



Marden High School

Friday 21st November 2025

Respect

On Tuesday year 9 students were involved in a drop down day with the theme of respect. They were involved in various workshops throughout the day which all allowed them to explore how to respect themselves, and those around them. The day began with a whole year group talk from an ambassador from Mpath, an organisation promoting healthy masculinity and the importance of positive male role models. The rest of the day saw students partaking in smaller workshops from local organisations, Show Racism the Red card, and Northumbria Police. These workshops ranged from malicious communications, protecting yourself online, consent, and challenging prejudice and discrimination. At Marden we want our students to be able to successfully navigate life both within and outside of school, and enhancing the curriculum to develop the skills required to do so, is part of the wider work we put in to help our young people have the agency to do just that. Feedback from both students and staff was very positive and the facilitators for the day made comment on how well rounded, confident and polite our students are.

Lockdown

School lockdown procedures are increasingly being implemented in educational facilities across the UK. While the risk of attacks on schools is extremely rare, it is essential to have these procedures in place to protect children and staff from harm. Just as with a fire alarm, lockdown drills should be regularly carried out to ensure that all staff and students know how to respond during an emergency, and the Department for Education guidance recommends that schools carry out a lockdown practice at least once annually. We will be running a lockdown drill on Tuesday 25th November at 10.45am, during which we will hear the lockdown message sound over the public address system, followed by staff and students responding appropriately to this message. In most cases this will be a matter of students remaining in the classroom with the staff in charge, who will secure the door and instruct students to remain calm and quiet, following the protocol outlined in our lockdown procedure. The drill is likely to last around 15 minutes. I spoke to everyone in assembly this week about the importance of us all keeping each other safe, and this lockdown drill will be a really useful opportunity to practise doing that. We will, of course, evaluate how it goes and whether there are any tweaks we may need to make for future drills.

British Sign Language

Mrs Morley has been working with staff to raise awareness of hearing impairment. Recently, Mrs Morley and three students delivered a professional development session aimed at supporting staff working with students with hearing impairment. Over the course of the year Mrs Mannion and Mrs Morley have also seen an increasing number of children join the British Sign Language (BSL) Club that runs twice a week. The group has been learning how to finger spell in BSL, how to sign, emotions, colours, animals, family and food. These students have made great progress with BSL and some are completing 'An Introduction to British Sign Language' qualification.

Lost property

We have a large amount of lost property at the moment, including some expensive items such as football boots and winter jackets. Lost property will be put out every Thursday and Friday evening during homework club this half term for students to check before heading home. Alternatively, students can continue to ask at the office at break and lunchtimes if any items have been handed in. Anything not claimed by the end of the half term will be donated to charity.

Literacy

Each week our students and staff are enjoying using our Oracy Toolkit in lessons. The Toolkit contains a wide variety of oracy strategies expertly curated by Literacy Lead Ms Taylor, such as Talk Tactics (now displayed in classrooms), the 60-second strategies, or discussion groupings, and staff are feeding back that these are giving lots of children additional opportunities to develop those all important skills of effective communication. In addition to this practice, each Friday we also have Reading for Pleasure when students have the opportunity to complete some Independent Reading and then engage in some reflective discussion using the book chat questions. I would like to also remind students to visit the library and check out the Literacy Cloud where there are always plenty of excellent reading recommendations.

The Listening Walk

This week, members of our student cabinet met with David Matthews MBE to talk about The Listening Walk. David is walking to all the Samaritan branches in the UK and Ireland - for the second time! This is a total of 12,000 miles. David warmly welcomed questions about his journey, his book, his reasons for the challenge and even how many pairs of shoes he would need. It truly was a fascinating experience and students learnt lots about the role of the Samaritans and human kindness. Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/over6000miles/> if you would like to donate to Samaritans, make a donation towards David's cost, or find out how you can volunteer for Samaritans. We wish David the very best of luck with his journey ahead.

Eva Rothery, one of our year 9 students, is exhibiting three pieces of her exceptional drawing work along with 30 other artists at The Grove in Newcastle this weekend. She has created a study of work linked to the theme 'Momento Mori'. For those interested in attending the exhibition it starts at 12pm on Saturday until late.

Sports

In spite of the bad weather, we still managed one sports fixture this week. The Year 7 Netball Teams were at Marden Bridge Middle School on Monday evening, showcasing exceptional skill and determination throughout all four of their short matches. Their teamwork was great, with every player contributing to the success of the team. The girls' spirit and support for one another were evident as they maintained high energy and focus. As a result, Marden High did not concede any goals throughout any of their games. Well done to all players.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher