



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

27th August 2021

Arrangements for September 2021

Dear parent/guardian

First of all, I hope that all members of the School community have had a restful summer. This letter sets out the arrangements for the beginning of the autumn term. School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.

Control measures and arrangements

Step 4 of the government's roadmap marked a new phase in the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk. As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education.

The DfE have produced a [guide](#) for parents, and the table below sets out the main changes in school from September 2021. A copy of our [risk assessment](#) is available on the school website, which includes our 'Outbreak Management Plan'.

Area	Details
Year group bubbles	There is no need to arrange the year groups in bubbles from September 2021. Teachers will return to specialist classrooms and students move between lessons (outside where possible). Activities involving students from different year groups can happen. Year groups are arranged in zones around the school for form time so that there is familiarity in case we need to enact the 'Outbreak Management Plan'
School day	Return to the standard 8.45-3.40pm school day, with no staggered start/finish times
Site opening	Students cannot come onto site until 8am and have to wait outside, the dining room or Bateman Room until 8.30am. Students must leave the suite at 3.40pm unless they have an after school activity.
Uniform	Normal school uniform for students and staff
Face coverings	Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet. This includes public transport and dedicated transport to school or college.
Close contacts	<u>DfE guidance:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Settings only needed to do contact tracing up to and including 18 July. Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.• As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parent to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. You may be

	<p>contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they are fully vaccinated they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. Staff who do not need to isolate, and children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal. They do not need to wear a face covering within the school, but it is expected and recommended that these are worn when travelling on public or dedicated transport. 18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated. At which point, they will be subject to the same rules as adults and so if they choose not to get vaccinated, they will need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact.
Self-isolation	Please see NHS guidance
Extra-curricular activities	All extra-curricular activities can resume, including those with multiple year groups. This is crucial part of our educational offering.
Residential activities	Residential activities can resume and are encouraged.
Travel and quarantine	<p>Anyone travelling to England must adhere to travel legislation, details of which are set out in government travel advice.</p> <p>Those aged 11 to 17 need proof of a negative COVID-19 test to travel to England (children aged 10 and under are exempt from this) and those aged 5 to 17 must take a COVID-19 travel test on or before day 2. More information is provided in the government's quarantine and testing guidance.</p> <p>Additional guidance has been issued on the quarantine arrangements for boarding school pupils travelling from red-list countries to attend a boarding school in England.</p>

COVID-19 testing for pupils on return to school

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools. As pupils will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, all secondary school pupils should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term. Please see the separate letter regarding exact arrangements for testing.

Transport and arrival/departure

It is really important that the students stick to their designated times for arrival and departure. The government has produced [guidance on the use of transport](#) which is important to read and understand. Information on the Green Bus can be found on their [website](#).

I have written extensively in the past about considerate parking and driving around the school and this is vital as we begin a new term and the staggered starts and finishes have come to an end. We continue to work with the local authority and police in making sure that the area around the school is as safe as possible. Please consider alternatives to driving and dropping off outside the school.

Arrangements for the start of term

The specific details for return are set out below. Students should enter the site via the main pedestrian gate or the CPA gate, from 8am. Please see the table above for guidance on where they should go when entering the site.

Thu 2 Sep	Staff training day; no students in school
Fri 3 Sep	Staff training day Year 7 induction (only students who did not attend the summer school) Year 12 induction (all students)
Mon 6 Sep	Year 7 and 12 induction (all students); see separate instructions Year 8 in school (see separate instructions) Some Year 11 in school (by invitation only)
Tue 7 Sep	All students in school (8.45am start) Year 9 games (students to wear tracksuits and games kit)

Uniform, lockers and sports store orders

We are expecting all students to return to school in full uniform, as this is an important part of our ethos. Students will be reallocated lockers and will be given more information on this at the start of term. Students may wear their QM sports kit (including a full tracksuit) on the day in which they have a games afternoon (see table below), but not on days when they have PE or swimming. Students should not come into school in non-QM branded sportswear.

Details of ordering and collection from the sports store can be found on the [school website](#). If you have any queries please contact Mrs Hopkinson on sports-store@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk

Year group	Games afternoon
7	Friday
8	Thursday
9	Tuesday
10	Monday
11-13	Wednesday

Behavioural expectations and school policies

We continue to expect the highest standards of behaviour and conduct of the students. All updated [policies](#) will be available on our school website.

Medical appointments, parent contact and visits to the school

Please contact the School via email or phone if you need to speak to a member of staff. Visits to the school should be by appointment only. The School requires 3 days' notice if a student has a medical appointment during school time, but it is requested that these are arranged (where possible) outside of the school day.

Mental health and Wellbeing

Form tutors and heads of year will be checking in with students as they return to school in September. Any member of the school community can raise concerns via the wellbeing email address well-being@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk or by using the QR code below.

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)



Parent mail

As advised in the summer term, we have moved to a new parent payment system called Parentmail. A guide to the system can be found [here](#). The school will be using Parentmail for parent payments for purchases of meals, trips, resources, and other such items.

If you have any difficulty registering or have any queries on the system please ring or email our Finance support team 01922 211389 Finance@the.merciantrust.org.

Catering

Innovate IFG will be providing catering services for our staff and students from September. Details of the company and sample menus can be found on the [School website](#).

Parents' evenings and information events

Following positive feedback in 2020-21, we will continue to conduct parents' evenings via the digital Parents' Evening Booking system this year. More details will follow on the dates of these evenings.

We will be running a series of in-person information events throughout the year, to update parents on key arrangements and to introduce pastoral staff and members of the senior leadership team. In September 2021, we will be running the following events, starting after 6pm:

- Year 7 – Wednesday 8th September
- Year 12 – Wednesday 15th September
- Year 8 – Thursday 23rd September

More details will follow to the relevant year groups.

Queen Mary's Association (QMA)

We are very much looking forward to the return of events run by the QMA. The QMA have played a crucial part in school fundraising over a long period of time. In recent years, monies raised from the events have gone towards the outdoor cricket nets/covers and the blue minibus. The previous two events (in 2019-20) raised money for a refurbishment of the library and tablets for the geography department, which we will be investing this year.

The provisional dates for events in 2021-22 are:

Sat 4 Dec 2021	Tastes of the World
Sat 22 Jan 2022	Burns Night
Sat 25 Jun 2022	Summer Ball

I will be speaking at the parents' information evenings about the work of the QMA and encouraging people to join committees to support each event and the running of the bar. We also have a separate group to support Farchynys. If you are interested in supporting the work of the QMA, please contact Judy McCoy (alumni officer) at: alumni@qmg.walsall.sch.uk

The 'Easy Fundraising' scheme is also a great way of raising money for the school with very little effort. Make sure you register, if you haven't already, [here](#).

Thank you for your ongoing support

Yours sincerely

Richard Langton
Headmaster