



Marden High School

Friday 20th January 2023

Dear All

We had the very sad news this week that Leah Casson, a young woman who left Marden in 2021 passed away in a house fire in the early hours of Monday. Leah was a wonderful young person, always ready to help others, and I know that her gentle nature has been an inspiration to many. Leah was a talented photographer and we will be creating a memorial to her in school displaying some of her fantastic work. We will also come together in our memorial garden to remember and celebrate Leah's time at Marden a little later this half term. Our thoughts and prayers are with Leah, and with her family and friends.

One thing that is an ever present backdrop to life at Marden is the encouragement of everyone to take opportunities when they arise, and, this brings to mind the words of actor Jim Carrey, "Life opens up opportunities to you, and you either take them, or you stay afraid of taking them." Our belief that every child can make progress and be successful is the reason why our young people, as they get older, say that Marden High School has 'set them up for life'. There are many varied opportunities open to our children at Marden, and I would encourage any student who has not got involved in an extracurricular activity yet, to do so. Very shortly we start working with a new cohort of Year 9 students as part of the Boys' Network. The Boys' Network is a Marden High School initiative in partnership with M10 Missions. It is a unique opportunity for a number of boys who have the potential to achieve great success in their future careers to be paired with a coach from industry who will guide him in the 'etiquette for success'. This incorporates extra-curricular, leadership and career development opportunities that will help kindle aspirations and motivation for education, training and employment after Marden. Meanwhile, Year 11 students are working with staff from M:10 towards their 'Mission to Mexico' this coming summer. Fundraising for this will begin later in the Spring Term. The educational charity Hand Of continues to offer exciting musical opportunities for students in Years 8 and 11 with a regional music project beginning later this month, and mentoring for Year 10 students. These projects, alongside the extra curricular offer here at Marden, continue to expand the rich and diverse menu of opportunities enhancing the experience at school and helping to provide a firm foundation for success in later years.

Another of the many exciting annual events which is fast approaching is the YMCA Lakeside Challenge in

Cumbria. This competition is team based and provides leadership, teamwork, problem solving and resilience in challenges against other schools. These skills dovetail nicely with our SkillsBuilder programme that sits within our school House Style in lessons, and this year, Year 9 and Year 10 students from across the four Houses, will travel to Lakeside with Mr Richards, Mr Prytherch and Miss Clark and as the competition against the other schools unfolds, will also be awarded bonus House Points to contribute to our termly House Competition back here at school. Good luck to each of the students on the trip, both in the competition against other schools and also in the competition between each other as the battle of the Houses continues.

More and more of our students are getting their accounts set up on Globalbridge, and there are some excellent portfolios developing. As I am speaking to students, in all year groups, I am reminding them to log on to their accounts at least every two weeks to review and add to their portfolios, which will become evermore important to them as they move through school, and I know that their subject teachers are also talking to them about the kind of evidence they can be adding. If any student has not yet set up their account and started a portfolio they are missing out, and I would encourage parents and carers to speak to their child about their Globalbridge portfolio. There are some excellent resources available on the Globalbridge website, and one area in particular that I have been using quite frequently has been the 'blogs' section (found under the 'about us' tab) which contains some very interesting and useful articles on a variety of topics from how to present yourself to future employers, through to strategies for preparing for exams, and information on future steps into college and sixth form. Next week will be our termly 'world of work' focus week where students upload work they have done onto GlobalBridge, developing their portfolio and celebrating work which they are proud of and that they feel represents their achievements in school.

The Student Leadership Programme for our prefects continues with the penultimate session relating to 'what have you got to offer?' This is a question often asked in interviews and sometimes in self-reflection as we seek to take the next steps in our career or personal life. This session, followed by the last one on Empathy, will then lead into practical sessions before the final celebration session.

Holocaust Memorial Day is an annual moment to pause and reflect on what happened in the holocaust during the second world war, and this year will be on Friday 27th January. The [official website](#) contains some fascinating information and very moving thoughts:

"Genocide is facilitated by ordinary people. Ordinary people turn a blind eye, believe propaganda, join murderous regimes. And those who are persecuted, oppressed and murdered in genocide aren't persecuted because of crimes they've committed – they are persecuted simply because they are ordinary"

people who belong to a particular group”

In Year 8 students will be covering the Holocaust as part of their Human Rights topic in RE. We look at this abhorrent period in history and explore how it is that humans can treat others in this way. The theme for this year's Holocaust Memorial Day is 'Ordinary people' and so we are looking at the stories of some who survived, listening to their personal testimonies and trying to identify with their feelings and emotions. These things happened to, and were perpetrated by, ordinary people, and it is important to ensure that we do not forget this.

There has been much news in recent days around teacher strikes. As it stands currently, the particular union that the vast majority of our teachers are in is not going on strike. However, there may be a potential knock on effect of other schools being closed and thus impacting on childcare for our staff. We are currently working through what this could mean for us and I will keep everyone updated as the situation develops.

Looking ahead we will be getting our Year 11 group photograph done on Friday 3rd February, and these will be available for purchase later in the term, providing what is a lovely keepsake for students' time at Marden.

On Friday 13th January, the KS3 Girls Football Team made the long journey to the beautiful countryside and Ovingham Middle School. In only their second game together, Marden Girls faced an Ovingham team consisting mostly of Year 8 students who had played together for over three years. Most of the Marden girls are in Year 7 and in addition to the age difference, many of the Ovingham team train with Newcastle United Girls. This was a tough game and Marden found themselves several goals down at halftime. But what was remarkable about this performance was the incredible and courageous attitude of the Marden players. Not one player stopped working for the team. Players continued to compete in every tackle and block every shot. Until the final whistle, Marden Girls played with passion and tenacity. Everyone in the team should be proud of their incredible efforts against such a strong opponent.

On Monday afternoon, the Year 8 girls netball team maintained their unbeaten run with an away win at Marden Bridge Middle. The students continue to demonstrate excellent teamwork and communication, with some fantastic passing on display. Due to the girls determination and hard work the match finished 9-0 to Marden High. A fantastic effort from all involved.

The Year 9 Girls' football team played in bitterly cold conditions on Wednesday night in the Central Venue League at John Spence. Despite the sub-zero temperatures, the football on display was awesome. Coming up against two very strong sides from Whitley Bay and Kings Priory, the girls battled hard but fell short in

the final result. There was some positive news though, with the girls coming away with a victory against John Spence.

The Winter House Sports competitions started this week with Year 8. The football competition took place on Monday with all four Houses showcasing their skills resulting in an exciting tournament with Alnwick just securing the title. On Wednesday it was Netball, again a great turnout with some talented netballers producing some breathtaking skills. It was Bamburgh that took the title this year with three wins from three. Next week it is the turn of Year 9, and of course the big question is, which House will win?

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