



## Marden High School

Friday 13th December 2019

Dear All,

In recent weeks I have written in this newsletter about the multiple conversations that staff, students, governors and parents have been having in school this term around our values and what we stand for as a school. In amongst this rich discussion, time and again, have been three words in particular, which were exemplified on Thursday evening this week in the delights of our Christmas Concert - community, individuality, and possibility. The coming together of a strong community, sharing in the celebration of such wonderful individual student contributions, and seeing the possibilities that can be realised now and in the future for our young people, was an absolute privilege to behold. It was a great evening, and many thanks go to Mrs Gibbings for preparing it all, and to all the staff and our fantastic PTA who supported behind the scenes.

Students studying for GCSEs need to be strong enough readers to understand their course textbooks and comprehend exam questions. Ensuring that all young people have the literacy skills they need to access their education, is essential to giving them the opportunity to succeed both academically and in wider life. In addition to developing these skills, we recognise that our children's reading must be supported throughout their time at school, not only so they can access the curriculum, but so they can get into the habit of reading for pleasure. The correlation between children who have developed this habit, and their personal economic well-being and achievement later in life is a strong one. It is good therefore to see the number of books being used in the LRC is on the increase, as is the number of books bought at our annual half price book fair. We will continue to have a focus on strengthening our children's literacy, including through regular and frequent activities woven into the fabric of lessons in all subjects, to develop these skills. At home too, children can be supported by being encouraged to develop the daily habit of reading, at times aloud to a parent or carer, and writing letters, reports or stories.

Every term we support our student voice by sharing a survey which students complete during form time. This has happened again last week, and we look forward to analysing the results and responding to the outcomes so as to continue to work with all our students to help ensure we hear their voices and respond to their needs. The initial findings are overwhelmingly positive and it is a credit to the hard work of staff and students that the enjoyment of lessons, safety around school and progress being made has been voiced very clearly over the week.

We have had confirmation that on January 9th we will host the Scotland and North East of England Regional Chess Championships. Our match is against St Mary's School in Newcastle and will hopefully be as exciting and successful as our last encounter in November. Our Chess Team have been training and are looking forward to the opportunity to progress to the National stage of the Championships. Good luck team!

We have had some great sports results this week, in particular from our busy U13 Netballers who have played 3 games winning 4-2 against J.Spence, 6-1 against Wellfield, and 4-0 against George Stephenson. Keep it up team - you're doing really well.

After lunch on Friday 20 December, year 7-10 will be going down to St George's Church to enjoy our school carol service, and students will be dismissed from the church following the service. This will be at approximately 2.15pm. This is a wonderful occasion and a great opportunity for us all to come together to celebrate the term we have had and to reflect on the time we will have with families and as a community in the coming weeks and months. Year 11 will be dismissed from school at 12.30pm, and are welcome to stay for lunch if required.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher