



Marden High School

Friday 1st July 2022

Dear All,

You may be aware that the theme of school academisation has been in the news and the topic of much discussion recently, and this is in part due to a [government white paper](#) published in March this year, in which an expectation is outlined that all schools in England will be part of an academy trust, or have plans to be, by 2030. But these conversations are also springing up because the thinking around the rationale for academisation is shifting, away from previous years when it may have been seen as purely a way to arrange the funding of schools to achieve economies of scale, towards now looking at how groups of schools working in closer alignment can achieve enhanced experiences and even better outcomes for their students. For this reason the governors of Marden High School have also started to think about the potential that academisation might offer our community. Of course, we are very far from any sort of planning, and when or if we approach that stage, there will need to be full consultation with all our stakeholders, including parents and carers, staff and students. At this stage though, governors are fulfilling their strategic duty of considering what academisation might mean for Marden, whether it could enhance the learning and developmental experience for our students and staff, and how it could support our community's continuing ambition to achieve the very best outcomes for our children.

We support our students with a comprehensive program of careers information, advice and guidance, and it is well worth parents and carers, as well as students, accessing the Careers pages of the school website for updates on this. As students think about what they would like to do after life at Marden, we encourage them to be aware of the whole range of options that are open to them, and one of those is a new type of post 16 qualification, the T Level. The idea is that, as the suite of qualifications is developed, young people will be able to access skilled employment or higher apprenticeships alongside further study, allowing them to keep their options open while ensuring they have the skills employers really need. T Levels have been designed in collaboration with employers, with the aim of students developing occupationally focused skills and knowledge that are essential for employment. All T Level students will complete a 45-day industry placement that will help refine their technical and practical skills, knowledge and behaviours, so they are prepared for the world of work. T Levels also attract UCAS tariff points in line with three A levels. 125 higher education providers have so far said that they will accept them, including 84 universities. A 'Get the Jump'

Skills for Life content hub has been created on the National Career Service website (gov.uk/get-the-jump) which contains clear and helpful information about all post-16 and post-18 choices.

Over the next three weeks we will see some of our old routines return, such as the end of term rewards assemblies and the end of year 'cashing in' of House Points, as well as the advent of some 'new traditions' like the Creativity Festival which has replaced Activities Week as the end of year collaborative community event. The Creativity Festival, borne out of an idea that our outgoing prefects discussed during a 'Friday Club' in the autumn, will be held over two days and incorporates a wide range of activities led by external providers and staff at school, who are now revealing their many talents including knitting, chocolate making, golf course creating and music making. We look forward to showing off our Creativity Festival film to our whole community on the school website.

This week, we met with the Prefect team for the coming academic year. With a record number of applicants we were able to discuss with them all the next steps on their journey of leadership. With the team now working in two cohorts of 'mentors' and 'departmental support', students will be agents of change as they support students in younger years either pastorally or academically. To support our Prefects, we have created a student leadership programme which will run throughout the year, with staff from Marden working with outside providers to support students in developing their leadership skills such as empathy, communication, decision making, and problem solving.

This week our Year 8 and Year 11 students who have been working with Hand Of and Ex Easter Island Head are pulling together their final preparations for their performance at the Whitley Bay Playhouse. Their project 'Coastal Explorations' mixes the ethereal, alien sounds of aeolian flutes, harps and chimes and recordings made by the students along the coast into a collaborative and ambitious performance piece. Drawing on the students' local environment and the critically acclaimed instrumental and compositional approaches of Ex-Easter Island Head, the piece is a unique journey through experimental sound and the environment. Tickets are £5 and are available on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/coastal-explorations-tickets-330553423187?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

Year 9 launched into their Year 10 mindset by taking part in a wellbeing day on Friday. All students took part in a session led by 'Tree of knowledge,' a sports activity, and a choice of taster sessions ranging from hairdressing to physics to law, led by staff from Tynemet and Queen Alexandra College. Students took part with enthusiasm, curiosity and great maturity. Staff involved remarked on the students' excellent behaviour and active engagement. An evaluation has been shared which we would encourage students to fill in to reflect on a thoroughly enjoyable day.

This week we celebrated the vast array of talent our students have by way of our annual talent show *Marden's Got Talent*. The show marked our first performance in the auditorium since the start of the pandemic, and the atmosphere was an excellent example of the supportive and positive spirit that courses through the veins of this Marden community. Students showcased singing, circus skills and karate among other acts from across all year groups, organised and technically supported by a backstage team of students. Huge thanks to the staff who supported all the students involved in this wonderful event.

On Monday 4 July we welcome parents and carers of our new Year 7 cohort for an information evening, ahead of students' Year 6 transition days on Tuesday 5 and Wednesday 6 July. If you have any questions about our transition process, please contact Miss Laing.

North Tyneside Catering Services have asked me to let all parents and carers know that from September 2022 the price of the set 2 course school will increase to £2.40. This is the equivalent of a 2.2% increase per annum since the last price increase.

A huge congratulations to the Year 7 and 8 tennis team who this week were crowned Division Two Northumberland Champions. Throughout all of the matches the team has had, they have not lost a single set, a fantastic achievement and something the students should be very proud of.

And finally we hope that all our Year 10 students going on work experience next week have an interesting and enjoyable time.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher