



Marden High School

Friday 20th October 2023

Dear All

Regular readers of this newsletter may recall that recently I wrote about a very exciting event we have coming up later this term called GIRLtalks, (Girl's Inspiring Real Life Talks). This event on the evening of 6th December will be an evening of thought provoking and inspiring talks from six of our very own Year 10 girls, who will be making us all think about some of life's big questions. The evening will be all about life's journey and the process of personal development that we all experience as we make life's journey, and we have now secured our keynote speaker, Mina Leslie-Wujastyck, one of the world's leading rock climbers and climbing coaches. Mina will be sharing her life journey so far, recounting the highs and the lows of some of the adventures and expeditions she has undertaken and how they have developed her physically, mentally and psychologically. Our students have been working hard with the creator of GIRLtalks, Jo Darby, in preparing for this event. With a background as theatre director and barrister, Jo is now a public speaking and communication coach who specialises in developing professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds with their presenting and motivational speaking skills, and so we are very grateful for Jo's time, inspiration and dedication in developing our students' confidence and presentation skills, and providing this opportunity for them to excel. Jo's company website [Voice in the Room](#) has more information of interest. Details on how to secure tickets for this exciting event will be sent out to students and parents very soon.

This week, it was good to see our Year 9 students taking part in the Youth Council Debate and the Young Persons Question Time. At both events our young leaders excelled, winning the debate with their argument for 16 year olds to have the right to vote and then asking questions of local councillors at Young Persons Question Time. At a time when kindness, togetherness and optimism have seldom been more important, it is wonderful to see agency in our students that give great hope for the next generation of leaders. Asking the right questions and making one's voice heard, in a respectful and passionate fashion, are skills that our students often show in lessons at Marden, and so this week, in these two events, it has made us all very proud that the public at large have witnessed this.

The theme of our staff training last week was lockdown in an emergency situation. This is a topic that nobody really wants to imagine, but it is still necessary for members of the school community to understand

what action would need to be taken in the event of it ever happening. However, whilst considering this matter it is also important to keep a perspective and remember that our safeguarding and security systems around the school site are sound, so a potential threat to our community is not something that could easily happen. In our staff training we examined our revised and updated emergency full lockdown protocol, which has at its centre the guiding principle of *'keep yourself and those around you as safe as possible'*, and the key task of staff undertaking *dynamic risk assessment* throughout such an event. The definition of a dynamic risk assessment is: *"The continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risk, taking action to eliminate or reduce risk, monitoring and reviewing, in the rapidly changing circumstances of an operational incident"*, and staff were able to practise this while considering how they would respond to a variety of scenarios. As part of a Personal Development lesson later in November, students will be looking at the same information so that they can become familiar with what to do in a lockdown situation. Later in the school year we will then undertake a lockdown drill, in the same way as we do a fire evacuation drill, as further practice.

During this half term we have been conducting one of our regular internal reviews of the quality of teaching which involves learning walks. Many lessons from different subject areas have been seen and the findings of these learning walks indicate very effective, and in some cases, exemplary practice in classrooms. Some of the strengths of many lessons have been teaching delivered in the context of the real world, and resources and activities being used to stimulate creative thinking and curiosity. It has also been good to see students' independence being developed over time resulting in them being more able to manage their own time and learning, and it is always great to see the students working with a sense of pride and accomplishment and making good progress.

Year 9 will soon be approaching the point at which they choose their optional subjects for GCSE. There will be some key dates coming up that are important for both parents and children in order to assist them in this process. Students will all take English Language, English Literature, Maths and Science as compulsory subjects and also follow PE and Personal Development. Students will then pick three additional subjects, and we aim to ensure that their curriculum choices are broad and balanced, to include at least one of French, German, computer science, history and geography. There will be Guided Choices assemblies where students will be given an introduction to the process of choosing their subjects, as well as information from curriculum leaders about the subjects offered at GCSE. These presentations will be available on the website in 'learning' and 'guided choices' following the assemblies which start in November. A letter with further details will be sent to parents and carers in due course.

The Netball leagues commenced on Thursday evening with the Year 9 Netball team in action against Whitley Bay High School. The girls got off to a flying start and were 12-0 up at the end of the first quarter. The positions were shuffled around and the girls gained experience in positions they are not familiar with. This did not deter them. The match concluded with a 28-1 win to Marden High. On Saturday the 11th of November the same team will be taking part in the Tyne & Wear County National Schools Competition. We wish them luck in this prestigious event.

The Year 7 Netball team started off the season with a series of small friendlies against Marden Bridge and Valley Gardens. The girls were extremely enthusiastic and their efforts and teamwork reflected the scores for all four games played, with 3 wins and a draw. The girls should be very proud of themselves! Hopefully we can maintain this motivation into their next fixture after the October break.

This week our Year 9 girls took part in the Badminton Central Venue League (CVL) at John Spence High School. The girls faced some tough competition from Whitley Bay, Kings and John Spence. They finished the night with wins against all opponents and played some fantastic Badminton, demonstrating excellent individual play and doubles play.

The Year 10 girls also took part in the Badminton CVL this week, playing both singles and doubles against schools across North Tyneside. The girls showed a high level of skill and tactical awareness to outwit their opponents and come away with wins in all of their games. A superb effort by all involved in badminton this week.

The Year 7 Girls football team got their season underway with a 7-a-side competition at John Spence on Wednesday evening. The girls have trained hard since September and the level of dedication is fantastic in this Year group. Sixteen girls travelled to compete in the mini-tournament, which included teams from schools across North Tyneside. The Marden players competed well in every game, conceding only 1 goal in the whole tournament and producing some fantastic football. We are looking forward to seeing these players compete over the course of their time at Marden High School.

The boys Football teams were also in action this week with the Year 11 team taking on John Spence School on Monday afternoon. In an entertaining game, the honours were shared as the result finished 2-2. A shock cup defeat at the hands of Longbenton saw the Year 9 Football team lose their first ever game in North Tyneside. The team will be sure to recover quickly however with a County Cup tie versus Berwick at home next week. The Year 8 team rounded off the week with a visit to Norham High School on Thursday evening. In tough conditions, the Marden Team settled into the game with two quick goals and kept their foot on the

accelerator all the way to the half time whistle, taking a healthy 6-1 lead into the break. In the second half, the weather worsened, but the Marden team managed one more goal to take their tally for the evening to seven. 7-1 the final score and a great performance to take into their remaining two fixtures before the half term break.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Year 9 boys rugby team played in a 10-a-side tournament at Whitley Bay Rockcliff RFC. The Marden team played extremely well and came away with wins against John Spence School and Astley High School. It was a first taste of competitive rugby for some of the Marden team and all players were fantastic in their approach to the games.

The Year 9 Basketball team had another successful evening in the North Tyneside CVL . Playing 5 games they won 4 and drew one and are now firm favourites to get through to the next round at Newcastle Arena.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'M. Snape'.

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher