



Marden High School

Friday 1st May 2020

Dear All,

Over the past weeks we have seen extraordinary resourcefulness and resilience from so many people across so many different sectors of our public services and business, including of course schools in North Tyneside – all quickly adapting to the implications of lockdown, scrambling to get computers, resources, food parcels, and hope to children, young people and communities. The collaboration between our schools has been a precious thing, and there has been considerable sharing of resources and mutual support, all in the interest of ensuring the best possible provision for our children.

Around the world there have been some very positive efforts made to not only stay safe and stay healthy, but also efforts made to develop support and a strong sense of community; be it global, national or local. In North Tyneside, it's been befitting of the geordie character that people have shown their support for key workers and sense of hope in what is a difficult time for all. Something which has made national news is the 'Whitley Bay Cairns' which have developed near the Brierdene. These little stone structures have developed organically as people have gone for their daily hour's exercise along the beach and have created a sense of togetherness and community as they have grown day by day, a reminder that through cooperation we can build a bright future.

Our student survey was sent out to all students on Wednesday and already there has been a good response. This level of commitment to communication from the students is evidence again that whilst apart, we are still together working to maintain our high standards whilst improving the areas that need attending to. There is still time for students to respond so if anybody hasn't yet, please remember that the deadline is Sunday lunchtime. Once we have analysed the results of the survey I will give feedback to everyone, and Miss Wallace and I will be following up with a virtual student focus group to gain some more detailed views and opinions.

Next week, we are launching the Art Competition 2020. This celebration of some outstanding artwork from 2019/2020 will be open to students, staff and the community with the winning work being the front cover of the 2020/21 student planner. This is yet another fine example of the individuality and creativity of our students being celebrated and so look out for the voting form on Monday, which Mr Prytherch will share with all students and staff. The community will be able to make their vote count on the website and twitter.

This week we have had some superb writing from our students, which will be published in the near future in The Chronicle. Year 10 students have been working with staff from the English department to explain how it is to live and work under lockdown, and they have been describing in particular some of the creative work that has been happening. It has been a real treat for me to read through the drafts of this work, and for me then to turn to the Work of the Week which again is of superb quality. This can be seen on this website by clicking the button just to the right of this newsletter. Well done to all concerned! It is great to see the same high standards we are used to in school continuing into our home learning.

However, it is not just work that gets highlighted that is going well. Generally across the school population, the amount and quality of work that is being done by students is excellent, and I know that we all feel very proud of the resilience and resourcefulness that our students are showing. As I have written before in this newsletter, I would like to reassure parents that the focus at home should be on the children putting in the effort to do what they can, without anyone feeling anxious or worried about not being able to complete everything, and that the expectation is of home learning and not home schooling. As ever, if any parent or carer has a question or needs help, please do contact me or a member of my Senior Leadership Team.

Members of the Year 7 drama club were treated to an unexpected email last week. It was a warm and thoughtful message from a student who leads the group who had obviously gone to great lengths to think about the experience that her fellow students would be having and what activities they could do to develop their drama skills during this time. It is another example of how students at Marden continue to impress us with their creativity, empathy and leadership qualities.

We are also very much looking forward to the next issue of Revolution, our student led magazine, which promises to be a bumper edition with some fantastic writing. There has

clearly been some deep reflection and thinking from students about our current situation and about how things may be in the future, and actually the mood amongst our youngsters is very positive, talking about how we might review our priorities and change how we live our lives moving forward. The magazine will be available on this website so watch this space, and make sure you have a look when it arrives shortly.

Take care and look after each other.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'M. Snape'.

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher