

Head of Year Newsletter - February 2023

WELCOME TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE HEAD OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

So many wonderful activities and achievements have happened since our first Head of Year Newsletter in the Autumn term, that we simply cannot include them all in this edition. Heads of Year have selected a few highlights, which we hope you will enjoy reading about. One highlight, for me in particular, was the fantastic Christmas concert that involved students from all year groups. Students ran five different performances and I was utterly moved by their breadth of talent and performance skills. So many of our students are modest about their talents and achievements but we want to keep encouraging them to let us know what they get up to outside of school and we welcome you, as parents and carers, to let us know too. Let's sing from the roof tops about how incredible our young people are!

Have a restful half-term break and we look forward to welcoming students back on Monday 27th February, on time and looking smart in full school uniform, ready to seize every opportunity with a positive attitude.

Mrs Connell
Assistant Headteacher

Year 7

What a fabulously creative term. Year 7 have been hard at work, both in lessons and their free time. There are several students who have joined Junior Band, who performed in the creative corner. The band played two songs; the James Bond theme tune and 'Lean on Me' by Bill Withers, where they were greatly applauded by all who watched.

A huge well done to Jasmin Sidhu, Sara Sikandar, Nelia Kenge and Freya Regan who entered the Poetry by Heart competition. This is a national competition where students must learn and recite poetry. Sara has successfully reached round two and if successful in the next round, her performances will be submitted for national judging, and she could get the chance to perform at the Globe Theatre in London. We wish you well Sara!

Creativity has no boundaries in Art as year 7 have been exploring the artwork of Millie Marotta, creating their final pieces using water colour paints, which reflect her style, and they look amazing! Whilst in DT, they have come up with their own designs for a needle case inspired by nature.

A huge well done to all our thespians in year 7 who got involved with this year's Junior Show. Our students worked incredibly hard to put together a range of performances around the theme of childhood and freedom. The shows were a roaring success, and many of the poems performed by our students reduced audience members to tears.

Year 7 have shown true resilience tapping into skills that have been shared through form time. The Wellbeing representatives have been free to create activities for the forms to complete. 7E recently made paper chains where each student wrote one thing they were grateful for, decorated their piece and effectively put them all together.

I hope that students have a restful and relaxing holiday, taking time to connect with their family and friends. Remember to find time to get outdoors and step away from their devices.

Well done!
Mrs Dunn



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Year 8

All students in year 8 continue to make excellent progress both in school and in the many extracurricular activities they take part in. We are hugely proud of the high number of students taking part in sports clubs, playing music and crafting, both in and out of school. Students are really taking ownership of their learning and many year 8 students attend subject clinics too. We are starting a year 8 revision and homework club where students can practice different revision techniques or complete their homework. It would be fantastic if students could help each other; so year 8's have been encouraged to attend if they can offer support to others in a specific subject. This is great practice should they wish to become subject prefects in the future! In order to progress, it is crucial that students are in school - so far, 8E is the form with the highest level of attendance.

Well done!
Miss Rubio



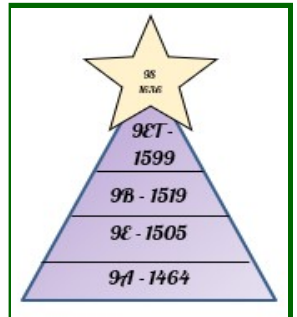
Year 9

It has been a big half term for year 9 as they have all been in the process of selecting their options for GCSE next year. All pupils have had an opportunity to experience GCSE taster sessions and have interviews discussing their goals for the future. I would like to thank all teachers and parents who have worked together to support them through this process. In addition, year 9 have been working hard and making many positive contributions to their lessons and to the school, with numerous instances of them demonstrating our core values. Well done to 9S who have the highest number of positive praise points, having earned 1636 points since September - keep up the good work!

Our wellbeing theme has been 'Let's Connect' and year 9 have been connecting through the variety of extra-curricular activities they have participated in and I wanted to share some particularly wonderful examples:

- Our Y8 and Y9 Netball team who played fantastically at the regional Netball Competition, coming 2nd in their division.
- Lola O'Leary in 9B took part in a Korean writing competition and received a special mention for her work.
- All Y9 Junior Show participants not only gave a wonderful performance but have shown how well they work together and support each other.
- Taybah Israar made it through to the second round of the Poetry by Heart competition and won.

Well done year 9, keep up the fantastic work!
Miss Bull



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Year 10

Year 10 have been working extremely hard this half-term. It has been a privilege to visit a variety of lessons and see the students motivated and engaged in their learning. I have included some pictures of the artwork of some of our students, which shows the creativity and care that is required to produce such detailed pieces.

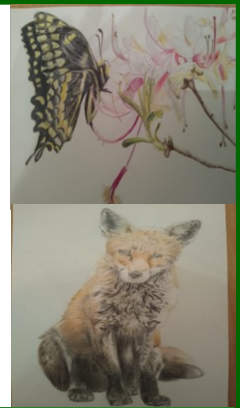
As well as the outstanding teaching and learning that is taking place in the classroom, year 10 have also engaged in a variety of co-curricular trips, visits and activities. A trip organised by the History Department was a powerful and impactful experience for all of our Historians; a short account of the visit is included right. Many of our Key Stage Four students also enjoyed a visit to Seville in Spain last week, where they were able to practise their language skills and immerse themselves in Spanish culture.

Our rich variety of extra-curricular clubs continues to grow. Chess Club is currently very popular, as well as Art Club and Debating Club. I would encourage everyone in year 10 to attend at least one club; they can provide a much-needed break from the pressure of GCSEs, a chance to pursue a new hobby and an opportunity to connect with more members of our school community.

I would like to finish by saying a huge thank you to year 10 for being such positive role models. Please continue to display our core values through your behaviour, interactions with others and attitude to learning.

"Our visit to the National Holocaust Centre and Museum extended our knowledge of democracy and dictatorship in Germany. We had the privilege of hearing a survivor's story. He told us how they managed to find ways to escape from the ghetto that he and his family were put in. We had the opportunity to ask questions and look around the different exhibitions." Alisha Khan, 10E

Artwork by
 Prina Hari
 and Tarja
 Illman-Walker



"I just love it here. I'm really looking forward to sixth form. Our community is tight and we all support each other."

"The friendships I made on day one of Year 7 are still strong now. I'm so happy to have made lifelong friends."

Year 11

This half term is certainly an exhausting one for year 11. Mock examinations took place during the first two weeks in January, which were quickly followed with feedback and target-setting in all subjects. This feedback should now help them to identify what has gone well and what their key priorities should be as they make their final preparations for their external examinations. There have been some outstanding individual performances, which clearly demonstrate the hard work, time and effort that has been invested. Well done – there is much to celebrate!

Our school community engaged in various activities in February as part of Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. This year's theme was connection. Some photographs of the postcards from one of the form time activities are included left. It seems particularly pertinent to remind year 11 of the importance of taking care of themselves and each other at this stage in the year, as the examination season is looming. They should all take some time over half-term to rest, relax and recharge. Our pastoral team are always here to support them if they need anything.

Finally, it has been a privilege for myself, the Senior Leadership Team and other members of our staff to meet with each student in year 11 to discuss their plans for sixth form study. We are always so glad to hear of how highly they speak of QMHS and the lifelong connections they have made. Year 11, thank you for all that you give back to our school community.

Miss Emery

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Sixth Form

Change Your Mind

On Friday 20th January, 30 students from year 12 (see photo below) took part in training for 'Change Your Mind'. This is an enrichment PSHCE initiative that involves students preparing workshops on important PSHCE topics such as 'Health and Development', 'Diversity, Equity and Inclusion', 'Digital Detoxing', 'Transition to Secondary School' and 'Relationships'. These workshops are then delivered to year 6 students in local primary schools.

Change Your Mind originated at one of the Mercian Trust schools, Queen Mary's Grammar School, and is now an initiative that students are participating in throughout the country. Our students worked so hard throughout the day and will spend the next few weeks developing their workshops, in preparation for going into primary schools later this term.



Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Our year 13 students who have been working hard on their EPQ projects have completed their presentation element this half-term. With some fascinating presentations relating to Formula 1, Dentistry, drug design and how social media has influenced the books we read, we are looking forward to receiving the final projects in the coming half-term.

Enrichment

Both the year 12 and year 13 students are in full flow with their enrichment activities this half-term: Year 13 have been getting stuck into some first aid, developing their presentation and public speaking skills through LAMDA and supporting good causes as Oxfam Ambassadors, whilst year 12 have had sessions on current hot topics with Street Teams, debated contentious issues and let their creative juices flow in creative writing.

Year 13 Mocks

Good luck to all of our year 13 students. We wish you every success in your mock examinations, which start on 27th February.

Personal Successes

Congratulations to Jess and Ciara, who both passed their driving tests first time round, and also to Freya who scored an outstanding 24/25 in the Poetry by Heart competition earlier this half term.

Well done Sixth Form!

Dr Darwood