Dear Parent/Carer

Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help on our SOS Day. We have now cleared the lockers from the corridor in the S Block and put new lighting in which has already made a significant difference. Getting this area painted will then allow us to finish the job and lay new carpets during the Easter holidays. I look forward to seeing you on Saturday.

On Saturday 8th March 2 teams of students entered the Magistrates’ Court Mock Trial Competition, held at Chatham Magistrates’ Court. The Year 8 team comprised of Jake-Lewis Fawsett, Luke Batchelor, Jack Wakerly, Michael Cameron, Arjun Johal, Matthew Exley, Kes Lawrence, Joseph Keyhani, Peter Buravytskiy, Luke Kellow, Anuj Ashar and Lewis Mason. The Year 9 team comprised of Isaac Watson, Thomas Chaggar, Luke Childs, Luke Sandys, Ethan Godden, Zachary Goddard, Joshua Cunningham-Marsh, Phillip Ivory, David Blair, Lewis Smith, Jamie Barden, Ashkaan Shavandi and Ben Pinnell-Whitton. Both teams had a lot to live up to as the Year 9 team had actually won the Local Round last year and were only just beaten by The Judd in the Regional finals. All students performed admirably on the day and some were even given business cards by some of the visiting solicitors (which hopefully will lead to some amazing work experience placements in the future!) Unfortunately, this year both teams were beaten by outstanding performances by Highworth Grammar School for Girls; the only consolation being that the Year 9 team beat them last year! Both teams are already eagerly awaiting next year’s competition, with the Year 9 team hopefully entering the Mock Bar competition, which will take place at one of the Crown Courts in Kent or London. Congratulations to all concerned.

Congratulations to our Year 7 and 8 football teams who both reached the Medway Schools Final last week. With our 1st XI league cup winners and two cup finalists, this has been a very exciting year for our footballers. We look forward to building upon this success when we resume football in September.

Can I please provide parents with forward notice that from the start of the summer term we would like all students to complete their work in black ink; students will then all be required to proof read their work and make any changes in blue ink to show where they have done the proofreading; all self and peer review as well as student responses should be completed in green ink. The school will have a stock of black, blue and green pens available to purchase from the Holcombe Office at cost price. If a student does not have the appropriate coloured pens for their lessons then they will receive a sanction. This is being introduced to ensure that students get used to writing legibly and at appropriate speed in black ink as they will need to complete their public examinations in black ink as many of these are now scanned into computers before being sent electronically for marking. We are requesting the use of a blue ink for proofreading so the teachers can clearly see that this has been done. Proofreading is an important part of students reviewing their work and ensuring that their spelling and grammar is accurate. This is part of a wider school drive to improve literacy within the school.
I am pleased to report that student behaviour on our trip to see Gillingham Football Club last week was exemplary. We also had the pleasure of watching an exciting match with six goals, four penalties and one red card! I would like to thank Gillingham Football Club for providing us with courtesy tickets for the event and hope to be able to run a similar trip in future seasons.

The next meeting of the Parent Council Forum takes place on Thursday 27th March at 7pm. I would be grateful if you could let us know via the office email if you are attending, for rooming and refreshment purposes.

Parents will be aware that the NUT has called a Strike Day on Wednesday 26th March. We are finalising plans for that day and will send this to parents in the next couple of days. However, it is likely that some year groups will not be in school that day.

Following our most recent Ofsted visit we feel that students deserve recognition of their hard work and their part in the improvement in the performance of the school. Therefore we will be holding a Tag Day this Friday, 21st March. Students can make a voluntary contribution if they wish to the School Captains in the Atrium at break or lunchtime. Any monies raised will be used to purchase additional games and resources for the student House Nights, eg, if every student donates 50p we could afford a commercial pool table; the pool tables we have are very popular and were kindly donated by parents but are unlikely to be robust enough for long term use.

Yours sincerely

S. Gardner
Principal