



## Marden High School

Friday 15th March 2024

Dear All

Our current three year School Development Plan comes to an end at the close of this academic year, and so we are starting to think about pulling together thinking from members of our school community which will inform our next three year development plan. The central aims of our plan will not change hugely:

1. To see hope and opportunity for everyone, recognising the great range of talents we all have, and to help our young people to a bright future.
2. To enable our young people to express their own personalities, and to understand their value in shaping a more equal society for the future.
3. To enhance still further our innovative, high quality education and excellent examination results.
4. To support our young people in developing their independent learning skills, their confidence and their communication skills.

This does present, however, an opportunity for discussion about *how* we want to achieve these aims and secure successful futures for our young people. To work towards that future, we want to have a shared vision, one which is co-constructed by the whole community, ensuring that everyone is working towards shared goals, with a clear understanding of what success looks like. So as we review our "vision" for the future, we want to spend some quality time reflecting on our values and culture as a school, and of course we want all stakeholders to be involved: students, staff, parents, and governors. With this in mind I would like to invite parents to our next Parent Forum meeting on Tuesday 19th March at 5pm, where we will be able to discuss our values, culture and vision, the outcomes of which will then feed into further governor and staff discussion. If any parent would like to come to this Parent Forum meeting please let Elaine Scott know. I will feed back to everyone the outcomes of all of these discussions later in the year.

Our Career Conversations continued on Thursday this week when students enjoyed a talk from an employee who has worked in Journalism and Public Relations. As you may be aware, this programme involves local business people and professionals visiting school to speak about their unique career experiences. They share insights, career guidance, lessons and tips to motivate and inspire our students to

make informed decisions about their future. Similar to a TED Talk, each visitor speaks for 15 minutes or so, about what inspired them to choose their career path, subjects they studied and how these are relevant now, what they enjoy most about their career, and so on, followed by a lively Q&A session where students are able to ask a variety of questions. We are always looking for new speakers to join this successful programme, so if you are interested or know somebody who might be, please do get in touch with me. There is little preparation needed, and slides or demonstrations are not necessary, as speaking 'from the heart' is often more impactful during these events.

It is good to see excellent attitude and work ethic continuing from Year 11, and that the majority of them already have firm plans for next year, in the form of A levels, vocational learning or apprenticeships. We have always been very supportive of our students during the exam season, part of which is Year 11 lessons continuing during the first few weeks of the GCSE exams, as this allows students to continue to access the expertise of their teachers at a crucial time for them. As the exams progress, there is gradually less need for some of these lessons to continue, and so after Thursday 23 May, there will not be the expectation for all students to attend school as normal. Of course, if any students wish to continue to work in school their teachers will still be here for them. Just before the GCSE exams begin, we will be holding the Year 11 Final assembly during Form Time on Tuesday 7 May, when we will be having a look back at their time here at Marden as well as reiterating important information regarding the exams. And just so that everybody is aware, the final exam of the 2023 season is on Wednesday 19 June, though it is worth noting that the exam boards have reserved Wednesday 26 June as a contingency day which they may use should they experience any difficulties during the exam period.

Next Wednesday, Year 7 parents and carers will receive a DC2 report for their children. There will then be two events for parents to discuss their child's progress. On Thursday 21 March parents and carers are invited to come in to look at their child's books on a drop in basis between 4.30pm and 6.00pm. Miss Laing and members of the Senior Leadership Team will be available to chat to in the Learning Resource Centre. Then on Monday 25 March there will be a remote Parents' Evening where parents can book appointments with subject teachers. These appointments will be live from 4.00pm on Wednesday 20 March.

A team of five Year 7 students went to Cullercoats Primary school this week with Head of Science, Mrs Atkinson, to demonstrate science experiments with Reception and Year 1 classes. As you might imagine, they were outstanding in terms of their interactions with the younger children and in the leadership skills they demonstrated. Well done to all of these students who have really run with this opportunity.

On Tuesday evening, Marden High pupils took part in their final performance for the North Tyneside Dance

Festival at The Whitley Bay Playhouse. This was an amazing opportunity and venue for the pupils to perform at, and the standard of their performance was breathtaking. We now look forward to seeing their performance in next year's festival.

Monday evening saw the Year 8 netball team taking part in the U13 North Tyneside Tournament. They competed against John Spence, St. Thomas More, Norham, Marden Bridge and Kings Priory. The team succeeded in winning four out of their five matches, once again working brilliantly together as a team. Marden High finished runners up on goal difference, with only one goal away from first place.

The final instalment of the U14s Girls Football CVL took place on Wednesday afternoon. The girls started their tournament against a very good John Spence team and came away with a hard fought draw, followed by two victories against Kings Priory and Longbenton. A fantastic effort from the team and a great experience to end the season.

On Thursday the Year 8 Rugby team competed in a Northumberland County 7's tournament. The team played some excellent flowing rugby and worked superbly well as a defensive unit which enabled victory against Kings and a tie against Blyth. A narrow defeat by a well drilled Newcastle Boys School wrapped up a fine afternoon of Rugby. Well done to those involved.

In the past I have discouraged parents and carers from driving on to the school site to drop their children off in the morning. I have appreciated that most people have understood the need for us to minimise traffic on site whilst children and staff are coming into school, so that we can keep everybody as safe as possible. I know that parents had responded appropriately to this request, but recently we have had a number of near misses where parents' cars have come on site without due regard for the safety of other people. I will reiterate here therefore that, unless there is a previously communicated arrangement with me reflecting the medical needs of their child, parents should not drive through the school gates onto the school site. Parents should also not drop their children off in the immediate vicinity of the school gates, as per road markings. The last thing anyone wants is for an accident to happen resulting in injury or worse.

Thank you for your continued support and take care.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher