



Marden High School

Friday 7th May 2021

Dear All,

This half term, as we are all aware, is a very important period of consolidation work and assessment for our Year 11 students during which their teachers will be giving them opportunities to show how much progress they have made. This information will be crucial in arriving at the Teacher Assessed Grades used by the exam boards to award GCSE grades. This week has seen us pass the halfway point in this period of quite intensive assessment for Year 11 students. JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) is the body who has provided the framework for schools to determine the Teacher Assessed Grades. As a school community, we have made the conscious decision to use a variety of rigorous assessment methods across the different subjects so that we could give all our students the best opportunities to demonstrate their learning, reflecting an important aspect of the values we hold to as a community:

“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.”

Our students' success requires, of course, considerable determination and effort, and it has been good to see them working very hard, and continuing to adopt the positive and responsible attitudes they have shown throughout this academic year.

Planning for the enrichment programme for Year 11 students is now well underway with students signing up for A level bridging sessions as well as getting some valuable work experience alongside their teachers. This will see students helping staff to develop and deliver resources in the classroom, and in so doing, will give them the opportunity to improve their leadership skills through supporting others.

This week saw the continuation of our MAST programme with students in all year groups supported in engaging and enjoyable sessions in numeracy, literacy, sports and CEIAG. Staff at Marden, and the organisations we have collaborated with through the National Tutoring Programme, have delivered bespoke sessions which aim to build confidence, develop future pathways and celebrate success. The Year 10 CEIAG session, delivered remotely by Celia

Samater of Sunderland University, was a great success and will complement the work students are doing through Globalbridge this term. This involved identifying what skills they have and when they have used them, before finding suggested careers that match those skill sets. Developing further their reasoning and analysis skills, the group evaluated the difference between 'hard' and 'soft' skills and how one can impact on the other, before updating their learning logs and building their Career Roadmap portfolio, which they will extend and enhance over the next two sessions. Celia has fed back very positively on the engagement of all students with this exciting project - great to hear.

At Marden we are interested in hearing thoughts, ideas and opinions from all of our stakeholders, - students, staff, parents and governors - and we try to provide plenty of opportunities for this to happen on a regular basis. Within our community, that we often refer to as the Marden Family, everybody's voice is important and influential in planning the future of excellent education and care for our children. Recently we held a Year 7 student voice exercise where a number of student groups met with me, Ms Laing their Head of Year, and Ms Wallace our Deputy Head. They spoke very clearly about a range of topics, and below you can see a snapshot of their answers to the question, "What is the best thing about being a student at Marden High School?"

- Teachers are always friendly and happy
- If something needs to be dealt with it is dealt with quickly - staff members are supportive
- PE has a range of activities that I've not done before in my old school
- Marden is a friendly environment and it was easy to settle into
- I enjoy the social aspect of school, such as group work in Technology, or times outside of lessons
- I enjoy the range of activities and lessons at Marden
- We have a lot of opportunities to do things like clubs and the writing competitions. I am busy but in a good way.
- Teachers are adaptable and take time to help everyone
- Members of staff are always available to help me if I need it, even outside of lessons.
- I like my reading for pleasure lessons

Our attendance continues to be good - consistently above 96% for the whole school - with the vast majority of students building great habits and showing dependability and commitment to their education, two qualities which will be so important in whatever careers paths our children take. The link between good attendance and achievement at school is well researched and very clear, and it

is good to see that our students understand this.

In assembly this week we reflected on some of the writings of Anne Frank, who was and remains such an inspirational figure. What Anne showed through her short teenage years was hope, agency and leadership - those things we as a school community try to show each day - and to this day her words still inspire others to show hope, to use their agency to change things for the better, and to lead themselves and others to do what is right. Linking this idea to the social media boycotts of last weekend reminded us that each one of us has the ability to bring about change for the better, even if it is in small doses. Here is a link to the [assembly](#) if anyone would like to see it.

All school related communication, newsletters, reports, timetables and attendance will soon be available through our new school app, which we will be launching later this term. It will be the central hub of information for all our parents and carers, allowing everyone to keep up to date with what is going on in school, and there will be further information sent to parents and carers in the coming weeks.

Finally I would like to remind everyone that a fantastic array of work from our students can be seen each week by clicking on the Work of the Week button on the website. Talking to the students about their work is always one of the highlights of my week, and I really do encourage everybody to have a look at this regularly as it is a great reminder of the excellent work that is produced every day by our students.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher