

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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February 2019

February half-term update

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of our first half-term of 2019, I wanted to take this opportunity to recognise the many achievements and successes and also summarise in one letter some forthcoming developments for the next half-term.

Achievements:

- So many **sporting successes** across all age groups, all summarised in our recently released QEGS Press Sport Newsletter on the school website. Well done to all students who take part, either just for fun or to win! Special thanks to the PE staff for their commitment to fixtures and practices for students either at lunch, after-school or at the weekend.
- School **Dance** has been hugely successful again with students from Yrs, 9 and 10 performing at the national SSAT conference and at the regional finals of the Great Big Dance Off 2019. Again thank you to staff for the rehearsals and organisation involved.
- We have had **theatre groups** in school performing to a range of year groups targeting GCSE English texts and also addressing topics such as 'Online Safety and Bullying'.
- Yr9 **Options** are almost complete and Yr11 Sixth Form Applications are well under way.
- **Mock exams** for Yrs 11, 12 and 13 have all gone well and students preparing for summer exams are on track for another successful year of results.
- **Yr11 Quiet Study** sessions in the library on Tuesdays and Thursdays have been well attended with lots of tea, coffee and biscuits being consumed whilst students work. As a special treat during 'Student Wellbeing Week' we treated all attendees to pizzas from a well-known local take-away. This certainly helped mental wellbeing anyway! Yr11 Parents - Quiet Study will continue until May half-term every Tues and Thurs 4.00-5.30pm.
- **UCAS and Post-16 Apprenticeship** applications have been submitted for university places and employment. The recent careers events and university talks have really helped students to see and hear about the wide-ranging opportunities available to them beyond QEGS.
- A group of approximately 40 Yr12 students recently showed their support for **Climate Change** by having a 'day of action' as opposed to a strike. They spent the day landscaping and planting new vegetation, including a wildflower meadow, around the sixth form site. Such a great team effort of which we are very proud, thank you.

Developments to be implemented after half-term:

Social Time:

We have reviewed the provision for students during **social time** and now the weather is improving, have decided to reopen some areas of the school site during break and lunch. The courts area will be available for students wishing to play football and the area to the rear of the Sports Hall will be available for students wishing to play outdoor basketball. We will also be talking to students over the next few months about any new activities and clubs they would like to see available at lunchtime and how they can help us to provide these.

Toilets:

We have reviewed our access and provision to **toilets** for students during the school day. Recently, we faced a number of challenges with some toilets being out of action due to plumbing and maintenance problems. Additionally, we have monitored student behaviour and the demand for the number of toilet options that we have

available. Please accept my apologies if communication around this matter was unclear. I can now confirm that we have decided to organise toilet access by age group:

- **During break and lunch**, toilets in the main teaching block (Levels 2, 3 and 4) will be only be open and available to students in years 7,8 and 9. Toilets in the gym corridor and the halls block will only be open and available for students in year 10 and 11 (plus 12 and 13 when on main site). We hope that by designating toilet blocks for age groups, students will feel more confident to access them and also greater ownership and responsibility for their areas. We have also ordered sufficient sanitary disposal bins for all female cubicles across the school and will be trialling providing baskets of complimentary sanitary products in the female toilets as opposed to the medical room.
- **During lesson time**, when nearly all students are in lessons, the 7 gender neutral/disabled toilets across the main site will be open for any student issued with a **corridor pass** by their teacher to show that they have been given permission to leave the lesson for an exceptional reason. All other toilets will be locked during lesson time.

Uniform:

Uniform expectations remain the same and details can be found on our website (Parents > Uniform). There should be no deviation from these expectations. Our uniform supplier offers a regular onsite uniform shop every last Wednesday of each month (dates on website). To further support students with forgotten or mislaid items of uniform, we now have a stock of loan items from our uniform supplier. We will be using these to help students maintain their smart appearance and the school expectations.

Should a student's uniform not meet our expectations:

- Students will be provided with a replacement garment in exchange for an item of their own property.
- The borrowed garment will be returned to the school at the end of the day.
- Parents and carers will be made aware of the uniform concern and a time-frame for this to be rectified will be agreed. Further sanctions will apply if the uniform expectations are persistently not met.

'GUEST':

To help remember QEGS classroom standards, we have a new way of remembering those all-important things to get right at the start of every lesson. We know that setting the right tone for learning helps the students to feel settled and lessons to get off to a great start. Therefore, we will be insisting that all staff and students start their lessons in a consistent, respectful manner:

Greet: Every teacher will greet all students at the door upon arrival.

Uniform: All students' uniform will be correct before entering the classroom.

Equipment: After entering the classroom, all students will have the correct equipment out on the desk.

Stand: All students will remain standing ready to learn behind their chairs before the teacher asks them to sit.

Teach: Teaching will then commence

At the end of lessons, teachers will once again check uniform before students stand behind their chairs and leave in an orderly fashion. Staff will carry out regular checks to make sure students have the correct equipment/items needed to do their work to the best of their ability. Please remember, a school shop in Student Services is open everyday for all essential equipment.

I hope this update is useful and informative. We always focus on how to improve and what could be better, this also relies on your support. Equally, human nature is such that we often forget to celebrate the successes and we can take much for granted. Our students and staff are working very hard and are succeeding in challenging times with less school funding and an uncertain political future. Add to this the pressures on society from such things as social media and yet our aim remains to deliver 'A World-Class Education for All Students at QEGS'. We wholeheartedly believe in this and know it is what our community deserves.

Have a great half-term.

Scott Garrity
Headteacher