



## Marden High School

Friday 8th July 2022

Dear All,

We started our new timetable this week, with students and staff starting with lessons they might ordinarily have begun at the start of September, and it has been very interesting talking to many of the students about how they have found it. Without exception they have been very positive about the benefits to them of starting this timetable early. Many have spoken about the fact that it has allowed them to get used to new classes, new staff and that it has given them a boost in interest and enthusiasm at the end of a long year. Some have also spoken about how they feel it has reduced stress and worry about change; one student commented "I get quite anxious about change anyway so the first day this week was a bit tricky, but now I'm fine and it means I won't be worrying about it over the six weeks holiday."

Looking forward to next year, we have this week enjoyed two days with Year 6 children, soon to be our new Year 7s. Involved in a range of activities and lessons across the two days, the general consensus has been that the children presented themselves very well, enthusiastic and polite, and we are all very much looking forward to them coming here as Marden students in September. It was also great to talk to lots of their parents and carers about their children on Monday evening, and, as we reflect on the old adage that 'it takes a whole village to raise a child', I hope that all those families who are new to Marden will quickly feel part of our community.

A major event in our CEIAG calendar is Year 10 work experience. There was much discussion at the beginning of this academic year as to whether work experience should take a virtual form like most schools in the area, or go ahead with the 'real world' experience. We opted for the latter and we are very pleased we did. Finding placements this year has been harder than usual due to the impacts of Covid 19, but as ever, our students have demonstrated resilience and determination. Many students had to contact in excess of five employers before securing placements, this in itself developing many skills needed for the world of work. The feedback we have received so far from employers and students has been a pleasure to read, and we look forward to having our Year 10 students back next week to hear more about their first ventures into the world of work.

On the subject of Careers Education, I am delighted to announce that Marden High School has been awarded the Quality in Careers Standard. This is a great achievement and is formal accreditation of our careers programme and is a national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance. The Standard is fully aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks and involves rigorous evidence based assessment, and as the Standard is externally assessed by one of the Licensed Awarding Bodies, appointed by the Consortium, student voice is a key part of assessors evidence gathering on the impact the careers programme has had on students' career-related learning. The letter to Mrs Brennan, our Careers Education Coordinator, stated:

*"This in recognition of your excellent careers education, information, advice and guidance provision incorporating Gatsby Benchmarks. It is a well-deserved achievement that recognises your hard work and that of all your staff."*

On Tuesday some of our Year 9 students had the opportunity to visit the digital production facility, PROTO, based in Gateshead's Baltic Quarter. As part of this year's Boys' Network programme, in partnership with M10, the group of boys were taken on a private tour of PROTO's offices and facilities. The creative arts and tech centre is certainly thriving in this part of the north east, and the boys were encouraged to explore the recording studios, photographic studios, and 3D capture technology, along with virtual and augmented reality experiences. It was a fantastic afternoon out with students gaining a valuable insight into tech and creative arts careers, learning about new equipment and even entering into a north east podcast competition! There's a [section on our school website](#) showing what the boys got up to. PROTO is also offering a free 3 day summer school in August, and whilst places are limited there is still some availability, further information for which is linked on the school website.

On Wednesday this week a large group of Year 8 students travelled to St James' park to attend STEMfest Net Zero. Throughout the day they visited exhibitors who were demonstrating their plans to become carbon net zero by 2030. The students enjoyed getting to grips with some fascinating features including a robot dog designed to go into and 3D map derelict buildings, an electric car where students learnt about emissions and their effects on the environment, and using virtual reality to explore wind farms at sea. Logical thinking and problem solving was a key aspect of the day and students were pleased to leave with prizes for demonstrating these skills. Well done to all students who were fantastic ambassadors for our school, and thanks to the staff that supported them.

Earlier this week we also had a number of Year 10 students attend a student residential at Cambridge University, the aim of which was to raise awareness and aspirations regarding Higher Education and to challenge preconceptions about the University of Cambridge and other highly selective universities. Students had the opportunity to live as a student for the duration of their visit, stay in their own student accommodation and experience life as a student, with the help of student ambassadors from Cambridge University. Lots of really useful advice and guidance was taken on board and the students all commented on how valuable the experience was. A particular highlight for students was being given the opportunity to tour the different departments and colleges around the city and university and get a real flavour for what university life is like.

We have also been represented by students in Year 8 and Year 9 at the Tyne and Wear Science and Technology Challenge day held at Sunderland University. The event aims to raise aspirations of students, specifically in Science, Technology and Languages, and is a regional competition where students compete in teams against other schools from the region. Students were set a range of challenges across the day, including The Robotics challenge, The Vehicle Challenge and The Medical Diagnostics Challenge, and it was an excellent opportunity for students to utilise skills learned within lessons and apply them to a problem-solving and team-working environment.

Last weekend a mixture of some seventeen Year 9 and Year 10 students completed their Duke of Edinburgh award in the beautiful Roman Wall landscape of Northumberland. Typical, ever changing British weather brought many challenges with students having to contend with being either too hot or too wet, but they kept up Marden's high standards with outstanding behaviour, respecting other camping residents and locals throughout the journey. We will be looking for exactly the same this weekend when the second group takes on a similar challenge, this time probably in warm, sunny weather.

On Monday Year 7 girls competed in the North Tyneside rounders tournament. The girls represented the school in spectacular fashion, playing four games and winning two, finishing third overall. Throughout the tournament it was great to see spectacular team work, communication and leadership.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher