



## Marden High School

Friday, 8 March 2019

Dear All

At Marden we are fortunate to have great staff. In our school vision it states that “Our teachers are highly qualified specialists who are committed to their continuing professional development. They put the students first and fully subscribe to the values and ethos of our school.” This is something that I see every day in my interactions with them and as I visit classrooms. Throughout the year, each teacher in the school has been looking at an aspect of their own teaching, and using action research to improve it further, and so provide enhanced outcomes for their students. This week we have also provided training for teachers from other North Tyneside schools as part of an Aspiring Senior Leaders program, where we have been able to pass on some of our expertise. This sort of collaboration is always good for our school community as it means there is a continual focus on what works best for our children’s learning.

The development of our children’s learning is of course one of our prime concerns. We are keen for our pupils to engage in learning how to learn rather than just learning what to learn, and this shift from just content to application of knowledge is increasingly reflected in the requirements of the new GCSE exams. By improving our pupils’ ability to study independently, to manage themselves, to persist in the face of difficulty, to understand their responsibilities, to try to make sense of what they are learning and to be able to stand back from their learning and reflect upon what it all means, we aim to develop independent learners and thinkers. One of the key means to developing this independence is through homework, and it has been good to see that parent feedback on homework has shown higher levels of satisfaction through recent surveys. We have clear expectations about the setting of homework and the completion of homework, however, I am aware that the picture can be variable, and ensuring consistency across subjects and year groups is something that we are currently working on, so that students are able to build good routines and habits as they progress through school.

We are pleased to be able to give a brief update on the fantastic work that the Anne Frank Trust ambassadors have been doing. They have spent two days this week working with a professional film-maker, creating a film about anti-discrimination, with a particular focus on sports and gender. The film has now been taken away to be edited and representatives from the Trust will return to school next week to work with the students on turning their work into a Personal Development lesson and assembly that they will be delivering in future weeks.

This week we have had the privilege of watching two amazing performances of The Addam’s Family. First performed by a year 7 and 8 cast, and then by a year 9 cast, this production

was actually a very technically sophisticated one, involving the coordination of a large number of teams including choreography, orchestra, and lights and sound, not to mention the actors themselves. As the children develop and experience more performing arts within the school it never ceases to amaze me how much talent comes to the fore, and of course it is the dedication and efforts of our wonderful staff that supports the children in achieving such consummate performances. Well done and thank you to all involved.

This week we celebrated World Book Day across the school with activities for all year groups including our 'Big Booky Breakfast' and annual lunchtime quiz. Year 7 were treated to an autobiography writing Super Learning Day with the English Department and were invited to dress as a literary character for the day. These activities raised a total of £139.64 for Book Aid, and photographs of the events can be found on our school website. A great time was had, and will be had, as we remember the words of Garrison Keillor, "A book is a gift you can open again and again."

An important part of the education our children receive at Marden is in developing those good habits that will support them in their adult working lives. To this end we remind them of the importance of good punctuality and how this relates to their future and to their success in school. For this reason a student who is late to school without a reasonable explanation receives a lunchtime detention. We appreciate parents' support in ensuring the children are punctual to school.

I would like to remind you that the programme for our Easter school will soon be published in the revision section of our website, and I would encourage Year 11 students to make the most of these opportunities as this Easter holiday time is a great way to consolidate their learning and achieve a considerable amount of revision. We look forward to working with them all, and making the most of the time we have.

Thank you for your continued support.



Mr M. Snape  
Head Teacher