



Friday, 18 January 2019

Dear All

Our Year 9 students have, over the past 8 weeks, received lots of information in assemblies and form time on the various subjects that they get to choose from in the Guided Choices process. This is an important time for Year 9 as they will effectively be personalising the curriculum they will be studying over the next 2 years during years 10 and 11. Indeed, the choices they make now may well be influencing what they go on to study post 16. To assist in the process of making these choices we have our Guided Choices evening coming up next week on Thursday, and we hope that all our Year 9 parents will be able to come along and listen to a short presentation about how the process itself works, before getting the opportunity to go around and talk to the staff about what their subjects entail in terms of content, assessment and progression. Following this parents will be able to come along to the Year 9 Parents Evening on 27th February to discuss their child's progress with subject teachers, and this will further inform or confirm decisions to be made regarding their child's key stage 4 options. The deadline for decision making is on Friday 1st March and all the Guided Choices information can be found on the school website under the Learning tab on the home page.

A number of our students have been working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Certificate this academic year. As part of this award pupils have to complete 2 expeditions, one practice and one qualifying, each involving 2 days walking and an overnight camp. The aim of the Practice Expedition is to equip the pupils with the skills to be self-sufficient in the outdoors, and this will be achieved through walking, developing their navigation skills, camping and cooking skills. We are currently working with a leading outdoor adventure company Adventure Training North East to run the expeditions which will take place later this academic year around the Hadrian's Wall area. Before that the students will be working with staff to develop the whole range of the 5Rs (reflection, resourcefulness, responsibility, reasoning and resilience) to ensure their success with the award. This is a great opportunity for students to develop character, grit and determination, and I would encourage younger students to get involved with this when they get the chance.

This week we have had a band of intrepid Marden reporters who have been continuing their work on preparing articles for The Chronicle newspaper. Each year the students involved include an interview with myself, and this year the questions posed have been of excellent quality, demonstrating the students' inquisitive and perceptive nature. One of their questions asked me to talk about the most challenging thing about being a headteacher, and whilst they are many and varied - which always makes it an interesting job - my answer was about finances. Trying to convince the politicians that education needs to be given a higher priority

in this country is certainly one of the most challenging aspects currently. We at Marden are in a better position than many at the moment as our numbers continue to increase each September giving us stability and sustainable finances into the future, but we are all bringing up future generations of this country, and they deserve to have better funding so that we can achieve that world class education we are aiming at. Well done to our reporters - they have seized a great opportunity to get involved and who knows what it might lead to in the future.

Our runners who qualified to represent the area before Christmas went forward to the County Championships at Temple Park this week. We are waiting for confirmation of results but many of our runners performed very well indeed in what were tough, windy conditions. It has been great to talk to several of them this week, and no matter where they have come in their particular race, what has shined through is their determination and enjoyment. We are very proud of everyone who took part.

Our U14 Boys' Badminton players took part in the North Tyneside Competition to finish first overall, a fantastic achievement. The Year 11 players came a creditable third. Well done to the players involved in the event.

We begin an exciting challenge with Show Racism The Red Card this coming week as students will work with our Art Department and the attached Art Prefects to create our entries for the competition run by the organisation. Through learning and research, before then creating images which promote equality, understanding and respect of all cultures, our students will be entering a competition which could see their images used in the 2020 Show Racism The Red Card Calendar.

Amongst the other exciting things happening next week is our Year 10 Work Experience. We hope the students enjoy the time they spend in their placements, and we are sure they will get lots out of it if they put lots of effort and the right attitude into it. We also have a theatre company coming into school to perform 'Extraordinary Women' to all our Year 7 students, a history based play dealing with the issue women's suffrage. We are very thankful to the PTA funding which has enabled this event.

Please note that the new netball league begins next week.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher