



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

## A message from the Headmaster, 3 February 2021

---

### First word

As outlined last week, we have been running a series of events to mark 'Children's Mental Health Week'. Mrs McPhee provides our think piece for the week on this area and I would like to thank her, along with other staff who have led sessions, for all the work in such a vital part of our school life.

### A think piece for the week (Mrs McPhee): Mental Health Week 2021: Making wellbeing inclusive

Now that QMGs's annual Mental Health Week is in its fifth year, I need to look for new avenues to explore that have not been covered before, and that are not already covered in the PSHEE curriculum. We are inundated with information at the moment about how to look after our children's mental health, and stories in the media or from friends who are also parents that children are unhappy - so much so that it seems there is the general assumption that our children are "not okay". I wonder how true that actually is. Of course there are many (too many) children suffering during this pandemic, for various reasons, but from speaking to my Year 8 form and to my own son, there are also many who are just fine, and dare I say it, may even feel that they are not normal for being okay right now. The key message here for everyone is, as ever: whatever you are feeling is valid, whenever you feel it.

For our own week of events, I interpret the term "mental health" in the broadest sense - I look for new content to cover which would not directly come under this banner, but which will hopefully lead to better mental health for certain groups of people. To this end, I am introducing a brand-new PSHEE lesson this Mental Health Week, about disability awareness. The vast majority of our pupils are not disabled of course, but through greater understanding of the struggle disabled people have had - and still have - fighting for their rights, and an understanding of how ableism is maintained through the language non-disabled people use, they can become allies, friends and supporters of disabled people, which in turn can only contribute to better mental health for this historically oppressed group.

However, the mental health benefit of educating oneself about groups with which we do not identify extends beyond those groups themselves. Indeed, we can all experience a boost to our own wellbeing through both increased kindness, support and understanding towards others, and through our own edification. One of our school mottos is "Life to the full" - this does not merely mean travelling more, packing more into the day, learning more - it is about the deep sense of satisfaction one can feel at being enriched by greater understanding of how someone else experiences the same planet we all inhabit. In PSHEE lessons, I try as much as possible to recommend reading or viewing material that will help deepen pupils' engagement with the topic matter. It behoves us all to open ourselves up to the voices of those who are different to us.

As important as it is to listen to those whom we consider different, it is also vital that we have access to the voices of those with whom we can identify. I have purposely sought out speakers whose backgrounds many of our pupils share - Black teacher T'Challa Greaves, and our own member of staff Mr Abbas, a British Asian Muslim. Pupils from these backgrounds need to hear these men assure them that it is important and right to speak out when their mental health is suffering, so that we can work on addressing the gender, race and ethnicity imbalances when it comes to mental health statistics.

I am truly grateful that my job allows me to connect with a wide range of people, learn and grow as a person myself as I prepare my lessons and other school events, then experience the joy of sharing what I have learned with others. I urge you too, to engage in conversation with your child about what they have been learning, both this Mental Health Week and in their PSHEE lessons generally - I am grateful to the history and art departments, and Mrs Walker in the library, for the work they are doing this week too. Listening, growing and learning feels good, and this goodness will radiate out to all you meet. When it comes to wellbeing, we are not islands - when we feel good, others will too. I wish you all well.

### Further sessions this week for students and parents:

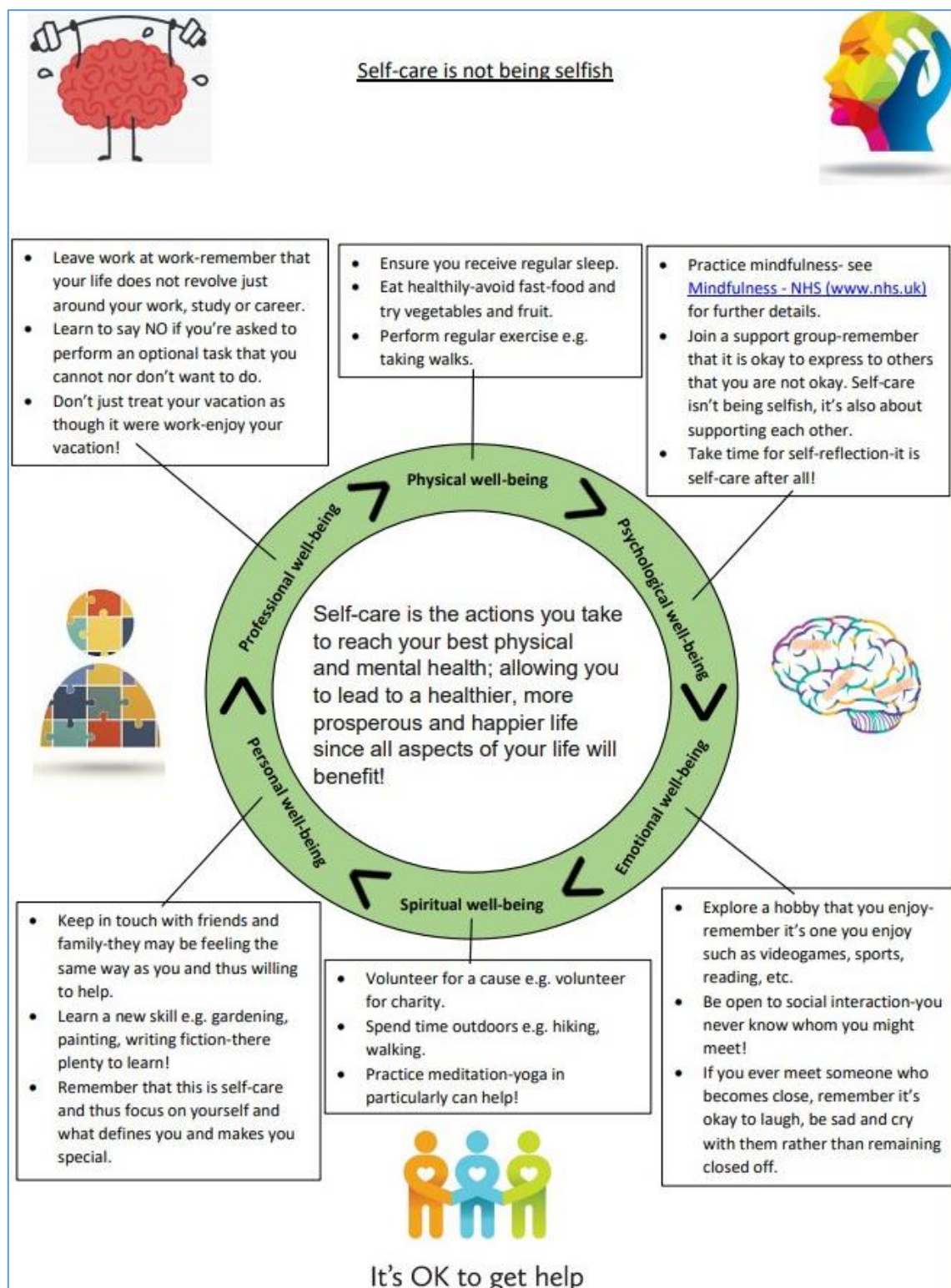
**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February** 7-8.15pm: Hope Virgo: Eating disorders. (Parent session, Zoom event)

## Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February

1.10-1.40pm: Mr Abbas: Mental Health, Sport and being a British Asian (Year 7-9, Live Event on MS Teams, link to be posted on PSHEE Teams)

### Later in the year:

- Diversity Role Models, LGBT inclusion and empathy (Year 7)
- Natasha Devon, mental health author and campaigner (Year 8)
- Hope Virgo, eating disorder campaigner (Year 10)
- Andrew Bernard, domestic violence awareness (Year 11)



### Wellbeing award for schools

At QMGS and across the Mercian Trust we recognise that the emotional wellbeing and positive mental health of all members of the community is integral to our continued success. In these times of uncertainty and what has been a very challenging 10 months, we know it is more important than ever that we keep our wellbeing at the forefront of all we do. In order to help us do this we are embarking on a formal review of our wellbeing culture. The intention to highlight and celebrate what we already do well and to recognise ways in which we can keep improving upon what we already do.

We have signed up to the WAS Wellbeing award for schools and I attach a summary for parents and students, including links to surveys for you to carry out. I would be grateful if you could take the time to complete these.

### Mental health and Wellbeing (Mr Collins)

The Wellbeing Wednesday newsletter is included at the end of this document. It is a challenging time for us all and it is vital that students talk about any worries they have. We are carrying out welfare checks across the school and parents will be contacted to make sure all is well. Staff and students can raise concerns via the wellbeing email address [well-being@qmgc.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:well-being@qmgc.walsall.sch.uk) or by using the QR code.

This account is monitored by the SEMH team:

- Mr Collins (Assistant Head and DSL)
- Mr Farnell (Safeguarding and Welfare Officer)
- Ms Hendricks (SEMH mentor)
- Miss Weston (6th Form Operations Manager, Girls welfare)



### Alumni Careers Meets (Mr Sunley)

We are currently running a series of Alumni careers events for the students during lunchtime. Students should follow instructions sent through via email to join these sessions. The schedule for the Spring term is set out below:

Date	Speaker	Job Title/Industry	Time at QMGS
2nd Feb	Nirali Parekh	KPMG Infrastructure Advisory Group	2015-2017
9th Feb	Lewis Hill	Research Engineer	2007-2014
Half-term			
23rd Feb	Olivier Swain	Associate at Signature Litigation	2002-2009
25th Feb	Peter Freeth	Careers	1979-1985
2nd March	Owain Johnson	MD, Global Head of Research and Product Development at CME Group	1987-1993
9th March	Tulsi Parekh	Research Optometrist at Moorfields Eye Hospital, London	2009-2011
16th March	Robert Selmes	Head of Rights for Sky Sports	1998-2005
23rd March	Mohammed Al-Sharif	Senior Civil Engineer	2007-2014
30th March	Simran Patel	Investment Banking Analyst at Barclays Investment Bank	2008-2015

## House competition #qmgscreeates (Mrs Mehta)

For each day between Monday 25th January and the end of the half term (Friday 12th February) we would like students to document something creative you do each day. This could be something you have done in a lesson or outside of school time.

Ideas include: Choreograph a dance, Make music, Do mindful colouring, Animate/Make videos, Paint or draw, Write a song, Bake/cook, Learn magic or juggling, Technical/graphic drawing, Write a story/lyrics or poetry, Exploring new way of customise, repair or up-cycle, Develop a new skill in pretty much anything!

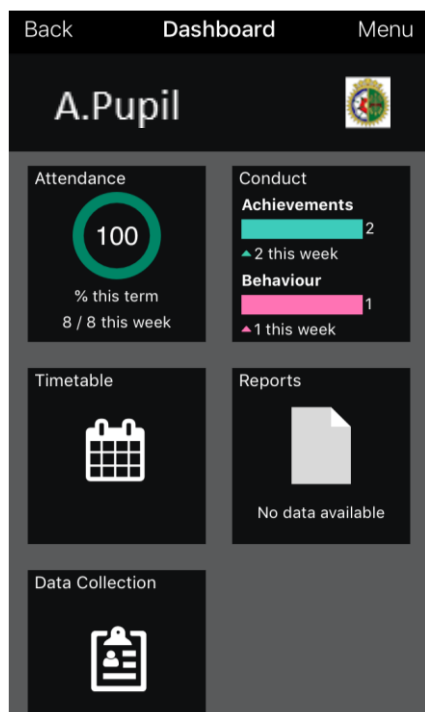
You need to log what you have done each day. This could be with a dairy, or a scrapbook of photos. At the end of the challenge you will upload your log to the houses SharePoint. The house with the most logs will win. The best log in each house will win a prize!

## SIMS Parent App (Mr Brown)

We have 1000 parents now registered with the app, a good number but not 100% yet.

We would strongly recommend that parents register, download and use the Parent App which the school is now using to communicate up to date information on pupil achievement, behaviour and attendance. The vast majority of parents within the school have now registered and are using the app to keep abreast of their child's performance in school, enabling them to challenge and support where needed.

If you need a new invitation to register with the app or are having any trouble in accessing the app then please contact [enquiries@qmgswalsall.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@qmgswalsall.sch.uk) and we will help to get the issue resolved. As well as receiving daily updates on any achievement or behaviour points the school also uses the app to send out key messages and reminders. The app also allows you to view your child's timetable, school term dates and amend your contact details so the school has up to date information. Pupil's school reports and assessment grades (for relevant year groups) are also now shared solely through the app.



Today		1st October 2020
<b>Assembly</b>		08:55 09:15
<b>Mathematics</b>	H3   Miss P Patel	09:15 10:05
<b>Biology</b>	H2   Mrs B Mehta	10:05 10:55
<b>Chinese</b>	H3   Mrs Y Wang	11:20 12:10
<b>History</b>	H3   Mr A G Kolaric	12:10 13:00
<b>Chemistry</b>	H2   Mr R J Short	14:00 14:50
<b>Physics</b>	H2   Mr M Senade	14:50 15:40

Queen Mary's Grammar School	
Sutton Road Walsall WS1 2PG United Kingdom	
01922-720696	
enquiries@qmgswalsall.sch.uk	
www.qmgswalsall.org	
<b>Key Dates</b>	
5 Days Programme	23 Oct 2020
Autumn Half Term starts	26 Oct 2020
Autumn Half Term ends	30 Oct 2020
5 Days Programme	20 Nov 2020
Autumn Term ends	18 Dec 2020
Christmas Holiday starts	19 Dec 2020
Christmas Holiday ends	4 Jan 2021
Staff Training Day	4 Jan 2021
Spring Term starts	5 Jan 2021
Spring Half Term starts	15 Feb 2021
Spring Half Term ends	19 Feb 2021
Spring Term ends	31 Mar 2021

### National guidelines

Please continue to follow the [national guidelines](#) regarding Covid-19, in terms of recognising symptoms, testing & tracing, self-isolation, control measures and other information. Do continue to inform us of positive cases within the student body in line with our [established procedures](#).

### Remote learning

I have received some excellent feedback about the online learning that is going on and I am grateful to all staff for the time and effort that is going into this. If you haven't already, please read our [remote learning statement](#). Please ensure that your child attends all of their live sessions if they are fit and well. Registers will be taken for these sessions. The pastoral team will contact parents if there are concerns regarding the completion of work remotely, or persistent non-attendance at live sessions.

### Children who receive Free School Meals

We are making arrangements for digital vouchers to be circulated for those students who receive free school meals, for the time whilst they are not in school. Please contact us at the [enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk) if you have any questions about this.

### QMA Fundraising

As a result of the current restrictions, we are unable to run our regular QMA events. However, parents can still support the school in other ways. The QMA are continuing to promote the **Easy Fundraising scheme** – a great way of raising money for the school with very little effort. Make sure you register, if you haven't already, at: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/queenmarysgrammar/>

### The Green Bus

The Green Bus are offering a demand-responsive bus service to their service 851 customers during the current lockdown. Further information can be found here: <https://www.thegreenbus.co.uk/flexibus/>. Booking is necessary 48 hours in advance.

Please contact [hello@thegreenbus.co.uk](mailto:hello@thegreenbus.co.uk) if you have any queries.

### The live calendar and term dates for 2020-21 are available on the School's website:

<https://qmgs.walsall.sch.uk/school-live-calendar/>

<https://qmgs.walsall.sch.uk/term-dates/>

Thank you for your continued support and feedback

Regards



**Richard Langton**

**Headmaster**

**Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall**

01922 720696 [www.qmgs.org](http://www.qmgs.org)

Twitter: @qmgs1554





# Well-being Wednesday

A WEEKLY WELL-BEING NEWSLETTER



Each week we hope to bring you all a few hints and tips in order to improve or manage your well-being.  
Don't forget you can reach us for support at  
[well-being@qmg.s.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:well-being@qmg.s.walsall.sch.uk)

## WINNING WAYS TO WELLBEING



THINK & LISTEN,  
BE THERE,  
FEEL CONNECTED



Your time,  
your words,  
your presence



REMEMBER THE SIMPLE  
THINGS THAT  
GIVE YOU JOY



EMBRACE NEW  
EXPERIENCES,  
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,  
SURPRISE YOURSELF



DO WHAT YOU CAN,  
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,  
MOVE YOUR BODY

INTRODUCE THESE FIVE SIMPLE STRATEGIES INTO  
YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL FEEL THE BENEFITS.

## PE Exercise Schedule



This week Mr Hammond has given us some crossfit challenges. Wednesday's training is 15 minutes - As Many Reps As Possible (AMRAP)

1. 10 squat jumps
2. 10 lunges
3. 10 burpees

Check out @QMGSSPORT for updates!

## Quote of the week

"When you are measuring life you  
are not living it"

Mitch Albom - The Time Keeper.

We can often find ourselves  
comparing our accomplishments  
to others. We imagine a timeline  
where certain things should be  
obtained or achieved. Stop  
measuring life and go live it!

Mr Farnell

## Indian Farmer Protests

At Queen Mary's we are blessed to have a diverse community. This means that issues around the world inevitably end up having an impact on our school community. For the past few months Indian farmers have been peacefully protesting against the farm acts which were passed by the Indian Government in September 2020. More recently the protests have turned violent as the police have resorted to using tear gas and batons to control the crowds. If any student is worried about what is going on, please do get in touch.