



# Marling School

An 11-18 Grammar School for Boys

Headteacher: Dr Stuart Wilson  
stuart.wilson@marling.gloucs.sch.uk

Cainscross Road, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 4HE

Tel: 01453 762251 Fax: 01453 756011

Website: [www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk](http://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk)

Email: [adminoffice@marling.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@marling.gloucs.sch.uk)

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Dear Parents and Carers

We write on behalf of the Governing Body of Marling School to consult with you regarding the school's proposal to permanently increase its Published Admission Number (PAN) in Year 7 from 120 to 150 from September 2016. The governors of the school recognise that there is growing demand for places, and that the school has the facilities and capacity for growth that would allow it to increase its PAN whilst maintaining the very high standard of education that our students enjoy.

An increase to PAN has been discussed by the governing body through its Admissions Committee and its Steering Group and both bodies made a recommendation to the Full Governing Body on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014. At that meeting the Governors voted unanimously to consult on an increased PAN for Marling School.

The reasons for this are:

- **Marling School is oversubscribed**

In each of the last three years over 500 boys from across the county have asked for their admission test results to be included in the school's cohort with over 300 reaching the qualifying standard. For 2014 entry there were over 150 first preferences for Marling School for 120 places.

- **Demand for places at the school remains high even after allocation**

For entry 2014 there were more than 35 appeals for places at the school which resulted in 8 admissions over PAN. A waiting list of 15 candidates was held from September 2014.

- **Anticipated increased demand for places**

Information from Gloucestershire County Council indicates that there will be future growth in student numbers in the county as a result of current numbers in primary schools and the impact of additional housing. In the Stroud District, the draft local plan records an additional 9500 homes for the district over the next 15 years and County Council data suggest that demand for places at secondary schools will rise year on year reaching close to capacity in 2017/18. This will result in more demand for places at Marling School.

There are further sharp rises in student numbers forecast for Cheltenham and Gloucester with a significant deficit in secondary places expected by 2018. To the south, there is very large growth in student numbers anticipated for Swindon, that will affect north Wiltshire.

When the potential sub-regional growth in student numbers is compared to our current distribution of students, the anticipated increased demand can be clearly demonstrated.

Distance from Marling School	Y7 Intake, Sept 2014	Approx. additional students based on committed housing	
		Additional primary pupils	Additional secondary pupils
0 to 5 miles	50%	300	200
5 to 10 miles	28%	2500	1500
10 to 15 miles	14%	800	500
15+ miles	8%	1890	1140

*Raising Aspirations, Inspiring Excellence, Succeeding Together*

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- **The school has suitable accommodation for more students**

The school has completed a curriculum analysis of additional classrooms needed for a PAN of 150 pupils, five forms of entry. The current building project has demonstrated that the school has the capacity to accommodate further students and our new dining hall has an anticipated seated capacity of 220, more than enough to accommodate the increased flow of students.

- **The school needs to grow to sustain its current provision**

Gloucestershire is one of the lowest funded counties for education in the country; a situation that looks likely to continue until a single funding formula is in place across the country. Funding has been further hit by cuts to both 11-16 and post-16 per-student funding and by changes to the distribution of funding to schools. These cuts mean that operating a physically large environment with only 850 students may become increasingly difficult.

We hope the information above allows you to see the reasons why we propose this change and that you understand and support the proposal to increase the PAN of Marling School to 150 from September 2016. The change will increase the availability of places for boys living locally as well as to those keen to travel from a further distance and the growth of the school will ensure that it remains a thriving and successful school.

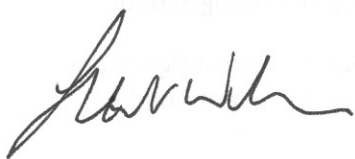
The draft version of the Marling School Admissions Policy for September 2016 is available on the school website at <http://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk/admissions/>.

If you would like to submit any comments regarding Marling School's proposal to increase its Published Admission Number to 150 from September 2016, please forward them in writing to Lynne Pidgley, Clerk to the Governors, c/o Marling School by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2015. All comments will be considered by the Full Governing Body on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

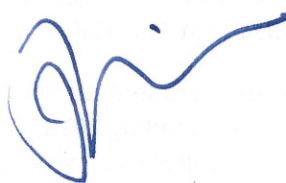
You may be aware that Stroud High School is also consulting on a proposal to increase their PAN to 150 from September 2016 and have written to stakeholders accordingly. The two schools collaborate closely on many aspects of school life, above and beyond our sixth form partnership, and we share a joint steering group of governors. After much discussion, both governing bodies have taken the decision to consult on increasing the published admission numbers of the schools.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher at the school.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Stuart Wilson**  
Headteacher



**Mr John Gilbert**  
Chair of Governors