



Marden High School

Friday 5th February 2021

Dear All,

With live streaming underway, our student voice exercise this week has focused on asking students about their experiences. A group of Year 10 students gave excellent feedback which, combined with the feedback that teachers have given, has helped us to review the learning experience with a view to making it the best it can be. Students said they weren't sure what to do if any aspect of the live streaming went wrong so it must be made clear that we are here to help. If there are any technical issues it is always worth bringing them to the attention of a Head of Year or one of the senior leadership team as there may well be something that can be done to help.

The students also said they really appreciated the work that their teachers were putting into all of the remote learning. They saw live streaming as a complement to asynchronous learning but one which had been good for morale and motivation and which provided reassurance and a focus for the day's learning. We are very much functioning as a learning community, sharing what we are learning with each other and supporting colleagues in ironing out the problems we encounter. Live streaming has gone well so far and our intention is to do more in the coming weeks.

We are aware that with students and families working at home together, broadband can become slow. To support homes that have these issues, we have managed to acquire some 4G routers. Fifteen of these have been provided by the Northern Powerhouse work that North Tyneside Local Authority is involved in. We are also awaiting a response from the DfE on the routers we have requested from them. These too will be distributed and we will continue to support all households as best we can to ensure all students can access the remote learning provision we offer.

With increased numbers in school during this lockdown, I am grateful to parents of children in school for keeping us informed about changing health situations in their households, as this helps us to manage the potential spread of COVID in school. So that we can continue to do contact tracing where necessary, we are asking parents and carers of children currently in school to let us know if their child tests positive during the half term break. So if a student that has been in school next week receives a positive test after Friday 12th February, we are asking parents to contact the

school immediately using my email address, m.snape@mardenhigh.net, and provide the following information:

- Child's full name
- Date of COVID test
- What date symptoms started if present

This will allow us to follow up any potential close contacts and request that they isolate for 10 days to prevent further transmission of COVID-19. It will also be very important that parents continue to let me know of other positive COVID tests in their households so that, again, we can help to prevent the potential spread of the virus by ensuring conversations take place about the correct durations of isolations.

On Thursday 25th February we have a Year 9 Parents Evening. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to speak to subject teachers and this will be helpful when they are helping their children make their final choices for GCSE. As mentioned in this newsletter previously, we will be using a new online system using video calls. There will be a link on the website for parents and carers to book appointments with teachers, and time slots will then be allocated for each appointment which can be accessed via a phone, tablet or computer. The deadline for Year 9 to make their final GCSE choices is Friday 5th March, and students should visit the Guided Choices Google Classroom to complete this process. Parents will find a copy of their child's provisional choices contained in their report.

All of us have had to become more creative in the way we do things recently, and probably this has been good for us. Being creative makes us reflect on our surroundings, and it can alleviate stress and allow self-expression beyond words. Needless to say all of these benefits contribute to our well being. At Marden there are currently a number of exciting creative opportunities available for students to seize. The [Royal Academy Young Artists' Show](#) is currently inviting submissions from all children aged 5 to 19 years old and we are encouraging students from Marden to apply to exhibit some of their best work either from lockdown or before. If any student is interested they can contact Ms Olbrecht who will give more details on how to apply. Also, our Art Subject Cloud on the school website contains students' work and teacher demos of art techniques that are a great source of inspiration for creativity. Any students interested in careers in the creative industries can also access information via the student bulletin. These resources have been produced by the TICE organisation. Currently TICE have released information on careers in

fashion and graphics and we look forward to adding to the collection as more information is released.

My inbox this week has contained the usual maelstrom of adverts for talks, books and products that will help save the world on the click of a button, but there was one particular message that came in with an attachment that I started to have a quick glance through. Thirty minutes later I had read the whole pamphlet, and some parts of it twice, and I thought that the following extract, which made me smile, summarised well how many people are feeling:

“Remind yourself that there is no one right way to get through this time. Take the pandemic pressure off. It is okay to allow yourself time to muddle through and manage as best you can, whatever that looks like. We don’t have to emerge at the end of the pandemic as a highly skilled baker with a Joe Wicks body. But we do have to ensure we come through this time looking after ourselves the best we can and feeling as safe and as good as we possibly can, so that we can get to the other side as mentally healthy as possible.”

The booklet has been written by an experienced clinical psychologist specialising in neuropsychology, and I have [included a link](#) to it in case you may find it as useful as I have.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher