

Queen Mary's Grammar School



QMGS updates 8-7-20

Dear parents and students

First word

It is at this time of year that we say goodbye to staff who are leaving us. I will cover some of these today and some next week, starting with five staff who joined us in 2015 or 2016.

Mrs Watson joined the school in 2015 at the beginning of an innovative joint music project with QMHS. She has worked across the two schools for 5 years and is leaving to work at QMHS full time. We wish her well and hope that the spirit of collaboration can continue.

Mr Youngman joined the CCF as a SSI in 2016 and has worked hard with the officers to grow and sustain a substantial programme across the contingent. He is leaving to pursue a similar role in another school and our thanks go to him for all that he has done.

Mr Kearsey initially joined the Chemistry department in a part time supply capacity in 2016 and has been a reassuring presence for the past 4 years. He has been a valuable member of school staff and his dry sense of humour will be missed across Science. We wish him well for a happy retirement.

Miss McKinney leaves us for a new leadership opportunity after 4 years in the RPE department. We are grateful for all that she has given, most recently in developing materials for the new SRE requirements. After joining as a newly qualified teacher, it is pleasing to see that her career has progressed into middle leadership.

The final departing member of staff to feature this week is Mr Clay-Croome, who leaves us for new challenges after four years as Head of English. He arrived at a time of national curriculum change (in terms of GCSE and A-level courses) and has led the department with flair and imagination. He has contributed widely to the school community, taking part (and leading) a number of trips and initiatives in the UK and abroad. He directed the last major school production (Romeo and Juliet) and has also held the role of Head of Petypher House. I'm sure his students will miss his classroom teaching and we wish him well for the future.

Partial re-opening, DfE guidance and home learning

As I have said in the last few weeks, home learning will continue until the end of term (Tuesday 14th July) for most year groups. We've received confirmation from the DfE that schools and colleges will not be required to remain open over the summer holiday for vulnerable children and children of critical workers, so the school will close at the end of Tuesday 14th July for all students until September.

Planning for September at QMGS

Following the government announcements on Thursday 2nd July, we are preparing for the following in September:

- A return of all staff and students, with no rotas to be in place for students to be in at different times
- A change in shielding guidance from 1st August meaning that the vast majority of people can attend school
- An expectation that we deliver a full range of curriculum subjects
- The expectation of year group bubbles, the need for a zonal school approach and the staggering of the school day
- This is, effectively, scenario 1.5 (based on the information shared on 24th June)
- Contingency planning for a return to remote education if there is a local or national outbreak

I am extremely mindful of the following:

- Of the welfare and wellbeing of all staff and students in returning to school, some of whom won't have been here for nearly 6 months
- Emerging pastoral and SEMH issues connected to the crisis
- Curriculum gaps in knowledge and the need for support for some students

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- The H&S implications of the return and the changes in expectations of hygiene, including implications on cleaners, toilets and the use of the canteen
- The issues related to the induction of new staff and students

I will release full details, per year group, of the exact arrangements for September in August.

The following guiding principles will apply from Monday 7th September:

- All year groups will attend school each day
- Each year group will be a bubble and will not be able to mix onsite with other year groups; they will be allocated a teaching zone within the school
- The basic 6 period teaching structure will remain in place for all students, with the allotted teachers per subject; not all lessons will be taught in specialist rooms and there will be restrictions on practical activities
- There will be slight variations in the timings of the day per year group, either starting at 08.45, 09.00 or 09.15 and finishing at either 15.40, 15.55 or 16.10 (the length of the day will remain the same); this is to stagger the arrival and departure
- There is a strong encouragement to avoid public transport and we would recommend walking/cycling alternatives
- Students will not be able to be on site outside of allotted hours, unless in an organised activity
- Students will wear normal school uniform, unless they have PE on that day; in which case they will wear their school tracksuit
- We will be providing a canteen service
- There will be variations in terms of what we can offer on the extra-curricular programme
- We will be comprehensively updating our risk assessment and school policies in readiness for the start of term, including guidance to parents on health and reporting suspected cases of Covid-19
- I would encourage you to read the DfE's guidance to parents:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

Whilst the term dates for 2020-21 will remain the same, it has been decided across the MAT that the start of term in September will look slightly different to usual:

Mon 31 Aug	Bank holiday
Tue 1 Sep	Staff training day 1
Wed 2 Sep	Staff training day 2
Thu 3 Sep	Induction for Years 7/12
Fri 4 Sep	Induction for Years 7/12
Mon 7 Sep	First day back for other students
Wed 9 Sep	First MAT lessons for sixth form

This is to allow more time for the induction of new students at the beginning of term (as we have lost face-to-face options from the summer term) and also gives more time for staff CPD and planning.

Microsoft Teams: A guide for parents by Mrs Round

Mrs Round has recorded an explanatory video for parents on the workings of Microsoft Teams. Please take the time to watch this, in order to best support the online learning going on:

<https://youtu.be/2cGenlmhJgk>

Year 13 Book Returns

Year 13 students should have received a letter outlining the details for book/equipment returns in July. The link below provides a copy of this letter:

https://qmg.s.walsall.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020_letters_y13_book_return.pdf

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End of year reports

We will be sending out reports to all student email accounts by the end of term. Staff are currently awarding an Attitude to Online Learning Grade based upon pupils' engagement with remote learning since school closed in March. There will be no attainment grades awarded this term

Speakers for Schools and study support from Loughborough University (Mr Sunley)

Do take the time to encourage your child to engage with the Speakers for Schools Virtual Talks programme. These are free livestreamed talks from top leading figures in their field for all young people to attend. No registrations or downloads are needed. Each week there is a different programme of speakers.

Full details and the weekly schedule can be found at

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/>

It would be great to get feedback on the talks and track participation - If your child does decide to participate in the talks programme please encourage them to take the time to complete a short survey afterwards Link here:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=E1T1PdfOSEuPbjC8TawIT4sy5f8w0OxBhNmyyHG7WUUMII1RzI5NEI2UzdMWVFIRjAyTjk3MERWSC4u>

Loughborough University have also launched a resource for students to support their learning in school:

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/study/school-college-liaison/study-boost/>

Prospective Law applicants (Miss Richards)

Any Year 11 and Year 12 students interested in applying to study Law at university are invited to join our new team. The code is **ugdujt9**. You should be able to join yourself but are also welcome to email Miss Richards and ask her to add you directly: i-richards@qmg.walsall.sch.uk

On the team you will find a Law reading list. All students will also be welcome to post links to reading material and discussion questions.

Instrumental lessons (Mr Vause)

I have attached to this email a letter from Mr Vause, which was sent originally last week. Please have a look at this if you are interested in instrumental lessons from September.

Updated student loan guidance

There is some updated guidance related to student finance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-prospective-students>

Pastoral matters

We have continued our 'safe and well' calls across all year groups. Please contact Mr Collins/Mr Brown directly or refer to the website with any concerns: <https://qmg.walsall.sch.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare-concerns/>

Mr Farnell is available from 2-4pm each week day on a school mobile (07849398033). Mrs Chatwin Can be reached between 10am-midday each week day on 07592 376697. This service is being provided for students who would like to talk to a member of the pastoral team with any concerns or worries that they might have.

QMA

Please don't forget the **Easy Fundraising scheme** – a great way of raising money for the school with very little effort during online shopping. Make sure you register, if you haven't already, at:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/queenmarysgrammar/>

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Final thoughts

My final community email of the year will come out on Tuesday 14th July, after which point there will be limited staff availability in school and online. Please do get in touch before then with any questions or queries.

With warm regards and best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. J. Langton'.



Richard Langton

Headmaster

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