



## Marden High School

Friday 12th November 2021

Dear All,

I am sure that many of you will be aware that there has recently been a national trend of school children posting videos on Tiktok which have as their subject their teachers. Many of these have sadly been disrespectful in nature. Unfortunately one or two of our younger students have been caught up in this latest craze and posted videos containing images of their teachers with disrespectful commentary. Everyone in our community needs to understand that consequences of this are serious, both in the damaging emotional impact it can have on individual staff members, and in terms of the sanctions that students who are involved in this will receive. We have an IT Acceptable use policy which highlights that we should always treat others in the same way we would want them to treat us. Indeed, this is a central tenet of our Values Statement, which talks about kindness as a characteristic of our community. It also says very clearly that nobody should distribute pictures or videos of anyone without their permission, and this is whether we are using a school computer or a mobile phone: "Personal devices should not be used in a manner that would portray Marden High School in an unfavourable light. Devices should not be used to intimidate, abuse or perform any unfavourable acts against staff, students or any person associated with Marden High School." I would ask all parents to talk to their children about what they are using social media for, and to be aware of this national craze of posting disrespectful videos online. It is also worth reminding everyone that 13 is the minimum age according to the terms and conditions of social media platforms such as Tiktok. To support parents and carers in their conversations with their children, we have posted a useful guide on the school website in the latest news section.

The North Shields Heritology Project is running a funded programme at the moment with students from Marden. The aim is to blend local history with modern technology to bring the past to life. Our project will bring to life the story of Mary Ann Macham, an escaped slave from Virginia, who settled in North Shields and told her story to help abolitionists. We are lucky to be working with Katy Hackers from Proto, the first digital production facility of its kind in Europe. She will be teaching students to animate, and they will be making a four minute stop motion animation, the results of which we are very much looking forward to seeing .

Saturday is 'World Kindness Day', and this theme is picked up in next week's assembly when we will be recognising Anti Bullying Week, whose theme this year is 'One Kind Word'. We as a community often refer to ourselves as 'the Marden family' and all families, however they are formed, are built on kindness. We explain to staff and students we must at all times have visible expectations and visible kindness and this runs through our School Development Plan, as we seek to equip our students for later life through our focus on CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance), our efforts to support their achievement, and our emphasis on being global citizens who work with kindness at the heart of what they do. In the coming weeks there will be several overt manifestations of the kindness we show as a community through our continued charity work, Children In Need, Christmas Jumper Day, support for the food bank and maintaining our links with Kwa Hilda, the South African Orphanage we are linked with. As next week's quote states, in a world where you can be anything, be kind.

This year we have introduced Yellis testing for all Year 10 students. Students sat this test before half term, and it is an adaptive baseline assessment which helps to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, and gives an indication of how students are likely to perform at GCSE. The Year 10 reports, which will be available soon, contain new information in the form of a series of chance graphs personalised for each student. These outline (based on performance in the Yellis test) the likelihood of an individual achieving each grade. We feel that this gives students, parents and carers, and teachers, a more realistic view of where each student is in light of having experience of two Covid school closures, and is more accurate than a prediction extrapolated from their performance in KS2 SATS. This data is based on how students have performed nationally in Yellis tests and their comparative GCSE outcomes, and this will replace the use of 'targets' at KS4. Students will receive a copy of their chance graphs to stick in their planner, and this will provide a more fruitful discussion between teachers and students when they are completing work and using success criteria.

This week we have had a few teams in action. The Year 8 boys football team had their first fixture representing Marden High School. They played John Spence on Wednesday night in a thrilling friendly, and the boys put in a superb performance and won 3-0. On Wednesday night the U16 girls football team were in action in a central venue league at John Spence. The evening consisted of 7 schools and almost 100 girls from across North Tyneside coming together to take part in competitive sport. The atmosphere was brilliant and there were some outstanding performances. We played 3 games; we beat St Thomas More 3-0, drew 0-0 against Monkseaton High and had a narrow 1-0 loss against Whitley Bay High School. The girls' attitude was fantastic and it was a great evening. On Thursday evening the year 9 netball team had their first fixture of the season with a 4-2 win over Kings Priory. Although the students are in Year 9, this is the first competitive game of netball they have had since they have been at Marden High School due to the pandemic, so the girls were a little nervous but soon settled into the game and

showed fantastic determination and teamwork.

Back in 2012, Marden High was facing significant financial challenges following the loss of one of our primary feeder schools to a newly set-up academy. This saw student numbers fall considerably, and over a number of years following there was a consequent large loss in funding. However, as a consequence of the school's increasingly high standards and excellent reputation, we are delighted that the school is now back to full capacity and we are actually oversubscribed in most year groups. Our cumulative deficit, which was in excess of £500k by 2018, has now been cleared and early this year we returned to a surplus financial position, three years earlier than we had planned. Eliminating the deficit and moving into a surplus budget position will enable us to increase our future spend on educational resources, and therefore sustain our high educational standards and outcomes that have been so key in our recent academic and financial success.

This week we enjoyed a superb piece of theatre from the Enact Drama group who took Year 9 students through the process of making important decisions about their curriculum choices and future study and careers. The students thoroughly enjoyed the piece and the event raised their awareness of making a three point plan for the future. The process of discussing their future options continues during the rest of this term with presentations from Curriculum Leaders having started this week in Form Time, before meetings with parents and the deadline for decision making in the Spring.

We have just heard that the Schools Immunisation Team will in fact be returning to school to complete Covid-19 vaccinations. They will be here on Tuesday 30 November and we will send out an email next week with further information. The Head of Public Health and Assistant Director of Education from North Tyneside Local Authority have also just fed back to Headteachers with the recommendation that face coverings should continue to be worn in classrooms and corridors. The next review point will be the end of this month, and whilst rates of infection continue to be high, we are encouraged by the slight decline in numbers here at Marden.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher