



Ref: MS/ES

9 December 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

At the end of a very busy and successful term, I would like to congratulate the students for their diligence and achievements so far. We have so many success stories to share and good news items to celebrate together. I would also like to thank the staff for their dedication and hard work, as well as parents and carers for your continued support of Marden High School and our students. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first term as Headteacher, and in particular it has been good to see so many examples every day of students living up to our high expectations of them:

- Know the code of conduct and safe practice
- Try their best, work as part of a team and value healthy competition
- Know that with rights comes responsibility
- Respect and value the diversity of others
- Make a full contribution and give service to the school and the community
- Be kind and considerate to others
- Communicate effectively with their teachers

We continue to value your support and active involvement in our learning community. I believe whole heartedly that good relationships between teachers, staff, children and parents are fundamental to the success of any school. With this in mind you may have noticed that we have set up a Parent Teacher Association, a first for Marden High School. Our first meeting proper will take place at 6pm on Wednesday 11 January 2017 in the LRC. All parents/carers are welcome to attend, and you can get involved at a variety of levels, from being a part of the committee to helping out at events. If you would like any other information on the PTA please contact Louise Newton either by phone or email l.newton@mardenhigh.net

Here is just a taster of the excellent things that have been going on during this last half term, not to mention all of the great lessons that go on every day. They are testament to the energy and effort applied by our students and staff working as a team. You can find further details of activities in our termly newsletter published on our website.

- Year 7 and 8 students have recently been involved in Super Learning Days where they have been able to combine and develop a variety of personal, learning and thinking skills whilst completing cross-curricular projects. Great organisation and creativity on the part of staff have made these memorable and enjoyable experiences for so many students.
- We now have 43 extra-curricular activities/enrichment clubs running before school, at lunchtime and after school each week. One of these is Buggy Malone the Musical and rehearsals are well underway for the performance in February. There are more than 40 students participating, some of whom will be playing in the live band. Tickets will soon be available and we look forward to seeing you there.
- Students involved with our Business Enterprise Club have also been busy turning an initial investment into big profits through the production, marketing and sale of various products. They intend to donate some of this to charity and reinvest the remainder into their next venture.
- A Newcastle Eagles basketball coach has been working with our students on a Tuesday lunchtime and Newcastle Falcons Rugby Coaches have been coaching a group of Marden girls on Wednesday evenings. Our link with the Northumberland Badminton coach has also been popular with a large number of students attending on Thursday evenings with teams competing against other schools with great success.
- Dance City, the North East's leading development organisation for dance has proved very popular with our students, leading and supporting a thriving dance culture in the school with its Tuesday evening extra-curricular club in our very own dance studio.
- Our Creative Writing Club goes from strength to strength with great success at the Sunderland Literature & Creative Writing Festival.

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Marden High



Marden High



- Music has been a strong feature of our celebrations this term with our Christingle Service at St George's involving Marden singers coming together with choirs from Cullercoats and Monkhouse primaries to provide a wonderful evening of light and song. In addition to this we have just experienced a fantastic evening of carols and musical items at our Christmas Concert.
- The Year 9 Guided Choices process is now well underway, and students will soon be approaching the point at which they choose their options subjects for GCSE. This term there has been lots of information given to parents and students including assemblies from Curriculum Leaders and the Connexions careers service, giving information about the various subjects on offer. The process continues in the New Year with our Guided Choices Open Evening and the Year 9 Parents' Evening, before they make their final choices at the end of February.
- Year 9 students have recently taken part in a Kick-Off HE Raising Aspirations course with Northumbria University. This has involved a series of afternoons of boxing training and workshops, with the aim of showing the students how skills and attributes developed through sport can transfer across to their academic work and lead to even greater success.
- Another group of our Year 10 students were chosen to participate in one of the region's largest medical career day events. The event was hosted by the MCS Raising Aspirations Group and outlined medical school entry requirements, including academic expectations, interview processes and admission tests. All of our Year 10 students will be going on work experience in the Spring term.
- As we approach the Christmas season there has been lots of fundraising going on for a variety of worthy causes. During the term we have also seen great efforts raising money for Children in Need, and for the M10 Mission, which involves a group of our Year 11 students heading off to Mexico this summer to build houses and help out in orphanages. They will be raising money for this great cause during the year so please support them where you can.
- Our Year 11 students can also get involved in The National Citizen Service (or NCS) in the summer holidays. This is a challenging and enjoyable experience including a week-long residential visit to an activity centre for an Outward Bound-style course, a residential week, gaining a taste of independent living and learning a variety of skills for their future, and a week-long community project. There will be assemblies and information to parents in the Spring term.
- Over the last few weeks the Year 11 students have been busy with their mock exams. This year we have brought the date forward so that we can maximise the amount of time students have to work on areas for improvement early in the spring term. Their attitude towards these exams has been exemplary; they are clearly committed to achieving success in the summer and it has been good to analyse with several of them what they have done well and what areas they have for improvement in their various subjects. The revision sessions for Year 11 at lunchtime and after school will continue into the Spring term, as will the evening workshops for students and parents giving information about the exams and how students should be preparing and how they can be supported at home.
- As part of Marden's partnership with Queen Alexander 6th Form and Tynemet College all our Year 10 and 11 students have attended Careers Advice and Guidance Assemblies this term to encourage and advise students on their Post-16 choices. Next term all Year 11 students will also have the opportunity to attend our Careers Fair, where they will be able to engage in conversation about job roles and employee skills with some thirty different businesses and organisations. There has also been Careers input in the curriculum. During the Year 11 Digital day students worked on challenges and later in the day they produced a Dragons' Den style pitch of their ideas.

On the afternoon of the last day of term, Year 7 – 10 students and staff will attend our annual carol service at St. George's Church, Cullercoats. As in previous years, we expect this event to finish at about 2.00pm. Students will then be dismissed from the church for the Christmas holidays.

May I also remind you that spring term will begin on Wednesday 4 January 2017 at the usual time.

Please accept my sincere best wishes for the festive season, and many thanks for your support, co-operation and encouragement this term.

Yours faithfully



Matt Snape
Headteacher