



A Selective Girls' Grammar School with Academy Status

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To Parents of Pupils in Y7

The Mandarin Excellence Programme

Dear Parents

We trust that your daughter is beginning to feel at home in the QM Community and that she is enjoying all aspects of her learning – both in the classroom and outside.

I am writing now to let you know more details about a wonderful opportunity for your daughter.

As you know, Queen Mary's was one of the first schools in England to be selected to participate in the Mandarin Excellence Programme – a new intensive language programme funded by the Department for Education. There are more details about the programme in the leaflet which accompanies this letter and I invite you to read it carefully.

We now need to begin the process of deciding which pupils will take part in the programme. It is both an exciting opportunity, the chance of a lifetime to do something very special *and* a very significant challenge, a long-term commitment that needs careful consideration.

The opportunities are indeed wonderful. Your daughter will have the chance to:

- Participate in a national programme where she will meet and work with some of the best students from across the UK
- Become proficient in a language which really matters to the future prosperity of the UK economy. (This will be an invaluable addition to her CV)
- Visit China. (The programme includes a subsidised trip to the Far East in Y8, where your daughter will advance her language learning and taste first hand a remarkable culture and country)

The commitment is similarly significant:

- Your daughter will be signing up for four years. The programme runs from now until 2021
- There will be the equivalent of 8 hours of study of various sorts per week

I recognise that it is the 8 hours of study that may seem too much. So, let's be clear. This is how we propose it will work in Y7. Each two weeks, there will be:

- Five lessons ('hours') of Mandarin in the normal timetable
- Three hours of taught lessons outside the normal timetable. This will be on Wednesdays (Week1 and Week2) from 3.40pm to 4.40pm, and Wednesdays (Week1) 8.45am-9.15am, 12.50am-1:20pm.

Cont:



Each week, there will be:

- Two hours of individual work online. Your daughter will be able to access special resources prepared for the programme from home on her computer.
- The equivalent of two hours in immersion sessions, including opportunities to meet with other pupils from across the region. This will normally run as one-day training events across the academic year.

This is an exciting possibility, but it needs careful thought.

We plan to proceed in this way. It will be free choice for families, but it will also be a guided choice. We need to be sure that those who opt in to the scheme are serious about it and capable of meeting its challenges.

So, we invite you to think it through over the next few days and then come to a preliminary decision by **Friday, 13th October**. On **Wednesday 20th September** from **7.00pm -8.30pm**, we will be holding an **Information Evening** for parents and students who are interested, and would like to know more about the MEP.

Shortly before half term there will be a Hurdle Test to allow us to choose the final cohort of participants. Selection will depend on their Mandarin class work, homework, Hurdle Test score.

So, by **Friday, 13th October**, we invite you to make the following choice:

1.	We have considered the matter carefully and have decided that the MEP is not for us.
2.	We would like to be considered for acceptance on the programme between now and 2021. We recognise that this will be dependent on performance in the <i>Hurdle Test</i> and commitment to the programme.

Please read the leaflet carefully, look at information on line and if, after that, you have any further questions, please join us on the Information Evening, and please don't hesitate to contact Mrs Liu at the school if you can't make it on Wednesday, 20th September. Your daughter must return the reply slip on **Friday 13th October**. Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Dr ALISON BRUTON
Head Teacher

Mrs Liu Teacher of Mandarin

