



Queen Mary's Grammar School

A message from the Headmaster, December 2021

First word

As the autumn term draws to a close, I'm sure that all members of the school community are looking forward to a well-earned break over Christmas. We have tried to run as many activities this term as possible, as can be seen via the School's [Twitter account](#), but it hasn't been possible to hold some of the larger events. The cadets returned to Farchynys last weekend for their Arctic warfare trip and it was great to see the return of drama on the 12th December, with Mr Williams and the students involved in the MOMO programme performing to a small audience. We look forward to more performances later in the year. Mr Kolaric has overseen the production of the QM Observer and this will be available later this week via the [website](#).

One of the events we haven't been able to run is the Christmas concert, but I am delighted to share the [link](#) here of the online version. I am grateful to Mr Vause and all of the musicians for the work that has gone into this and I look forward to the return of in-person concerts in the spring.

End of autumn term 2021

We are holding a **Christmas jumper day on Wednesday 15th December**, to raise money for *Save the Children*. Students can wear a Christmas jumper, along with their usual school uniform, in exchange for the donation of £1 via Parent Mail or in person. We are also serving our Christmas lunch on the same day, so please make sure that there is money on the student accounts.

Term will finish at **2pm on Thursday 16th December**, following a short registration. The Green Bus is running slightly earlier on that day. You should have received **end-of-term grades via the SIMS parent app**. Please contact the school if you haven't been able to access these or there are any issues.

Spring term 2022 and lateral flow tests

We are required by the DfE to carry out one lateral flow test per student upon their return in January. As a result, we are having to stagger the beginning of next term, with some groups working at home via Teams for part of the first week back. Our current Covid controls (set out in our [risk assessment](#)) will continue in January.

Tuesday 4th January: Training day, school closed to students

Wednesday 5th January

08.00-08.45 Student arrival (Year 11)

09.30-10.05 Student arrival (Years 7, 12)

10.05-10.55 Registration and extended form time (Years 7, 11 and 12 in person; Years 8, 9, 10, 13 remotely via Teams)

10.55 Break and normal day thereafter (Years 8, 9, 10, 13 live lessons via Teams, following timetable)

Thursday 6th January

- Normal lessons in school for Years 7-12
- Live lessons for Y13 remotely via Teams, following timetable (including morning registration)

Lateral flow tests

Wed 5 Jan: pd1&2 Y11 Pd3&4 Y12 Pd5&6 Y7 (Drop in Y13 when not in live lessons)
Thu 6 Jan: Pd1&2 Y10 Pd3&4 Y8 Pd5&6 Y9 (Drop in Y13 when not in live lessons)
Fri 7 Jan: Pd5&6 Y13 (no live lessons p5/6 for Y13)

All students should make sure that they take home with them additional lateral flow tests and continue the twice weekly testing over the Christmas holiday. I have attached a letter regarding the on-site testing for January and please refer to our guidance (on the [parental letters page](#) of the website) if a student is unwell. Please do contact us with any questions.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 (DfE update)

From Tuesday 14 December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 is being introduced (including until the end of this term). All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating. Daily testing by close contacts will help to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the [Online Reporting System](#) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the [Sunday 12 December press release](#). This approach should also be adopted over the winter break and on return in January.

If they test positive, they should self-isolate and [order a PCR test](#) to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive. All staff and secondary aged pupils and students should have access to a box of 7 LFD tests from their education setting. If your setting requires additional test kits sooner than they would be available through the standard ordering process, or will run out of test kits imminently, you can contact 119 to request an emergency replenishment. For primary aged children [LFD test kits are available through the usual routes](#) (community test sites, local pharmacies or online).

Finally, it is important to continue regular twice weekly, at-home testing for all education and childcare workforce and all students of secondary age and above.

SIMS Parentapp

The majority of school communication, including Reports, is sent by email and Parent App so it is crucial that you keep your contact details updated. Please check your account and ensure you can access it. If you have any access issues please email parentapp@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk for assistance.

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 Farchyngs. If you are interested in supporting the work of the QMA, please contact Judy McCoy (alumni officer) at: alumni@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk Also, please contact us if you can provide a good quality raffle prize for any of the events.

QMA Burns night: Saturday 22nd January

The QMA are delighted to promote the Burns night event on Saturday 22nd January. Students will be given an envelope this week, containing a letter, flyer and raffle tickets. The [flyer](#) is also available on our website, and a [taster clip](#) has been prepared to promote the evening. The support for the Taste of the World raffle and non-uniform day was really pleasing and it would be great to match the £3000 earned for that event.



Queen Mary's Association
presents

**THE BURNS
NIGHT BALL**

with
Ed Cusick
and his band

**Saturday
22nd January 2022
6.45pm
Tickets £40**

Parents' evenings

Thank you to parents of Year 12 who attended the feedback evening at the start of the month. If you are a Year 12 parent and haven't completed the [feedback form](#) please do so. All parents' evenings will remain online this academic year.

Walsall Christmas Holiday programme

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



**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 20th to Thursday 23rd and Wednesday 29th to Friday 31st December



To register and book your activities visit:
https://go.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/haf_signup
Contact us at WR4C@walsall.gov.uk



SCAN ME



Mental health and Wellbeing

Any member of the school community can raise concerns via the wellbeing email address well-being@qmg.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 Christmas 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)



Home-school agreement and MS Form

We wrote to parents at the end of November, highlighting that we have made some changes to the Home-School agreement. The new document is available on the [school website](#). If you haven't already done so, please complete the [MS form](#) as your part of this agreement.

Attendance policy

The updated [attendance policy](#) was approved at the latest governors meeting, including some new guidance on absence during term time. All policies can be found on the [School website](#).

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@qmg.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.

Careers and work experience

We are continually looking to expand our offering of work experience and careers links. If you are able to offer any input, or particularly a placement for a Year 12 student in the summer of 2022, please contact Mr Sunley via the CEIAG@qmg.walsall.sch.uk address.

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. Members of staff have also been spoken to in a rude and aggressive manner, whilst simply carrying out their duties and looking to safeguard the students. In one instance, this was reported to the police.

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.

Key dates for your diary

Wed 15 Dec	Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day
Thu 16 Dec	Last day of term (2pm finish)
Thu 6 Jan	Y13 leavers' event
Mon 10 Jan	Year 13 mock exams begin
10-14 Jan	Year 11 academic reviews
Thu 13 Jan	Year 10 parents' evening (online)
Tue 18 Jan	Non uniform day for Burns night event
Sat 22 Jan	QMA Burns night event



We have currently raised £3,762.35, from 264 supporters. The top 4 supporters have raised £1272.99 between them!

One supporter has raised a magnificent £423.63 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 all of your support this term. I wish you a peaceful Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Regards



Richard Langton

Headmaster

Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall