



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

## A message from the Headmaster, October 2021

---

### First word

As we approach the end of the half term, I think it is important to look back positively on how the students and staff have embraced the QM experience in all of their involvement in School life. The [Twitter account](#) gives the usual view on the richness of our wider curriculum and I have had no shortage of content for School assemblies. In particular, it has been fantastic to see all the coverage in October of activities around Black History Month. The students have spoken very personally about their experiences in assemblies, the QM Perspectives and the See Yourself group. We have all taken inspiration from the reading recommendations from the English department and were very privileged this week to host the author [Alex Wheatle](#). We sincerely hope that the new Covid restrictions are only short lived and we can continue delivering our rich co-curricular offering. As I said in my letter last week, Speech Day has been postponed until later in the year and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October is a regular school day, finishing at 3.40pm. Half term will start at this point.

### Covid updates and the vaccine roll out

I wrote to all parents last week with details of changes we have had to put in place from 18<sup>th</sup> October. The letter can be accessed [here](#). This will be reviewed by Walsall Public Health after half term and I will write to you with any changes. Please do continue to keep us informed on cases and follow the [School's guidance](#).

A [joint letter](#) has been written to parents of secondary school and college students in England on Covid-19 testing and vaccines from the Secretaries of State for Education and for Health and Social Care. We are waiting on exact details of the 12-15 vaccination roll out at QMGS, but the consent letter from the NHS can be accessed [here](#).

16 and 17 year olds can now use the online booking service for their COVID-19 vaccine. The Department of Health and Social Care announced on Friday 24 September that all 16 and 17 year olds can now book their first COVID-19 vaccination appointment [online](#).

Young people aged 16 and 17 can:

- [book their COVID-19 vaccination appointments online](#) for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy
- [find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site](#) to get vaccinated without needing an appointment

### Parents' evenings

Thank you to those parents in Years 11 and 13 who have joined us for the online parents' evenings this month. If you are a parent in these year groups and haven't filled in a school feedback questionnaire, please do so here:

[Year 11](#)

[Year 13](#)

### Senior Soloists Concert - Wednesday 10th November, 7.30pm School Hall

The music department present an evening of musical entertainment provided by some of our outstanding musicians from years 10-13. We are hoping this event can happen after half-term and tickets are available [here](#), with full refunds if the event cannot go ahead.

## Queen Mary's Association

Thank you to all those parents who have signed up to help the different QMA committees at the beginning of this year. We are looking forward to hosting our full range of events this year:

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

Each event has a committee to run it and we have a separate group who manage 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@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:alumni@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk)

For the Taste of the World event, if you work in the catering industry, or have contacts, and are able to support the evening, we are keen to hear from you. Also, please contact us if you can provide a good quality raffle prize for any of the events.

## Farchynys maintenance weekend, 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> November

Mr Hudson and the QMA are currently looking for volunteers to help with a maintenance weekend at Farchynys after half term.

We wish to target our efforts on the following projects:

- Decorating the Day Room at the Coach House
- Clearing the banks above the drive/car park at the coach house and the garden area above/around the patio at the barn
- Jet washing the patio and fire escape
- Routine deep cleaning throughout all properties

Please contact the School via the [enquiries@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk) email address if you are interested at being involved.

## Absences for appointments

May I remind parents/carers, as per the Home School Agreement, the below process for absences relating to appointments during the school day:

- Where possible try and schedule appointments after school and during school holidays
- If this is not possible, then provide as much notice as possible, or at least three working days' notice. This should be sent to [absences@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:absences@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk) with a copy of the appointment notification
- If you attending the appointment during the school day, you are required to collect your child from Reception and sign them out using the Exeat Book, you will need to sign them back in on their return
- If the appointment is before school you are required to accompany your child back into school and sign the Exeat Book
- Parents are not allowed to drive onto the school site, please park off site legally and with consideration for local residents
- Parents need to ensure that their child is aware of what time he/she is being collected. The student will be responsible for making their way to Reception so that they are ready for collection when you arrive to sign them out.

## Uniform shop

For students who have lost their School ties and want to purchase a replacement, they are now able to purchase the ties via the School online Sports Store, which can then be picked up from Reception with proof of purchase.

## **FSM FAQs (Mrs Youngman)**

We have produced a frequently asked question document for those families where a child receives free school meals, including details what can be purchased from the canteen. This is available [here](#).

## **Second hand uniform**

An appeal was previously made for uniform and sportswear, in good condition, which your child has grown out of. We had an excellent response and are in the process of sorting through these items. These items will be made available, on a discretionary basis, to families with a need. If you would like to be considered for these items please email Mrs Hill via [enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk) with details of requirements and sizes.

## **Wearing of gum shields for rugby and hockey**

Please can families be reminded that although the sporting bodies for both hockey and rugby advise that pupils should wear gum shields the school is looking to make this compulsory for all participants in games afternoons who are playing these sports. Gum shields are inexpensive and can either be obtained from a local sports shop for around £10, the school sports store or fitted by a dentist (around £50). If you have any queries on this please contact Mr Hitchen.

## **Traffic and parking around the School**

I have written extensively in the past to parents in bid to encourage sensible driving and parking around the School. With the full return of the school in September, it has inevitably been busy, but it is disappointing to see many drivers not listening to my requests to take account of others. In particular, we have observed:

- **Dangerous driving** – in the form of speeding and U turns down the length of the Sutton Road
- **Inconsiderate parking** – particularly around driveways and on private property. We have received lots of feedback from residents, for example in the access road at the bottom of the Sutton Road and at the flats on the corner of Sutton Road and Princes Avenue

We have engaged with Walsall Police and the Council's Civil Parking Enforcement Officers, who can issue Penalty Charge Notices for parking offences relating to Traffic Regulation Orders, you may have seen an increased presence of the Enforcement Officers around the school; this will continue. I have spoken to the students about encouraging you to make different choices, such as:

- Dropping the students further away from school
- Using public transport
- Walking or cycling; a helmet must be worn when cycling

Please work with us on this to make the environment around the school a safer place.

## **Mental health and Wellbeing**

Any member of the school community can raise concerns via the wellbeing email address [well-being@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:well-being@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk) or by using the QR code below.

This account is monitored by the SEMH team and will be checked periodically during the summer break:

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



### Key dates for your diary next half term

Wed 10 Nov	Senior soloists concert
15-24 Nov	Y11 mock exams
Thu 25 Nov	Sixth form open evening
Friday 26 Nov	Training day – school closed
Tue 30 Nov	Non uniform day for QMA Taste of the World Event
Thu 2 Dec	Year 12 parents' evening
Sat 4 Dec	QMA Taste of the World event
Mon 13 Dec	Y13 leavers' event
Tue 14 Dec	Christmas concert
Thu 16 Dec	Last day of term

### Year 12 parents' evening – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

Year 12 parents' evening is approaching, on 2nd December; parents should look out for details on how to access the virtual event, especially those parents of students that joined us in September. There is a guide on the [school website](#) with a login [here](#).

### Year 11 mock exams

Year 11 Mock Exams are due to start w/c 15 November. Timetables have been issued to students and these exams will be conducted under strict exam conditions in the Sports Hall to provide students with the opportunity to show what they can do in conditions as close to the real thing as possible. GCSE exams will be going ahead next summer, with some adaptations that have been announced by the government and so this is a really important opportunity for students to stretch themselves and for teachers to identify gaps in understanding. All students and parents have been sent a revision topic list for all subjects to help with revision, which is available [here](#).

Please support your child to establish good revision techniques over half term and in the run up to those exams. An achievable revision timetable is essential. There are many excellent revision resources available online from

- Seneca: <https://qmgs.walsall.sch.uk/gcse-revision/>;
- BBC Bitesize: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/levels/z98jmp3>;
- Get revising: <https://getrevising.co.uk/resources/level/gcse>;
- Free Science Lessons on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/Freesciencelessons>;
- Kerboodle: <https://www.kerboodle.com/users/login>.
- Revision World has a large collection of past papers freely available: <https://revisionworld.com/gcse-revision>.
- Remember to check all exam board websites
- There are many, many resources made available by teachers at QMGS via your child's Microsoft Teams access.



We have currently raised £3,626.04, from 255 supporters.

One supporter has raised a magnificent £439.98 thus far! Just imagine what we could raise if every household signed up, and used, Easyfundraising. It would help us to provide even more opportunities and facilities for our young people. Please support this initiative which does not cost you anything as it is the retailers who donate on your behalf based upon the amount that you spend with them.

*We need your help to raise much needed funds!*

- easyfundraising has over 4,400 shops and sites which will donate to us at no extra cost to yourself, including lots of big name retailers like John Lewis, Argos, Uswitch, eBay, M&S, Just Eat, Now TV, Domino's Pizza and Audible.
- All you have to do is sign up to support us using the link below and the next time you shop online go through the easyfundraising website or App and we'll receive a free donation.
- We really need all the help we can get at the moment and any funds we raise will make a big difference to us!
- You can find our easyfundraising page at this [link](#)

Thank you!

### **Final thoughts**

Thank you for your support and feedback this term. It has been great to see parents in school and I hope we can continue this after half term. I hope all members of the community have a restful half term break.

Regards



**Richard Langton**  
Headmaster  
**Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall**