



## Marden High School

Friday 6th November 2020

Dear All,

We have had a great response to our new Marden Alumni scheme, with lots of past students signing up for getting involved with future activities, many of which will revolve around providing guidance and information on careers for current students, as well as, we hope, social events in the future. Of course, we are somewhat limited in what we can do currently with restrictions in place, but it will be good to be prepared for when we can once again involve people more fully in the life of the school. The sign up button is still live and can be found on our homepage.

On Wednesday 11th of November we will be remembering those who have lost their lives in battle. Due to the restrictions in place across the country, we are aware that many of our children who are part of groups such as the Scouts, the Guides and the Cadets will not have the opportunity to take part in the annual ceremonies. Therefore, on Wednesday 11th November we are inviting any student who is part of a uniformed service or group such as Scouts and Guides to wear their uniform to school that day. We hope that a number of our students will be proud to do this. We will also be displaying a range of poetry written by our students reflecting on the sacrifices made by those we remember.

I would like to congratulate the whole school community for continuing to adhere to the risk assessment so rigorously. I think that this is reflected in the fact that we have had relatively few positive COVID cases in school, and this has meant that, in turn, relatively few students have had to self isolate as contacts of a positive case. However, it is very important that no complacency creeps in, and that we all stick to the rules. Now that we are under a national lockdown there have been some additional changes to how schools must function, given that we are not part of this latest lockdown. Generally speaking it is business as we have become used to this term, with all students continuing to access their full curriculum, but I would like to highlight two changes in particular regarding face masks and extra-curricular activities. Everyone in school currently wears a face mask whilst moving around school to help reduce the potential for virus transmission. We will now be extending this to the spaces where students purchase and eat their food. Therefore, students and staff will wear masks in all indoor spaces, apart from when they are in a lesson, or sit

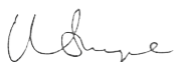
down to eat. If any student or member of staff wishes to continue to wear their face mask in lessons, then that is, of course, fine. The other change in government guidance for schools is that any planned extra-curricular activities after school can now no longer happen, and this means that we will have to suspend the extra curricular aspect of our MAST programme (Marden Achieving Success Together) until national lockdown has ended. We will, of course, continue to put in place intervention and support for all of our students during their lessons and form time, so that each child feels fully supported both pastorally and academically.

During my school day I often have the privilege of taking a broad snapshot of what is going on around school and I am invariably so impressed with what I see: quiet, purposeful study; engaged children; interesting practical activities, professionals providing expertise; children enjoying breaktime sensibly - just a great reflection of our team working together to provide such high standards of education and care. I have said to students and staff this week that I want us all to take strength this half term from the fact that we are doing this every day, together. The persistence, consistency and resilience that our whole community - children, staff, parents and governors - shows is what leads to the excellent outcomes our children enjoy. It is so important that each of us continues to look after ourself, mentally, emotionally and physically, so that we can sustain these qualities. There's lots of supportive information out there now on this subject, including this useful article from ITV:

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-11-02/top-tips-to-stay-both-physically-and-mentally-healthy-during-englands-covid-19-lockdown>

I would also like to emphasise the importance of us talking to each other this half term. Please do contact me or any member of the senior leadership team if you have any concerns or anxieties - we're in this together and we'll find solutions together where needed.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher