



## Marden High School

Friday 20th September 2024

Dear All

On Wednesday evening students and staff enjoyed welcoming the community for our Open Evening. Over a thousand parents, carers and children attended to look around the school taking part in a French cafe, science experiments and RE challenges to name but a few of the exciting activities taking place. Students from the music department entertained visitors by busking around the corridors. Myself and Mrs Robson talked in the auditorium about who we are as a school and what children could expect if they come to Marden. We were joined by Leo and Leah, our head prefects, who talked articulately and passionately about their time at Marden. This was their first time speaking publicly in their new roles and they really were exceptional. The resounding feedback from our visitors was how well our students communicated with them and how friendly and welcoming the school felt. We look forward to welcoming parents, carers and prospective students in to tour our school as part of our open mornings.

One of the key themes we speak about at Open Evening, on Open Mornings and at other events where we are introducing people to our school community, is what our values are, and what is important to us. Whilst I believe our values can be best seen being enacted every day in lessons, during extra-curricular activities, and through all the conversations and interactions we have with one another, we actually do have a written summary of who we are in our Values Statement, parts of which I like to remind people of from time to time. Here is the first part of it:

*This is a vibrant, exciting place to be where people thrive. We are a strong community, each individual full of hope, looking forward to many possibilities.*

*We are recognised for our innovative, high quality education and excellent examination results.*

*We believe in our young people and inspire them to achieve more than they ever thought possible, both in and outside the classroom.*

*Within the Marden family, we know each other well and are kind to one another.*

*We see hope and opportunity for everyone, recognising the great range of talents we all have, and we leave no stone unturned in helping our young people to a bright future.*

*At Marden we are able to express our own personalities, confident that we will be supported in the achievement of our goals and dreams.*

I have seen so many people doing these things this week, as I do each and every week, perhaps evidence that I have one of the best jobs in the world. The full statement can be found on the school website under the 'about Marden' tab.

The theme of this week in assemblies has been 'agency' and Mr Anderson has delivered informative and interesting talks each morning on our annual democratic process of appointing students as Form Reps and members of the Student Voice Cabinet. Mr Anderson spoke about the important role young people can play in making a difference to their own life and others lives, and the students were inspired by their newly appointed Head Prefects who spoke in the assemblies, and given the chance to apply for roles that will be vital in the promotion of student voice. We are an inclusive school and we ensure that these opportunities are open to everyone, so it is with great delight that I have been reading the first of the applications from a wide range of students wanting to be on the cabinet. The Form Reps are beginning to be nominated and the enthusiasm for this position is heartening to see. I look forward to more students stepping up into positions of leadership within our community, taking part in this year's Student Development Programme, and becoming great role models as agents of change.

Recently, Kielder Observatory came to our school with their inflatable planetarium. Year 7 and 8 students enjoyed visiting the planetarium learning about the stars in the night sky. This event was to kick off our partnership with Kielder Observatory in a STEM to Stars project. The project includes some exciting space activities where students will be planning a trip to Mars in STEM club in November, and an evening of star gazing in November, more details to come.

As you will be aware, this year's House competition started at the end of last term so points have well and truly started to build. The house points are now live on the school homepage, and at the time of writing Alnwick have a narrow lead. However, it is very close, so all to play for. There are lots of House competitions coming up this term, both in and out of the classroom, and I would encourage all students to get involved in some way, and earn House points for both themselves and their House.

On the theme of taking opportunities, I am looking forward to lots of our students taking up extra-curricular activities and developing their talents through the year. Every day in school I see a great range of talents and skills in our students which they have developed by engaging deeply in their learning or by getting involved in the many extra-curricular activities we have at Marden, and I am reminded of the words of the great ice hockey player Wayne Gretzky "100% of the shots you don't take, don't go in". A host of extra curricular clubs begin this term, which parents can book children on through the School Gateway. A range of activities are on offer and all students are welcome to come to our staffed homework club in the LRC which is on every afternoon until 4.15pm.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher