

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Green Road, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 1EP

Tel: 01335 343 685 Email: enquiries@qegs.email Twitter: @qegs_ashbourne

Web: www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr S Garrity Chair of Governors: Mr C Smith



17th December 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Staff

Weekly Bulletin #14

The Leadership Team have been carrying out daily, early morning reviews of our staffing and Covid cases, hence the change to plans yesterday. Our aim has been to act on evidence, forward plan, make sure parents, staff and students have sufficient advance notice and ultimately our aim has been to keep our stakeholders as safe as we possibly can.

Based on the increasing and high levels of staff absence, coupled with a rapid rise of positive cases in the student population and our ability to provide high quality remote learning, we feel the safest way to end this term is for **all teaching, for all year groups, on Monday 20th December and Tuesday 21st December to be remote and via TEAMS**. The online school day will start at 08.50am with Form Time and normal lessons P1-5 will be in place, taught by usual teaching staff or cover via departmental provision.

We have plenty of devices (laptops and Ipads) for students to loan. If your child is likely to struggle (sharing device, old device, no device) then we want to help - please contact bawden@qegs.email for a loan device to be issued.

We appreciate that this is not how we would want to end a term. However, we feel this limits unnecessary risk for all.

QEGS Winter Week

We have had a brilliant week celebrating the run-up to Christmas, with so many wonderful events. Christmas dinners have been a great success! We have had a lovely festive menu thanks to our canteen staff and enjoyed lots of Christmas tunes to get us in the festive spirit. Well done to all our raffle winners. Special mention to Oscar for being dressed as the most festive Year 8 and Ben and George for some brilliant work on the microphone, announcing the raffle winners.



Despite some changes to the original end of term plans, Year 11 have definitely, not missed out. With a wonderful visit from Quantum Theatre Company on Tuesday 14th for a performance of A Christmas Carol, and a free drink and cake from DeLICious Coffee, yum!



Craft Club

The after-school Craft Club continues to be a great success. Not only have the members made lots of wonderful things to keep for themselves, they have also managed to make fabulous Christmas decorations for the Reception area and raise money for charity too.

They raised £30 for *Children in Need* selling their Pudsey lollipop decorations and £36 for *Breast Cancer Research* with handmade Christmas gift tags. Well done to everyone involved.



Speech Day

Thank you to all of the staff and students involved in setting up and hosting Speech Day. Well done to all prize winners onsite and at home.

A 'normal' Speech Day is busy enough. However, this one had multiple challenges; technology, online audience, staff absence and health and safety to consider!

We did it! Thank you. It was a lovely, safe and rewarding event to end the term with. The speech from our special guest Ann Smith was superb and inspirational. The musical interludes and the Canon project video once again reflect the wealth of talent and opportunity here at QEGS.

With no time for a break, some of our staff and students are now straight back to it with a recording for a Carol Concert and Music Concert. Wow, thank you.

A link for the recording of Speech Day 2021 can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/657518614>



Music Concert

Our annual Christmas Music Concert will be just a little different this year, and yet still very familiar. There are the usual superb performances you have come to expect, and this time you will be able to view from the comfort of your own homes. As we approach the end of another year watching these talented performers will hopefully add to your festive cheer. The link is: www.qegs.link/ChristmasConcert21

Carol Concert

As a wonderful end to what has been a uniquely challenging term, we are pleased to attach the link to our carol concert. Students and their families will be able to access this performance on Tuesday 21st December during their normal Period 5 lesson times, as well as later that evening should you wish to view it again. Our thanks go out to all the staff and students who have made such a production possible. They are all truly QEGS amazing. The link is: www.qegs.link/CarolService21

Christmas Support

If you need any support over the Christmas season for you and your family please find some helpful links and numbers:

For a concern of immediate safeguarding risk, the first contact must be to the Police on 999. You can contact Social Care on Derbyshire 01629 533190. If your enquiry is not urgent then we will be able to respond when school opens again on Monday 10th January 2021.

Online Mental Health Support for Students- www.kooth.com

Domestic Violence Support- 0808 2000 247 or 999 if you are in immediate danger.

Derbyshire Food Banks- <https://www.ruralactionderbyshire.org.uk/foodbanks> or call Ashbourne Food Bank on 01335 344338.

You may be eligible to apply for Healthy Start Vouchers if you are pregnant or have a child under 4. You can find more information here <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/>

Finally

'Well done' nominations:

Thank you to staff for nominating students for a Xmas 'well done' gift. I had over 30 nominations from Heads of Department and Progress Leaders, all bar some Year 13 students have received their gift and message of 'thanks and well done' from me.

Students were proud, delighted and a little embarrassed. What was special was that they knew a member of staff had noticed their efforts and noticed them as maybe just a kind and hardworking student. A couple of them almost brought a tear to my eye with their gratitude.

Farewells:

This term we say farewell to a number of staff. Bhranti Patel Geddes (Maths), Tracy Hyder (Maths), Abigail Elliott (Food Tech), Claire Rushton-Plant (English) and Poppy Hellaby (Art Tech). We wish them well in their retirement or next challenge. We then welcome our new staff who start in the new year.

We know that the current climate appears to be uncertain. However, please be reassured that we feel we have experienced many challenges and we are well placed to overcome whatever the new year brings.

Have a safe, family focused and festive break.

Yours faithfully



Mr S Garrity
Headteacher