



Marden High School

Friday, 1 March 2019

Dear All

This week we welcomed everyone back to school for what promises to be a busy and productive half term. It was good to see that the ski trip over the half term has been a good experience for all, with the group enjoying some fantastic alpine weather and no injuries!

On Monday and Tuesday of this week, Year 8 form classes were given the opportunity to partake in the 'Free to Be' programme, led by the Anne Frank Trust. The workshops were designed to develop students' critical thinking skills and promote a culture of tolerance and empathy, here in Marden and beyond. Students learned about Anne Frank and her legacy, and deepened their understanding of the prejudicial attitudes that led to the Holocaust. Students were able to make thoughtful and interesting links between this historical era and modern Britain and considered how they could safely challenge prejudice and discrimination in today's society. Following on from this, next week eight Year 8 students, who have been chosen as Anne Frank Ambassadors, will partake in a 2 day film-making workshop. This will be an opportunity for them to showcase the positive messages that they have taken from the 'Free to Be' programme in a unique, creative and inspiring way. Staff were ably assisted by a number of Year 10 students who demonstrated proactive, supportive and mature attitudes, and provided excellent student leadership to the younger students.

This week we have also had our KS4 Careers Fair, with a varied selection of education and training providers including sixth forms and colleges, universities, apprenticeship providers, and employers. Many of the students were signing up to take part in the National Citizen Service during the summer, and it was good to see that Queen Alexandra College had ex-Marden students as their representatives, who were obviously very excited to come back to visit their old school. Students who have shown an interest in apprenticeships will be involved in a follow up session with the Connexions advisors this month.

As Spring approaches, I find myself reflecting on a building sense of excitement as final preparations are put in place for this year's school musical production, The Addam's Family. The performing arts, sports and academic extras that happen at Marden are many and varied, all developing valuable skills and interests in our young people, and it is the school production which exemplifies the breadth of attributes which make Marden students so special. Each day I witness our students' discipline and work ethic in classrooms, and this is mirrored in the learning of lines, choreographing of routines, and orchestra practice that I have enjoyed in these last few weeks. It is the enthusiasm and commitment of our dedicated staff in "going the extra mile" which inspires our young people to increasingly take on leadership roles - this year we have added student directors and a student technical crew to the leadership committee.

One of the key messages we give our children is to take opportunities that arise, remembering that “100% of the shots you don’t take, don’t go in”, and so it has been good to see this year so many students wanting to be involved in the show, enough for two full casts. Our students achieve great things because of the opportunities they have at school. Marden is one of the highest performing schools in the area, but more than that, each day as students and staff we enrich our lives, taking pleasure and enjoyment from the wide variety of creative, academic, technical and sporting opportunities. A vibrant, exciting place to be, there is always something happening at Marden, from first thing before school, right through into the evening. The anticipation of Spring is upon us, and with it the opportunity of ventures new for our young people.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Snape', written in a cursive style.

Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher