



MAIDSTONE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1549

MGS Newsletter

Winter 2022



From the Headmaster

The start of this academic year was seen by us as a continued opportunity to further develop MGS through the eyes of our two pillars of learning and belonging. We have continued to inspire the students to learn, to be curious and to have a zest for discovery. And we have also continued to inspire them to belong, to feel safe and supported, to be able to give service and leadership to their school, and to grow into kinder people - re-connecting them with their fellow Maidstonians.

Just recently, a number of our year 13 students were on interview for places at Oxford and Cambridge, and more have started their interviews for medicine or dentistry. The growth of this high level of academia is something we



are looking to build from the earliest years at MGS, and the popularity of Oxplore in Key Stage 3 has been particularly exciting. The Senior Debating Society has continued to go from strength to strength with competitions at Oxford and Cambridge coming up in the New Year, as well as the Mock Trial in January. This has been really driven by a core team of students who are going to Harvard in January to take part in the Model United Nations Conference. Back in September we had a huge Higher Education Fair so more of our students can learn about studying at university - and it is by getting involved in these wider, challenging opportunities at school that the pathway to university becomes clearer. We have had the whole of Year 7 go out to Bletchley to learn about Scherbius's Enigma Machine; the Autumn Showcase, where those involved took on some very challenging pieces; and we have been really pleased by the growth in the number of our older students leading societies. This has been a term that has stretched many of our students.

Since September we've also seen our programme of clubs, activities and societies, also known as MGS Extra, go from strength to strength. Well over 50 clubs and societies are currently running, covering almost every conceivable interest, from War Hammer to Chess Club, and from robotics to linguistics. There is a real buzz of activity and excitement around the school at lunchtime and after school in the many clubs and societies and it has been great to see Maidstonians come together

and support each other. Earlier this academic year we delivered a presentation on sexual consent to all of Year 12 and since September we've been talking to all of our students in age appropriate ways to develop their understanding of consent in day-to-day interactions, including respecting the boundaries and personal space of others. A series of student-led assemblies, led by Barton House, took place in October as a part of Black History Month and our ever growing Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity agenda. These assemblies celebrated a number of lesser known Black Britons such as Evelyn Dove, Oliver Morris, Roy Hackett, Martin Griffiths and Walter Tull. In November, Barton House also led on Anti Bullying week, and on Monday 14 November it was heartening to see so many Maidstonians wear odds socks and their own ties to raise funds for the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Our house councils and school council also met this term and a number of themes emerged including: how can we make our school a much more greener community; and how can we improve our rewards system? The councils will flesh these out in more detail when they next meet in the New Year. Also in the New Year we will continue our preparations for the School's 475th anniversary which will take place in the 2023-2024 academic year. Preparations for this launched this term with the MGS 475 logo competition and I look forward to sharing the winning design with you all shortly.

One other significant development this year has been to look at ways in which we can be more involved

in sustainable projects involving the entire school community. We are about to complete a project to replace all the lights in many of our older buildings with motion sensor LED lights, and we are in the early stages of auditing our roof space with a view to investing in solar panels to further reduce the school's carbon footprint. We have also made a good start at getting rid of single-use plastic by introducing re-fillable bottles for drinks in the Refectory. We want to encourage student involvement in helping us achieve a 'greener school', and this will be launched early next year. We want several student-led projects to begin as soon as possible so that we, at Maidstone Grammar School, can do our bit to not just help conserve the Earth's resources but also understand how we can support biodiversity in and around the school site.

Moving now to the family of staff, at the end of every term we sometimes have to say goodbye to those members of staff who are leaving the MGS community. Well this term we are saying au revoir to two: Miss Deo and Miss Sandhu, and goodbye to five: Mrs Rathbone, Mrs O'Neil, Mr Baker, Mrs Harriss and Mr Friend. Both Miss Deo and Miss Sandhu are leaving us for a while to have a baby, and so we wish them and their families all the best. To the leaving staff, Mrs Rathbone has taught mathematics here for the last two years, and in that time has made significant contributions to the department. She is leaving us to pursue other ventures outside of teaching. Mrs O'Neil has been

integral to the workings of the school for seven years working as the finance manager in the Bursary. She is retiring at the start of January and will probably spend some of her retirement in Australia where her daughter recently moved to. Mr Baker has been teaching business studies and economics at MGS for the last eight years, and he leaves us to become a head of department at a local school. Mrs Harriss officially leaves MGS in January and has worked as a cover supervisor for nearly 20 years. In that time she has covered thousands of lessons when teachers were absent. It is a hugely important role in the school, and so we thank Mrs Harriss immensely for her service and commitment to MGS and to the many thousands of Maidstonians she has supported. And finally, we say goodbye to Mr Friend, our D&T technician who has worked here for 27 years. He is known by virtually every student of the school, and by the tens of thousands of students who have come before them. He has helped them with their designs, assisted them using the machinery, and supported them in their constructions. He is more than just a member of staff. He is going to be missed by many right across the school, but particularly those within the D&T department. Thank you Mr Friend and best wishes for a long and happy retirement. We wish them all the best.

Finally, I wish to thank you, the parents, the students and the staff for the tremendous efforts shown during this year. 2022 has been

another demanding but rewarding year; and despite the challenges we have faced we are all still incredibly proud to call ourselves Maidstonians and to be associated to Maidstone Grammar School.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Mr M Tomkins
Headmaster



Duke of Edinburgh Award Update

Since the beginning of the academic year, 65 students in Year 9 have made a start on their Bronze Award, and 33 students in Years 10 and 11 have started their Silver Award. It's encouraging to see a great variety of different skills, physical activities and volunteering opportunities being embarked upon; some examples include marksmanship, volunteering in animal welfare, learning sign language and completing a course in money management.

In addition to new enrolments, Year 10 Bronze participants completed their assessed expedition back in September. It took place at Adamswell Scout Campsite near Tunbridge Wells, and the cool, dry weather offered excellent walking conditions. There was some positive feedback from the assessors about quite a few of the groups and most students seem to have really enjoyed the experience. As George in Year 10 said: "I found it really valuable to learn to be cohesive within a team environment and the entire experience was a great opportunity to gain some independence."

54 participants who started their Bronze expedition in September 2021 have now successfully completed their award. Congratulations to all those involved. We look forward to getting the expeditions rolling again next season.

Miss E Alloy



News from MGSPA

As ever, our fundraising activities this term started with a bang! Our ever popular fireworks event on November 5th was a stunning display of colour and noise, and raised a whopping £15,000 to go towards our aim of purchasing a new mini bus for the school by the end of this academic year.

We also had our annual coach trip to Bruges and the Christmas Markets, and as it sold out in 24 hours, was clearly as in demand as it was pre-pandemic. We are exploring the option of another trip in the Spring to Le Touquet - so watch this space!

Our final events before Christmas included our fantastic wreath making evening, where 40 of us were guided through the process of making our own wreaths, to hang on our front doors, by a professional florist, and the Great PTA Christmas Draw. These last two events raised over £2,000 too.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and peaceful New Year, and thank you all for your continued support.

Kind regards

Sarah Hudson
MGSPA Chair & Trustee



Harvard Trip 2023

Winter 2022



In the next school term, January 2023, Maidstone Grammar School will be sending 24 students to the USA to take part in the annual Harvard Model United Nations conference (HMUN). This international debating competition is an incredible opportunity for students to debate the most pressing world issues, and draft original responses to them.

The preparation for this event began last year, for Year 13s, and in September for Year 12s. This competitive opportunity has required hard work from all students and staff involved. Each school taking part is allocated two countries to represent; neither of which can be their own. Prior to these allocations, preparations involved mock debates, in which we were given a minute to state our position in relation to a proposed question. We have also been reading and annotating our delegate booklets, provided by Harvard, which offer guidance in how to approach this conference, and what exactly it entails.

In the past week MGS has been allocated its countries, and we were all surprised to learn that we have been given Ukraine and Indonesia. One MGS student will represent Indonesia, and the remaining 23 students will represent Ukraine. Due to its international importance currently, with the War in Ukraine, our preparation will be even more intense and rigorous than usual; however, this will also be hugely rewarding as it is an amazing opportunity to maximise our involvement in the conference. In the past year it has been near impossible to avoid the tragic news of Ukraine, giving us a lot to draw upon. Further preparation will involve extensive research into not only our designated countries, but other nations at the conference, and their relation to either Ukraine or Indonesia. This could manifest itself in reading articles, papers, books, or any other works on the countries and listening to podcasts or documentaries about the important issues that will be raised at the conference. Preparation will look different to each of us, as we have individual roles within the conference, so we are tailoring our work towards this. Additionally, we are preparing for the conference by working on understanding the complexities of the United Nations. We will each be required to write position papers, outlining what we want our countries to achieve from the conference.

Particularly helpful in preparing us for HMUN was the training given by four Old Maidstonians who had previously attended the conference. In this session we learnt more about the way in which the conference is structured, and what we will be required to do. We were also able to practise speaking and debating in some of the more complicated contexts in which we will find ourselves. Perhaps most useful was the advice they gave from their personal experiences, giving us insight into the reality of taking part in HMUN. We are all hugely grateful for their support and aim to continue their successes in January.

Finally, a key part of our preparation has been the support and organisation from all members of staff involved in the trip, particularly that of Mrs Van Mol, who has led every after-school session for us. She has organised, inspired, and motivated each of us to achieve our very best at the conference in January 2023. We hope to make the school proud of our participation in HMUN next term.

Amelia L 12To2

CCF Army Section

This year the army section has focused on progression in all aspects of our craft, aiming to resolve the skill fade we have suffered throughout the covid period. This has seen the army leadership team, a group of 6 Year 13 students working alongside the officers within the section to improve our planning, communication and quality of training. These three qualities are aspects we have felt will lay the strongest foundations for our cadets, whilst still providing an enjoyable but beneficial training program.

So far our newest cadets, Year 9, have learnt drill, first aid, fieldcraft and navigational skills at a basic level, in preparation for their first experience outside the school grounds for their recruit camp in February. This will show the cadets what life is like on a military camp, the etiquette, protocols such as room inspections, as well as a chance to show off what they have learnt so far.

Within Year 10, they have begun a more advanced syllabus, taking all they learnt in Year 9 and layering those skills with added complexity. This year is also a time for them to demonstrate their commitment and leadership potential as we begin to promote individuals who we see as adept in their craft, positive minded and a good role model to those around them.

Year 11s have been undertaking a course called CFIT since the start of September. Taught by out of school staff from the cadet training team, the Cadet Forces Instructional Technique course teaches the cadets to conduct their own lessons, and is imperative to the section as without skillful, confident teachers, our cadets would not be gaining a quality education.

Therefore our Year 12s have been putting this into practice, conducting lessons to a high standard to those in Year 9 and 10. Although sometimes challenging, these lessons will allow our senior cadets to plan and conduct sessions, developing their own personal skills as they find out what methods work for them.

Last but not least, we have begun our additional competition training, open to Year 10 through to 13 in preparation for our Military Skills competition which we will attend around easter. By providing additional training, those who wish to go beyond expectations can train at our highest possible level. We hope to place high enough at our regional competition to once again participate in the national Cambrian patrol, in which we achieved a silver medal during our 2022 attempt.

CSM Liam E 13Cr11



CCF Royal Navy Section

This year has already been an adventurous start for the Royal Navy section at MGS. Within a few weeks of school starting we were invited to visit HMS Trumpeter, an archer-class patrol vessel, at the Chatham Docks. At the docks, cadets were able to tour the vessel guided by the ships crew, giving a first-hand experience of life on a Royal Navy patrol vessel. After spending a few hours on the ship the cadets were then able to wonder the docks seeing HMS Victory, the wooden ex-flagship, as well as the decommissioned submarine HMS Ocelot.

Upon return from the trip it was time to complete basic training in drill and general knowledge, with Remembrance Parade only two short months away. This involved weekly sessions dedicated to drill to get cadets up to marching standard while teaching the new recruits the basics. This process was greatly aided by tips from visiting Chief Scott from the Royal Navy, helping us to perform correct and proper Royal Navy drill.

After the Remembrance Parade the focus in CCF sessions shifted to knowledge and practical leadership tasks. With three different lessons being given every week, taught by both senior leadership and lower ranked cadets, who showed great passion in their performance.

The future for the Royal Navy section this year is filled with opportunities. During Extended Learning Week cadets will have the opportunity to attend the annual trip to Scotland

for a week, being the crew for on of the fleet tenders and seeing the base HMNB Clyde. In the summer we will be kayaking and canoeing on the lake or river, with the new recruits learning the basic skills and older cadets honing their skills or helping to teach others. Finally we received news we will be receiving new updates uniform in the new academic year, making us uniform to the actual Royal Navy.

CPO Ewan C 13Cg8



CCF RAF Section

The start of a new academic year has seen the RAF Section here at MGS working to re-establish itself as a competitive unit, with quality throughout its ranks. A new cohort of Year 9 and 12 recruits, along with returning cadets, have created an sense of belonging; a return to the successful training and activities enjoyed pre-pandemic has formed a close-knit unit, ready to face the remainder of the year.

Under the guidance of more senior cadets our new recruits have begun their instruction in drill, and discussed a range of topics regarding the RAF and aviation as a whole. At the same time, they have begun to immerse themselves in some of our more practical activities, beginning their weapon training and flying our drones. They are now eagerly awaiting the moment they can visit an RAF base to put all their training to good use, along with their upcoming recruit camp. We have all enjoyed watching and guiding the start of their journey with the cadets, the enthusiasm abundantly clear throughout.

Every year, recruit camp is an opportunity for recruits to hone their skills, build stronger relationships, and to encourage both healthy competition, and cooperation between the RAF, RN, and Army Sections. In what is typically recruits first experience of command tasks and map reading exercises, they are often broken into small teams, working together, gaining the kind of valuable knowledge that is often unattainable in the classroom. Every year, they will return absolutely exhausted, but absolutely exhilarated too.

A number of our more senior cadets will also be looking forward to the

camp, having attended a leadership cadre at RAF Henlow earlier in the year. Over the course of this week, they received instruction on how to direct other cadets through both lessons and their general day-to-day within the CCF. This is a brilliant first step for these boys as they begin to progress through the Section's rank structure and gain more responsibility, with a view to them one day leading it.

Having implemented a new array of flights within the Section at the close of last year, we have now introduced an inter-flight league table. The first points having been earned prior to the October break, the next round will occur soon, and a fierce competition can be sure to ensue. We hope this league can encourage increased dedication and pride for our cadets, all while fostering MGS's principle of "Inspire to Belong".

Drawing a busy first term to a close, but continuing the theme of competition, a team of 13 cadets took part in the South East Region heat of the Royal Air Squadron Trophy. Having trained upwards of 4 hours a week for several months, opposition from the 14 rival teams was just as tough. The team performed admirably, achieving a confident second place. We now have our sights set on the upcoming national round, aiming to go one better - winning the Royal Air Squadron Trophy.

FS Henry N 13Cg2



Barton House Update

In September our Head of House and House Captain met to recruit a new Junior Prefect Team. We had an overwhelming response from candidates and although we found making a choice challenging, we are pleased with the team that is now in place.

Our Prefect Team have been working with the wider School Prefect Team to support many school wide events since September. We really enjoyed supporting the Year 7 Open Evening and it was fantastic to be able to represent the school and welcome guests through the Gate House. At Fireworks Night we stood around the perimeters of the field, helped with crowd management and enjoyed chatting with the visiting families. It was yet again a successful year where everyone got to enjoy an amazing fireworks show with some music, food and drinks.

We are incredibly proud of the work we did leading on Anti-Bullying Month in November and how we spread awareness across the school. As a part of the month we had Odd Socks and Wear Your Own Tie Day (thank you to everyone who joined in!). This was a fun way for us as a community to show that our differences should be celebrated. This was our junior prefects' first event and they got involved in making posters, engaging in events and delivering assemblies.

Also in November we held our House Council Meeting, which gave us a chance to hear the lower school's ideas and concerns. We look forward to sharing the work we are doing in our House Council with you all at a later date.

Our Prefect Team have also delivered assemblies to all the houses. The theme for these has been "Reach Out". We have used these assemblies as an opportunity to emphasise all the ways

in which students can get support at school and report a concern. We also used our assemblies to create awareness around issues we feel passionate about, such as the LGBTQ+ community. We also informed the wider school about the various types of bullying, so they're equipped with the knowledge they need to stay safe. We ensured that psychological and cyber bullying were also acknowledged.

We hope that our work this term has inspired others to open up to others about issues important to them. The Barton Prefect Team continue to work on and discuss new ways at how we can support each other, and we hope that anyone who does need support feels they know where to go and is not hesitant to ask.

Barton House Prefect Team



College House Update

We have been extremely busy since the start of the academic year trying to build on our multitude of successes from last academic year (winning the House Cup and providing and incredibly successful Christmas Charity Day, to name a few).

The first item we had on our agenda this year were the appointments of our Junior Prefect Team. With these now in place the College Prefect Team for the 2022-23 academic year is a team that consists of a diverse range of personalities, perspectives, and positive attributes that will enable us to move the direction of our House forward and build on its successes.

Our team has worked hard to support many school events since September (the Fireworks Night in the November cold and the frantic search for more tour guides at the Year 6 Open Evening!).

Our House Council Reps have also met several times, in small groups and with the larger School Council (combining all House Councils), to discuss issues, develop actions and create an open discourse between the school and student body. We hope that everything we do to improve our community will last long after we leave and that one day we will look back with fondness at our years in College House.

One of our aims this year is to develop a network of support for all year groups that improves inclusivity and equality in each form group and throughout the House. We want each and every member of College House to feel valued. Our Vice Captains, Callum and

Mia have been leading on initiatives at house events, in assemblies and during form time to help fulfil this mission.

We are currently planning for our Charity Day scheduled for 27th January. We will use this event to raise money for the British Heart Foundation and our Head of House, Mr Hughes will run in the London Marathon later next year to also help this cause. We all wish him luck in this charitable event!

Our Charity Day will provide something for everyone and will include a cake sale, a re-gifting, shop stall, teacher talent show and it will also be a Non-uniform Day. We look forward to telling you all about it next time!

College Prefect Team

Corpus Christi House Update

Without any 'new year blues', Corpus Christi House have got stuck into this academic year with gusto and excitement. The appointment of our 10 Junior Prefects aided our Senior Prefect Team with the first events of the year.

Starting off in late September, the Corpus team alongside other prefects helped host students, parents, and guests from the wider community in the Big Hall, through selling coffees and cakes in support of Macmillan Coffee Morning. This, alongside our Year 6 Open Evening - where we had the pleasure of supervising our Year 7 and 8 guides - really got the Corpus Christi 2022/23 ball rolling.

Children in Need Charity Day saw the first test for our Junior Prefects, as they took hold of the handle, while Year 13s were on mock exam leave. Events such as crossbar football, teacher sponging, and a 12 hour 'Badmintonathon' - led by our very own Callum S (Year 12) - wouldn't have been able to run without the help of Corpus' prefects, and the success of said events is a testament to their hard work. Another prefect of worthy mention is Connor V (Year 12), who took on a running challenge to complete 60 kilometres over the month of November, in aid of the Movember charity. He took to the All Weather Pitch every morning before school, come rain or shine, in order to complete the challenge. By the end of the month, he fundraised £1,015 - Well done Connor, you have done Corpus Christi house proud.

Friday 9th December saw Christmas Jumper Day, where Corpus played a pivotal role in organising the event, collecting donations at the gate, raising money for Homeless Care.

Looking ahead, we are preparing support sessions for our Year 7, 10, and 11 students, each designed by our prefect team to help aid the students through their year. We also have inter-form competitions for Corpus in store for the New Year, and finally, all the way in June we have our celebration of LGBTQ+ Pride Month where we have high expectations to meet after last year's huge successes.

Corpus Christi take great pride in our first full term of events and can't wait to help and make many more Maidstone Grammar School memories this academic year.

Corpus Christi Prefect Team



Tonbridge House Update

The start of the academic year saw Tonbridge House get off to a flying start with us winning the 'MGS Spelling Bee' created by the English Department. This was very much needed as it gave us a boost in House Points and enabled us to climb up the leaderboards a little; ultimately getting us closer to the end goal of winning the House Cup. Furthermore, numerous Tonbridge House Council Meetings which have taken place regularly, have allowed us to put into place new systems and rules which positively affect the school.

Here at Tonbridge, we pride ourselves on our innovation and individuality, and so seeing these new changes being brought into effect has been incredibly rewarding. Examples of these, being our new 'Green Agenda', which have led to the use of more open bins throughout the school - the Sixth Form Common Room in particular - to avoid the hard time of having to fold rubbish to fit through the 2 hole bins, and our new and improved 'Rewards System' which may see the arise of rewards that can accumulate students buying powers; with the idea of a 'get out of detention pass' also being discussed! This new system will also allow students to obtain awards more frequently for progress gains, personal improvement and most improved. I assure you however that this will not be the end of the improvements sparked by Tonbridge and that we are always looking for improvements to be made - so be sure to get in touch with us if you have any suggestions. The Business Department likes to call this 'Kaizen' - continuous improvement through small incremental changes.

Another event which we have also organised is the most recent Christmas Jumper Day, allowing a large sum of money to be donated to charity while raising the festive spirits for the upcoming holiday. A very special project we have upcoming is the 'Keep Warm Campaign' which will be happening very soon - so remember to stay updated with that! However, all this could not be possible without the help of our amazing team, so thank you to our House Captains, Tom P, Tom E and Georgia G and our newly appointed Junior Prefect Team: Amelia L, Amritha S, Billy L, Charlie S, Joseph H, Joshua V N, Judah M and Leo G. It is a pleasure having you on our team and the mix of personalities is incredible.

I would also like to end this update off with a special message for the house as a whole. It is ESSENTIAL that we win the House Cup this year, as this year marks Mr Holmes' Silver Jubilee with the school. So what better way would there be to mark this incredible achievement of 25 years of service and loyalty than with the House Cup in our name? Get involved with every event that we have going on and push for success in everything you immerse yourself in - it's ours for the taking.

Tonbridge House Prefect Team

School Council

This term saw a gathering of the School Council to discuss issues raised through three specific sources within the school. The first through the staff Senior Leadership Team, the second through House Council Meetings, and the third through student's specifically raising issues with various members of both the student and staff bodies. In this way we aim to improve communication and connection throughout the school community.

The first point raised during the council was the 'Green Agenda'; an initiative to reduce the school's environmental impact. Positive points about our progress so far included the introduction of School Water Bottles in place of single use plastic bottles, as well as more recycling bins being available in classrooms. However we recognise areas that still need to improve, like the removal of single use plastics from the entire school.

Our move towards a more digitally aware school was also discussed, raising the need to remove paper timetables and information slips to reduce waste, and improve the information provided on how to access online resources. Secondly, using the digital screens already around the school to provide information more effectively was also raised.

The issue of littering was also mentioned, with suggestions to implement harsher punishments for people seen actively littering and to improve the difference between our recycling bins and ordinary waste bins in addition to upping the quality of education

on how to more effectively recycle or reuse waste.

The second item discussed was anonymous reporting of concerns. The unattractiveness of reporting concerns was discussed and suggestions included offering different ways to report concerns, removing the formality of the process, and providing more professional training for prefects to act as a more friendly and approachable body for students to take concerns to.

The third item addressed was about integration between year groups in form time. Some forms have no issues with relationships between year groups, but others would like more structured form time and issues with the formality of form times was also mentioned. Suggestions including rotating seating plans and more time to talk to other students, more widespread implementation of "Mentoring Monday" and similar schemes to facilitate greater connection in forms specifically.

The fourth and final item discussed was about the rewards system. The regularity and frequency of rewards between teachers was raised and a desire from the student body for more variety in the rewards offered was discussed. Suggestions include rewards that accumulate and can be exchanged for privileges or rewards for progress and personal improvement.

The Student Council's aim is to raise issues for the staff and student body to address. All the issues raised in our meetings are carried forward into subsequent more targeted meetings between

those able to enact the changes necessary for an evolving school such as MGS.

School Captain, Ethan Y 13Ba14
School Vice Captain, Sam L 13Cg7

From the Archive

In 1922 the first Shakespearean play, 'Twelfth Night' was performed at MGS; the War Office donated two Wireless Telegraphy Sets to the school; and rugby became the school's official winter sport. And all of this occurred exactly 100 years ago!

In 1930 when workhouses were abolished in the UK the Junior School from Brunswick House was incorporated into the new main school in Barton Road - the school that we are in now.

In 1668 the 13th headmaster, John Law, was admonished for frequenting alehouses. Twenty three years later he was indicted for murder, but refused to leave the school buildings until an order was given by the Queen!

In 1554 the School was closed for four years following Maidstone's sympathy with Sir Thomas Wyatt and cancellation of the town's charter. The Princess Elizabeth (later Elizabeth I) was imprisoned in the Tower of London by Queen Mary.

Did you know when Maidstone Grammar Schools was celebrating its 300th anniversary, Harrods Store was just opening for the first time in London.

Year 7 Learning to Learn

Since the start of Year 7, I and the rest of Year 7 taken a subject called Learn to Learn, in which a student learns how to use very useful skills for revision and studying. This course of study is only learnt in the first year at MGS and it is extremely helpful. Learn to Learn covers lots of techniques to help us revise and study for tests, GCSEs and A-Levels and how to manage time wisely.

Mindsets

In this branch of study, we have spent a few lessons on mindsets. A mindset is how you approach something. A person can have a fixed or growth mindset. When learning you want to have a growth mindset. Having a growth mindset means you are open to learning new things and you believe that you can become better if you try. There are a lot of features to a growth mindset like; believing that effort leads to mastery; intelligence and talent can be developed; mistakes are part of learning; failures are opportunities to improve; failing is temporary; and viewing others successes can be inspirational. Having a fixed mindset, however, can be a negative thing. We have learnt that if you want to set goals and have a growth mindset, you can add the word "yet" to make it positive. For example, if someone said, "I can't code well" that would be having a fixed mindset because they would be saying that they aren't good at it now and cannot improve. Although, if they put "yet" at the end, it means that they are not good at it now but want to get better at coding. It is very important to have a sensible

growth mind set because if you tell yourself, you can do something enough times; you will believe that you can do it.

The Learning Brain

Your brain learns at every moment whether you know it or not. Inside your brain, there are these things called neural pathways. You can think of them as roads from point A to point B. Neural pathways are how your brain learns things, and as you get better at those things, the neural pathways strengthen. When you were learning how to do long division, your road from A to B is like a 'dirt road' that isn't very clear. As you get better at doing long division, your road becomes more efficient, because your 'dirt road' turns into a 'motorway'. Different people have different ways to strengthen their neural pathways best. There are three ways to do this: hearing it, seeing it, or doing it.

Note Taking

In Learn to Learn, we have learnt many ways about how to take notes such as the Cornell Note Taking Method, paraphrasing, and skimming and scanning. The Cornell Note Taking Method takes the essential parts of texts and puts them down into a title, some headings, notes and a summary. Paraphrasing is putting a text into your own words, and it can be done by changing the order of certain words, using synonymous words, and keeping the main idea. Skimming is a type of fast reading that requires you to look through content quickly to understand the heart of the matter. Scanning is when you also

read quickly but when you read, you don't give some sections of a text as much attention as others.

I think that Learn to Learn is a very helpful subject that can assist students well when they need to revise and study. It can help pupils manage their time well, be effective at note taking and help develop a correct attitude to learning.

Oluwadarasimi D 7Ba2



Year 7's First Trip

This term 196 Year 7 students have visited Bletchley Park. The trips created an opportunity for students to gain a deeper understanding of the role that the men and women working at Bletchley undertook to help end the war and to appreciate how their work also laid the foundations for the computer age. Importantly, two months into their new school, it was another opportunity to spend time together in a positive, inspiring environment.

The boys thoroughly enjoyed visiting the original huts in which thousands of people worked during the war. Today, each hut offers an immersive learning experience which the students made full use of - from trying on the uniforms; working with interactive maps to plot the course of incoming air raids through to role playing how to intercept messages.

Each student also took part in a workshop to better understand how those working at Bletchley Park were able to decipher and eventually crack Enigma. The workshop included guidance on how to understand and interpret Morse code and also offered an opportunity to test their decoding and cypher skills through a range of practical activities. Everyone got to have a go on an original enigma machine - cue plenty of photo opportunities!

Thank you to everyone who participated - from the teachers and volunteers that helped supervise the trip, to the parents who dropped off their children incredibly early and to the pupils themselves. We received excellent feedback from Bletchley about the polite, engaged behaviour of our students. Two out of the three groups experienced travel issues which delayed their return. However, the students coped very well and showed a high level of resilience and patience throughout.

Mrs E Ridgway



Sport and Games

Maidstone Grammar School Sport this term has continued to go from strength to strength and it has been a pleasure to see so many of our pupils keen to both develop in their sports whilst also being so proud to represent their school in extracurricular fixtures.

Our culture is to develop our young men and women both on and off the pitch and is underpinned by our values of Memories, Growth and Support. This has been our guiding practice across both Games and MGS Extra this term and it has been fantastic to see our pupils living these values.

At the heart of our sporting programme is the emphasis we place on providing pupils with positive memories of sport to ensure they remain heavily involved in Sport as they move through life. So far this term we have seen over one-hundred and seventy fixtures across campus, where pupils have had the opportunity to be a part of a school team and the kudos that comes with this. From this many brilliant memories have been created and whilst we are always very keen on placing an emphasis on performance over results there have been some notable highlights well worth sharing. In Football all our sides have been successful in progressing within their

respective District Cups. Outside of the District our sides have also been competing in County wide competitions. I am delighted to say our U16s have qualified for the final already, whilst our 2ndXI, U15 and U14 sides still have to play their quarter-finals over the coming weeks. Away from Football it has been fantastic to see the Growth of our Basketball programme this term across all age groups. Year group practices are often packed with numbers in the Sports Hall and our sides are making fine progress in the County competitions. In Rugby, numbers at all age groups are on the rise and we are consistently putting out two teams in our Saturday block programme, whilst our Year 7s carry the baton on a Friday afternoon with six teams consistently representing the school. The stand outs so far this term being the 1stXV and U14A team who have both had very strong seasons. Outside of these sports Girls netball continues to thrive on a Wednesday evening with inter-house tournaments coming up in the New Year.

Whilst it is always nice to talk about success it has been the value of 'Growth' that has been most pleasing this term. Across all Games lessons and extracurricular clubs our pupils are keen to constantly develop and hone their skills. The

MGS Extra programme continues to provide a wide offering for pupils to do this and it is great to see so many of our pupils taking up this opportunity with the All Weather Pitch being a hive of sporting industry until 5pm every evening this term.

Put quite simply the aim of MGS Sport is to help our pupil's become both better players and better people, we have a strong belief that sport acts as a vehicle for the holistic development of the pupils in our care at Maidstone Grammar School. We believe in 'Supporting' one another, it has been a pleasure to see our pupils do this across the sporting programme, whether this be within their own teams or Senior pupils coming down to assist with Junior training. None more so is this evident than seeing our Year 7s acting as ball boys on a Saturday morning for our Senior teams.

This has been a fantastic term of MGS Extra, thank you to all the pupils and staff for their continued efforts throughout the term and for the parents support on the touchline!

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas.

MGS Sport

Art Gallery



Max G OM 2022
White pencil on black paper



Max G OM 2022
Watercolour on paper



JJ G 11Ba12
Work in Progress



Eoghan C 11Cg13
Work in Progress



Max G OM 2022
Clay



Maidstonians in the News



Haydn C (Y10 Barton House) spoke at the UK Youth Parliament in the House of Commons earlier this term. Massive well done Haydn, we're proud of you!



Massive congratulations to Jake W (Y11 Barton House) who represented England at the World Karate Championships in Turkey. Jake may not have received a medal, but he did get through 3 rounds, which is such a great achievement at this level. Well done Jake!



Owen V (Y11 Barton) and Finlay M (Y11 Tonbridge) competed in the South East Powerlifting competition. Finlay placed second and Owen gained first place. They both wore their MGS sports socks with pride for their deadlifts! Massive congratulations to them both.



Toby H (Y7 Tonbridge House) competed in the Commonwealth Games Karate competition and came home with a bronze medal in his category. Massive congratulations Toby!

OM Success



A massive congratulations to OM Hamish Reilly (2019 Corpus Christi House) who recently took part in the U23 World Triathlon Championship in Abu Dhabi and finished 3rd. Well done Hamish!



William S (Y9 College House) took part in R5 of the Total Karting Zero Summer Southern Championship at Thruxton Karting Circuit and the Mansell Raceway in Devon in October. Congratulations William.

Key Dates for Term 3

- 4 January - Postponed Christmas Dinner (Ba & Cg)
- 5 January - Postponed Christmas Dinner (Cr & To)
- Year 8 Information Evening 7pm at MGS
- 9-13 January - Year 10 exams
- 10 January - Year 9 Virtual Parents' Evening
- 1 - 28 Feb - LGBTQ+ History Month
- 3 February - Parents' Association Quiz Night
- 6 February - Year 12 UCAS Evening
- 8 February - Year 8 Virtual Parents' Evening
- 20-24 February - Year 11 mock exams
- 27 Feb - 3 Mar - Year 13 mock exams



