



Marden High School

Friday 27th January 2023

Dear All

Our belief that every child can make progress and be successful means that Marden is one of the highest performing schools in the North East. It is also clear that the atmosphere that pervades Marden whereby people are able to express their own personalities, and the fact that people here know each other well and are kind to one another, fosters a sense of family and belonging. So it is with a sense of optimism that we have been able to approach challenges that have come our way, and that we will continue to face as a community - that sense of family and tackling issues together will see us through. One of the challenges that we face as a broader society, and therefore also in our community, is that of sexual harassment. Nationally, 54% of female students and 34% of male students say they have witnessed someone using sexist language at school. Keeping our young people safe and healthy, both physically and mentally, means ensuring they have the right spaces to learn about and discuss these issues. The foundations of sexual harassment can be found in everyday attitudes and behaviours that are often left unchallenged, and this can lead to people suffering more extreme impacts including physical, mental or sexual harm as well as the threat of this harm and coercion. Delivering education on gender inequality and gender-based violence is complex and requires addressing the many issues that young people face today, such as non-consensual sharing of intimate photos without consent, pornography and specific gendered slurs that might not be familiar to us from our own lived experience of being young. Next week students will listen to an assembly about being aware of, and how we might be able to respond to, sexist attitudes, behaviours and language, and this will be followed up by further information and workshops in form time from Mrs Reece and [Ben Oliver](#) from the *Think for Yourself* project.

Fifteen students have successfully been accepted onto the up and coming TICE fashion programme due to start in February. The students will take part in an exciting in school workshop and will experience their introduction to the fashion industry. The workshop will focus on various areas of fashion and students will participate in a number of tasks throughout the day looking into career areas such as fashion forecasting, design, pattern design, advertisement and more. This introduction will be the first part of the programme with students continuing to create their own fashion portfolios based on their chosen briefs. The chosen students will be guided by TICE industry professionals throughout this process and will have the opportunity

to meet their mentors and experience what industry professionals do on a daily basis in their own work environment at Northumbria University.

At some point during the next half term, we will be moving from split break and lunchtimes for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to a single break in the morning for everyone, and a single longer lunchtime, again for everyone, at the start of the afternoon. Because everyone will be having lunch at the same time, classrooms and other spaces in the school building will be freed up as lessons will not need to take place at this time. There will be no change to the food offers that students can currently access, but it does mean that we will be able to go back to offering extra-curricular clubs and activities during lunch, something that we have missed since operating the split system, introduced during Covid. This will give additional opportunities to more students to get involved in extra clubs and activities. In addition, there will be supervised quiet locations and study areas in various parts of the building that students will be able to use at lunchtime. Students and parents/carers will receive more information about these clubs and activities and about the starting date for this arrangement over the next few weeks. We will also be talking to some student focus groups to get their ideas on a wide variety of activities so that everyone can have a pleasant and useful lunchtime.

As many of us rarely carry cash these days, and a lot of our students have their own debit cards, we regularly get asked if we accept card payments. After researching options, and following in the footsteps of our PTA, we have invested in a cashless system for accepting payments in school. The school office sells a number of small value items such as replacement ties, stationery, revision guides, at heavily discounted prices, and locker rental, and we are now accepting card payments from Google Pay, Apple Pay, Visa, V Pay, Mastercard, Maestro, American Express and all other major card issuers. We usually put our more expensive trips on ParentPay to allow payers to make partial payments to 'chip' away at a larger balance. However, this facility will also be available via card payments now too.

This week's House competition saw the turn of Year 9 which produced some wonderful and energetic performances from the students. In the football competition Alnwick took the title with a spirited performance, winning it in the final game. The netball title was won by Dunstanburgh but all three Houses produced some flowing moves resulting in some high scoring matches. All the players should be very proud of their efforts and their commitment to their Houses.

The Year 7 Girls netball team were in action this week playing 3 friendly games against Marden Bridge Middle School. The opposition were organised and very hard to break down. After two narrow defeats, the girls showed great resilience and determination in the final game to end on a 1-1 draw, the opposition

equalising with the last throw of the game.

The Year 11 girls football team had a very good second round of Central Venue League games on Wednesday evening. They beat Churchill (4-1) and St.Thomas More B (2-0) and narrowly lost to a last minute goal to strong St.Thomas More A. Well done to all.

With regards to the national day of strike action by teachers next week on Wednesday, I can confirm that Marden will be open as usual. The union that the vast majority of our teachers are members of is not going on strike. However, a few staff may be impacted upon by the effect of other schools being closed and thus impacting childcare for our staff. So it may be that some students will have lessons covered by substitute teachers, or that they have alternative activities in the auditorium. We foresee this impact being kept to a minimum of students.

I would ask that all parents and carers please remember that students should not bring medication into school for self administering. Medicines can be administered only after a written agreement has been completed by parents or carers and received by the school staff member responsible, Mrs Thompson. Parents and carers should contact school to obtain the parental/school agreement form to administer medicines, and this should be returned to school by the parent or carer when bringing the medicine in.

Next week on Tuesday 31st January at 6pm we have our Year 11 Exam Preparation Evening, entitled *Be Motivated, Be Confident, Be Ready*. All Year 11 students, parents, and carers are welcome to attend what we think will be an interesting and informative series of talks and workshops which tackle these two, all important questions:

What are the most effective methods for exam preparation?

How can you, as parents, support effective exam preparation?

We look forward to seeing you there.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher