Queen Mary's Grammar School

A message from the Headmaster, Spring 2026

First word

The Spring term seems to have gone by in a flash, as we approach the Easter break. We started with snow in January and are ending with Spring sunshine and the exams not too far ahead. I hope that the Year 11 and 13 students have settled into a steady work routine and will use their Easter break purposefully.

We have been enjoying student performances in assemblies this week, ahead of the Spring concert at 6.30pm on Wednesday 25th March. Tickets are on sale and available from Ticketsource - please search for Queen Mary's Grammar School Spring Concert or click on this link. Tickets are £5 per adult, with children free. The students involved have been working very hard and attending weekly rehearsals to prepare for this event and we are very much looking forward to this opportunity to perform for you. The standard of the music making is very high and parents are able to watch back highlights of the Christmas concert here if you are interested.

It has been great to welcome in many members of the community this term to events that we have held. We have held an options event for Year 9, Futures Evening for Year 12, as well as a variety of online parents' evenings. Over 150 staff and parents attended the QMA's Burns night event in January, raising over £5500 toward projects in the school. We also held our first community Iftar at the beginning of March, welcoming a wide range of students, families and community members into the school for a really special evening.

March has also seen events to mark 'National Careers Week' with over 20 alumni in school to give advice and support students of all ages in a range of presentations and through our careers fair.

We are also delighted to have received the **Young Carers in Schools Award** in recognition of the work we do with our young carers. We offer support and guidance ranging from identifying a young carer's needs, facilitating both general and bespoke support subject to School Policy, to signposting support outside of the school setting. We currently support 30 young carers here in school but know that there are many more. If you think that your child may be a young carer, please click on this link here for more information and contact Mrs Hill, Young Carers Operational Lead on **d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk**

It has been a busy term of sport, with rugby teams reaching the latter stages of county cups and the Year 8 basketball team finishing runners up in the Walsall area competition. The hockey teams have excelled, with a county cup victory in Year 8 (right) and the Year 7 and 9 teams finishing runners up. All teams have gone on to represent the county at the Midlands finals.

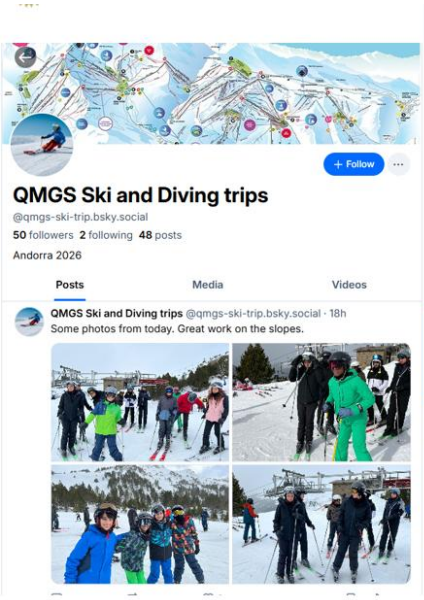
There has also been success in the CCF in the Regional Air Squadron Trophy. Not only did our team receive trophies for coming first place in shooting, and the drill and inspection stands of the competition, but they also placed first overall, making them the winners of the Regional Air Squadron Trophy (below). They competed with 12 other RAF sections on a variety of different stands designed to test their individual and team skills. This means that for the first time in 25 years we have made it through to the National Air Squadron Trophy. This is taking place at RAF Wittering on 21st June.

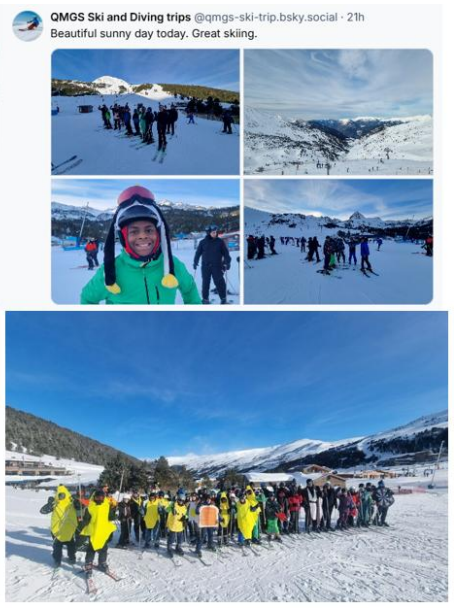
There have been a number of trips, with A-level geographers visiting London and Birmingham, as well as over 50 Year 8 students spending 3 days at the Towers activity centre in North Wales.

The English department have run theatre trips; History students have visited the Holocaust museum and there have been several CCF weekends at Farchynys.

The ski trip to Andorra during February half term was a great success, with staff and students enjoying fantastic conditions (below).

Finally, we say goodbye to three members of teaching staff at Easter. Ms Akthar moves on after 3 years at the school teaching Computing and we wish her well. Mr Newell and Mr Mackenzie are also leaving us, both to take on curriculum promotions in English. Mr Newell has been at the school since 2021 and has worked within the head of year team for the past 2 years. Mr Mackenzie joined in 2019 and, as well as being an experienced English teacher and Head of Year, has been part of the extended leadership team for the past 2 years. I'm sure all members of the community will join me in wishing them all well for their future careers.

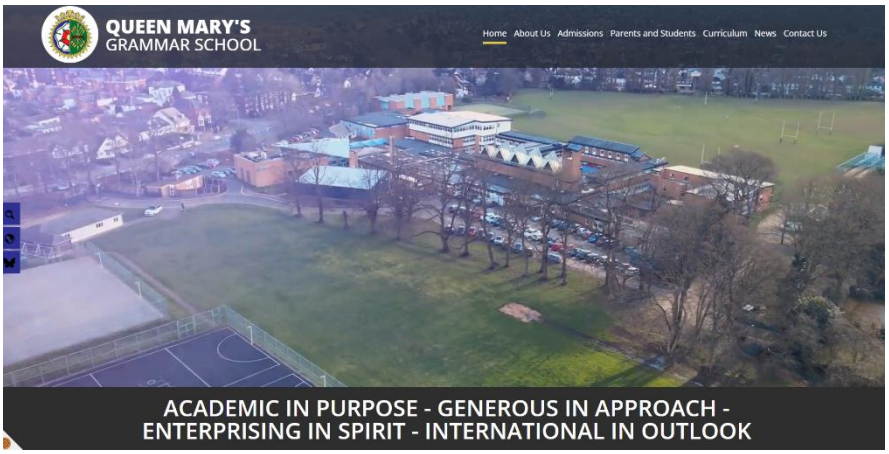




New website and Bluesky

Parents may have noticed that we have changed our main school website (right). I encourage to take a look and familiarise with the sections aimed at parents and the curriculum. We have tried to improve the navigation and freshen up the presentation of the site, which can be viewed here:

[Queen Mary's Grammar School - Home]



We have also launched a number of new social media sites on the Bluesky platform. After using X (Twitter) for over a decade, we felt that the time was right to embrace a new platform. You are able to view the accounts without a log in and the setup is very similar to the original format of Twitter.

The main school account is visible to the left and a number of accounts (such as Geography, PSHE, DT, hockey, cricket, rugby, ski/diving trips, expeditions) have been set up with more to follow.

The main school account can be viewed using the link below and other accounts searched for by typing in QMGS in the search:

[Queen Mary's Grammar School (@qmgs1554.bsky.social) — Bluesky]

The Queen Mary's Association (QMA)

Following the success of Burns Night, we have one further event in 2025-26, with the Summer Arts Festival taking place on Saturday 27th June. Tickets will go on sale soon, so please look out for these. Easy fundraising is also an easy way to support the QMA. We have raised a total of £8,464.11 for the school from 309 parent and staff supporters. Please support this initiative which does not cost you anything as it is the retailers who donate on your behalf based upon the amount that you spend with them; you can find our Easyfundraising page at this link

All of the money generated from profits of events and other QMA fundraising contribute to projects which ultimately benefit many of our children. Previous fundraising events have enabled the school to purchase a minibus, install cricket nets and covers and also a refurbishment of the Library. Last year we provided funds to support teacher-led initiatives such as the refurbishment of the Welfare Hub extension, which allows the school to provide targeted pastoral support to students. This year, we continue to support individual projects as well as supporting the School's Future Sports @ QMGS project. We hope that you can support the valuable work of the QMA by attending events and purchasing raffle tickets, so that we can continue to enrich our children's school experience.

We are always looking for support in the running of the events, but also in the donation of raffle/tombola prizes, business sponsorship, and match funding. Please do contact us if you can help in any way. Each QMA event has a committee to run it, and we have a separate group who manage the running of the bar. If you are interested in supporting the QMA, please contact us via Minaxi Patel-Gill at: alumni@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk

Walsall Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme

Please see below for for Easter opportunities. The Walsall HAF website can also be found here.

QM Experience Fund and the Future Sport programme

I wrote to all parents at the start of the school year about our 2025-26 QM Experience Fund. A large number of people have already made a contribution to this, and I hope that all parents can consider a donation this year. Whether it is through sport, music, drama, language learning or one of the many other extra-curricular activities, we hope that your child will make the absolute most of the QM experience in their time with us.

We try our best to provide these activities through our school budget or at as low a cost as possible. However, our ambitions often go beyond this income, and I am hoping that you will consider giving a regular amount to ensure that we can continue to offer a full range of activities. We launched the QM Experience Fund last year and received a tremendous response, raising over £10,000 in 2024-25. Added to just under £20,000 raised through the QMA events, this was a terrific boost to the school from the parental/student body and has made a genuine difference to what we can achieve.

As I have written to you about previously, over the past three years, we have been fundraising towards the Future Sport @ QMGS project: an ambitious initiative to revolutionise our facilities for the benefit of our students and the wider community. Any donations to the QM experience fund will initially go towards this but will support a wide range of other opportunities once we have completed the project.

We have almost completed the astro-turf development, and we hope to be able to hold our opening event in April. Work proceeds on the natural turf pitches, which should be seeded by the end of the Spring. We still have significant fundraising to do for phase 3 (the refurbishment and extension of the pavilion) and would be grateful for any support. As shared in October, please follow this link to read press coverage of the work.

I hope that you will seriously consider making a regular payment to the QM Experience Fund. We are grateful for a regular contribution as it enables us to plan the best ways in which to support our young people. Please follow this link for details of how to set up a standing order to the donations account and a Gift Aid declaration which, if you are a UK taxpayer, will allow us to claim an additional 25% on top of your donations. Alternatively, if you would prefer you can make a one-off annual payment (£75) or termly payments (£25 per term), you can do this via Parent Mail. Please select the 'QM Experience' option. You can also support the Future Sport project via the Just Giving website.

Thank you for your support!

Avenues of support (Mrs Hill)

I would like to remind all parents of the avenues of support we offer, focussing on pre-loved uniform and sports kit and food hampers. We have had donations of uniform from Y11 and Y13 at the end of last year, but there has been a drop in donations to the Community Hub of late.

Thank you to parents and alumni alike who have generously donated uniform and sports kit to our Community Hub. This is always very much appreciated, and we look forward to receiving more donations. We have a good stock of pre-loved items, so please contact Mrs Hill at d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk if any items are required. Please also contact Mrs Hill at d.hill@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk if your family would benefit from a food hamper.

Mental health and wellbeing

The school continues to support staff and students with their wellbeing through the usual communication channels. We work with several organisations and any member of the school community can raise concerns via the wellbeing or safeguarding email addresses. These will be checked during the holiday, but there may be some delay in response.

Qmgswell-being@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk
qmgssafeguarding@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk

This account is monitored by the SEMH team and is checked regularly:

- Mr Collins (Assistant Head and DSL)
- Mr Farnell (Safeguarding and Welfare Officer)
- Mrs Mohan (6th Form Operations Manager)
- Ms Forbes (SEMH counsellor)
- Miss Daniels (SEMH counsellor)

Dates for your diary

The full school calendar can be found on the School Website, but I have included some key dates for the end of the Spring and beginning of the summer terms are below:

Thu 26 Mar	Y8 parents' evening	Wed 17 Jun	Year 12 results day
Fri 27 Mar	Finish for Easter (at 2pm)	Thu 25 Jun	Year 12 UCAS day
Mon 13 Apr	Staff training day	Sat 27 Jun	Summer Arts Festival
Tue 14 Apr	Students return to school	Wed 8 Jul	Staff CPD early finish (2pm)
5-15 May	Year 12 exams	Wed 15 Jul (2pm)	Students finish for summer holiday
19-22 May	Year 10 exams		
1-4 June	Year 9 exams	Thu 13 Aug	A-level results day
Thu 4 Jun	Whole school open evening (early finish, 2pm)	Thu 20 Aug	GCSE results day

Term dates for 2025-26 and 2026-27 are available, via this link.

Regards and have a fantastic Easter break

Mr Langton
Headmaster