

Head of Year Newsletter - October 2022

Welcome to the first edition of the Head of Year Newsletter

We have had a fantastic first half term with so many wonderful events that we would like to share and celebrate with you. We cannot fit it all into this first newsletter but our Heads of Year have selected a few highlights to share as they have reflected on the past 7 weeks...which feels like a lot longer!

Our overall attendance figure is currently 96.59% and our school target is 97% so we are little bit off. Year 7 lead the year group league table with 98.29%. Well done to all students who have achieved 100% attendance this term. We understand some students get illnesses and have medical appointments that cannot be avoided but do please support us in ensuring your child is in school when they are well. As a reminder, holidays should not be taken during school time.

Behaviour has been exemplary, on the whole, with a total of 10,566 positive behaviour points being awarded. 10B are at the top of the table with 718 collective points - Mr Moore will be very proud of you.

We wish you all a restful half term break and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in school on Monday 31st October in full school uniform.

Year 7

Year 7 have made an amazing start this Autumn term. It has been a pleasure to see how students have really settled into life as a Queen Mary's pupil, forming new friendships, navigating their way around school and making a great impression on their class teachers. Thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement at home as the students have found their feet.

It is through the ongoing support of the year 7 tutor team that the students are thriving. I have seen wonderful activities taking place in the morning. From quizzes to problem solving, drama to wellbeing activities. The students are engaged in a wide programme of events. Some students have been outside playing team activities. We used the first term to get to know our students when they created Tudor roses 'all about me'.

I wanted to give you a glimpse into the new experiences that the students have had this half term. Moving from Primary School is not easy yet year 7 has made it seem effortless. Picking up new lessons they may not have previously experienced. Students are thriving in their language lessons. There was positive feedback from the pupils as they highlighted language lessons as one of their favourite subjects.

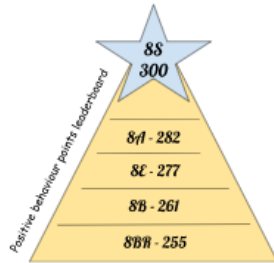
The music department, led by Mrs Watson, allows all students to take part in the Music wider opportunities programme. All students have been working hard but also enjoying getting to grips with playing an instrument. I look forward to seeing their performances later in the year.

Enjoy your well deserved half term break after working so hard, I look forward to seeing you back next half term.

Mrs Dunn



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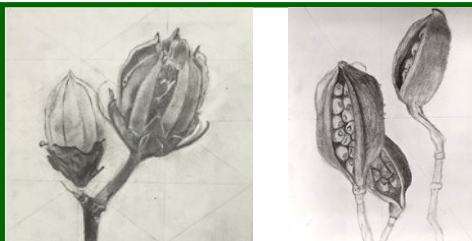
Year 8

Year 8 has made a brilliant start to this academic year. This half term we have been looking at routines and responsibility in form time. This was supported by an extremely successful Positively You workshop (with a focus on resilience) delivered by Shenaz. The students really enjoyed the session and the parent follow up workshop gave a great insight into how parents can support their child in becoming resilient and reaching their full potential. I know some parents were unable to join due to work commitments but attached are some key takeaways from the session. We will be doing more of these sessions in the future.

- Congratulations to 8S on getting the most positive behaviour points this half term!
- 60% of year 8 students have 100% attendance.
- 8A is the form with the highest number of students with 100% attendance!

There have been a huge array of clubs available to students this half term. Participating in extracurricular activities builds teamwork, communication, relationships, and a sense of belonging, all of which help students to develop socially and be successful in school. Doing activities you are passionate about can increase your brain function, and help you concentrate and manage your time better, all of which contribute to higher grades.

CONGRATULATIONS to year 8 netball for winning their first match!



Artwork by Khadeeja Husnat & Raya Ali



Wellbeing activities prepared by students for their form groups

Year 9

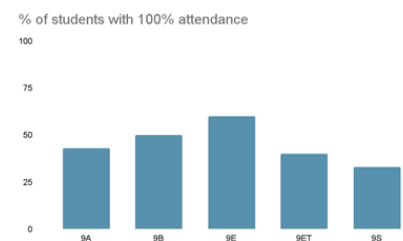
Our Year 9 Pupils have had a wonderful start to the new school year. We have looked at responsibility and wellbeing in our form time. As part of this our form Wellbeing Wednesday sessions have been led by our Wellbeing Representatives and they have covered a range of topics from mindful colouring to setting targets. Our focus on wellbeing has been supported by a workshop from Positively You led by Shenaz. The focus of the workshop was on how to reduce stress and different methods that we can use to support our mental health. The pupils really enjoyed the morning and engaged with the activities brilliantly!

- Congratulations to 9ET who have the highest number of positive behaviour points this half term!
- 9E has the highest number of pupils with 100% attendance, well done!

We are very fortunate to have a wide variety of extra-curricular activities offered in school. Joining clubs can help improve your teamwork, creativity and communication skills, and increase your sense of belonging. You can also discover new passions and make friends on the way! As well as supporting you with your academic progress it can help improve your overall school experience. It's wonderful to see so many Year 9s engaging in different activities and I look forward to seeing even more joining clubs next half term!



Finish the heart by 9B



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Year 10 & 11

It has certainly been a busy and fast-paced start to this academic year! Year 10 and Year 11 students have made a positive and focused start to the term and have really hit the ground running. They have been excellent role models to students in Key Stage 3 and it has been lovely to see them helping our new Year 7 cohort to settle in, find their way around and feel part of the QM community.

It has been a pleasure to welcome back Shenaz, a presenter from 'Positively You', this half-term to deliver some engaging and inspiring workshops. 'Positively You' is an organisation that focuses on empowering students with the study and personal development skills to grow as enthusiastic and motivated learners and take responsibility for their own future. Year 11 had their 'Exam Busters' workshop earlier this month. Shenaz shared a wide variety of study skills and revision tips to empower students to work smartly – both in lessons and at home – whilst also equipping them with strategies to manage pressure and look after their wellbeing. Year 10 will have their workshop in November. You can find out more about the work of 'Positively You' here: <https://positivelyyou.org.uk/>

Thirty students in Years 10 and 11 have been successful in gaining a place on The Girls' Network mentoring scheme. The Girls' Network is an organisation that works with young women across the UK and aims to inspire and empower girls by matching them with an individual, professional mentor. This mentor works with mentees to help them to develop a range of professional skills, confidence and access to opportunities to support them now and in the future. We had over 80 applications this year! Thank you to all those who applied, and congratulations to those who were successful. We had our first session last week and are looking forward to the 'matching event', where students will meet and be matched with their mentor, after half-term. You can read more about the work of The Girls' Network here: <https://www.thegirlsnetwork.org.uk/>

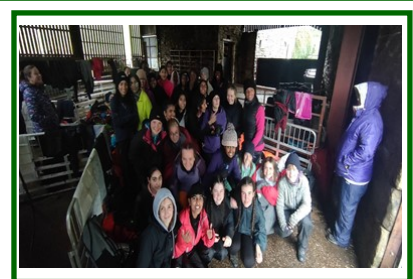


Congratulations to our 32 Year 11 students who completed their Duke of Edinburgh qualification expedition in Yorkshire last month. The weather was (mostly) kind, if not a little chilly! The students did remarkably well; their teamwork, camaraderie and resilience was fantastic, and I'm sure they returned home very tired, but very proud of their achievements. Well done!

Form-time is busy as usual, with a wide range of different activities taking place each morning. Forms are now settling into their routines, and it is pleasing to see so many members taking on positions of responsibility within the form and taking the lead on some of the activities. Each form group in Key Stage Four will have a weekly form-time slot dedicated to study skills and revision. This has been built into the form-time programme in response to student voice and feedback from school council meetings. Many of the study and revision activities that students are engaging with are built around the VESPA model. The VESPA approach to study focuses on developing students' Vision, Efforts, Systems for study, Practice and Attitude. Its aim is to help students to reflect on their current approach to study and take actions to refine and improve it so that they have a clear vision of what success means to them and are armed with the resources, techniques and strategies that they need to achieve their goals.

The current commendation count for year 10 is 2230 and 10B are currently in the lead with 687 points! For year 11, the current commendation count is 878 and 11S are currently in the lead with 228 points!

What a fantastic start to the year! All of our students should give themselves a well-deserved break over half-term and come back refreshed, well-rested and ready to build on their achievements.



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Sixth Form

Welcome to the sixth form newsletter for this half term. We have been busy in school and out doing a huge variety of activities, attending induction days and conferences, and working hard, of course!

Year 12 induction- Woodlands outdoor activity centre

We welcomed our returning and joining students into year 12 with a fun-packed day of outdoor pursuits at Woodlands activity centre. It was the first time our new year 12s had been together as one, and the day proved to be a really good way for them to get to know each other. Even though we got a little wet due to the rain, all the students took part in a carousel of activities including archery, high ropes, team building and zip wire.

UCAS

September is always a busy month for our students applying to early entry university courses such as medicine, dentistry and veterinary science. It's also been a hectic time for our students applying for Oxford and Cambridge.

This month, our year 12s have attended the HE university and apprenticeships fayre at Edgbaston cricket ground; an opportunity for them to consider their pathways to higher education ready for their applications this time next year. All of the students found the opportunity to speak to admissions tutor, outreach officers and apprenticeship providers extremely useful, and has given them much to mull over in the coming 12 months.

Enrichment

Enrichment is a hugely important part of our co-curricular offer in the sixth form; it enables our students to develop "softer skills" that complement those they develop in their academic studies. So far this year, both year 12 and year 13 have had the opportunity to engage in meaningful, accredited course, such as LAMDA, had introductory lectures about aspects of higher education on the back of our trip to Edgbaston, and taken part in workshops and seminars allowing them to explore strategies to improve their study skills.

Some of our year 12 students have also become Oxfam ambassadors and had the opportunity to take part in debates about current affairs. Year 13 have been preparing to deliver sessions to the lower school during Parliament Week.

Engineering opportunities

This half term, some of our year 12 STEaM students were invited to apply to join the National Engineering Education Scheme Programme. This programme counts towards the Gold Cadet Award. The Engineering Education Trust together with the University of Birmingham and ALSTOM will support the students in this venture.

After the application process, six students have been selected to take part. These students are Rachel Chen, Sienna Birdie, Maisie Hollowood, Tyła Cockayne, Lucy Halford and Gabriella Maher.

Achievements outside of school

Our students in sixth form have many interests and hobbies outside of school. Jess Malhi in year 13 certainly enjoys a challenge.....here she is competing in a "tough mudder" event back in September.

Dates to remember

Wednesday 2nd November - Sixth Form open evening (5-7pm)

Tuesday 15th November - UCAS main stream entry deadline for school

Thursday 24th November - KS5 student council meeting

