



Marden High School

Thursday 17th December 2020

Dear All,

So we have reached the end of a long term, full of extraordinary challenges but also replete with many opportunities for discovering new ways of learning and for personal development. It has been wonderful to see the personal journeys that many of our children have been on in their development this year, and I am sure that parents and staff alike feel very proud of the children's responses to this year, such as this from a Year 11 student: *"students have been struggling with mental health and trust issues due to our current times and lockdown, but coronavirus has given us a new point in life and shown us a new perspective"*. It has been a good term, and a very enjoyable one, with many successes for our students. What I have seen in particular this term has been great teamwork, not only within school, but in the wider community, as parents and carers have worked closely with us to ensure the incidence of positive COVID cases has been kept low. This, I think, is hope in action, and this mindset is well summarised by our quote for this week from Helen Keller:

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."

I know that Marden staff have also appreciated the many messages of support and thanks we have had from parents and carers, and whilst I could not possibly list them all, this extract from one of them is a good example of the close working relationships we enjoy within our community:

"I just wanted to take some time to pass on my thanks and gratitude to you and all your staff for the hard work and dedication to the students of Marden High throughout 2020. It goes without saying that 2020 has been a challenging time for many families and in particular our young people. However, the structure and excellent support provided by the school during lockdown and since September has provided much needed stability in uncertain times which is both reassuring and greatly appreciated as a parent."

Staff at school have also been very supportive of one another, being attentive to each other's well being and offering optimism where needed. One of the messages that staff have shared is from the cartoonist Charlie Mackesy, whose work *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, may be familiar to some, and I have included a link to the message: 'Don't give up, the storm ends'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55305286>

The Home Office has joined forces with a number of charities including the NSPCC, Barnardo's and The Children's Society to launch a new campaign to protect victims of child abuse. The month-long campaign, 'Something's Not Right', encourages young people to recognise different forms of abuse, report it and get help, and the campaign will see animated adverts aimed at secondary school pupils aged 13+, running across Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook. Young people will be directed to a dedicated page on the NSPCC service Childline where they can access information and seek support.

Year 9 students have now watched all of the Guided Choices screencasts from subject leaders this term, and all of these can be found in the learning section of the website. I hope that parents and carers are able to spend some time over the holidays having a look at this information and discussing choices with their children, as they will be asked to make provisional choices about their Key Stage 4 curriculum in January.

In place of our usual visit to St George's Church on the last day of term, we were able to take a small group of students to the church earlier this week to put a video assembly together which everyone enjoyed in school at the end of this week. The poetry that features has been written to a very high standard by a variety of students, and carries the theme of hope, and so that everyone can enjoy the presentation by our Head Prefects, the Christmas Message video has been posted above this newsletter.

Last week I mentioned that our TICE students were in the final stages of completing their projects, so I thought you may wish to have a look at what they have been doing.

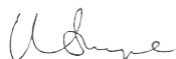
<https://thisiscreativeenterprise.com/sharing-sounds-projecting-voices-or-maybe-simply-switching-of-f-and-tuning-in/>

There are some beautiful pieces in this collection, and it is a testament to Marden resilience that we were the only school to complete the final stage. Well done and thank you to everyone.

Father Adrian Hughes and his staff are inviting families from all over Cullercoats and beyond to the 'Angel Trail' at St George's Church on Christmas Eve. They have arranged a COVID safe trail around the church to visit a variety of locations including, of course, the tree and the crib. All are welcome.

I hope that you enjoy looking through just a small selection of the fantastic work and events that have been going on in school recently in our end of term newsletter. We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone back in January, but before then, I hope that everyone has a restful and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.

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

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher