



Marden High School

Friday 1st March 2024

Dear All

This week we welcomed everyone back to school for what promises to be a busy and productive half term. It was good to see that the ski trip over the half term has been a good experience for all, with the group enjoying some fantastic alpine weather and no injuries! Our students have been doing some marvellous work and certainly my Work of the Week conversations with students have been testament to that. We have also had some excellent student voice discussions around how we can continue as a community to challenge the racist and discriminatory attitudes and language that we know sadly blight our society at times. The students involved were realistic, perceptive, incisive and optimistic in these discussions reminding me of the hope, agency and leadership they so often demonstrate.

At Marden High School we do talk a lot about hope, agency and leadership being essential elements in the development of our young people, so we have been very pleased to host the North of Tyne Mayor's Question Time this week. This was an excellent event with Jamie Driscoll answering some very testing questions from students who clearly have great awareness of the world around them. This event, very ably hosted by two of our head prefects, Gracie and Blyth alongside writer and comic Alfie Joey, has given our students, and those around North Tyneside, another great opportunity to engage with those in positions of authority and hopefully to genuinely influence their decision making. As this year of key electoral decisions, regionally, nationally and globally, unfolds, it is vital that the next generation of decision makers sees the importance of democratic debate and that they feel confident in their sense of agency, and in being part of shaping a more equal society for the future.

This week Mrs Robson, Deputy Headteacher, gave a very informative assembly in preparation for National Careers Week next week. As you will be aware, the provision of good information and advice around careers is very important to us here at Marden, and is a key priority in our School Development Plan. Priority number one in fact states that:

We will enhance the personalised programme of information, advice and guidance for each student by emphasising the importance of linking curriculum learning to careers, so pupils have a clear understanding

of how subject knowledge can contribute to a future career.

Central to this is our particular focus during this Spring term when all curriculum areas are emphasising the explicit links between subject content and career opportunities. On Monday next week all students will be receiving a presentation of resources expertly curated by our careers lead Mrs Brennan, and they will be able to access this whenever they need to. This will give students lots of information on various careers and the links with the skills and knowledge they are developing in their various subjects. This presentation will be available on the school website from Monday for parents and carers to access and use with their children. Teachers will also be using opportunities in lessons to link lesson content to careers throughout the week. For example, the Science and Geography departments will be running a career focused, cross curricular project during Year 7 lesson time. The focus will be on 'Water Conservation and Sustainability' and this will be supported by employees at Northumbrian Water who will visit our classrooms to work with students and teachers. We also have our next Career Conversation coming up next Tuesday at lunchtime, this time with a focus on architecture, when one of our parents, an experienced architect himself, will be in school to speak to students. Any students interested in attending this session should sign up using the google form Mrs Brennan has circulated.

Education in schools has long been reliant on technology, and with that always comes a responsibility to ensure that the apps or platforms we use are safe and secure, both in terms of content and also in relation to the data that they can both share and access. This is something that as a school we are very aware of and pay careful attention to. What we have also started to consider is the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) within education, and its potential positive and negative ramifications. To this end we have set up a group within school to consider the various implications of any new AI technologies we may introduce at Marden, looking in particular at the purpose, benefits and data sharing capabilities, and any repercussions there may be for the skills, ethos and culture in our school community. This group is liaising with other professionals within North Tyneside to examine this issue.

The Year 8 girls football team were in action this week, playing a friendly game against Valley Gardens Middle School. Having faced their opponents already this year in the County Cup, the team understood that they needed to be at the very top of their game to get anything from the encounter and started the game at a high tempo. Marden had the majority of the play in the first half, warming the hands of the Valley keeper on several occasions. This pressure finally brought its reward midway through the first half when a powerful free kick found its way through a crowd of players and into the back of the net. The Marden girls kept up the work rate and soon had another goal to their name after a shot was parried by the goalkeeper into the path of the onrushing Marden attack. The second half was more of the same, but the Marden team were unable

to score another goal, so the score remained 2-0. The girls thoroughly deserved their win and are looking forward to their next game.

Thursday saw the Year 10 Netball team in the next round of the North Tyneside schools competition. They faced a well-drilled John Spence team and soon found themselves 5-0 down. However, the Marden team rallied in the middle portion of the game and came back at the hosts, making for a very close game in the final minutes. So close in fact that nothing could separate the two sides on the scoreboard, with the match finishing in an 11-11 draw. A marvellous achievement for the girls, showing grit and determination to fight back after an early setback.

And rounding off the week, the Year 9 Boys Football team faced Jesmond Park Academy on Thursday in the County Cup Quarter Final. Marden were on top for the majority of the first half but fell a goal behind late on when Jesmond produced a decisive counter attack. The second half was more difficult and Marden struggled to break down a strong Jesmond defence. A set piece corner saw Jesmond take the tie 2-0 but it was a very honest and brave display from Marden who will only get stronger.

One of the key messages we give our children is to take opportunities that arise, remembering that "100% of the shots you don't take, don't go in". Our students achieve great things because of the opportunities they have at school. Marden is one of the highest performing schools in the area, but more than that, each day as students and staff we enrich our lives, taking pleasure and enjoyment from the wide variety of creative, academic, technical and sporting opportunities. A vibrant, exciting place to be, there is always something happening at Marden, from first thing before school, right through into the evening. The anticipation of Spring is upon us, and with it the opportunity of ventures new for our young people. With that sentiment in mind, we hope our Year 8 students and staff have a great week at High Borran's next week.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher