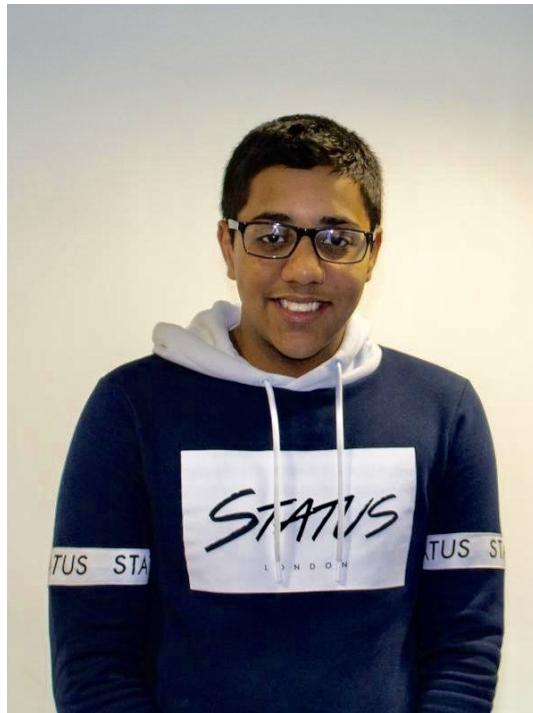




# The QM Observer

## MEET YOUR MYP...

In February 2019, Kamran Khan campaigned as one of the 7 candidates for the UK Youth Parliament Elections. He visited local secondary schools across Walsall and filmed an election video outlining what he would bring to the position of local MYP. 5,861 votes from across Walsall were collected during the voting period and, to his delight, it was announced that he had received the highest number of votes and had been elected as a Member of Youth Parliament for Walsall. His role will be to represent young people and work within Walsall to tackle issues such as knife crime, poor mental health and homelessness. As a newly-elected MYP, Kamran is excited to start setting up projects to address key



issues and getting young people involved. "I genuinely believe that we can achieve real change in Walsall during my term as a MYP".

## HSBC BRITISH COUNCIL NATIONAL MANDARIN SPEAKING COMPETITION WINNERS

After losing out in three National Finals in the past four years, our Year 9 team of 6 Mandarin Excellence Programme Students hoped to go one better in this year's group competition. The team were tasked with creatively using their knowledge of the Mandarin language and Chinese culture to present an original script to a panel of judges. An initial strong performance in the Regional round saw the team progress to the National Finals at the British Museum in London. They delivered their performance with aplomb, much to the delight of the judges. The team proved too strong for their National rivals and well-deservedly were crowned 2019 National Winners. As a result of their win, the group will enjoy a week-long cultural immersion programme in Beijing over



the Easter Break. The school also had success in the individual competition with Thomas Sharma finishing as runner-up in the National Final.

## Mental Health Week 2019



In the week commencing February 4th, QMGS held a Mental Health week. This included a whole host of activities: from tea tasting to yoga classes, all striving to bear a positive influence on the mindset surrounding the mental health and well-being of the school community.

Furthermore, we were privileged to welcome many guests to support the week. This included the Mayor of Walsall, Marco Longhi, who promoted his charity WPH by hosting a samosa sale.

Fiona Thomas, the author of Depression in a Digital age, provided an insight into her book which detailed her personal struggles with depression through an impactful Q&A session.

We also had 6<sup>th</sup> form pupils delivering talks to the younger years on why we should talk about our mental health, which were then emphasised by drama sessions run by the charity Time to Change.

A debate on the impact of Social Media was chaired by the Headmaster and provided the 75 plus pupils in attendance with a gripping hour of back and forth action as the two teams of 6<sup>th</sup> form students battled to make their opposition understand the significance of their motion.

On behalf of the school, all students involved throughout the week would like to thank Mrs McPhee for her tireless work in organising the events of this successful and awareness inducing week.



## TRIPS AND VISITS



## FLORIDA 2019

On the 14th February, 30 students and 4 members of staff from QMGS and QMHS left Manchester Airport to fly to Orlando, Florida. During the trip, the group enjoyed some time at Universal's Islands of Adventure and shopped at Florida's premium outlets. The trip also involved a guided tour around Kennedy Space Centre exploring the past, present and future of space exploration at NASA's operational launch pad. The group also visited Disney's Magic Kingdom, explored Orlando's Universal Studios and experienced indoor skydiving. Alligators and turtles were spotted during a tour of Florida's Everglades, whilst gliding on the Boggy Creek's airboats.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

### SAMOSA SALE

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, the QM samosa sale took place in school as part of Mental Health Week which was organised by Mrs McPhee.

The sale was in aid of WPH Counselling, a mental health charity that provides free, confidential and professional counselling across many Walsall venues.

The charity is supported by the Mayor of Walsall, Marco Longhi. Mr Longhi kindly took time out of his busy schedule to serve students, alongside staff and sixth-formers, at the event.

The sale was a great success with hundreds of samosas and spring rolls selling out within minutes. The event raised £218.90 in total.

This fundraising initiative was only possible with the support of Mrs Mehta, Mr Collins and Mrs McPhee as well as a team of sixth form volunteers.

### BREAK BREAD BREAK BARRIERS



At Queen Mary's, a key fundamental of school life is upholding community spirit. On 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March, Alek Reimus, Yuvraj Bansal and Devraj Jheet ran a social integration breakfast event to celebrate diversity and promote the education of world cultures. This was sponsored by the Youth United Foundation, a charity striving to progress social integration, enabling them to become Youth Integration Champions on representatives of the Walsall region. The event was dubbed "Break Bread, Break Barriers" and subsequently followed a food theme, a delectable medium through which to explore the different countries across the globe. However, what they hoped to achieve was not just integration, it was education and motivation. Nearly 400 students attended over the two days and certainly served to demonstrate not only the mass support of our message but also the firm bond shared throughout the school regardless of difference. Special visitors such as the Mayor of Walsall served to emphasise the impact that we are striving to have in the broader Walsall Community. Ultimately QMGS possesses, as so eloquently put by Mark Brindley of the James Brindley Foundation, "great ethos, which is evident from when you first walk in the door" and ergo in the future this is something we as Youth Integration Champions shall strive to mirror in the Walsall community to promise a safe and united future for all.

## JASPER SKI TRIP



Students from Queen Mary's Grammar School and Queen Mary's High School embarked on a week-long ski trip to Jasper, in Alberta, Canada. Upon arrival, the group were driven by coach to the Marmot Basin Ski Resort for the first day of skiing.

Throughout the week, all students showed great improvement in their skiing with every group making it up to the top of the mountain by the end of the week. Highlights of the week included an ice canyon walk, an ice hockey game and gift shopping in Jasper town. After a solid 6 days of activities, it was clear to see that the students had enjoyed themselves. Special thanks to all staff for making it such a great trip!

## HOUSE OF LORDS INTERVIEW

Alek Reimus travelled down to Westminster, surrounded by the Brexit maelstrom, to conduct a formal interview in the House of Lords with Lord Jitesh Gadhia in his capacity as a Youth Integration Champion.

He gained an insight into how governments over the last 50 years have dealt with the issue of racial integration and to what extent it remains an issue. His questions discussed the issues of social integration in Britain and drew on conclusions from Dame Louise Casey's review and the government's Race Review Audit.

Lord Gadhia has worked very closely with other Parliamentarians, the government, charities and commercial institutions in order to find ways to ascertain common ground between various social groups and promote greater social integration.

His most successful and recent work in this area has been to introduce Khadi poppies (of the type that Gandhi wore) to commemorate the contribution of British Indian soldiers in both world wars.

Lord Gadhia was himself optimistic about the prospects of race relations in Britain but added that more work was needed.



## CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

### BAR MOCK TRIAL

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 16 students took part in the National Bar Mock Trial Regional Heat in Birmingham. This competition aims to give young people an insight into the workings of the legal system. Throughout the first round, the team conducted 3 trials, prosecuting and defending cases concerning acid attacks and money laundering.

After winning all three trials with strong performances from all involved, the team were shortlisted to take part in the final round that would decide who would qualify for the National Final. The final trial was judged by David Swinnerton, Deputy Head of Chambers at Cornwall Street and an old boy of QM. After a closely contested final, the team narrowly lost to a strong KES Stratford Team. This is the first year that a QM Team has reached the final round of a Regional Heat. Many thanks to Mr Bryars and team barrister mentor, Mr Tabari, for the priceless hours of preparation they gave to everyone involved!



### CHESS

To say the year was hard for QM in chess would be an understatement. Despite these hardships, themes of commitment and teamwork prevailed throughout the season. After many hours of lunchtime training to refine skills, the teams have been inspired to victories.

In particular the A-Team have benefitted immensely from the training which has resulted in wins against tough opponents. As the chess season draws to an end; the entire team would like to thank Mrs Anderton for her continued hard work. Next year promises great success!



teaching and leading cadets in a tactical environment. On behalf of all CCF cadets involved in the day's training, the contingent extends its thanks to the cadet NCOs and CFAVs who put countless hours into planning the training delivered. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved.

## SPRING FIELD DAY

22<sup>nd</sup> March saw QMGS CCF travel to Swynerton training area for its Spring term Field Day. This training was the culmination of the theory learned on Friday parades, with the day's highlights including ambushes, obstacle courses, and a weapons demonstration from the Mercian Regiment. Year 9 cadets from both sections continued their basic training whilst Year 10 cadets in the Army section were gifted the opportunity to take part in a large blank firing ambush. For Year 11 cadets, this day was devoted to developing themselves into the future senior cadets of the CCF. They practiced

### TACTICS WEEKEND

Tactics weekend was not a typical CCF weekend, to say the least! Cadets ventured into an array of activities including night patrols. Cadets planned routes and gathered intel from the enemy with a particular highlight being the commendable Russian accent of Mr Magee. On the Saturday, cadets participated in defence and attack scenarios in preparation for the final attack on Sunday. The weekend was action packed and the platoon of cadets were ultimately successful in their mission to destroy the enemy; each part of the weekend was a great and memorable experience.

### MATHS FEAST

On Thursday 14th February, eight students took part in the Maths Feast competition at The University of Wolverhampton, Walsall Campus. They competed against other schools from the area working cohesively as a team to answer a variety of challenging Mathematics problems. Fitting the theme of "Maths Feast", one of the tasks was a "Dessert Round", where students solved complex problems and estimated their values in a list of solutions. Both QM teams topped the competition with 10D and 10G finishing first and second respectively.

The experience was enjoyable and all students involved would like to thank Miss Fahmida and the AMSP for the opportunity to represent the school.

## CHINESE NEW YEAR MEP DAY

To celebrate Chinese New Year, Year 7 MEP Students from QMGS, QMHS and BVGS enjoyed a day of cultural activities hosted by the QMGS Mandarin Department. Students were able to take part in a range of activities from singing Chinese songs and paper cutting to tasting traditional Chinese New Year delicacies.

Students were also able to learn and perform their own Chinese New Year Lion Dance. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved and the school extends its thanks to all students and teachers who were involved with the setting up and smooth running of the day.



## SYNTHESIS CLUB AND CHEMISTRY COMPETITIONS

Chemical synthesis and chess have much in common: the rules are straightforward but it is in their execution that the real skill lies. The aim of synthesis club is to teach the rules and practice application. It is an opportunity to experience first-hand the practical techniques involved, the terminology used by chemists, and how to make an array of compounds. The first series of compounds investigated were azo dyes. This project is now being incorporated into Krish Shah's Arkwright Scholarship, using the dyes to colour polyester casts. Inorganic liquids are also being looked into as part of a collaboration with the Institute for Research in Schools. These unique liquids offer an alternative to environmentally unfriendly volatile organic compounds.



QM pupils have had great success in various external competitions recently. Following a tremendous performance in the qualification round, the school's team took part in the Royal Society of Chemistry's Top-of-the-Bench regional final. Held at the new Collaborative Teaching Laboratory at the University of Birmingham, pupils sat a written test and completed a practical assignment.



# SPORTS NEWS



unfortunate absence of Mr Taylor, the team were lucky to have both Mr Collins and Mr Bletcher step forward to take on the role of 1st XV coaches. The team thank both of them for their ongoing efforts, aiding player development within the side. The 1st XV have shown great character and heart to produce some unexpected and well-deserved results this season, pulling through to play on a weekly basis against the odds. Thank you to all those involved.

## HOCKEY

This season has been one of change for the 1st XI after a major rebuilding job at the start of the year, due to losing 9 members of the squad from the previous year. However, the squad as a whole remained set on improving throughout the year and beating some rival teams. There has been a mixed bag of results for all sides with some good wins throughout the season and of course a few disappointing losses. There have, again, been some impressive individual performances such as Karam Auluk who has made some spectacular saves to win crucial matches. Also, Jaian Patel who came into the 1st XI to fill in at the start of the year and played so well he has now cemented his position in the starting lineup scoring multiple goals along the way. As always, a thanks must go out to all the senior hockey players who have shown great heart throughout the year and especially those drawn up in to teams above their usual level at the last minute and coped admirably. I speak for all the hockey players as well in thanking all the staff who have taken the fixtures this year, as at times there were four fixtures at the same time.

## CRICKET

A busy term of training has been completed for all age groups alongside U14 -1st XI 1-1 sessions before school. The 1st XI attended BatFast HQ in Nottingham to experience their innovative cricket simulation technology. Girls House Cricket, Specialist Wicketkeeper and Fielding Training and Indoor Practice has also taken place. The U13 & U15 teams have already achieved silverware this season winning the Staffordshire Indoor Chance to Compete Cricket Tournaments.



## RUGBY

From cup semi-finals and plate finals to broken bones and narrow defeats, the season was one of great highs and unfortunate lows. The season started optimistically, having lost a bulk of the side through the previous year, new recruits and old faces banded together to make a competitive 1st XV. Under captain Joel Pepper. QM, travelling away for the majority of matches this season, found themselves battling in every game they participated in, gradually growing stronger, building chemistry within the squad, and starting to play for each other. As the season progressed, critical injuries crippled the squad, however, with the heart of the Year 11 side stepping up, the team recuperated and continued on. The team also faced tough times in terms of coaching. With the

## BASKETBALL

The Year 10 Basketball team are becoming a force to be reckoned with after successfully defending their Walsall Schools' League title: they were crowned champions for a third time in a row.

The team kick-started their defence with a 32-11 win over



a competitive St Francis side and finished the season in style with a dominant 34-4 victory against Shire Oak Academy. The Year 8 team enjoyed a fantastic first season playing competitive fixtures in the Walsall League (P7, W5, L2). Fraser Dunn was the highest point scorer for the team with 55.



## HOUSE COMPETITION

This term we have seen passionate participation and friendly rivalry from all 4 Houses in the House competitions. Aragon won the swimming competition with 275 points, Darby responded in kind through House Basketball winning with 525 points. Additionally, Petypher have won the Year 7 History competition while Gryphon won the food bank collection with 267 items collected. The diversity of these competitions shows that everyone can get involved, wherever your talents may lie!

Through events and initiatives such as the Diwali samosa sale, Penny Wars, Movember and Christmas Jumper Day, the school has channelled its community spirit for a good cause; collectively we have raised £2339.71 for several charities.

Furthermore, our food bank collection for the Glebe Centre in Walsall led to over 800 items being collected. A second samosa sale for WPH counselling on 6th February raised over £200.

So far, regarding house points, Darby are leading with Gryphon, Aragon and Petypher in 2nd, 3rd and 4th place respectively. However, it is all still to play for with the girls' indoor cricket and chapatti competition coming up, and of course, our annual sports day competition in the summer!

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