



Marden High School

Friday 17 July 2020

Dear All,

It has certainly been a different sort of term, and I think that we are all looking forward to returning in September to a more normal situation, though there will of course be changes in line with safeguarding everyone's health. As we look forward to welcoming everyone back to our safe and happy school, we have put in place some changes to ensure we all stay safe. In order to return safely, students will be in "year bubbles" during social times, and where possible during the day. We will have an increase in cleaning routines and more frequent cleaning of the building and surfaces, and we all have a responsibility to follow hygiene measures, respectful distancing, thus playing our part in keeping each other safe and healthy.

Our homepage now includes a **SEPTEMBER 2020: BACK TO SCHOOL** button in the top right corner. By clicking it you will find important links about returning to school in September. This includes the 'Back to School Protocol' and a video message from myself. It is very important that students and parents are familiar with all of the information here.

We are of course aware that there have been students who have been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, or who are living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable. I would like to remind everyone that if there are any parents or carers who have concerns, reluctance or anxiety about their child returning to school to contact us, so that we can reassure them by putting the right support in place to address this. This would also include those who may be concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus, including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

There is an interesting Army virtual engagement event coming up on Wednesday 29th July. An invitation has been sent out for students and parents to join us for this event which includes a 20 minute presentation and a Q&A session where guests can submit live

questions to Colonel Lisa Brooks, Deputy Commander Reserves 4th Infantry Brigade & HQ North East. You can access and register for the live broadcast [here](#) at

<https://virtualbroadcast.yourarmy.co.uk>

The aim of the live broadcast is to provide greater awareness and understanding of the British Army and how it serves the country. The presentation includes current information on how the Army is supporting the Government's response to the current Coronavirus pandemic. With live questions, you can find out how the British Army is serving our nation.

When we return to school in September, blended learning will be a phrase on everyone's lips. We will all be making a transition between online learning at home and learning in the classroom with both elements remaining very important as we see a new normal in teaching and learning.

After 4 months of online learning, staff at Marden have equipped themselves with the skills needed to deliver high quality blended learning. We are adept in screencasting and making online instructional videos and have spent hours trawling the internet and specialist fora for the best and most engaging online resources for students to use in support of their learning.

Staff have also accessed online conferences and webinars in order to ensure that they are as ready as possible for September.

Google Classroom has played a prominent part in staff training with instructional videos for teachers themselves to use and discussions where staff have been posting comments and sharing ideas. This has meant we have firsthand experience of the Google Classroom platform not only from a teacher's, but also from a student's perspective.

In September a programme of professional development will continue to address the needs that arise with further technology training, online safety and mental health and wellness awareness and it is safe to assume that this too will be a form of blended learning.

We look forward to seeing our Year 11 students on 20th August when they come in to collect their GCSE grades. As I have said before in this newsletter, their teachers, who know them very well, have taken into account the excellent progress the students were making this year up to March, and have had this uppermost in their minds when submitting the centre assessed grades (CAGs) to the exam boards. We will be putting in place a process

whereby, once they have received their GCSE grades, a student will be able to apply to receive their CAG for whichever subjects they require. We think this would support any student deciding to put in an appeal to an exam board because they felt they had been disadvantaged by this year's process, particularly those who believe this has implications for their progress to the next stage of education or employment.

The summer holidays are upon us, but things might look a little different this year considering COVID-19. To support children and young people and to help keep them entertained The British Red Cross are continuing with their kindness calendar. If anyone wishes to sign up, quick activities are emailed out on a weekly basis. The activities will encourage simple acts of kindness, build resilience and include topics like mental wellbeing, loneliness and help children and young people prepare for the return to school.

[Get your kindness calendar >](#)

There is also a great self help resource from the Anna Freud centre on the homepage of our school website to be used specifically over the summer, containing some useful strategies to improve your physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

Whilst school is closed to students for the summer, and staff recharge their batteries ready for September, the senior team and I will still be available via email, so if any parents have any pressing issues they need to discuss with us, please do contact us.

Take care and look after each other.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher