



Marden High School

Friday 24th May 2024

Dear All

We are now two and a half weeks into the GCSE exams and our students have demonstrated the mature and focused approach we were confident they would. They are doing really well, and I hope that they all have a good rest over the half term break in readiness for the remainder of the exams.

In the weeks after half term, our themes include Pride Month, School of Sanctuary and our trilogy of values; Hope, Agency and Leadership. These core themes are part of being a global citizen, developing a moral compass that informs our actions and interactions. Key to this is empathy which was discussed in last week's Boys Network session. The group considered empathy, with their mentors and discussed how and when we show empathy, the power of empathy and applied it to both real life scenarios they encounter now, as well as hypothetical situations they may encounter in future careers. The next Boys Network session is on social skills; which are vital to any area of work. Continuing to develop careers information, advice and guidance is one of our whole school priorities, and the Boys' and Girls' Networks remain two key programmes which support this priority. With any piece of work and experience undertaken by our students, the uploading of evidence on to GlobalBridge will provide the record of achievement students can use to reflect on their experiences and to prepare for the next stage of their education and employment. Our next GlobalBridge upload week takes place at the end of June therefore I look forward to seeing students collating their evidence in the coming weeks.

The second half of the summer term is when we tend to finalise arrangements for next academic year, and in that spirit I thought I would share with everyone the list of residential visits which will be taking place:

High Borrans Year 8 - November 2024

Ski trip Year 11 - February 2025

High Borrans Year 7 - March 2025

Arran Year 8 - July 2025

France Year 9 - July 2025

Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions - dates to be confirmed during the year

It is likely that we will have more interest for each of these trips than there are places, and so we will pick names "from a hat" to establish the children who will be going. We want to be able to offer as many students the possibility of attending a residential visit during their time at Marden, so when we are selecting for these and future visits, we will be taking into account who has already attended a residential trip, so that we can give as many children as possible the opportunity to go on one. This, we feel, is the fairest method of selection. We will be reminding parents and carers of this protocol each time we send out letters regarding residential visits.

This week we hosted the Year 11 Art and Photography exhibition in the Sports Hall. This is now an annual event and coincides with the exam board moderator coming into school to view and assess the students' work. As ever, they were suitably impressed, and there were comments about the quality of the work being of A level standard. We are very proud of our students' achievements and enjoyed celebrating their hard work with family and friends. For those who could not be there at this event, an online exhibition of Year 11 work will be posted on our school website and Instagram page.

We have now had our new caterers, Dolce, in school for half a term, and so far the general feeling is that both the service and the food is very good. We have of course been monitoring both of these things carefully over the last six weeks and most recently we held a student focus group meeting where students were able to provide senior staff from Dolce with some direct feedback. As you might imagine our children were forthright in their views, acting as excellent advocates for the wider student body. They were very positive on the whole about the new service, citing shorter queues, more choice, and better quality food as the three main benefits. The students were also able to make suggestions for improving service still further, including having more variety at breaktime, having more vegetarian options, and increasing some of the portion sizes. These are all recommendations that Dolce have now said they will be acting on in the near future.

At Marden High School we support students with a wide range of medical conditions. We would like to remind parents that students should not be carrying any medication in school unless by prior agreement for those with asthma, diabetes and allergies. Where medication is absolutely necessary for other conditions e.g. antibiotics, pain relief, we have trained staff who will make arrangements for safe storage and administration of medication. Parents are responsible for bringing medicines into school and we require written consent (form available from Reception). All medicines should be in their original packaging and clearly labelled. Any queries please contact Mrs Sonia Thompson, Medications Officer.

Good luck to all students taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award walk over the half term. They have been working hard with their preparations including First Aid training, and developing their new skills and voluntary work. The Award is open to Year 9 students each year, and is something our younger students look forward to getting involved in.

As you can imagine, the weather has not been kind to the start of the athletics season this week, which has led to cancellations of fixtures. Here's hoping for better weather next half term and more reporting on Marden sports achievements.

It is always good to meet parents face to face to discuss how we are developing as a learning community, and so I would like to remind you that our next Parents' Forum is on 10th June at 5.30pm. This is a good opportunity for parents to come into school to talk generally about developments in the school. Past topics have included things such as homework which have then been incorporated into our School Development Plan. If you would like to come along, please contact Mrs E. Scott at school.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'M. Snape'.

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher