



Marden High School

Friday 3rd December 2021

Dear All,

As I am sure everybody is aware, there has been severe damage to most of the school roof which has been caused by the high winds last Friday night and over the weekend. The initial leakages that we experienced on Monday when we came in have, during the week, become far worse and more widespread, so that when we arrived on Wednesday morning, we had several centimetres of water on corridor floors, and rain coming in through ceilings. Everybody responded superbly yesterday morning: school staff grabbing mops and buckets and starting to salvage equipment; students calmly and sensibly waiting and contacting parents; and parents making arrangements for their children to return home at short notice. Many thanks for this.

The situation now is that we have very large parts of the building flooded and out of action with power shut down. We are currently working closely with the Local Authority, Loss Adjusters/RPA and the Department for Education, to plan a temporary repair in a bid to stem further damage. The permanent solution is currently under detailed investigation and to be determined.

We have carried out a full risk assessment to ensure the remaining areas of the school which can be accessed are made safe, and equipped with sufficient power, for as many students as we can accommodate on Monday. The result of this assessment means that space is very tight, at least for the next two weeks, and sadly, that not all students will be able to come into school for that period. The arrangements, therefore, are that Years 10 and 11 will come into school for the next two weeks, and Years 7, 8 and 9 will continue with remote learning. We appreciate that this is far from ideal, but as much of the building has been taken out of action there is simply insufficient space for all the children. Please be assured that we are moving as quickly as we can to effect a temporary solution so that we can get all our students back on site.

There will be additional important information for students in Year 10 and 11 sent to them and their parents about how they will enter the school site as considerable changes have been put in place to ensure everyone's safety.

The arrangements made until the end of term for Year 7, 8 and 9 students accessing learning remotely involve no change to the curriculum and timetable. The structure of the day will remain the same. Work will be posted on Google Classroom on the morning of the lesson, and teachers will be available online during the lesson to support children with their learning. This may take the form of: live streaming a portion of the lesson and use of the chat or microphone facility; a screencast explaining the work and the use of online chat facility or email; the teacher commenting directly on individual pieces of work and children being able to comment back. Special Support Assistants (SSAs) will also be 'live' in the Google classroom to provide additional support for learners. I would like to reiterate that although students will be developing their independent learning skills, the learning being provided is not 'parents homeschooling', and teachers are very much available to interact with children during their lesson time. We would encourage students to communicate with their teachers when they need support.

From today, and over the next two weeks, Heads of Year of students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will begin contacting the home of every student to check in on their wellbeing and progress with work. These phone calls to parents and carers will sit alongside contact with students from form tutors. So that their learning is facilitated with advice, guidance and support, there will be links to blogs, websites and advice on study skills shared by Heads of Year to each student. Any children with Special Educational Needs will be contacted by Mrs Reece (SENCO) or Mrs Thompson (HLTA) who will check on progress of learning. Student Support Assistants will be available for children who have support in lessons where possible.

If you have any safeguarding concerns about a child or young person, please contact Mrs Reece, Safeguarding Lead, in the first instance during school hours. If you have concerns about a young person out of school hours you can speak to a social worker by calling the **Front Door Service in North Tyneside on 0345 2000 109**. They are open 8.30am - 5pm, Monday–Thursday and 8.30am – 4.30pm on Friday. Outside of those hours you can call the After Hours Service on 200 6800. You can also email at childrenandadultscontactcentre@northtyneside.gov.uk. Of course, if you have an immediate concern and feel that a child is at risk of significant harm or danger please contact the **police on 999**.

I am aware that when schools are closed, it can be a worrying time for young people and parents/carers for lots of reasons, and I hope the regular contact from school with all students helps to maintain our strong community spirit during this difficult time. I hope also that with structure, routine, engagement and effort on everyone's part, we have an opportunity for our children to really boost their independent learning skills. We continue to work with the support of the Department for Education and RPA to put medium and long term solutions in place so that our school community can continue to thrive together.

I would like to conclude with thanks for the many messages of support and the offers of help we have had from parents and students. It is a real privilege to read and hear these, a testament to how much I know our school and community is valued by its members. Much of the school is a 'hard hat' zone now, so 'health and safety' would prevent us from accepting those offers anyway, but the routine and reassurance I know parents will be providing for their children is the best help for teachers to continue to enable quality learning for the children, just the sort of teamwork that makes the Marden partnership between home and school work so well.

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