



# Queen Mary's Grammar School

## A message from the Headmaster, Summer term 2025

### First word

It has been an incredibly busy end to the year, with lots of students out on trips and activities, expanding their experiences beyond the classroom. I have spoken to the school about how fortunate that they are to have such a range of opportunities and it is important that they say thank you to the staff for providing them.

Each of the Year 7 forms have enjoyed their first experiences of Farchynys, deepening friendships and pushing them out of their comfort zone. The Welsh weather has been kind this year and the returning staff have been universally positive about the attitudes of the students on the trips. I hope it is the start of a long association with our field centre for these children.

We have also seen a number of other trips, around the UK and further afield. The Under 13 cricket team enjoyed a successful tour in Yorkshire, there have been several CCF trips and activities and army cadets are looking forward to their summer camp.



QMGS PSHE @qmgs-pshe.bsky.social · 41m

7R at the top of their precipice walk - heroic effort from them all!



QMGS reposted



QMGS Mandarin @qmgs\_mandarin · 8h

Day 1 of Y9 MEP Intensive Study at ECNU : Opening ceremony + language lessons + meeting the language partners and the welcome dinner. A lovely, relaxing start to the programme! 🌟👏 @qmgs1554 @MEP\_Excellence



The Year 10 Geographers made the most of their day trips to the Peak District and Geographers in the sixth form have undertaken fieldwork at Farchynys. Mandarin, Business, English, DT and History students have taken part in trips to various destinations, and we have seen a number of overseas visits, with A-level maths students in Italy, a diving trip to Lanzarote, as well as lower school languages trips to Normandy and Shanghai (MEP). I am sure that all students will have hugely benefitted from these experiences.



QMGS Ski and Diving trips @qmgs-ski-trip.bsky.social · 2d

First dives done. Most students halfway through the open water course.



Finally, the Outlook expedition group are currently in Malawi. I am sure these students will grow as people, developing leadership and resilience as they cope with new experiences and challenges. We look forward to following their progress via the school's social media accounts on X (Twitter) and Bluesky.

On the sports field, it has been a very busy summer term of cricket, with lots of individual and team successes, playing against some high-quality opponents. Since the last newsletter, the Under 12 rugby team have also been crowned county champions.

We celebrated the sporting successes of the year at the sports awards evening, and it was amazing to hear of the sheer amount of fixtures and victories during the year. Again, I must pay tribute to the staff who have made this possible.



In terms of music, we have enjoyed student performances at the Spring Concert and the Summer Arts Festival. From those who have only started playing an instrument this year, to those who have developed their expertise and left the school after 7 years, there is a staggering breadth and depth of talent. A link to the Spring Concert highlights is available [here](#) and the following link can be used to sign up for extra music tuition from September 2025. [Instrumental Lessons @ QMGS \(from Sep 2025\)](#)

Finally, we have supported a range of charities during the term, with initiatives led by the school council alongside established events such as the 24 hour maths challenge in support of [Birmingham Children's Hospital](#).

I have tried to just capture the essence of the co-curricular offering here, but there have been many more successes and opportunities. I hope that the students continue to take advantage of these next year, after a well-earned summer break.

### Staff tributes

It is the time of year when we traditionally say goodbye to staff, as they move on to new adventures. Two colleagues are leaving us after one year in associate staff roles, to take up initial teacher training places. Mrs Poblete has worked as a Spanish FLA and cover teacher, whilst Ms Taylor has supported the Biology department as a lab technician. We wish them both well in their teaching careers. Mr Whitehead is also leaving us to start his teaching career, specialising in English at Wood Green School. He has undertaken a number of roles at QMGS since 2020, starting as a Covid tester and providing huge amounts of support in cover, whilst also leading cadets in the CCF. He has completed his teacher training this year, including a placement at QMGS and I'm sure that he will continue to see him at the school. Mr Johnstone also moves on to his next educational pursuit, after one year teaching psychology. We wish him well for the future. Finally, Miss Humphries and Mr Mitchell are leaving us for foreign shores, taking up exciting new teaching roles in Japan. Miss Humphries joined the school in 2020, teaching geography and acting as Head of Year for 4 years. She has taken part in multiple school trips and we wish her well for her next chapter. Mr Mitchell is leaving us for the third time in 14 years! His current spell has lasted 5 years and I'm sure that students will miss his maths teaching. He has been a valuable teacher of maths and has worked beyond the school in the development of maths teaching. We wish Mr Mitchell well, along with all colleagues leaving us, and hope they stay in touch.

### Mercian trust parent code of conduct

The Mercian Trust have introduced a new code of conduct for parents of all schools in the group. The code can be found [here](#). We want to continue to maintain our extremely positive relationships with our parental community and ask that you are aware of these expectations.



### **Clive Mark uniform**

We will be continuing to work with Clive Mark uniform suppliers for the next academic year. This is for sportswear and regular school uniform. There are no planned changes to uniform design this year. The online store is available [here](#).

### **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@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk) if any items are required. Please also contact Mrs Hill at [d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk) if your family would benefit from a food hamper.

### **Is your child a young carer? Let us know (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 had assemblies to raise awareness of young carers and asked pupils to reach out to us if they think this applies to them so that we can try to ensure the right support is given to them. Since doing this we have identified over 30 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@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@qmgs.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.

Useful contacts: Mr G Collins – Young Carers SLT Lead:

[g.collins@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:g.collins@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk)

Mrs D Hill –Young Carers Operational Lead:

[d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk)

### **Walsall Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme**

Please see the flyers at the end of this newsletter for summer opportunities.

### **Bluecoat School STEM Summer Workshop**

Bluecoat School are hosting a STEM Summer Workshop on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July. It is aimed at ages 11-13, children going into Years 7-9 in Sept.

[Build, Code, Create! Summer STEM Week Tickets, Mon, Jul 28, 2025 at 9:30 AM | Eventbrite](#)

## Future Sport @ QMGs

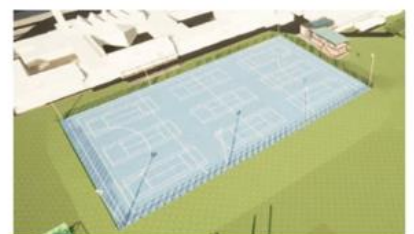
I hope that you had a chance to read my letter earlier in the term relating to the contract being awarded for the [Future Sport @ QMGs project](#)! This comes after over three years of hard work in fundraising, preparing plans and building our partnerships with clubs, schools and charities. We will be starting the work before the start of next term.

We are looking for people to give their time. We have a dedicated campaign board, made up of staff, parents and alumni. We are looking for alumni who would like to be ambassadors for the programme, organising events and advocating for Future Sport @ QMGs within their year group or community. If you are interested in this, please let us know via [alumni@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:alumni@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk)

We are looking for people to contribute financially. Thank you to those who have done so already, but, if you haven't, you can do this in a variety of ways:

1. By setting up a regular payment through a standing order. Please follow this [link](#) for details of how to set up a standing order to the donations account. This includes a Gift Aid declaration which, if you are a UK taxpayer, will allow us to claim an additional 25% on top of your donations.
2. By making a regular payment to the QM Experience Fund, via Parent Mail. You can make a one-off annual payment (£60) or termly payments (£20), via Parent Mail. Please select the 'QM Experience' option. Please remember to make your Spring term donation, if you haven't already.
3. Just Giving – [Future Sport @QMGs - Queen Mary's Grammar School - JustGiving](#)
4. Supporting the work of the Queen Mary's Association (QMA), by attending events (Taste of the World, Burns Night and the Summer Arts Festival), and supporting raffles

## FutureSport@QMGs: A Community Legacy Project



Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan (NTS)



Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan (N)

Express & Star



### Walsall school looking to transform its sporting facilities – and here's why

A Walsall school is looking to transform its sporting facilities to enable it to compete competitively in hockey through an ambitious plan.

## Queen Mary's Association (QMA)

The fabulous Summer Arts Festival took place at the end of June, attracting over 400 people and raising £5000, taking fundraising this year to just under £18000. Thank you to everyone who has supported the events over the past 12 months.

We have set the dates for the events in 2025-26:

- Taste of the World: Sat 6 Dec
- Burns night: Sat 24 Jan
- Summer arts festival: Sat 27 June



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 QMA, please contact us via Minaxi Patel-Gill at: [alumni@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:alumni@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk)

Easy fundraising is also an easy way to support the QMA. We have raised a total of £8,033.72 for the school from 311 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](#)

## Mental health and wellbeing

We have included some information at the end of this newsletter with regards to some summer wellbeing workshops, as well as a parent guide on generative AI safety.

The school continues to support staff and students with their wellbeing through the usual communication channels. We work with several 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@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:Qmgswell-being@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk)  
[gmgssafeguarding@gmgs.merciantrust.org.uk](mailto:gmgssafeguarding@gmgs.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)
- Mrs Mohan (6th Form Operations Manager)
- Ms Forbes (SEMH counsellor)



### Dates for your diary

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:

Wed 16 Jul	End of summer term (2pm)
Thu 14 Aug	A-level results day
Thu 21 Aug	GCSE results day
Mon 1 Sep	Staff training day
Tue 2 Sep	Year 7 and 12 induction day

Wed 3 Sep	Start of term for all students
Wed 10 Sep	Y7 parent information evening
Thu 11 Sep	Y12 parent information evening
Tue 16 Sep	Y10 parent information evening
Thu 25 Sep	RSE parent information evening

Term dates for 2025-26 are also now live, via this [link](#).

Regards

Mr Langton  
Headmaster



**Walsall Holiday Activities & Food Programme**

# HAF 2025

## What's on offer?

A free and exciting holiday programme for children and young people aged 5-16 who are eligible for income based free school meals. The programme is running over Easter, Summer and Christmas.

### Free activities:

- Horse riding
- Arts & Crafts
- Cooking
- Pantomimes
- Football
- Swimming
- and much more!

**Sign up Now!**



# How to register and book for the 2025 programme?

You will need a code to register if you have not received a code, by post. Please contact us to see if you qualify for the programme via email [wr4c@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:wr4c@walsall.gov.uk).

## To register your child, use any of the following options:

- Scan the QR CODE below
- Visit our website [www.walsall.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/holiday-activities-programme-haf](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/holiday-activities-programme-haf)
- Call us on 01922 653899
- Email us your enquiry on [wr4c@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:wr4c@walsall.gov.uk)

Once you have registered you will be able to book onto activities.



## To find out more visit our website or sign up to our newsletter:

[www.walsall.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/holiday-activities-programme-haf](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/holiday-activities-programme-haf)







Join us for an exciting  
**WELL-BEING  
WORKSHOP**

Discover the ways to look after our  
physical and mental health through  
nature, crafts and games!



**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August**  
**1:00pm - 2:30pm**



**Caldmore Community Gardens, Carless  
Street, WS1 3RH**



**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August**  
**1:00pm - 3:00pm**

**Caldmore Community Gardens, Carless  
Street, WS1 3RH**



For additional information or brief sign up form to register  
your attendance for these events, please email

**[bchft.reflexions@nhs.net](mailto:bchft.reflexions@nhs.net)**



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GENERATIVE AI SAFETY

Generative AI tools – such as ChatGPT – are now commonly used by children. In fact, 3 in 4 pupils in the 2024 Annual Literacy Survey reported using generative AI, up from just 2 in 5 the previous year. While these tools can boost learning and creativity, they also raise concerns around misinformation, privacy and overuse. This guide explores the key risks and how to support safe use.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### MISINFORMATION AND ACCURACY



Generative AI can sometimes produce false or misleading content. Children – and even adults – may assume the information is accurate and trustworthy. This can affect learning and understanding of important topics. It's vital to teach children to critically assess all information, even when it comes from AI.

### EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Because generative AI is trained on vast datasets from across the internet, there is a chance it may occasionally generate harmful or inappropriate content. Without supervision, children could encounter disturbing or unsuitable material. Active monitoring and clear usage boundaries can help reduce this risk.

### PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

Some AI tools ask for personal details or store users' interactions. If privacy settings are not correctly configured, children's personal data could be exposed or misused. Teaching good digital hygiene and setting strong privacy controls is essential for protecting children online.

### REDUCED CRITICAL THINKING



Relying too heavily on AI-generated responses may reduce children's willingness to think independently. If they consistently use AI to solve problems or complete tasks, it could impact their ability to reason, analyse and form their own ideas. Encouraging thoughtful reflection is key.

### DIGITAL DEPENDENCY



Regular use of generative AI can contribute to increased screen time and less real-world interaction. If left unmanaged, it may affect physical activity levels, sleep, and social development. Striking a healthy balance between online and offline activities is important for wellbeing.

### UNCLEAR ETHICAL BOUNDARIES



Children may not fully understand the ethical implications of using AI to complete homework or creative tasks. This can lead to unintentional plagiarism or dishonest academic practices. Conversations around responsible use and academic honesty are crucial.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ESTABLISH CLEAR GUIDELINES

Set clear, age-appropriate rules for when and how generative AI can be used. Reinforce these regularly to help children develop a healthy, respectful and informed relationship with the technology.



### ENCOURAGE CRITICAL EVALUATION

Help children to question the accuracy of AI-generated information and seek out additional trusted sources. This builds essential digital literacy skills and supports better decision-making.



### PROMOTE ACTIVE SUPERVISION

Keep an eye on how the children in your care use AI tools. Check in regularly to ensure they're using them appropriately and be ready to step in if something doesn't feel right.



### ENHANCE PRIVACY AWARENESS

Talk to children about the importance of keeping personal information private. Make sure privacy settings are in place and explain how data shared with AI tools could be used.



## Meet Our Expert

Brendan O'Keefe, Deputy Headmaster and Director of Digital Strategy at Eaton House Schools, has extensive expertise in digital safety, safeguarding, and generative AI in education. As an author and speaker on digital literacy and online safety for institutions such as The National College, Brendan guides parents and educators in creating safe digital learning environments.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College