



Marden High School

Friday 27th September 2019

Dear All,

On Wednesday this week we enjoyed a busy and very successful Open Evening with many students helping by acting as guides or demonstrating activities in the various departmental areas. As ever, our children were great ambassadors on the night, and there were so many positive comments from visitors about the welcoming atmosphere and the enthusiasm of students and staff alike.

Year 9 will soon be approaching the point at which they choose their options subjects for GCSE. There will be some key dates coming up that are important for both parents and children in order to assist them in this process. Students will all take English Language, English Literature, Maths and Science as compulsory subjects and also follow PE and Personal development. Students will then pick three additional subjects, and we aim to ensure that their curriculum choices are broad and balanced. To this end our approach to supporting students and parents with this process will be highly personalised, and we will be helping with options suggestions that we feel will be well suited to each child and which will help them achieve their best. There will be Guided Choices assemblies where students will be given an introduction to the process of choosing their subjects, as well as information from curriculum leaders about the subjects offered at GCSE. These presentations will be available on the website in 'learning' and 'guided choices' following the assemblies. At the start of the Spring term there will be information evenings for parents before final choices are submitted. Whilst an involved process, this is an exciting time for the students as they make important decisions which start to give them some direction to their future studies and careers.

As you are aware, ensuring that our children's literacy continues to develop, from wherever they are currently at, is a very important element of them being able to achieve well, and with this in mind, every Year 7 student will be assessed this half term to determine reading attainment for each student. The assessment analyses a student's literal comprehension, understanding of vocabulary, comprehension requiring inference and comprehension requiring analysis. The results of these assessments will then assist us in differentiating for individual needs and identifying programmes of support for any who are falling behind. This is an important part of the individual approach we take to ensuring that each of our children makes good progress.

The revision timetable for year 11 students is already up and running, and I would encourage all our students to take advantage of this excellent support which is put in place for them. The timetable is displayed around school, as well as on the school website. Those students who start to put a little extra time in at this point in the year will find it easier when it

comes to key assessment points during the year because they will have developed the habits of extra learning and learning at home.

This week we celebrated the European Day of Languages, promoting the idea of communication and the different languages in Europe. Throughout Europe, 800 million Europeans are represented in the Council of Europe's 47 member states and all are encouraged to discover more languages at any age, a part of, or alongside their studies. This stems from the Council of Europe's conviction that linguistic diversity is a tool for achieving greater intercultural understanding and a key element in the rich cultural heritage of our continent. As a school, we share this conviction and look for opportunities to learn and use different languages. To this end, we do encourage students to add a language to their GCSE options, for the benefits described above, as well as the advantage that language learning has in exercising and developing the brain in unique ways.

You will remember that some of our recent charity fundraising events have been in support of the Kwa Hilda Orphanage, run by Urszula Piotrowska, with the support of a dedicated team on the ground in South Africa. One of these people is a priest called Father Thami, and on the 16th October, we are very much looking forward to welcoming him into school so that we can hear about the great work that is going on at the orphanage. He will be delivering assemblies, visiting lessons and supporting us in our build-up to the charity event on Friday 18th October when we will also be "Wearing Red" to support Show Racism The Red Card. Alongside this work, where we continue to build our link with the Kwa Hilda project, there will be the opportunity for members of our wider community to meet Father Thami on Thursday 17th October at St George's Church in Cullercoats at 11:30am.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher