



Marden High School

Friday 19th January 2024

Dear All

Every spring we welcome the return of our creative “Home Adventures” project, working with [Hand Of](#), when Year 7 and Year 9 students collaborate on developing music, sounds, imagery and stories of the local area and work towards a presentation in the summer. This time 'Home Adventures' will see students explore the history and culture of the North East together with musician Ceitidh Mac, puppetry artist and filmmaker Saya Naruse and animator Andrew Wilson. Over the course of six months, students will learn about the region they call home, through delving into the heritage and stories of three key locations: Kielder Forest and Water, Hadrian’s Wall and the city of Newcastle. Students will go on an historic and cultural journey together with our artists and educators, taking them from the Big Bang, through to Roman rule, and on to the present day. We look forward to seeing how the students get on.

Our student development programme is continuing this term, with work for Year 9 relating to relationships, both online and in person, from the outside organisation Worth Educating, whilst Year 10 students are working with Act2Cam on developing skills of project management. Meanwhile Wednesday morning mentoring with maths, science and English Curriculum Leaders are progressing well with Year 11 students all focussing on their next steps, following the mocks last term. Our prefects have their third Student Leadership Programme session taking place next week when they will be examining the skills of managing their own emotions when decision making, and our Cabinet are meeting with a representative from Surfers Against Sewage later this term. Our form reps have meetings with their Head of Year before half term and the agenda for these meetings comes from last week’s assemblies that centred around potential. It is recognising the potential in all our students and helping them realise it - in becoming informed, valued and purposeful citizens - that is a key driver in all we do at Marden. When I see every day the dedication that Marden staff show for our children, I am often reminded of the [now famous clip featuring Ian Wright](#) talking about one of his old teachers.

In the news recently you will have seen both behaviour and attendance have become headline worthy with politicians presenting various arguments for how the national concern around school attendance can be resolved. At Marden we are never complacent but work hard every day to provide a happy, safe

environment where students can flourish, meaning both our attendance is above the local and national average and our students present such positive behaviours. It is through this work that we have seen our attendance figures for the autumn term buck the national trend and increase year on year, from 2020 onward. Each term we conduct student voice surveys and student voice panels where we capture the views of students across the school and together with the parental surveys that take place annually we identify key trends and help ensure that our place within the community is that of a home for Hope, Agency and Leadership. Our students' behaviour is often commented upon positively by visitors to the school and it is always with great pride that I show people around the school. The values of kindness and respect are golden threads through all we do, and this week's theme, celebrating Dr Martin Luther King, highlights these very positive characteristics with the quote of the week hopefully reflecting our everyday practice:

Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that.

Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.

Under the excellent leadership of Mrs Thompson we have now submitted our Healthy Schools Award application which reflects the great work that is being undertaken at Marden and follows an evaluation of how health and wellbeing are promoted across our whole school community. It is based around a whole school approach and it has been a great opportunity to identify what is working well and to identify areas to develop. Our evaluation has included a wide variety of essential criteria including our provision for physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and emotional wellbeing, giving children and young people a voice, safeguarding, and staff health and wellbeing. We are confident that our provision in these areas is good, and I look forward to confirming this award with everyone.

Next week some of our Year 9 students will be attending a workshop with Fraser T Smith, who is arguably the biggest current songwriter in the UK at the present time. Fraser is a multiple Grammy award winner, multiple Ivor Novello winner, a MOBO Winner, Mercury Prize nominee, Brits nominee and regularly works with the likes of Adele, Stormzy, Drake, Britney Spears, Sam Smith, James Morrison, Dave, Tinchy Strider, Bastille, and

Ghetts. Fraser will be talking about his career, creativity, and how people can look at a future in the music industry. He will also be taking the time to look at how he makes music, and at some of the people he has collaborated with in recent years. This certainly promises to be an interesting and exciting event, offering a unique view into the world of music production.

The rearranged North Tyneside Cross Country running event took place at Monkseaton High School last week with pupils from Year 7, 8 and 9 representing Marden in the team event. Despite awful conditions

underfoot, the pupils were fantastic, with many top 10 finishers in the Marden ranks. The team event saw the Year 7 Girls team finish in first place overall, with the Year 7 boys team finishing 4th. The Year 8/9 Girls team also did really well, finishing in third place and the Year 8/9 Boys team going one better, coming in second place overall.

Following these superb achievements, many of the Marden runners qualified to represent the North Tyneside team at the Northumberland County event on Tuesday this week at Temple Park in South Shields. Pupils from Years 7 to 11 had to overcome very difficult wintery conditions with snowfall, icy winds and frozen ground throughout. They all performed to their very best and were a credit to the school and themselves. Four pupils managed to finish in the top 16 for their particular races which means that they will go on to represent Northumberland County, having qualified to run in the North of England championships held in Middlesbrough next month. Well done to all involved.

In the first Inter-House competition of the year, the Year 9 Netball has set a high standard. It was a fantastic display of teamwork and positive energy by everyone involved. Bamburgh took the competition win, with Warkworth coming runners up and Alnwick and Dunstanburgh tied for third. The House Captains did a great job of organising and supporting their teams. We look forward to more competitions next week when the Year 7 and 10 Netball competitions take place, as well as the Year 9 and 10 football tournaments.

This spring North Tyneside Council will be making some highway improvements in the local area, with the aim of improving road safety and supporting sustainable travel, including installing a zebra crossing on Hartington Road near the junction with Rothley Gardens. This work will start on January 24 and last around three weeks. There will be barriers installed around all works, to help maintain a safe environment, but I would ask that parents and carers remind their children of the importance of road safety awareness, especially in busy and changed environments such as this. It is also worth noting that the bus stops on Hartington Road, immediately either side of the Rothley Gardens junction, will be suspended during the works.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher