



Marden High School

Friday 18th November 2022

Dear All

We have been supporting Children in Need today with our non-uniform day and charity collections. As the BBC Children in Need website says, the last few years in particular have been challenging ones, for everyone, but in particular for children at key points in their personal and academic development, so the fundraising that happens is all the more significant for the children that benefit from the proceeds. Of course, life is not about to get less challenging as the country enters recession and we all face increased cost of living this winter. I have often said that we are a strong community, evidenced by the fact that together we have come through considerable challenges over the years. Over the coming months it will be important that we continue to support one another as a community, and so please do let us know if there are any considerable changes in your family circumstances that you feel might impact on the well-being of your child. With the adage of 'it takes a whole village to raise a child' in mind, there may be support we can offer, or assistance in terms of signposting to relevant outside organisations that may be able to help.

School life beyond lessons has been busy this term as more and more of our extra-curricular clubs get going and lots of our children are staying behind to get involved. It is great to see them enjoying themselves, and to experience the vibrant, lively atmosphere which pervades the building. Particularly exciting is hearing the auditions going on for the school production, which this year is 'Sister Act'. No doubt this will once again provide many opportunities for showcasing talent and student leadership. The singing that I have heard so far as students practise promises great things for later this term when the students will be performing.

Students, parents and carers should also remember that the Learning Resource Centre is available to all students after school for homework and study, with special support assistants available to support students with their work. This is a really good way for the children to get help with homework, or just to get a head start on, or catch up with, school work.

Many of you will be aware that we have a link with an orphanage in South Africa, and some of you will remember when Father Thami visited the school a number of years ago. Father Thami was a great inspiration when he came here, explaining how money that we collected here was able to change young

lives at the orphanage, and we are still in touch with him. In particular, Mr Anderson has a regular email correspondence with him, and in his latest message he said:

“I hope this email finds you well. I have just arrived from the meeting of the South African Legion of Military Veterans. They elected me Welfare Officer. I would like to inform you that some recipients from your school donation have started their small businesses. One of them is sewing church uniforms. Thank you very much. We highly appreciate your assistance.

God bless you abundantly.”

Father Thami is an amazing man, and the orphanage is a wonderful project. We do feel blessed to have this connection and we look forward to students in the future being involved in communication with and fundraising for the orphanage.

This term has seen staff enjoying the opportunity to collaborate on teaching and learning during our professional development sessions. We have focussed on *two key aspects* of teaching practice so that we can personalise and adapt our planning and challenge learners at all levels. Firstly, using educational research linked to *cognitive load, working memory, and long-term memory* to help us to plan our teaching and linking it to the cognitive needs of different students. Secondly, we want to know how successful *each and every student has been in each and every lesson*. What have they learned and what are their next steps? Although this seems obvious, it is critical that children leave each classroom having understood the ideas being presented and are ready to build on that knowledge in subsequent lessons, and teachers have been working together on assessment strategies which check for understanding and plan to support any gaps in knowledge.

A small group of governors spent an informative morning with me in school recently as we conducted the first of our governor familiarisation visits this term. We toured classrooms and spent time in discussion with Mr Horn, Curriculum Leader for English, talking about curriculum intent, and it was evident that governors were very impressed with what they saw, the words “focus” and “enjoyment” often being used in their feedback. I also spent an enjoyable English lesson discussing the role of governors with some Year 9 students. They were clearly very interested and they had some great questions about what governors do, which, in summary is as follows:

Governors work with the headteacher and senior leadership team to drive the strategic development of the school and raise standards of achievement. Duties include setting the school's vision, aims and objectives, approving the school budget and appointing the headteacher.

If any parents would like to be involved with the school in this way, we do currently have one vacancy for a parent governor, and I would be more than happy to chat informally with anybody interested.

This week the Year 11 netball team went into the North Tyneside Under16 competition unbeaten in league games and tournaments since Year 7. The atmosphere on the bus was full of togetherness and purposeful teamwork, and this transferred to the court with smooth, fast and efficient play, and slick communication between defence and attack. The girls beat St. Thomas More 15-1, Whitley Bay High School 7-3 and John Spence 11-5, finishing the tournament with maximum points meaning that the team are North Tyneside Champions. The team has held this title for five academic years, a fantastic achievement and something the students should be extremely proud of. Miss Harrison always looks forward to Thursday evenings because the camaraderie, happiness and laughter between the students epitomises the benefits that sport can bring.

This week the Year 10 boys football team took part in a 7-a-side Central Venue League tournament at John Spence High School. The team played three matches against very strong opposition, winning the first game, drawing the second and losing the last. The team showed great resolve to stick to the agreed game plan and demonstrated great effort and composure in all of their games.

The Year 11 boys football team were back in action against John Spence this week in tough conditions. The boys started well with a couple of early chances which could have given them the lead. John Spence made the most of the home advantage, scoring midway through the first half, but the Marden boys came back into the game with two goals of their own. The John Spence team made the most of elements, eventually running out 5-2 victors.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher