



Marden High School

Friday 12 June 2020

Dear All,

In the context of that other major news theme of recent weeks, that of the abhorrent murder of George Floyd and the subsequent protests and questions about prejudice and discrimination in society, it is worth reflecting on, and not taking for granted, what we have as a community at Marden, described in these lines from our Values Statement:

- Within the Marden family, we know each other well and are kind to one another.
- We see hope and opportunity for everyone, recognising the great range of talents we all have, and we leave no stone unturned in helping our young people to a bright future.
- At Marden we are able to express our own personalities, confident that we will be supported in the achievement of our goals and dreams.
- Our focus on student leadership helps develop our strong moral compass, giving us a global awareness and a sense of agency to shape a more equal society for the future.

These characteristics are what make us a strong community, and allow us to be proud of the place in the world each of us has. But we must never be complacent - these are not passive qualities, but rather hard won, by taking the right action when the opportunity arises. That's not necessarily easy, but it's times like this that make us who we are.

Linked to those lines from our Values Statement, our quote for the week has been from CS Lewis, who said 'We cannot go back and change the beginning but we can start now and change the future'. Our student cohort have always excelled in their leadership and an opportunity to inspire our students has been advertised by Unicef. The United Nations wants everyone to reimagine the world using the Global Goals as the starting point. On the 16th June the World's Largest Lesson Live will premiere on YouTube at 4pm. This global broadcast for teenagers is a 30 minute educational show featuring United Nations leaders

including Amina J Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of the UN. They are joined by teen stars Millie Bobby Brown, Sofia Carson and students from across the world. They will all invite young people to take part in reimagining education, health and activism. This broadcast is a great opportunity for students to seize the day and begin their work on helping ensure the 'new normal' supports the environment, celebrates diversity, and is kind and useful.

Following on from their English Literature study of Arthur Conan Doyle, and his popular creation Sherlock Holmes, Year 8 students will be donning their deerstalkers for their very own investigation. For this year's Marden She Wrote mystery, students (and staff) will be using their finest inquiry skills to work out ... *Who Hacked Horn?* We look forward to what promises to be excellent fun, as well as a great opportunity for students to develop their skills of inference and independence. Watch the website for more information in the near future.

It is good to hear from parents and teachers that the changes we have made to the home learning timetable are having a positive impact. The intention, you will remember, was to keep the overall volume of work consistent, that is, around four hours a day in total, but to have just one subject each morning and afternoon to allow the students to go more deeply into their learning for each subject. The changes to the timetable have certainly eased the pressure of having five separate lessons a day and have given students more time to concentrate on each lesson without worrying about the other lessons that needed to be completed, which in turn has resulted in generally less anxiety at this difficult time. I would like to remind parents that continuing a dialogue with Heads of Year and teachers is still important so that we can continue to try to get the amount and level of work right for the children.

There is much discourse nationally about what the longer term might hold for us, and I am hoping that within the next week or so we will hear something more definite about what September will look like. I suspect, though, that a form of blended learning - a mix of learning at home and in school for some students - is likely to be with us for some time. Therefore, at the same time as providing for home learning in its present form, teachers are working hard to develop the use of screencasting and video lessons as we prepare for September. There will be more information on this in due course, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the unfaltering dedication and professionalism of the whole Marden staff who

continue to do their best in providing for our children in these challenging times.

In the meantime, we are looking forward to welcoming Year 10 students into school from next week. They will be talking to various staff about how they are getting on and what they need to continue with in their home learning, and our aim will be for each student to leave the building feeling confident about what they need to do at home, happy that they have made contact with some of the staff and their peers, and that they are looking forward to coming in next time.

Take care and look after each other.

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

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher