



## Marden High School

Friday 14th July 2023

Dear All

One of the strengths of Marden High School is the sense of community that pervades all we do, and that visitors to the school, including Ofsted, invariably comment upon. There are of course many things which build and contribute to this sense of community, a key one being the extra-curricular activities which staff really do go the extra mile in providing - we have staff who are prepared to go above and beyond and who are committed to providing the rich diet of extra-curricular activity that exists at Marden. When staff organise educational visits and extra-curricular residential trips it is sometimes the case that there is more demand than there are places. This is in spite of the best endeavours of staff to provide for the maximum number of students possible, but I do appreciate that children and parents may feel disappointed if they do not get to go on a school residential visit. This year we have seen an increase in the number of students interested in going on residential visits organised by school, perhaps following restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic. When trips have been oversubscribed, we have this year taken the decision to allocate places on a random basis, believing this to be the fairest method. However, this is something we would like to refine further for next year to try to ensure the fairest chance of students having at least one residential experience, if they want that. So staff will continue to request from parents an expression of interest when they advertise a residential trip they are organising, and now the school will record centrally the trips that a student may already have been on, so that, all other things being equal, priority is given to students who have not yet been on a residential school trip. I hope that this will allow a larger number of students to experience a residential visit during their time at school if they want that.

The residential trips we currently have planned for next year are:

- High Borrans November 2023 - Year 7
- YMCA Lakeside trip February 2024 - Year 9 and 10
- Ski trip February 2024 - Year 10 and 11
- High Borrans March 2024 - Year 8
- Cambridge University June 2024 - Year 10
- Arran July 2024 - Year 8
- France July 2024 - Year 9

- Duke of Edinburgh expeditions July 2024 - Year 9

Last week Year 7 students attended Tanfield High School to take part in the Royal Academy of Engineering Robotics Festival. During the day students were set various challenges from programming a drone to building and programming their own robots, tasks they had to complete against the clock. Their organisation was tested as they delegated tasks to smaller sub-teams and they showed excellent problem solving and teamwork skills, but above all else proved to be resilient when faced with difficulties. The students were delighted to have come second overall in what was a very tight competition with only 3 points between the winning teams.

Recently a group of Year 9 girls had the fantastic opportunity to develop their public speaking skills in a workshop hosted by Jo Darby from Voice in the Room. This workshop is our first in the set up for Girl Talk - a project focusing on empowering students whilst also developing public speaking skills. This is a fantastic opportunity that will complement our ongoing partnership with the Girls' Network next academic year. It was fantastic to see our students developing their confidence and trying something new! We look forward to seeing our students flourish.

Thursday evening this week was a busy one. At school, we hosted M10 who spoke to students and their parents about the exciting opportunity to fundraise and visit Mexico in the summer of 2024. This annual work our students engage with involves travelling with students from other schools to northern Mexico to build a house for a family whilst providing voluntary work in a charitable shelter for ten days. The agency our students show through this project is a further development from activities here at Marden in our morning reflection time, our assemblies and our lessons throughout the day. The positive and generous character of our students is something often commented upon by local residents, visitors to the school and new parents and carers when I show them around. This character is recognised in a number of ways and one is the Star Awards, a North Tyneside celebration which recognises young peoples' ambition, leadership, achievement and success. Every year we are proud that at least one student from Marden reaches the final four and this year was no different. Thursday evening, with students from around North Tyneside, we proudly saw one of our students recognised for their hard work and achievement over the past year. This took place just along the road from the Common Room in Neville Hall, where our Year 7 and Year 9 students sold out the venue as they performed their final presentation of their Coastal Explorations project they undertook with Hand Of. Working with Hand Of and two local musicians the students created a magical performance displaying all the wonderful features of the North East Coast line through the medium of dance, music and song. It was an evening where hope, agency and leadership shone through and an evening to make our whole community very proud.

Last week 32 students in Year 7 enjoyed a day at the Vertu Motors arena, exploring the careers and research involved in STEM, as part of this year's STEMFest. The event was organised by STEM learning and there was an array of interactive STEM activities in each of the four zones. Students learned about the ways companies are reducing their carbon footprint and how they are using recycled materials to invest in infrastructure and buildings for the future. There was also a visit to the inflatable planetarium, where students learned about some of the moons of the planets in the Solar System. All in all, this was a tremendously enriching experience for all and students gave very enthusiastic feedback.

The Year 8 boys Football team brought a conclusion to their seemingly never-ending season last week when they faced John Spence in the final of the North Tyneside Schools Cup. The Marden team looked in fine form in the early exchanges, and midway through the half the deadlock was broken when Marden fired home after a corner. From then on, the Marden team took control of the game and scored a further 4 goals. With the final score 5-2, this caps a fine season for the team, who a few weeks earlier had also won the league undefeated.

Monday evening saw the Year 7 Rounders team play their first games together at the Central Venue event. The girls all played brilliantly, showing some fantastic skill and determination, to eventually win 2 of their 5 games on the night. A great experience for our girls.

The Year 8 girls Volleyball team took part in the North Tyneside school event on Thursday evening. This was the girls first taste of competitive Volleyball, having attended early morning practices all term. These practices seem to have paid off as they went on to win all three of their games. The girls thoroughly enjoyed the experience and we look forward to their development in next year's competition.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher