



Marden High School

Friday 13th January 2023

Dear All

Happy New Year to all our readers - I hope that everyone has had a pleasant Christmas break. It has been great to see everybody back this week looking well and looking forward to making the most of the coming term. I have recently had some communication from the NSPCC who are currently setting up a Board for Change. The charity is looking to recruit a diverse group of 15 young people, aged 13-16, from across the UK to have their views heard by joining the Board. It is hoped that the Board for Change will place children and young people right at the heart of steering, advising and influencing the work of the NSPCC. Members will be a voice for others, sharing views and ideas with decision makers. They will have the opportunity to travel across the country to take part in residential, meetings, and workshops with other young people. If any students and parents/carers are interested in this opportunity, there is more information and an online application at nspcc.org.uk/boardforchange.

As you will see on the school website, our Pupil Premium Strategy and Catch Up Premium document outline the ways in which we identify barriers to learning for all students, and in particular those who are supported by the pupil premium. In these plans you can also see how we can intervene and overcome those barriers. As part of our work on this, we have invited Children's North East into Marden next week to undertake a two day 'Poverty Proofing' exercise which will help us develop further support for our children and families. This exercise involves consulting various sections of our community - parents and carers, staff, governors - and we greatly appreciate your help in completing the surveys we have emailed out. Students will also be consulted, and a special prefect team has been set up to carry out discussion with groups of the student body next week. The prefects have recently undertaken training with Children's North East and this has certainly developed their skills in questioning, leading groups, evaluating and time management, all skills which will serve them well in the future. This process will allow us to see a detailed picture of where challenges and barriers are for particular students or groups of students and how we can best support them. Once the Poverty Proofing exercise has been completed we will share a summary of the results via the website within the Pupil Premium section.

The behaviour of our students is something that invariably visitors to our school will comment upon. Indeed, Ofsted's judgement of pupils' behaviour was reflected in their report from last term:

"Pupils thrive. Behaviour in many lessons is exemplary. Pupils support one another in their learning. They listen attentively to staff and respond with enthusiasm when challenging questions are asked."

Similarly when students are out and about on field trips and sports fixtures, we receive so many positive comments from members of the public and colleagues from other schools. We do have, however, a number of sanctions as part of our Behaviour for Learning policy for when behaviour expectations are not met. One of these is a detention which a student may have to do if there has been an issue with focus in a lesson for example. Detentions act as a reminder of our expectations and are an opportunity for students to speak with their Head of Year to reflect on how better to meet those expectations. Detentions operate three times a week on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, and last for 30 minutes. A text message will go out a day before so parents and carers are aware. In the unlikely event that a student fails to attend a detention, they must attend a longer detention on Friday with Mr Anderson, which runs until 4pm.

In recent weeks many parents and carers will have been made aware through the news media of the pernicious and potentially damaging impact that some so called 'influencers' may be having on young people around the country. These people use various social media platforms to broadcast misogynistic and racist views, often attracting viewers using a business model based on increasing advertising reach. It is vitally important for us all to be aware of the sorts of material our young people will be exposed to when online, and essential that we know how to support and protect our children, through either educational or technological means. This week we held our e-safety evening for parents and carers of Key Stage 3 children, and we benefited from an excellent presentation from Head of Year 7, Ms Laing, who took us through highly relevant and useful information on how we can all help support and protect children with regards to inappropriate conduct, inappropriate contact, and inappropriate content. The presentation was followed by an excellent discussion during which parents and carers were able to share both current concerns and parenting strategies for managing their children's intake of social media. There was clearly a feeling that this was of huge benefit, and the hope is to run further sessions where both latest information and mutual support is shared. I will let everyone know details of the next event on our school website and in this newsletter.

Please remember that a range of activities are on offer for students to take part in before and after school. Homework club is available every day after school in the Learning Resource Centre, and is a great

opportunity for students to complete their homework with support from school staff. The list of extra curricular activities is always available on our website:

<https://www.mardenhigh.net/our-extra-curricular-activities/>

If you would like your child to take part, please sign up using the Schoolgateway.

This coming Thursday (19 January) is Parents' Evening for Year 11 parents and carers from 4pm until 7pm. This will be remote via the school cloud app (<https://www.mardenhigh.net/parents-evening-system/>). Reports will be emailed out on Monday 16 January and bookings can now be made on the school cloud system if you wish to.

Year 9 students will be making their provisional Guided Choices in form time next Thursday. They have received an invitation to a Guided Choices google classroom which contains all of the information that they need to make their choices and, on Thursday, will receive a google form to complete. To assist students in making their final choices, all Year 9 students and their parents and carers are invited into school between 6pm and 8pm on Thursday 26 January to our Guided Choices Evening. This is an excellent opportunity to hear an overview of the Guided Choices process, visit curriculum areas and talk to students and staff about the choices on offer. We look forward to meeting parents and carers then.

We have a number of sports fixtures next week, as well as house competitions starting up, so I will look forward to reporting back to you all on these in next week's newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher