



Queen Mary's Grammar School

A message from the Headmaster, November 2022

First word

I'm writing the November updates a week earlier than usual due to our digital transformation project from 28th November. The [letter](#) sent out this week gives full details of the temporary arrangements, but please be particularly aware of contact details for the week:

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WEEK Mon 28th Nov - Fri 02nd Dec

Anyone wishing to contact the School during the Digital Transformation week must use the temporary telephone numbers below:

07401470634 - Main school reception 1
07401879541 - Main school reception 2
07401397713 - Sixth-form absences

07445840685 - Main school absences 1
07401198799 - Main school absences 2

It has been great to hear the musicians practicing this month ahead of their Christmas concert (see below) and I was very proud to see how our cadets conducted themselves in the Walsall remembrance parade. We also held our own remembrance assemblies and heard from Mr Hughes on his research into former students who lost their lives in the world wars. As with Speech day, I have encouraged the students to reflect upon those who have done so much in the past to ensure that we have the quality of life that we enjoy. The School's [Twitter](#) account has full coverage of the co-curricular activities and I encourage you to take a look.

Queen Mary's Association

We will be looking to run a full range of events in 2022-23 and we will be seeking opinions on a new format for the summer event. The dates of the events are:

Saturday 3 December 2022 Taste of the World
Saturday 28 January 2023 Burns night
July 2023 Summer arts festival

The flyers for Burns night will be coming out soon and we encourage parents to buy tickets early for this popular event.

We sent out flyers and raffle tickets for the Taste of the World event a couple of weeks ago and held the non-uniform day for raffle returns on Wednesday 23rd November. We are approaching £3000 in sales and you can still buy tickets up to the event itself on Saturday 3rd December. One of the providers of a prize is Kombat Kids' and I have included information about them on page 5. I have included a flyer for the event, including a QR code for ticket sales on page 2 or by following this [link](#).

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 Prveen Kataria-Raulia (alumni officer) at: alumni@qmg.s.walsall.sch.uk Also, please contact us if you can provide a good quality raffle prize for any of the events. I have also included a summary of the progress made on Easy Fundraising at the end of this email.

CELEBRATE
TASTE OF THE WORLD

EXPERIENCE MANY CULTURES, MUSIC AND FOOD! AT...
Queen Mary's Grammar School

Tickets can be bought using QR code below with prices as follows:

Under 18s & QMGS students:	£5
Adults:	£15
Family (2 adults, 2 children):	£35

DECEMBER 3RD
18:00PM - 21:00PM

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE!

Prices include entry, entertainment and food from each stall (Mexican, USA, Indian, Chinese). There will also be a desserts stall, mehndi artist, games and a licensed bar, for an additional cash fee.

Celebrating the rich culture of QMGS
Performances from the Mandarin Excellence Programme
Professional bhangra group 'Bhangra Smash Up'
Open Mic Talent Competition
And So Much More...

Music concert

We will be hosting the Christmas concert at school on Thursday 15th December at 7.30pm. With over 150 performers, there is sure to be a high demand for tickets, so please avoid disappointment and buy yours now following this [link](#).

National Online Safety Centre

The School are now signed up to the National Online Safety Centre. Mr Lally recently [wrote to parents](#) about how you can create an account. We will be sending out regular updates on specific E-safety matters. We will be providing monthly E-safety updates. This month, we focus on the SENDIT function and the parental guide can be found on page 5

Cost of living support

We are very aware of the current economic challenges and want to support our families as much as possible. Mrs Youngman sets out two initiatives below and parents can view other resources both on our [website](#) and through [Walsall council](#).

QMGs Bagels for Breakfast

As a school, we have linked up with Family Action and the National Breakfast Programme so we are able to provide a free bagel every morning in the canteen between 8am and 8.30am to any student who would like one. They don't need to register for this; just turn up!

Walsall Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme Too Good To Go app

Information has been included on pages 8 and 9 on the Walsall Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme. We would also like to make you aware of the 'Too Good To Go' app, which allows people to buy food which hasn't been sold from supermarkets at the end of the day or during the day, at really low prices. Clicking on this [link](#) will give information about how it works and how to get the app via a QR code. Alternatively, you can just type in Too Good To Go app to download it.

Thanks to Balbir Seimar and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Branch, who have kindly donated food hampers to support our families and the community. Please contact Mrs Hill at dc-hill@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk if your family would benefit from a food hamper.

Home School Agreement 2022-23

Please see the [website](#) for our Home-School Agreement and link to student consent. I would appreciate you taking the time to read this with your child and completing the MS Form to confirm that you have done so.

DT voluntary contributions

A letter has recently gone to all students in Years 7-9, along with those who have opted to study Design Technology at GCSE or A-level. We rely upon parental contributions (above our core budget) to be able offer the full range of curriculum and co-curricular opportunities in DT. Please follow this [link](#) for the letter and information on how to contribute.

Homework club

Homework club is running again this term, on a Monday-Thursday. More information can be found on the School's [website](#).

Mental health and wellbeing

The School continues to support staff and students with their wellbeing through the usual communication channels. Any member of the school community can raise concerns via the wellbeing email address well-being@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk or by using the QR code below.

This account is monitored by the SEMH team and is checked regularly:

- Mr Collins (Assistant Head and DSL)
- Mr Farnell (Safeguarding and Welfare Officer)
- Ms Burgess (SEMH mentor)
- Mrs Mohan (6th Form Operations Manager)



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. Please send any updates of parental contact details to absences@gmgs.walsall.sch.uk

Dates for your diary

The full school calendar can be found the [School website](#), but I have included some key dates below:

Thu 24 Nov	Sixth form open evening
Fri 25 Nov	School closed, digital transformation starts
Thu 1 Dec	Year 12 parents' evening (this will now be moved to the Spring term)
Sat 3 Dec	Taste of the World event
Mon 12 Dec	Early finish for staff CPD (2.40pm)
Fri 16 Dec	End of term
Tue 3 Jan	Staff training day
Wed 4 Jan	Start of Spring term for students
Thu 5 Jan	2022 Year 13 leavers' event

Absences for appointments and religious observance

May I remind parents/carers, as per the [Attendance Policy](#), the below process for absences relating to appointments during the school day:

- Medical appointments should be arranged outside of school time wherever possible
- The school must be notified a minimum of 3 days in advance of any medical appointment that have been made. Without this prior notification and proof of the appointment, the absence will be marked as unauthorised
- This notification should be sent to absences@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk with a copy of the appointment notification
- If you are attending the appointment from school 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.
- If you require some absence for the purpose of religious observance, please complete and return the form which is available on the school website via this [link](#)

Traffic and parking around the School

I recently wrote to parents with regards to traffic around the school site. This letter can be found [here](#). Please continue to work with us in making the school environment a safer place. In particular, please consider the following:

- Not undertaking dangerous manoeuvres (such as U-turns or overtaking) on Sutton Road or surrounding streets
- Not parking inconsiderably near to resident driveways
- Not using access roads or resident only parking areas
- Dropping the students further away from school
- Encouraging the student to use 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

Final word

Thank you for your continued support. I hope to see you at one of the events in December

Mr Langton



We have currently raised £4,655.68, from 270 supporters. The top 4 supporters have raised £1303.35 between them!

One supporter has raised a magnificent £514.12 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.
- There are big donations on travel bookings. A small selection is below but there are many more:
 - Trainline 2.5%
 - Travelodge 2%
 - Haven Holidays 2.5%
 - Booking.Com 4%
 - Crystal Ski Holidays 0.5%
 - TUI 2%
 - First Choice 1.5%
- 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

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

SENDIT

Sendit is an add-on to Snapchat, not a standalone app; it requires users to have an active Snapchat account, which they then connect to Sendit. It's important that trusted adults realise, therefore, that any risks associated with Snapchat also affect children using Sendit. Within the app, people play question games like 'Truth or Dare' and 'Never Have I Ever'; users select a question to share on their Snapchat story for their friends to reply to. All responses are anonymous, although – for paying subscribers – Sendit reveals hints about who sent which messages.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ANONYMOUS RESPONSES

Anonymity online encourages people to say things and act in ways that they normally wouldn't. They're less accountable, and it's harder to track who sent a message. Research has highlighted that children perceive anonymous messages as being more severe than if the same message had come from a friend. Any app that lets children communicate anonymously should be treated with caution.

MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT

Categories of questions such as "Ask me anything" or "Rate me" – coupled with the app's anonymity – mean there is a likelihood of some friends or strangers (if the account is set to 'public') responding in a negative manner. These critical comments (especially if there are several) could ruin a young person's self-esteem – heightening their insecurities and affecting their mental health.

MEMBERSHIP COSTS

Currently costing £8.49 per week, Sendit's Diamond Membership offers clues about who sent a particular message, such as their approximate location, the type of phone used and any mutual friends. Membership also provides exclusive games and an ad-free experience. Young people may well be curious to find out who certain messages are from and therefore sign up for membership.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Open-ended questions which relate personally to the sender are an opportunity for malicious people to make offensive remarks, which can lead to full-blown bullying and harassment. Additionally, bullies and trolls can hide behind the anonymity that Sendit offers, feeling more powerful and able to intimidate their target – who, by contrast, feels hurt, victimised and helpless.

POSSIBLE GROOMING

If your child doesn't have their Snapchat account set to private, or they have previously added strangers as friends, there is a possibility of predators responding to their Sendit questions. They do this in an attempt to gather information about your child – or to initiate a conversation with them, seeking ultimately to form an online 'friendship' and gain the young person's trust.

REPEATED ENGAGEMENT

On Sendit, users receive trophies for reaching a particular number of responses, for answering friends' questions and for posting their own. This sense of achievement could incentivise a young person to be active on Sendit more frequently – spending more time on their phone or tablet as they may naturally want to collect all of the trophies or might be competing with their peers.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ENCOURAGE EMPATHY

If your child has already downloaded Sendit, it might be wise to have a discussion with them about the impact that saying something anonymously online could have on others. Encourage them to think about how they would feel if they were on the receiving end of a particular comment. Reminding them to stop and re-read messages before sending could reduce the number of regrettable situations.

TALK IT OVER

Before allowing a young person onto a social networking app, it's a good idea to chat with them about the possibility of receiving hurtful comments. Explain that not everyone online is nice; that people often say things they don't mean; and that posts get misinterpreted. Teach your child not to reply to any offensive users on Sendit and simply block instead them (via the three dots in the top right of the screen).

BLOCK IN-APP PURCHASES

Even if you do allow your child to use Sendit, you might want to consider talking to them in advance about whether they really need a membership subscription. Either way, it's probably safest to make sure that in-app purchases are blocked in the settings, or that you have configured your child's device to ask for your approval before making a purchase online.

ONLY PLAY WITH FRIENDS

Stress the importance of your child playing Sendit games only with their close friends and not having strangers on their contacts list. This should help to keep the nature of the questions light-hearted – and if the games are being played among a small group, it will be easier for the members to figure out who gave certain answers if someone's been left feeling hurt or uncomfortable by any responses.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

<https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com> | <https://www.getitall.com/parents> | <https://www.sendit.com/terms>
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KOMBATKIDS

The Right Choice!



**First 3
classes
FREE!**

WELCOMING NEW BEGINNERS AT

KILLOCK CENTRE

Longwood Lane, Aldridge, Walsall. WS5 3AT

SATURDAY 10.15 - 11.15AM

WOLVERHAMPTON UNIVERSITY (WALSALL CAMPUS)

Gorway Road, Walsall. WS1 3BD

FRIDAY 5.30-6.30PM

To register text: child name / class location

t: 07730 899722

e: info@kombatkids.com

w: www.kombatkids.com

f: www.facebook.com/kombatkids



1992-2022

WALSALL CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PROGRAMME



Walsall Council are offering all eligible children the opportunity to join our Christmas Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF).

How do I know if my child is eligible?

For your child to take part in the programme you must live in Walsall, your child must be eligible for income-based free school meals and be aged between 5 and 16 years old.

What do we offer?

The Department for Education's (DfE) funded, Holiday Activity and Food Programme is delivered locally by Walsall Council in partnership with over 60 local providers.

It is aimed at eligible children and young people and their families to provide an opportunity to be active over the Christmas Holidays, meet other children and take part in activities they may not usually get the chance to try.

At each activity, whether it is a holiday club or pick and mix session a healthy meal will be provided.

When does the Christmas HAF programme start?

The activities will take place over the Christmas holidays for four days from Monday 19 December to Thursday 22 December.

Christmas programme provision

For the Christmas programme running from Monday 19 December to Thursday 22 December 2022 your child can choose one of the following options:

4-Day Activity Club

A holiday club providing a range of activities throughout the day. This is for children to engage with a range of activities for at least four hours a day, four days a week, per child.

OR

Choose up to four sessions from a range of 'Pick and Mix' activities on offer.

Children booked to attend pick and mix activities will receive a total of one food box and an activity pack per child.

How can my child take part?

You should receive a letter in the post with your child's unique HAF code. Once received you will need to register your child, if not already registered, by visiting the website: www.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/haf_signup



← OR SCAN ME

Once registered, from 1 November 2022, you will be able to go online and book your child onto the sessions.

My child is already registered for the HAF programme

If your child is already registered on the programme at some point this year, you are able to log onto your account at anytime, and book on from 1 November 22. The letter will have on it a unique access code which will be required to access the booking process. If you haven't received a letter or if you are unable to find your code please contact the HAF team by email or by calling the team with your child's name, Date of Birth and your address. Contact details are below:

If I don't have a code

If you want to see if you have a code, please contact the HAF team by email or by calling the team with your child's name, Date of Birth and your address. Contact details are available below.

What happens after I have registered and booked my child's activities?

Once you have booked your child's activities, you will receive an email with confirmation. The provider delivering the activity will then contact you to confirm details and discuss any practical arrangements such as arrival times and dietary requirements.

Please ensure that you let the provider know if you need to cancel or amend a booking well in advance where possible. Activities are very popular and if your child is not able to attend it is important that we are able to offer their place to another child to benefit from the programme.

My child has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – can they still take part?

Walsall Council has been working closely with local providers to ensure that where possible SEND requirements can be met on activities that are on offer – specific requirements should be discussed with the provider to confirm the arrangements.

For any further enquiries

Details of how to contact the provider of any of the activities your child is registered on are available on the webpage www.walsall.gov.uk/children_and_young_people/haf_signup

Please email any questions to WR4C@walsall.gov.uk or call our Holiday Activities helpline on 01922 853899 – available from Monday to Friday from 10am until 4pm.



Walsall Council



Department
for Education