



Marden High School

Friday 26th April 2024

Dear All

As you are aware, we are always very keen to hear parents' views of their own children's experiences at school. I hope, therefore, that all parents will take a few moments to complete the questionnaire which is linked in this newsletter, as the more responses we have, the clearer the picture is to us of our areas of strength and areas for development. I mentioned recently that we are currently working on our School Development Plan for next year, and the findings from this parent survey will feed into the content of this important working document. The [survey can be found at this link](#) and has been emailed directly to all parents and carers. I look forward also to seeing parents and carers at my next parent forum meeting at 5.30pm on 10th June.

A cohort of Year 10 students continues to be supported by *The Girl's Network* through meetings with their individual mentors and through group sessions. Upcoming sessions for students involved in *The Girl's Network* include a Careers Roundtable session, where students will learn about a variety of different career sectors and vocations, and a session on Personal Branding, designed to help students' define and celebrate what their individual 'brand' is when applying for jobs and further education. If you would like to know about our work with *The Girl's Network*, please get in touch with Ms Laing at the school.

This week our Year 10 students participated in mock interviews. The students have been supported by their form tutors during registration to help them prepare for the event which included advice on how to complete application forms, confident body language and questioning techniques. All the students had a 15 minute one to one interview with an employer from industries and businesses across the North East. The experience proved to be invaluable for many and it was great to see so many happy and confident faces when they left the interview area. We look forward to the students putting their communication skills to good use when they undertake their work experience placements later this term.

This week's [assembly was about respect](#), and gave us all the opportunity to reflect on the need to challenge any misogynistic, prejudicial or discriminatory talk that might be witnessed. This assembly followed a number of student voice conversations about sexism and discrimination that I had with

representatives from different year groups, and it was heartening to hear that generally students feel safe and confident in their daily lives at school. However, we cannot pretend that sexist language is never used here, and so we need to continue to foster the culture of respect and care that we have at Marden so that we can counter the prevalence of sexism and misogyny that sadly we find in wider society and in particular online. As our Peer on Peer Abuse policy says, sexual harassment does not occur in a vacuum, but occurs in a society where there are structures and norms that shape young people's views, experiences and behaviour, as well as responses towards them, and so being proactive in guiding young people in the right direction is an important part of their education.

The most important resource we have in school in providing for our children's education and wellbeing is our staff. As you are aware we have a fantastic staff body, full of skilled individuals who work hard to provide great experiences for our young people. Looking after our staff wellbeing is an important part of ensuring that they can give of their best, and as part of this we have had, for some time, a Valued Workers group, whose job it is to look at ways of enhancing staff wellbeing. One of the outcomes of this group's discussion and consultation with the wider staff has been our staff charter, and I thought I would share this with you here as another reflection of the supportive culture that exists at Marden for staff and students:

We value each other as colleagues by:

- *Recognising and celebrating good practice*
- *Trusting each other as professionals*
- *Having time to work to the best of our abilities*
- *Respecting and supporting each other*
- *Understanding each other*
- *Listening to each other and valuing each other's opinions*
- *Engaging in consultation on changes happening in school*
- *Showing empathy towards each other*
- *Appreciating each other's efforts*

As we get closer to the Summer exams I would like to wish our Year 11 students all the best. They continue to prepare with a positive attitude and hard work. Year 11 were involved in an assembly at the start of the week where Mrs Robson explained what would happen in the coming weeks. On the day of an exam students are welcome to come into school and revise in the cafe from 8.00am, and if they have an exam in the morning they can have a free bacon, sausage sandwich or cheese bagel. Free porridge is also available every day for all students. Parents and carers of Year 11 students have today been emailed more detailed information about the exams. It is always nice to wish people good luck for a forthcoming event,

but I would like all our students to remember the words of the great golfer Gary Player: "The more I practise the luckier I get."

Last Friday afternoon, the Year 7 girls football team took part in the Tyne & Wear Girls Football Finals, held at Cochrane Park. They played three schools, St. Joseph's (2-0 loss), Lord Lawson (0-0 draw) and Kenton (1-0 win), all providing tough competition. This was enough to finish joint second in their group, but unfortunately they were unsuccessful in gaining a spot in the semi-finals. However, their efforts and attitude throughout the afternoon were a credit to the school. They should be very proud of their efforts, especially their motivational team talks from their captain, and others, in between matches.

As I suggested in last week's newsletter, the queues in the Cafe would shorten as students and staff became more familiar with the new tills system, and indeed, that is what has happened. Service at break and lunch has been very smooth this week and we have all continued to enjoy the excellent food. It is still worth parents and carers encouraging their children to remember their fobs as students who have forgotten them cause delays at the tills. A student who has forgotten their fob will not be able to buy any food during morning break, but can receive a meal of the day *in the cafe* at lunchtime. If a student loses their fob, catering staff in the cafe will replace it for a 70p charge, which comes out of their account at the time of replacement.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher