



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

## A message from the Headmaster, November 2021

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### First word

Despite the heightened Covid controls over the past month, there has been lots going on in school. The [Twitter account](#) has been as busy as ever, with snippets of school life. It was pleasing to see the cadets representing the school in the Walsall remembrance parade and a good range of trips and initiatives have been taking place. Lists of sporting and other activities can be found on the School's [website](#).

### QMA Taste of the World Event

The national picture, however, looks a little uncertain at present and I expect that the current controls (including face coverings) will operate for the rest of this term. To this end, we have had to make the unfortunate decision to postpone the QMA's Taste of the World event until Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022. We have done this in conjunction with Walsall Public Health. People who have bought tickets will receive correspondence through the Ticket Source website over refunds and transfers. I am grateful for all the work that has gone into this event and **the non-uniform day (for the return of raffle tickets) will continue on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November**. We will be holding a 'Culture day' in school to promote this and to celebrate the theme of our diversity. We have a great range of prizes for the raffle (some examples below) and all proceeds go to school fundraising. Thank you for your support.

### *Some of the raffle prizes*

- Hitachi 32-inch smart HD ready TV/ DVD combo
- Lenovo Tablet M10
- Match day tickets for 2 at Walsall Football Club
- 4 Birmingham Bear Cricket T20 tickets
- Samurai "Tourist" Bag
- Silver Bow Necklace with Hot Diamonds from Jewellery & Gifts Aldridge (RRP £75)
- Salter Waffle Maker
- Snowdome Tobogganing session for 2
- Great Barr Golf Club voucher - One 4 ball round of golf
- BaByliss Heated Rollers
- Kajal Indian Restaurant £25 gift voucher
- Toby Carvery £20 gift voucher
- Harvester £20 gift voucher
- Jewellery & Gifts Aldridge £20 gift voucher
- Yutopia Swedish Spa Voucher
- 6 Theory Driving Test Vouchers worth £11 each
- 5 day passes for Mercure Hotel Gym

### Christmas concert

We took the decision a number of weeks ago to move the Christmas concert to an online event, so that the necessary preparations could be made. We are looking forward to seeing the final results and the link will be shared nearer to the end of term.

### Christmas jumper day

We will be supporting 'Save the Children' through the Christmas Jumper Day on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December. Christmas lunch will also be served in the canteen on that day. Students may wear a Christmas jumper, along with their regular uniform, in return for a donation of £1, which can be paid in cash or via Parent Mail.



# QM Library Newsletter

Issue 1, December 2021 (edited by Sam Whittern)

## IN DEPTH

### TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD by Harper Lee

*To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee is a fictional story on the front, but its themes are so much more than that. It is one of those books which you will have to read at some point and reading it as early as possible is ideal since it is a good entry point into books that explore deeper themes.

The story is told through Jean Louise "Scout" Finch, and it is about the unconventional hero and single parent Atticus Finch, the lawyer who stands up for a black man, charged with the rape of a white girl.

Atticus is known as a "moral" hero – and morality is the main theme of the book, as well as what is "right" and "wrong" and targeting the problems with the law. Atticus is not perfect, but at the same time he has the ideal personality – he is not racist, sexist or homophobic, but he sees everyone as equal, and he fights indirectly to destroy bias.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is a tough read – that is understandable – but you must at least give it a try. The themes of the book link into many real-life situations.

Taysir Chowdury (Year 9)

## PEARLS OF WISDOM

### FOR A SHORT WHILE by Jay Hulme

*People like to write about Icarus, but we forget that he flew, for a short while, anyway; / and people like to write about Judas, but we forget that he walked with God, for a short while, anyway; / and people like to write about death, but forget that we live, for a short while, anyway; / and perhaps such things are worth it, are worth throwing it all away; / oh, what I'd give to touch such dreams, for a short while, anyway.*

chosen by William Stevens (Year 10)

## QUICK READS

### THE TAKING OF ANNIE THORNE by C.J. Tutor

*The Taking of Annie Thorne* is one of the most sinister thrillers out there, an opinion shared by authors such as Stephen King. The novel gets straight into the drama and will make shivers run down your spine. The twists and turns make it almost impossible to predict what will occur later in the book until the very end. I highly recommend this book by C.J. Tutor as well as her best-selling book *The Chalk Man*.

Adam Jawaad (Year 11)

### REAPER MAN by Terry Pratchett

This fantasy comedy set on the strange Discworld tells the story of Death, dying. He tries to hide from a governing power on a farm to live out the rest of his days with the innocent Miss Flitworth under the guise of "Bill Door". He tries to figure out how humans live their everyday lives by eating, drinking in bars, and trying to learn how to dream, while simultaneously attempting to teach a dyslexic rooster how to crow correctly. Meanwhile, across the world people die, but don't go away. Benjamin Westwood (Year 10)

### I AM THE MINOTAUR by Anthony McGowan

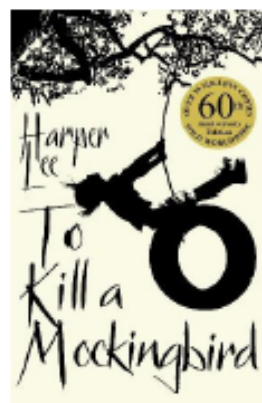
*I am the Minotaur* is an inspiring book, aimed at around 12 to 13-year-olds. The imagery of *Minotaur* is especially appealing, and the characterisation is some of the best I have read. With an emotionally drawing plot that shines a light on the struggles of being a young carer, *Minotaur* is a book which shows that the life you hope for may not work out in the end, but that your true calling can be found in the places you do not expect.

Blake McCarthy (Year 9)

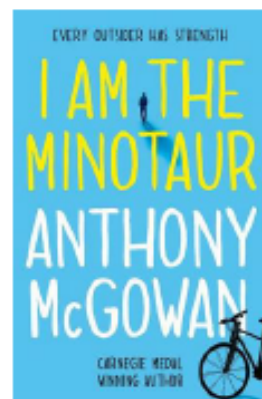
## JUDGING BY COVERS...



Benjamin Westwood



Taysir Chowdury



Blake McCarthy

December 2021

## **Mercian and Q3 merger statement**

Please see our [website](#) for a statement on the progression of the merger.

## **77 bus**

The school has been made aware by a number of families that the 77 bus route from Sutton Coldfield to Walsall has part of its route terminated from December 5th. The school has written to National Express expressing our concerns about the closure and the effect on our pupils and the short notice given.

## **Absence due to family illness and bereavement**

Unfortunately students sometimes need leave due to close family illness or following bereavement, I understand that these are difficult and emotional times. However, can I ask that when you are able to you email [enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk) and notify us? This will not only ensure your child's absence is recorded as authorised but will allow me to make the relevant staff aware of the loss so that emotional support can be considered if needed

## **Covid updates and the vaccine roll out**

We hosted the NHS vaccination team last week, as part of the roll out of 12-15 vaccines. I shared a [joint letter](#) in my last update (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).

16 and 17 year olds can 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**

We welcome parents of Year 12 this week (Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December) for the subject feedback evening. Please do let us know if there are any issues with this and please complete the [feedback form](#) if you are a parent of a Year 12 student. All parents' evenings will remain online this academic year.

## **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)



## Autism workshops

Please see the flyer below about some workshops that are being offered for parents/carers to explore and understand their child's behaviour if they have AUTISM/ADHD or are on a diagnosis pathway. Families should contact Helping Hands Walsall directly to find out more information about how to attend the virtual workshops. This can be done by emailing [helpinghandswalsall@family-action.org.uk](mailto:helpinghandswalsall@family-action.org.uk) or calling Louise Hudson on 07966395437.

### **THIS IS ME: Understanding my behaviours as I have different needs**

**Workshops for parents/carers to explore and understand their child's behaviour if they have AUTISM/ADHD or on a diagnosis pathway.**

Written by Dr Melanie Bruce and Dr Stephanie Summers Clinical Psychologists NCH&C

All sessions delivered virtually, so you can attend from the comfort of your own home.

#### Session One:

- Introduction by Dr Mel Bruce
- Understanding your child's needs
- Needs and behaviours

#### Session Two:

- Introducing the bucket model
- Observing behaviour

#### Session Three:

- This Is Me plan
- Completing a plan

#### Session Four:

- Effective communication

#### Session Five:

- Dealing with sensory issues
- Routine praise and rewards

#### Session Six:

- Understanding meltdowns
- Repair, reflect and restore



"Thank you for providing families with so much brilliant information and resources they otherwise wouldn't know about. It's been eye opening and interesting to take part in the sessions, I really appreciate the work you are doing and the help and knowledge you provide"- parent attending workshop

"The workshops have helped me change my approach to my son, I took a step back and observed him, stopped nagging him and allowed him to do things "choosing my battles"- Parent attending workshop

For more information please contact:

Helping Hands Walsall

Email: [helpinghandswalsall@family-action.org.uk](mailto:helpinghandswalsall@family-action.org.uk)

One of the team will get back to you within 5 days.



Building  
stronger  
families

Clinical Commissioning Group



### **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 22 Jan 2022	Burns Night
Sat 19 Mar 2022	Tastes of the World
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)

Also, please contact us if you can provide a good quality raffle prize for any of the events.

### **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. Unfortunately, we have continued to witness examples of dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking.

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. We are also involved with the Council's A-stars scheme.

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 and students should make sure they are fully visible (through lights and clothing) in the winter months

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

### **Walsall Christmas Holiday programme**

I have included some flyers at the end of this newsletter regarding the Christmas holiday programme, provided by Walsall council.

### **West Bromwich Albion PAN disability/SEND football**

I have included a flyer at the end of this newsletter

### **Key dates for your diary**

Tue 30 Nov	Non uniform day for QMA Taste of the World Event
Thu 2 Dec	Year 12 parents' evening
Mon 13 Dec	Y13 leavers' event
Wed 15 Dec	Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day
Thu 16 Dec	Last day of term (2pm finish)





We have currently raised £3745.15, from 259 supporters.

One supporter has raised a magnificent £442.83 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**

I will write again at the end of term, giving updates on the Covid restrictions. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Regards



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

# WALSALL CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

**Walsall Right for Children holiday activity programme for children and young people aged 5 – 16 years old in Walsall.**

Over the Christmas Holiday's we will be offering a range of Holiday Clubs, Pick n mix sessions, virtual activities, activity packs, family activities and lots more!

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December**



To register and book your activities visit:  
[https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_people/haf\\_signup](https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/haf_signup)

Contact us at [WR4C@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:WR4C@walsall.gov.uk)



SCAN ME



# WALSALL CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PROGRAMME



## Walsall Holiday Programme Sign up Sessions

The programme is for children and young people aged 5 - 16 years in Walsall and your child will be able to access free activities and healthy recipe boxes during the Christmas holidays.

The Department for Education's (DfE) Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) has provided funding for the scheme

If you are unable to register for our Christmas HAF online or over the phone, come along to one of our drop in HAF sign up sessions where you will find out more information about our Christmas programme and we will support you to register and book activities.

See below dates and times *(No booking required just turn up)*

One Walsall - Saddlers Centre unit 23/24 Saddlers address is 1 Park St, Walsall WS1 1YS	10 November, 1st and 8th December. 09:00—10:00 & 13:00—14:00
Oak Park Active Living Centre, Cop- pice Road, Walsall, WS9 9BH	Saturday 13 November 2021 10:00— 14:00
Bloxwich Active Living Centre High Street Bloxwich WS3 2DA	Saturday 20 November 2021 10:00— 14:00
Frank F Community Association Christmas Fayre at Beechdale Life- long Learning Centre, Beechdale,	Saturday 27 November 2021 10:00— 14:00
Bloxwich Community Partnership, Palace Play, Shop, Eat, Blakenall Community Centre, Blakenall Row, WS3 1LW	Monday 15 November 2021 15:30— 17:00
Willenhall Library, Walsall Street, Walsall WV13 2EX	Wednesday 24 November 2021 09:30— 12:00
Streetly Library, Blackwood Rd, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield B74 3PL	Wednesday 17 November 2021 10:00— 12:00



For more information email: [wr4c@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:wr4c@walsall.gov.uk)

Or go onto our website: [https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_young\\_people/](https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/)

Department  
for Education



Walsall Council





Be part of our family

# PAN DISABILITY/SEND Football



the streetly academy

Queslett Rd East,  
Sutton Coldfield B74 2EX

## Tuesdays

DURING TERM TIME

**FOR ALL AMBULANT DISABILITY GROUPS**

**Ages 8 years +**

**6:00pm - 7:00pm**

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT CHRIS PRICE  
[chris.price@albionfoundation.co.uk](mailto:chris.price@albionfoundation.co.uk)