



Marden High School

Friday 10th January 2020

Dear All,

Happy New Year to all. We have had a most enjoyable week back after what appears to have been a good rest for everyone over the Christmas break. As usual it has been a busy week, and it has been great to see students and staff picking up where we left off, creating a positive, hard working atmosphere around school.

We are strong on fostering ambition, and our students rise to the challenge of high expectation, so our students are proud of consistently being amongst the top performing in the North East. But this does not happen by chance. Part of our success is knowing what we want to achieve, and being clear on how we can achieve it, so it is important to be aware of what our priorities are at any point in time. We have been discussing priorities for the Spring term with staff and students this week, and these are outlined below:

- To continue our focus on developing excellent learning opportunities for our students
- To challenge ourselves - "Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow" (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- To focus on quality feedback - providing it and acting on it
- To read for pleasure, and to practise extended writing
- To enhance our focus on careers education across the curriculum
- To further increase the use of student voice to help design learning experiences
- To continue to enhance the well being of students and staff

Of course, the Spring term is a particularly important one for Year 11 students preparing for their exams, as they will be receiving feedback from their mock exams and getting to grips with exam technique as they practise exam questions and start to step up the amount of revision they do at home. Their teachers will, of course, be spending time with them in lessons showing them the best methods to use for particular subjects and there are also plenty of ideas for revising at home on our school website under the 'Learning' tab. It is

certainly worth parents looking at this, as well as students, as a joined up approach to revision at home can make a big difference to its effectiveness. Parents Evening for Year 11 is on Wednesday 22nd January.

Next week we continue our work with Show Racism The Red Card. Alongside preparations for World Holocaust Day and following our workshops in the autumn term with Show Racism The Red Card we are delivering our bi-annual training to all staff as we seek to ensure we are always at the forefront of inclusive work with the most recent and relevant information so as to best support all students. The work we do to better understand the wider world, different cultures, religions and ways of life is paramount to our celebration of diversity and equality.

On Thursday we hosted the North East Of England and Scotland Regional Finals of the National Chess Championships. Our team battled admirably against a strong St Mary's team but lost out in the latter stages of the evening. It was commented on what a strong team spirit there was within our squad of 6 and that our mixed team had shown resilience, leadership and professionalism throughout. We look forward to future tournaments and wish St Mary's the best of luck in the final to be held in London after Easter.

The regional cross-country championships took place on Thursday afternoon this week, where our students performed very well in awful conditions. There were some excellent individual achievements and it would seem at the moment that quite a number have qualified to represent North Tyneside. Final results will come through next week.

Our Year 9 A and B Netball teams had to play each other in the North Tyneside league this week. This unusual situation resulted in a great battle with the A team winning through in the end.

Our KS4 boys' Badminton team came third in the North Tyneside Finals this week, an excellent achievement winning two games and losing one. Well played!

In Handball this week the Year 10 team won two games and lost one playing against Churchill, John Spence and Longbenton, giving a very encouraging result overall.

Tuesday this week saw a very interesting visit from students of Jesus College Cambridge, who came in to talk to Year 10 students about life at university and the sorts of courses and qualifications available. The university students reported back that our students had been

very receptive to what was presented and that they asked some excellent questions, and this will have been interesting food for thought for everyone as they start thinking about for the future.

This Thursday Year 9 had the privilege of a visit from Holocaust Memorial Foundation speaker Gerald Stern, whose own father came to England on Kindertransport. His retelling of his father's story and the tragic loss of his whole family during the Holocaust was deeply moving, and served as a poignant reminder of the importance of remembering this terrible time in our recent history. This will feed into work we will be doing as part of Holocaust Memorial day later in the month.

The vast majority of our students wear their uniform very well and look smart in it, something that visitors often comment on, and something that our students can be very proud of. The start of term is always a good time to be reminded of the requirements for school uniform which can be found on the school website and in student planners, and I would ask that parents support us in this by ensuring all the children come to school in correct school uniform.

Looking ahead we will be getting our Year 11 group photograph done on the 24th of January, and these will be available for purchase later in the term, providing what is a lovely keepsake for students' time at Marden.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher