



Marden High School

Thursday 21st December 2023

Dear All

It has been a long and successful term with many and varied successes. I have much enjoyed talking to the students these past few weeks whilst giving out my weekly Headteacher's Work of the Week Awards, and many speak about taking new opportunities this term, and about having enjoyed the process of learning and developing their skills as they work with their peers and their teachers. You can read some of the great activities that students have been getting involved with in this newsletter. Our assemblies last week celebrated the achievements of the four Houses, Alnwick, Bamburgh, Dunstanburgh and Warkworth, and of the students' attendance. There have been so many students with 100% attendance this term that there has not always been time to announce them all. There have also been several house competitions this term where students have been able to work towards house points and it has been good to see so many of our students learn the value of hard work by working hard. Congratulations to Warkworth for being top of the league at the end of this term. The totals, however, are very close, so it's still all to play for next term.

Students studying for GCSEs need to be strong enough readers to understand their course textbooks and comprehend exam questions. Ensuring that all young people have the literacy skills they need to access their education, is essential to giving them the opportunity to succeed both academically and in wider life. In addition to developing these skills, we recognise that our children's reading must be supported throughout their time at school, not only so they can access the curriculum, but so they can get into the habit of reading for pleasure. The correlation between children who have developed this habit, and their personal economic well-being and achievement later in life is a strong one. It is good therefore to see the number of books being used in the Learning Resource Centre is on the increase. We will continue to have a focus on strengthening our children's literacy, including through regular and frequent activities woven into the fabric of lessons in all subjects, to develop these skills. At home too, children can be supported by being encouraged to develop the daily habit of reading, at times aloud to a parent or carer, and writing letters, reports or stories, and the Christmas period brings great opportunities to enjoy some extended reading time.

The School of Sanctuary Club visited the St Vincent De Paul Centre in Newcastle recently. The students

delivered in excess of 50 gifts which had been kindly donated by the school community. These gifts will be donated to vulnerable families, who might otherwise receive no gifts at this time of year. The club had a thorough tour of the centre and found out all about the work the St Vincent De Paul does with those seeking sanctuary.

Year 10 pupils recently attended an Animal Science conference at Newcastle University. They got a taste of university life, attending lectures on different aspects of animal welfare including; Selective breeding in dogs, Rhino poaching and Pig welfare in pork production. Pupils were a credit to the school, respectfully listening to the presentations and asking relevant questions.

We have had a great response to The Bay Foodbank appeal, and it has been humbling to hear students explain their understanding of inequality and why foodbanks exist. It is our hope that as our young people grow up and become the decision makers of the future, their approach to societal wellbeing will see the need for foodbanks diminish.

As you may be aware, we have a tradition of Year 11 students travelling to Mexico most summer holidays with the M10 Mission. Summer 2024 will see the next cohort of volunteers travelling to Mexico with the M10 charity to work with local people to build and repair houses for people who find themselves in difficult financial and social circumstances. To fund this journey students have to raise money through sponsorship, and in this spirit some of our Year 11 students will be holding a Christmas coffee morning on Friday 22nd December between 10am - 11:30am at St George's church hall in Cullercoats. The students are looking forward to seeing lots of people there.

I hope that everyone has a good break over the Christmas period.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher