



Friday 20th March 2026

House competition

What a difference a week makes! Last week, Dunstanburgh stormed into the lead for the first time this year... but this week the leaderboard has shifted again! After a fantastic week of effort and enthusiasm, Warkworth have edged ahead of Alnwick in a tightly fought battle. Here are the latest scores: Alnwick 402537, Bamburgh 402139, Dunstanburgh 410104, Warkworth 403524. Just a few thousand points separate second and fourth place so every single point matters. Mr Richards has been reminding students to keep entering competitions, keep earning those house points, and to keep supporting your House. The competition this year is unbelievably close and with all four Houses still in contention, it really could go anyone's way!

Marden's Got Talent

On Thursday this week we hosted our annual talent show, Marden's Got Talent, for the eleventh year. As always, the show's celebratory atmosphere and the collaborative effort from students and staff involved was an excellent example of the supportive and positive spirit that is commonplace here at Marden. At the same time, competing students were also earning thousands of house points for their school houses, showcasing a range of talent including singing, dancing and piano skills. The funds raised from ticket sales will be donated to the Northumberland Mountain Rescue Team, as voted for by our School Cabinet. I would like to extend a huge thanks to all the staff who helped with the preparation for this remarkable event and on the night.

Exam preparation

Year 11 students now have four and a half weeks of school time before the exam season proper begins. I have said previously in this newsletter that it has been good to see therefore this year group working hard in preparation for these exams. This is also a significant point in time for Year 10 students. They will soon be doing their Year 10 exams, and they should be very aware that Year 11 are about to start their final GCSE exams. They will therefore also realise that they have five and a half weeks and one year (including holidays) before their final GCSE exams start. I know that this has been a moment of realisation for some Year 10 students that things are starting to get serious for them. It is not overstating the case to say that GCSE exams really are key for our young people's futures and depending on the results, they can make or break their plans and ambitions. Each student needs to have a realistic sense of how well they are working, how much effort they are putting in, what sort of progress they are making, and, critically, what they need to do to take the next steps in improving their work and learning. Now is a good time for them to think very honestly about whether the perception they have of themselves is accurate. Useful questions they may ask

themselves are:

- What do I want to do when I leave Marden?
- What sort of qualifications will I need to do that?
- What level of effort will I need to put in to get them?
- What learning and revision skills will I need to achieve what I want?

The answers to these questions will vary for each young person, but this is an essential first step to getting serious about achieving potential. I think these questions also provide a useful framework for parents and carers to use in conversations with their children, as support for the students will obviously come from both home and school. Now is a great time for Year 10 students to reflect on these questions, and it is worth them, and the rest of us too, remembering the words of Oprah Winfrey “The smallest change in perspective can change a life. What tiny attitude adjustment might turn your world around?”

School attendance

Around the school we have communication for students relating to attendance and these messages are reiterated in our information sent home at each data capture. Every minute counts; so arrival at school and lessons on time will help ensure that learning is maximised so that the best chance is had by all when it comes to exams. Every day counts; with a high attendance of 95% still meaning that the equivalent to two weeks of lessons having been missed. Our high quality teaching in every lesson, our support for all students around school and our commitment to working with all families to help maintain relationships and therefore a sense of belonging have meant that last academic year our attendance of 94% was one of the highest in the North East. This year, our attendance up to February half term of 93.2% means that we are 5th out of all secondary and middle schools in the Local Authority and in the top 30-40% of schools in the country. The following website is filled with useful ways to support attendance at both home and school: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/01/improving-school-attendance/>. Together we will continue to strive for the highest attendance and the success for students that this will bring.

Judo success

Year 11 student Matthew Lane travelled to the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield to compete on behalf of Marden High School at the British Schools Judo Championships recently. We are thrilled to announce that Matthew won gold in the Year 10/11 under 50kg category. Competitors from schools all over the UK attended this event and clearly Matthew has done us all proud in representing Marden High School in such amazing style.

Sports report

As the football season draws to a close, several Marden teams are still in the latter rounds of the Northumberland and North Tyneside cups. The Year 8 boys team played their quarter final game of the North Tyneside cup away to St Thomas More on Monday afternoon. The boys are the holders of the Year 7 cup and were looking to continue their success in this year's tournament.

The game was a close fought affair, with both teams defending well in the opening half, Marden having the better of the chances, hitting the crossbar and forcing some smart saves from the home keeper. After the break, Marden pressed hard for the opener and were rewarded 10 minutes into the second half with a superb individual goal from their captain. This eased the tension on the visitors and the Marden team began to play some attractive football. This led to a second goal shortly after when a Marden free kick was turned into the net by a St Thomas More defender. With time running out and the result assured, Marden added a third 2 minutes from time to make the scoreline 3-0 and progress through to the semi finals where they will face Valley Gardens. We wish them the very best of luck in this game.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher