

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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14th May 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Staff

Weekly Bulletin #30

We are very much looking forward to our new, better 'normal'. The school is alive with ideas and energy and our students and staff are ready to prove that we can all move to the next stage of the government roadmap safely.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Update

We continue to feel blessed to have had so few cases at QEGS, and going forward we know you will support us in continuing to keep our school and our community as safe as possible. From **Monday 17th May**, some things will change, while others remain the same. There will still be the yellow two metre line in classrooms for staff to maintain social distance; windows and doors will remain open to increase ventilation; we will all sanitise frequently. It is this culture that helps us keep everyone safe. The main area where things will change is around face-coverings.

Face-coverings:

- Students will no longer need to wear face-coverings in lessons from Monday. However, they will be allowed to keep wearing them if you or they wish to.
- The school timetable will now begin to re-introduce more movement around the school for all classes (particularly KS3). Therefore, we will still require staff and students to wear face-coverings when in corridors or communal areas (canteen, toilets etc) where 'bubble' mixing may occur.
- All students who travel by school/public transport will also still need to wear a face-covering.

We ask that you continue to be vigilant regarding the symptoms of COVID-19. That you and your family test regularly on Monday and Thursday mornings. That you report your results to the NHS and school. But, most importantly you stay aware to the risks as we enter this next phase of unlocking our school, our community, and our broader school lives.

Stakeholder Input to Academy Improvement Plan for 2021-2022

We would really appreciate your input to include in our Academy Improvement Plan for the next academic year via the form <https://forms.office.com/r/S0kLgqE4GN>. The feedback will be anonymous and will be considered with feedback received from staff, students and the Local Governing Body.

Sixth Form Update

Another busy week at the Sixth Form and for the vast majority of Year 13 students as they end their courses and assessments. They have been resilient as a year group throughout the whole process and the amount of uncertainty that there has been over the last 12 month or so. Well done to all of you and we look forward to giving you a send off on the 28th!

Year 12 have also been busy organising their new council which met for the first time on Thursday afternoon. We are really excited to see the new ideas that they bring as a team as well as the continuation of all the great things our current council have done this year, thank you to the outgoing ones that again have been brilliant and innovative this year.

Lastly, we have had two extra reasons to celebrate as the Young Enterprise team, led by Fern B secured their place in the East Midlands Regional Final later this month. They were the winning team out of 7 other local schools after presenting their idea to a panel of judges as well as answering a set of tough interview questions. We wish them luck later on this month. Also, congratulations to the following students who have been awarded certificates in the 53rd Chemistry Olympiad Round 1.

Proud to be part of the **QEGSMAT**

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Reminder to Current Year 11 and Year 12 to Complete Bus Survey

Thank you to parents/carers and students who have already completed the survey linked in the letter from the 3rd May (www.qegs.link/sftransport21). If a student in current Year 11 and Year 12 is planning to use a school bus to travel to/from school in Sixth Form, please read and complete linked form by Friday 21st May 2021 to aid with checking the capacity of vehicles.

Online Safety

Use of the platform 'Discord' has increased dramatically over lockdown and is being used by lots of our students. Previously, it has been commonly used by gamers to chat during their gameplay, but it is also used to chat to others as an alternative to other chat apps. You often hear terms such as 'private servers' being used. This is not a technical term; they are referring to what most people would call a 'private chat room'. To find out more about 'Discord', click [here](#).

As usual, our best advice is to communicate with your children and have a conversation about the things they like to do online. Be open and constructive in your chats but reserve the right to examine your child's phone if you feel the need to. If you pay for the contract, then the phone actually belongs to you.

Remember at QEGS we have access to the 'Zumos' app if any students need support with their mental health. They can talk to any member of staff they feel comfortable talking to and will be signposted to the relevant help and support. Healthy minds are very important in all of us!

Saxophonist Featured on BBC East Midlands

Talented saxophonist, Tessa P in Year 12 is part of the group Hot House Music, school is immensely proud of how Tessa and the group has not only engaged, but also progressed as they switched to online provision during lockdown. This is testament to their positive attitude to learning and commitment to the group and recognised by the BBC to be featured on the Midlands Tonight programme last Monday. Well done Tessa and Hot House Music!

Mental Health Awareness Week 2021- Connect with Nature

This week we marked Mental Health Awareness Week. During lockdown many of us realised the benefits of nature and its impact on our mental health. Staff and students at QEGS really embraced the theme this week and spent lots of time thinking about how we can work on being mentally healthy and how nature can help us with this. Mrs Flinders' group dug up some vegetable patches in preparation for planting, Mrs Watson Jones' class have been doing outdoor crafts based on their study of a flower's reproductive organ, Ms Keeling's class have taken part in some tree themed yoga and Mrs Betty led some creative cloud watching at lunch! Perfectly (and coincidentally) linked to theme of connecting with nature was our first field trip post lockdown...our Year 10 Geographers were able to investigate rivers as part of their course. We were all so happy for trips to start running again - one step closer to our new normal.

Weather permitting, all Year 9 students will participate with the vegetable plots over the coming weeks in their fortnightly food lessons. Students started to work on the vegetable plots after Easter.

Year 9 are currently learning about food sustainability. One way that we can reduce food miles and food waste is to 'grow our own'. This is useful for understanding how food is grown and where foods come from.

If you are able to donate any spare gardening equipment/seed/plants, please email flinders@qegs.email to get in touch.



Year 9 students working on the 'grow our own' vegetable patch.

School Day Proposal

Thank you to parents for your feedback on the proposal to change the school day. This feedback is now being considered alongside other information and a decision will hopefully be made by 28th May 2021.

- 45 (3%) parents/carers responded to say that they disagreed with the proposal
- The points of note were: 16 parents referenced the shorter lunch as a reason and 11 parents referenced transport for P6 provision.

Nineteen questions were submitted by parents/carers. They have been grouped based on category or theme with responses below:

- Will students be able to eat their lunch in the Canteen and Main Hall? *Yes they will*
- Will lunchtime clubs still be available? *Some provision such as library will be available, details TBC*
- How will students who use school transport access P6 provision? *We would investigate the demand in September and look at what provision may be needed*
- 2-3 questions about specific bus routes. *Mrs Bramwell and Mrs Morgan will follow up and confirm should any change be implemented*
- Could there be a 5 min 'travel time' added between lessons? *We don't believe this will be necessary, although any change would have regular review points*
- Will period 6 be compulsory or optional in September? *P6 provision would be optional*
- Is this proposal a permanent change? *If changed, yes it would be permanent*
- Does this proposal apply to the Sixth Form? *Yes, it would apply to all year groups*
- Questions around the school day timings of local primary schools and any clashes with traffic. *If changes are made, these factors will be taken into account to prevent additional congestion*
- Will students be allowed to attend school in their PE kit when they have PE, Drama or Dance? *Regardless of a change to the school day timings, we think this a good idea and is currently being looked at by the PE/Dance/Drama depts. we will confirm once a decision has been reached*
- Will all year groups be allowed in all areas of the school? *All students will have the access to all facilities, using specialist rooms for art, science, technology (DI), dance, drama and computing.*
- Will students be able to use the library and use it after school for work in P6? *Again, regardless of a change, we have offered this before and expect to be able to offer this again*
- If there are Teams assemblies, will they be able to have more fun assemblies, for example when theatre companies visit? *We only expect some assemblies to be remote via TEAMS. We will still use the main hall for 'special' assemblies, performances, guest speakers and awards etc.*

Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip

Well done to all our Year 10 Geographers who this week went on the first fieldtrip of 2021! As part of the Geography GCSE, they visited three locations along the River Dove and conducted various river surveys. They had lots of fun, did not hesitate to go into the river and were a credit to the school. Thank you to Ms Fisher, Miss Wilband, Mr Hughes, Mr Machin and Miss Edwards for running the trip!



Lunch Money Refunds for Year 11 & 13 Leavers

With regards to lunch money for your Year 11 child – if they are staying on at Sixth Form in the new academic year, then all remaining lunch monies can be carried over as the same canteen facilities are used.

- If your child is leaving QEGS, then all remaining balances on ParentPay can be refunded via ParentPay.
- You also have the option to transfer any remaining funds into a siblings account.
- If you would like a refund or your money transferring into a different account, then please email finance@queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk.

Staffing update

Congratulations to:

- Miss Angris who takes on the Deputy Head of English role from 1st June 2021
- Miss Wilband who will be Progress Leader (Maternity Cover for Mrs Bowbanks) for the new Yr7 cohort in September

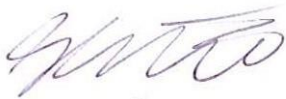
We are recruiting for several new/replacement posts. Details can be found via <https://www.qegsmat.com/current-vacancies/>

Finally

Good luck to our outgoing Yr13 students who finished their teaching and assessments today. You have been an absolute pleasure to teach and have been key members of our school community. You have led by example and have fantastic futures ahead of yourselves. We look forward to seeing you all at the Yr13 Leavers' Celebration on Friday 28th May.

Stay safe and well this weekend.

Yours faithfully



Mr S Garrity
Headteacher