



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

## A message from the Headmaster, October 2024

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### First word

I am writing this message at the start of the last week of a long half term. We end this week with Speech Day, our annual celebration of the achievements over the past year and a day where we reflect back further, to those people who have been instrumental in making sure that the school has thrived over its 470 year history. We should never take our School for granted and it is important that we all play our part in ensuring that the community thrives.

The sense of community was extremely strong at the Varsity rugby event last week, where hundreds of students, staff and parents watched the under 12s, followed by the senior teams take on Bishop Vesey's Grammar School. The delight on the faces of the Under 12 A and B teams as they ended their games victorious, coupled with the determination of the senior teams in their close games against strong opposition, told a lot about how working together can result in success. The School's [social media](#) accounts give a glimpse at the broader extra-curricular life and it is down to the hard work of staff and students that these events happen and that young people thrive. That has happened to many generations of Marians and long may it continue.

As well as sporting successes, we look forward to the performances of musicians at Speech Day, displaying the fruits of their endeavours over many weeks of practice. We also have a student in China (Nishan Siddique of Year 13), representing the UK after winning the national Mandarin speaking competition in the summer term. This is the second year in a row that QMGS has provided the UK entrant and is testament to the hard work and dedication of Mrs Wang and her team. This has been recognised by UCL, who have awarded Mrs Wang a national award of excellence for the teaching and leadership of Mandarin. A fitting accolade for many years of dedication.

Finally, I have been really impressed with students who have spoken in our large key stage assemblies this term. From reflective accounts of international trips, to presentations of iconic figures related to Black History Month and in parental presentations about the experiences of sixth formers in the school, they have shown the best of QMGS. Bright, articulate young people with a clear sense of morals and perspective. We look forward to presentations at Speech Day and on Diwali after the half term break and I wish all families who are celebrating this a wonderful experience.

### QM Experience Fund and the Future Sport Project

Thank you to those parents who have made donations to the QM Experience fund, following my [letter](#) at the beginning of term. We try our best to provide extra-curricular activities through our school budget or at as low a cost as possible. However, our ambitions often go beyond this income and I am hoping that you will consider giving a regular amount to ensure that we can continue to offer a full range of activities. Prior to the Covid pandemic, we ran the 'Lift Fund' and I am grateful to those of you who supported this. Over the past few years, I have been very conscious of the national economic picture and have been cautious about approaching parents for support. However, I am grateful to those who have given what they can to the school and who have supported events through the Queen Mary's Association (QMA).

For the past two years, we have been fundraising towards the [Future Sport @ QMGS project](#): an ambitious initiative to revolutionise our facilities for the benefit of our students and the wider community. We are very close to receiving planning permission and, with pledges standing just below £1million, we are hoping to start the development this year. Any donations to the QM experience fund will initially go towards this but will support a wide range of other opportunities once we have completed the project.

I hope that you will seriously consider making a regular payment to the QM Experience Fund. We are grateful for a regular contribution as it enables us to plan the best ways in which to support our young people. Please follow this [link](#) for details of how to set up a standing order to the donations account and a Gift Aid declaration which, if you are a UK taxpayer, will allow us to claim an additional 25% on top of your donations. Alternatively, if you would prefer you can make a one-off annual payment (£60) or termly payments (£20 per term), you can do this via Parent Mail. Please select the 'QM Experience' option.

### **Taste of the World - Saturday 7th December 2024 - save the date and request for support**

We are pleased to announce that the Queen Mary's Association (QMA) are holding the annual Taste of the World event on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December, 6-9pm. We are delighted to confirm that catering this year will come from Chef Vijay, Five Rivers and Innovate.



We are looking forward to performance from students involved in the Mandarin Excellence Programme (MEP). To complete the entertainment for the evening, we are searching for:

- A bhangra group or similar musical performance to start the evening. If you are involved in a group or can recommend one, please contact us via [alumni@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:alumni@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk)
- Open mic music performances from the students – look out for posters in school and for announcements from the Pupil Senior Leadership Team (PSLT)

**DECEMBER  
7TH  
18:00 – 21:00**



Tickets are available now via [Ticket Source](#) and details will be shared on the student raffle/non-uniform day after the half term break. Thank you for your support and we look forward to welcoming you.

### **Queen Mary's Association (QMA)**

We enjoyed a full range of events in 2023-24, raising over £15,000 towards the Future Sport project. We hope that you can support the valuable work of the QMA in 2024-25 by attending the QMA events and purchasing raffle tickets, so that we can continue to enrich our children's school experience.

The events for this year are:

Saturday 7 December 2024	Taste of the World
Saturday 25 January 2025	Burns Night Ball (adults only)
Saturday 28 June 2025	Summer Arts Festival

We have just welcomed new members of the parent community to the QMA and we are always looking for support in the running of the events, but also in the donation of raffle prizes, sponsorship, and match funding. Please do contact us if you can help out in any way. Each QMA event has a committee to run it and we have a separate group who manage the running of the bar. If you are interested in supporting the work of the QMA, please contact us via Minaxi Patel-Gill at: [alumni@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:alumni@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk).

Easy fundraising is also an easy way to support the QMA. We have raised a total of £7,412.31 for the school from 305 parent and staff supporters. 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; you can find our Easyfundraising page at this [link](#)

## **Attendance updates**

We welcomed Mrs Nolan to the school at the start of October as a new Attendance Officer. She has been communicating with students and families over the past few weeks, with regards to attendance and punctuality. We are committed to making sure that student attendance is as high as possible. I [wrote to parents](#) at the beginning of the year to set out the changes. No holiday in term time will be authorised and we are obliged to consider issuing a penalty notice to parents if a child misses 5 days of school for an unauthorised absence. We are following tightened [DfE guidance](#) on attendance and ask that all parents support us in this key area.

## **F1 in Schools competition**

We are thrilled to announce that our school is participating in the prestigious F1 in Schools competition! This exciting programme challenges students to design, manufacture, and race miniature Formula 1 cars, all while fostering skills in STEM. To make this experience possible, we are seeking sponsorship from our wider community. Your support can help us cover materials, tools, and travel expenses, enabling our talented students to compete at their best. If you or your business would like to sponsor our team, please reach out to us at [xlr8\\_racing@outlook.com](mailto:xlr8_racing@outlook.com). This is a fantastic opportunity to not only support our students but also to promote your business within our school community. For further details, visit our website [here](#).

Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference!

Aidan Fernandez (Year 13), XLR8 Racing

## **Mental health and wellbeing**

The school continues to support staff and students with their wellbeing through the usual communication channels. We work with a number of organisations and any member of the school community can raise concerns via the wellbeing or safeguarding email addresses. These will be checked during the holiday, but there may be some delay in response.

[Qmgswell-being@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:Qmgswell-being@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk)

[qmgssafeguarding@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:qmgssafeguarding@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk)

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

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

## **Avenues of support (Mrs Hill)**

I would like to remind all parents of the [Avenues of Support](#) we offer, focussing on pre-loved uniform and sports kit and food hampers. We have had donations of uniform from Y11 and Y13 at the end of last year, but there has been a drop in donations to the Community Hub of late.

Thank you to parents and alumni alike who have generously donated uniform and sports kit to our Community Hub. This is always very much appreciated, and we look forward to receiving more donations. We have a good stock of pre-loved items, so please contact Mrs Hill at [d.hill@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk) if any items are required.

Thanks to Balbir Seimar and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women Branch who kindly donate food hampers to support our families and the community. Please contact Mrs Hill at [d.hill@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk) if your family would benefit from a food hamper.

QMGs Breakfast Club, in partnership with the [National Schools Breakfast Programme](#), offers free bagels and spreads every morning from 8am until 8.30am in the Canteen - all pupils welcome! Click on the link above for more information on the National Schools Breakfast Programme, weekend breakfast ideas and quizzes.

### **Is your child a young carer? (Mrs Hill)**

We are proud of being a diverse and inclusive school and strive to support our pupils and their families in any way we can. As we continue to develop our support, we have been improving our knowledge and understanding of young carers. Therefore, we would be interested to learn if your child helps to give ongoing care and emotional support for you or other members of your family who may have an illness, a physical/mental disability, or a mental health issue. With your help, we are looking to gather more information to help us identify and support any of our pupils who have a caring role at home and therefore could be considered a young carer.

We have been conducting assemblies which have raised the awareness of young carers and asked pupils to reach out to us if they think this applies to them so we can try to ensure the right support is given to them. Since doing this we have identified 16 young carers but know that it is a small part of a much bigger picture.

Please follow [this link](#) to help you decide if your child might be a young carer. If you think they are, please email Mrs D Hill, Young Carer's Operational Lead [d.hill@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk) with the heading 'Young Carer'. Please tell us your child's name and form with a brief overview of the caring role they provide. We will then be in touch with both you and your child to explain how they can be supported here in school (and out of school) and share information about other measures of support available.

### **Dates for your diary**

*Christmas Concert: Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm, Main School Hall*

Our annual Christmas concert featuring the school's choir and various ensembles, is on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December. Tickets are now on sale priced £5 available online from ticket source: please click on the following link: [ticket source](#). We hope many of you will be able to join us for what is always a really great night of musical entertainment.

The full school calendar can be found on the [School website](#), but I have included some key dates for the end of term and beginning of the autumn below:

Thu 24 Oct	Speech Day (half term starts after)	Mon 16 Dec	Y13 leavers' event
Sun 10 Nov	Remembrance parade	Tue 17 Dec	Christmas concert
Thu 21 Nov	Sixth form open evening	Fri 20 Dec	Term finishes at 2pm
18-28 Nov	Y11 mock exams		

Thank you for your continued support for the school. I wish you a restful half term break.

Regards

Mr Langton  
Headmaster