



Marden High School

Friday 10th March 2023

Dear All

The Schools of Sanctuary Committee, headed by a group of Year 11 prefects, have been presenting a fantastic assembly this week which has introduced all year groups to the exciting work that has been going into achieving the School of Sanctuary Award at Marden High School. This was an expertly crafted assembly, giving very clear information regarding the plight of many refugees and asylum seekers who look to the citizens and the government of the UK for sanctuary. As a School of Sanctuary, Marden High School is working closely with the Walking With centre in Wallsend, and the students will be collecting donations for the foodbank at the centre, which supports refugees and asylum seekers who have arrived in North Tyneside. Many refugees and asylum seekers arrive with nothing and the foodbank facility at the centre is a lifeline for those in need. We are hoping to make a real difference to people's lives through the generosity of our school community. A group of the prefects will be delivering the donations to the centre on 21st March, so please bring to school any of your donations before this date. The work started by this prefect group now presents an exciting opportunity for students from all year groups to get involved in the Schools of Sanctuary Committee. The Committee will meet every Monday lunchtime and organise a range of activities and fundraising events, building students' compassion, empathy and leadership skills. Places will be limited, so students should let Ms Fenwick know as soon as possible if they are interested in getting involved and making a difference.

Last summer term was the first time that we held a Creativity Festival, and this was such a fantastic success that we plan to make this an annual event that celebrates the very best of our community and helps to develop the 'real world' skills our children will need for their futures. The Creativity Festival is held over two days and incorporates a wide range of activities led by external providers and staff at school. Last summer we saw many skills and talents come to the fore including knitting, chocolate making, pottery, film production and music making. Many of you will have seen our Creativity Festival film on the school website which illustrated the breadth of exciting features the children were involved in. Over the coming months Mrs Berriman and Ms Olbrecht will be leading staff in planning the event which is a central part of our School Development Plan in enhancing the curriculum to develop our creative pedagogy, providing opportunities to develop skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, digital literacy and innovation. This year we are

keen to diversify even further and extend the breadth of opportunities for our students, and so we are very interested in hearing from parents and carers who feel they may have something to offer the festival. The idea of creativity is wide ranging and it is worth remembering that a creative learner is imaginative, inquisitive, persistent, collaborative and disciplined, so we are open to conversations and look forward to hearing from anyone with an idea. If you are interested in contributing, please email me in the first instance.

It is good to see excellent attitude and work ethic continuing from Year 11, and that the majority of them already have firm plans for next year, in the form of A levels, vocational learning or apprenticeships. We have always been very supportive of our students during the exam season, part of which is Year 11 lessons continuing during the first few weeks of the GCSE exams, as this allows students to continue to access the expertise of their teachers at a crucial time for them. As the exams progress, there is gradually less need for some of these lessons to continue, and so after Friday 16th June, there will not be the expectation for all students to attend school as normal. Of course, if any students wish to continue to work in school their teachers will still be here for them. We will be holding the Year 11 Final assembly on the afternoon of Thursday 15th June. And just so that everybody is aware, the final exam of the 2023 season is on Wednesday 21st June, though it is worth noting that the exam boards have reserved Wednesday 28th June as a contingency day which they may use should they experience any difficulties during the exam period.

On Monday we will be moving to arrangements for a single break and lunch rather than the split break and lunch we have operated since Covid. Prior to the pandemic we always had a single lunch which allowed for a rich menu of extra-curricular activities for our children to engage in at this time, and being able to offer this is one of the main reasons we are returning to these arrangements, but the rationale also includes:

- A longer lunch supports staff and student wellbeing
- Students can access the LRC and IT facilities to complete homework or conduct independent study
- Mixing of year groups strengthens relationships and a sense of community
- Provides opportunities for student leadership and agency

I have included a link here to the detailed [single break and lunch](#) document we have shared with students and staff this week, and here is a [screencast](#) from Mrs Robson our Deputy Head which takes you through the arrangements. I would encourage parents and carers to look at this and talk through it with their children so they can identify activities they may wish to be involved in during their lunchtimes.

Last week the Year 8 boys football team played Longbenton (away) in the second round of the county cup on Wednesday. In challenging conditions, they showed great character to outplay the opposition in all

positions and came away 6-0 winners. This was one of the team's best performances of the season against a tough opponent and will go on to play Ponteland in the quarter final. Also last week, the Year 11 boys football team were involved in Cup football, a semi final on Thursday against a very strong team from George Stephenson High School. The first half was an excellent contest with both teams coming close to scoring early on in the game, Marden coming the closest with a goal line clearance from the opposition defence. The George Stephenson side took their chances late on in the first half, and continued this in the second, the game ending in a defeat for Marden, but the team showed great spirit and fought for each other right until the very end of the game.

On Wednesday evening it was the final Central Venue League for the U14 girls football team. The cold conditions and blustery winds did not dampen the girls spirit, and they put in some brilliant performances. The first game was end to end and we were very unlucky to come away with a 0-0 draw against John Spence. The students then played St Thomas More and displayed some very skillful play. Hitting the crossbar twice, finally an exquisite through ball was played and we slotted home for a 1-0 victory. In the final game we played Whitley Bay High School who were ferocious in attack. The girls stuck together and put in a solid performance and secured a 0-0 draw against top of the league. All in all a great performance.

On Thursday evening it was the long awaited staff vs student netball. The Year 11 netball team had been very vocal about how confident they were that they were going to beat the staff. The staff team, some of whom had never played netball before, went 2-0 up within the first 3 minutes. It was an end to end battle throughout with some interesting footwork and defensive tactics from both teams. However, the youth and practice of the Year 11 team shone through and they won 15-10. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed the evening and there was a real sense of community spirit.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher