If in doubt, check the Policy for Responsible use of Personal Technology in the Planner.

# Provision for Learners with Special Educational Needs

As a school we make special provision for those learners who experience learning difficulties and Student Support Services has purpose built accommodation with excellent facilities and equipment. Children in all years have access to information technology and Teaching Assistant support to help them advance their skills. We have a team of experienced specialist staff who provide flexible and sensitive support for a whole range of learning difficulties. Some support takes place in the classroom alongside subject teaching staff, other support includes intervention withdrawal in small groups or 1:1 aimed at a specific need.

A range of interventions are used to support students throughout the school. These include:

- Teaching Assistant statement support
- Phonics programme for selected Year 7 students
- Literacy withdrawal
- Numeracy withdrawal
- Social skills groups
- Autism support
- Behaviour intervention groups
- Transition programme
- Visual impairment resource modifications
- Pet therapy
- Life skills coaching
- Paired-reading
- Handwriting skills
- Mentoring programmes
- Referral to specialist agencies such as Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Sensory Inclusion Service, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS
- Access arrangements for public examinations
- Dyslexia screening
- Counselling service

All Year 7 students are tested on entry and following this parents and carers are informed if their child is experiencing learning difficulties.

We visit feeder primary schools for specific SEN information and attend Year 6 annual reviews for statemented students.

Parents and carers who believe their child has problems, needing extra help or further investigation should contact the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).



## More Able Pupils

Here at The Marches School, we recognise the importance of providing appropriate education for all students, none more so than our most able learners. The excellent provision we provide has previously been recognised by the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE).

We are continually developing individual learning programmes to challenge our more able learners. We also use setting by ability from Year 7 to enhance progress and the most able learners may take GCSE exams early in some subjects such as languages.

As well as opportunities which arise for the most able students within the classroom there are also countless opportunities for them in our extra-curricular provision, ranging from Junior Sports Leader Award to live theatrical performances, additional music related opportunities such as lessons, and summer schools or tours. We also encourage more able students to take part in national competitions for example STEM challenges. For those who prefer a more mathematical challenge, we participate in the National Maths Challenge. This and many other opportunities mean that all gifts and talents are recognised, appreciated and encouraged to develop.

We continue to develop our provision for our KS4 and KS5 students, in particular providing as much support as possible regarding options for when they leave The Marches School. Our students are given the opportunity to attend university days including amongst others the University of Cambridge, careers conventions and workshops which all provide valuable information regarding the next steps in their education. We have a belief in the ability to achieve potential for all our learners, and will always do our utmost to guide, support and reward each individual in order to reach this goal.

# Student Books and Folders

It is the responsibility of all learners to take care of all text and exercise books entrusted to them by staff. In the event of loss or damage, the cost of replacement must be borne by the students. Student Planners are issued to all students to record homework and important information. They are vital to the learning process and parents and carers are asked to check and sign the Student Planners on a weekly basis. The teacher looks at and checks completed work on a regular basis and the Leadership Group and Subject Leaders undertake Year Focus reviews throughout the year, examining whole school books, folders and planners. All departments produce assessment sheets at the start and end of topics taught in class. These can be found in books/folders. Learning objectives are shared at the start of topics. At the end of the topics students then show reflection on their learning and progress. We encourage parents and carers to be involved in supporting and reviewing the learning process.

Basic expectations for all presentation are as follows

- Underline title and date
- Sheets glued neatly flat not folded
- Blue or black pen
- Draw graphs etc. in pencil

## Marking

You should expect to see your child's book marked at least every six lessons. Teachers will give written feedback telling the student what went well and then setting them a development target (WWT). Teachers will often use a yellow box to help the student understand the quantity of work they expect to see when addressing their development target.

**W W T**

What  
went  
well?

What  
went  
well?

Target  
to  
improve

The aim of yellow box marking is to develop and encourage student response to feedback. We believe that ongoing dialogue between teacher and student is what drives learning. The size of the yellow box indicates the size of the response expected and this is something that could be a regular conversation at home. A student's book should show their progress to both students and parents and highlight progress between reports.

## Work Experience

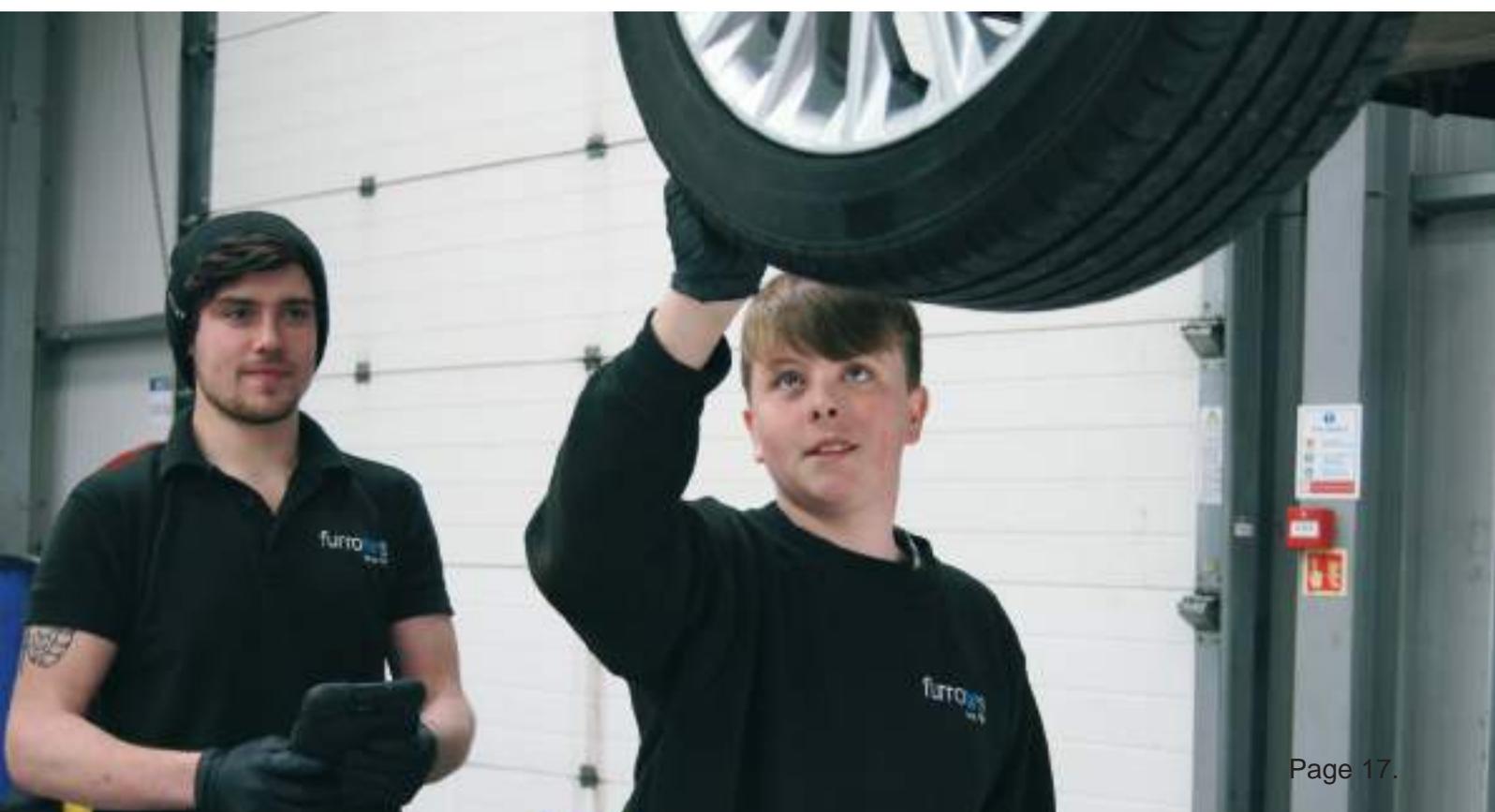
Students undertake a work experience placement during Year 10 and Year 12. Work experience is a way of learning about the world of work and the workplace environment. It also provides insight into specific areas of employment. Although it is not intended to provide preparation for a particular job, work experience does promote personal and social development. It helps to improve attainment by making learning more relevant and also broadens the range of continuing education, training and employment which students consider.

## Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

At The Marches School we believe good quality careers education will raise the aspirations of all young people. It will increase motivation by linking activities in school with preparation for life post 16 and post 18. CEIAG will therefore contribute to raising pupil achievement, help our students focus on their longer-term career ambitions and ensure an equality of opportunity for all.

At The Marches School we provide a comprehensive CEIAG programme to students in every year group and this includes aspects of work related learning, enterprise education, option choices and information on all post 16 choices following the government directive to ensure all students remain in education or employment based training until they are 18 years old. Students in our Sixth Form are very well supported as they make their applications to university, apply for Higher Level Apprenticeships or other non university post 18 pathways.

Most people spend many years of their life in a working environment and it is important to equip our students with the necessary skills for them to career plan and know how and where to access impartial and unbiased information. Developing key enterprise and employability skills are important and we are pleased to have been selected as a National Citizen Service Champion School, for our student participation.



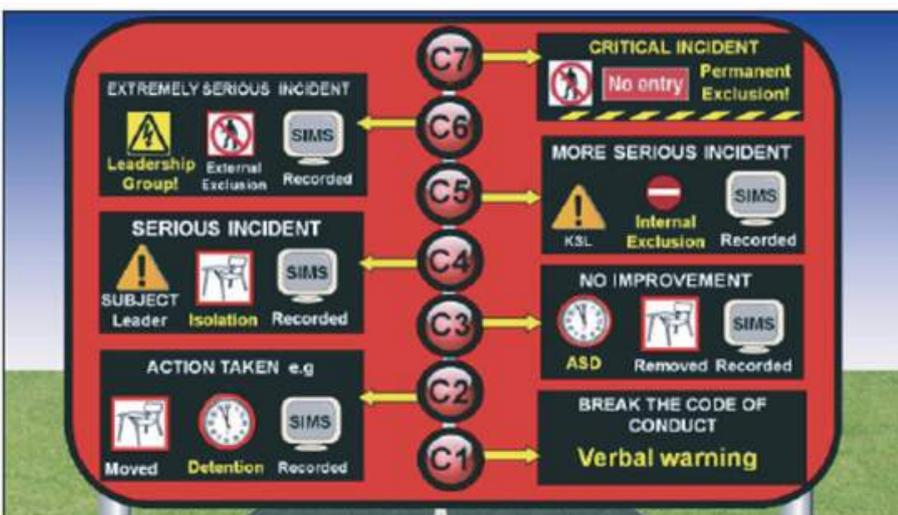
# Rewards

All members of staff award electronic "points" for a range of reason; these include effort in a task, outstanding achievement, contribution to activities in school, attendance and consideration to others.



# Sanctions

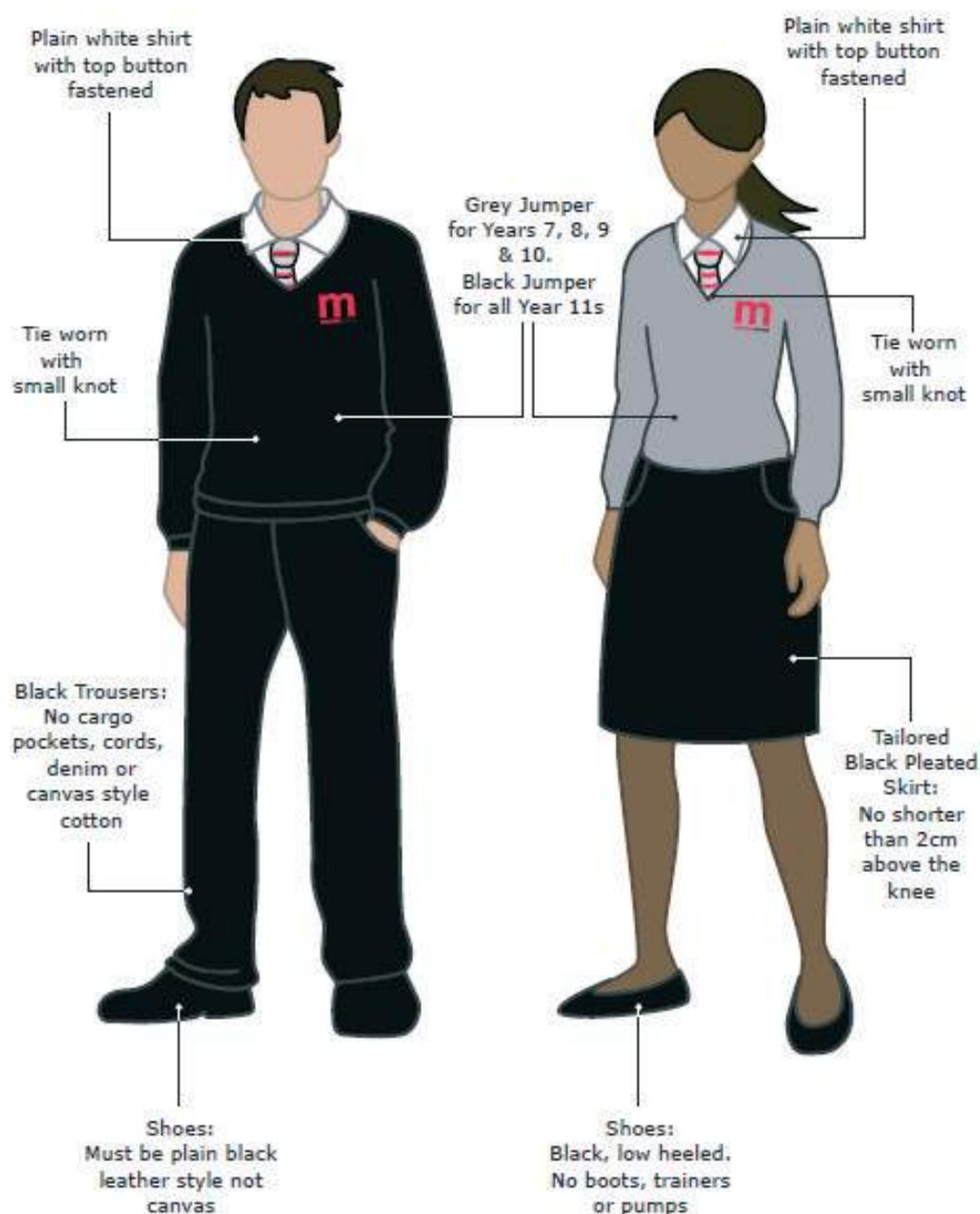
Where high standards of work/behaviour are not met, a number of different sanctions apply. Students may be kept in at break by individual staff or in department detentions. Students may also be placed on report for a period of time in order to monitor particular aspects of behaviour, attitude and performance. Specific targets for improvement are set and parents/carers are fully involved in helping to monitor progress towards achieving these targets. Serious incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with by Year Team staff or the Leadership Group. Parents/carers are contacted as appropriate and a strong emphasis is placed on partnership with parents/carers to achieve high standards in all aspects of school life.



# Uniform

Uniforms show that you are part of a community. Wearing it says we are all in this together. Also, if you wear your uniform with pride, it means you are half way there to being respectful, buying into what the organisation is all about. We believe passionately that our uniforms give students a sense of belonging to our school and create an identity for the school in the community. Research has shown that a school uniform can improve learning by reducing distraction, sharpening focus on schoolwork and making the classroom a more serious environment, allowing students to perform better academically. Perhaps most importantly, a uniform means students do not have to worry about peer pressure when it comes to their clothes. When everyone is dressed the same, worrying about what you look like is not so important. There is no competition about being dressed in the latest trend, which would put a great deal of financial pressure on students and parents. Potential bullies have one less target for their insults; it is hard to make fun of what someone is wearing when you are dressed exactly the same.

Information about uniform can be found [here](#).



# Understanding Bullying

## What is bullying?

It is important to state from the outset that bullying in all forms is not tolerated at The Marches School. We are proud to say that our bullying log shows very few incidences of persistent behaviour. We believe bullying is when someone intimidates or causes harm to another person **repeatedly and on purpose**. No child deserves to be bullied. Our anti-bullying policy is very clear and can be found [here](#). If you suspect your child is being bullied, do not ignore it. Sign post your child to our SHARP system which can be found [here](#).



## The SHARP Anti Bullying System

There are many reasons why young people decide not to talk about incidents, whether that is due to not wanting to talk face to face, lack of confidence, scared, peer pressure or scared in case someone sees them talking to or seen in the school's office but to name just a few. That is why our bullying ambassadors chose to launch the SHARP bullying system in school.

**SHARP** stands for *Student Help Advice Reporting Page System*. The SHARP system allows young people to report any incidents which occur within the school and local community anonymously and without fear.

**SHARP is anonymous**, you don't have to leave your information if you choose not to, but if you want help and support it's best to leave your details. The SHARP System is not just a school system; it can be used at home as well as at School. SHARP can be used on phones, tablets, consoles or any device with an internet connection. All you need to do is log on to the school website and click on the SHARP link on the school website and make a report.

Find a quiet time to talk to your child. Explain that bullying is unacceptable and that no one should have to put up with it. Promise to do all you can to stop it.

If you would like to deal with the situation directly make an appointment to see your child's Form Tutor as soon as possible. Useful tips for the meeting:

- Decide what you want to say and what you would like to achieve from the meeting before you go
- Try to stay calm even though you may feel angry and emotional
- Do not blame the teacher - he or she may be unaware of the bullying
- Give specific examples of how your child is being bullied
- Ask what the school's anti-bullying policy is
- Discuss what action the teacher will take
- Arrange to meet again within two weeks to discuss progress

# Exams

## Assisting with Revision

All students at The Marches School will sit examinations in varying degrees of formality. The secret to doing well in exams lies in planning. You can help your child to create a clear revision plan and method of studying that will make them feel in control of their work.

Tips for revision planning:

- Work out a revision timetable for each subject
- Break revision time into small chunks - hour-long sessions with short breaks at the end of each session often work well
- Make sure your child has all the essential books and materials
- Condense notes onto postcards to act as revision prompts
- Buy new stationery, highlighters and pens to make revision more interesting
- Go through school notes with your child or listen while they revise a topic
- Time your child's attempts at practice papers

## Providing all-round support

The best way to support your child during the stress of revision and exams is to make home life as calm and pleasant as possible. It helps if other members of the household are aware that your child may be under pressure and that allowances should be made for this.

Make sure there are plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and try to provide good, nutritious food at regular intervals. Encourage your child to join family meals, even if it is a busy revision day - it is important to have a change of scene and get away from the books and computer for a while. Also encourage your child to take regular exercise. A brisk walk around the block can help clear the mind before the next revision session.

Try not to nag or make too many demands on your child during exam time. Arguments are counter-productive and will only add unnecessary stress and distract from revision.

It is important to get a good night's sleep before an exam, so discourage your child from staying up late to cram. And make sure he or she eats a good breakfast on the morning of the exam.



# School Lockers

There are a total of 346 lockers at The Marches School and can be found at the following locations:

- Site 1: The Technology Corridor
- Site 2: The Textiles Area
- Site 3: The Maths Staircase
- Site 4: The Old Reception Area

Students can rent a locker for the school year by visiting [www.locker.rentals](http://www.locker.rentals) from any device connected to the internet. Once on the website they will be able to use the drop down menu and simply choose one of the 4 areas and a locker number. The lockers will be numbered 1 –346.

The lockers are leased from Prefect Lockers. The cost of a locker per school year is £18.00.

Payment is convenient and can be made by Paypal, Debit/Credit Card or by calling Prefect Lockers on 0845 880 2426. On receipt of payment the combination for the lock is sent to you or your preferred contact via text or email.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch or contact Prefect Lockers on the phone number above.

## Transport Links

Students currently travel to The Marches School using a variety of means including service buses, taxis, bikes and on foot. The existing bus links to and from the school are very good and provide access from a number of areas in and around Oswestry, as well as across the border into Powys and Wrexham.

Please visit their websites for the the most up-to-date timetables and services:

Arriva Buses – [www.arrivabus.co.uk](http://www.arrivabus.co.uk) or call 01691 664661

Tanat Valley Coaches – [www.tanat.co.uk](http://www.tanat.co.uk) or call 01691 780212

Parish Coaches – 01691 656222

### Minibus Services 2017-18

The school also operates a number of daily minibus services. For more details on this service and to apply for a seat on one of the minibus services, please contact [Mrs K Parsons](#) or call 01691 664407.

### Who is entitled to free school transport?

#### Shropshire Residents

Please visit <https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/school-transport> or call 0345 678006 for more details.

#### Powys Residents

Please visit [www.powys.gov.uk](http://www.powys.gov.uk) or call 01597 826438 for more details.

## Free School Meals

If you think you may be eligible for free school meals (even if you do not want to use the money), just registering your child for the free school meal benefit means that the school is able to claim extra funding. Therefore, every application can help towards bringing in much needed funding to support every child.

### Do you qualify?

You can register your child for free school meals if you get any of these benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

If you qualify for any of these, you can apply by completing a form or coming into reception. If you have any further questions or would like to request a form, please do not hesitate to contact **Miss A Nunns** on 01691 664432.

# House System

The five house names come from Everest climbers' surnames – **Mallory** (the first British person to get onto the mountain), **Bonington** (the leader of the first successful team to reach the summit via the South West face), **Stephens** (the first British woman to reach the summit), **Hargreaves** (the first British woman to reach the summit alone and without supplementary oxygen) and **Whittaker** (the first disabled British person to reach the summit, climbing without a right foot).

Here at The Marches School, we strongly believe that this provides students with an increased sense of belonging. Students remain with the same group right the way through school; as they become older, their roles and responsibilities change and they will find themselves acting as mentors and role models for the younger students. As a large school, we are always looking for ways to further support and nurture our students and the house system has proved an effective system to further enhance the 'family' feeling already so strong at the school.

Each house is assigned a Staff Leader, a Student Leader and a Deputy. Their roles and responsibilities are to lead their houses, with the 'Student Voice' a valued and respected tool for development. Throughout the year, students take part in a range of activities from sports to festive-themed events, each providing members with the opportunity to win points for their houses. This element of 'healthy' competition is essential to a child's development and all students are encouraged to take part. House points can be tracked on the school website and, at the end of each academic year, the house with the most points is crowned 'House Champion'.

## Champions from last 4 years:

2013-14- Whittaker  
 2014-15- Mallory  
 2015-16- Bonington  
 2016-17- Bonington



# Parent Pay

Parent Pay is our cashless system that can be used for dinner money and school trips, on the day your child starts you will receive an e-mail with your account details to setup your login. The email will look like the sample below:

Address

Dear Name

**Pupil: Name and Class**

In an attempt to remove all cash and cheques from school we are asking parents to use our e-payment method to pay for **dinner money, trips, music lessons etc** . This can be done online using a very secure website called ParentPay.

## **Already have a ParentPay account?**

If you already have a ParentPay account, either with our school or another ParentPay school, you can simply login to that account and add your other children via the **Add a child** tab on your home page. You will need the below activation username and password to do this.

## **New to ParentPay?**

You have a secure online account, activated using a unique activation username and password; you will be prompted to change these and to keep them safe and secure as your Username and Password for future logins.

If you have two or more children at a ParentPay school, you only need to activate one account to create your 'main account' and then add your other children via the **Add a child tab** on your home page.

Please visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) and activate your account via the **Account login** area on the home page of the site.

**Username: Username Password: password**

ParentPay holds an electronic record of your payments to view at a later date. Once you have activated your account you can make online payments straight away.

You can still continue to pay cash for items and your child can still add cash to their dinner money account using the current methods available to them.

**\*\* Please note that any payments will take 24 hours to appear on your child's account. Please take this into consideration when using Parent Pay.**

**\*\* School Uniform is to be purchased and paid for via Ram Leisure not via the Parent Pay system. Thank you.**

Please do not hesitate to contact Parent Pay via the help screen should you require assistance.

**Morda Road, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 2AR**

**Telephone: 01691 664400 | Fax: 01691 671515**

**E-mail: [admin@marchesschool.net](mailto:admin@marchesschool.net) | Website: [www.marchesschool.co.uk](http://www.marchesschool.co.uk)**