



28 September 2021

Dear students, parents, and carers,

It has been an enjoyable and successful start to the Autumn Term with students producing some excellent work in class, high attendance at enrichment clubs and some beautiful early Autumn weather for us to enjoy at break and lunch.

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1. JMHS Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

I have asked each member of the SLT to write a short paragraph about themselves to put into newsletters this term. This week we hear from Mr Collard (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs Laidler (Assistant Headteacher).

Mr Collard (Deputy Headteacher)

Since joining the teaching profession in 1996 I have enjoyed a wide variety of roles, though none has made me as proud as being the Deputy Headteacher at JMHS. I am honoured to play a role in helping the school to build on its many strengths and make it the best place it can be for everyone. It is great that I still get to do some teaching as whilst I love my job, I am still happiest in the classroom. Seeing the daily successes of students and how they overcome obstacles that sometimes occur is really inspiring.

Going to school in the 1980's and initially struggling with school meant that I immensely appreciated the kindness and support of some of my teachers. Their faith in me left a huge impression and has always shaped my view that we can always make a difference, no matter how difficult things may seem.

My wife and I have three children which means when not working I am usually coaching football or being a taxi driver. Supporting Ipswich Town means I have a sense of humour and don't get too down when things don't go as planned!

Mrs Laidler (Assistant Headteacher)

I joined John Masefield in 2003 as Faculty Leader for Mathematics and have since been promoted to Assistant Headteacher. I have always enjoyed mathematics and have been privileged over the years to be able to teach students of all ages and levels. I was honoured to be part of the Shanghai-England teacher exchange in 2015 and was fascinated by the quality of the curriculum and teaching in the Shanghai schools. I have since worked with teachers across England to develop the teaching of Mathematics, which has helped raise national standards.

I live between Worcester and Stratford-upon-Avon and have two teenage children, a daughter in Year 13 and a son in Year 10. I am a keen runner and have recently completed the Great North Run, one of my bucket list races, and hope to do the London Marathon in the future. I also enjoy working with a variety of crafts and making novelty birthday cakes for my extended family.

My main responsibilities in school fall under the curriculum, these include:

- Writing the school timetable
- Managing the choices for Year 8 and Year 11
- Teacher deployment
- Faculty Leader for Mathematics

Our school website lists the main responsibilities and roles of SLT members. These can be viewed by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/about-us/senior-leadership-team/>

2. COVID testing, precautions and vaccinations

We have been fortunate that so far there have been very few COVID cases at JMHS this term. However, we are aware that there have been significant outbreaks in other local schools and that it could happen here. We would like to thank all students and staff for continuing with twice weekly Lateral Flow Tests. In order for us to keep all members of our community safe, it is important for students and staff to continue taking the LFTs at home.

Additionally, we are continuing with the following COVID precautions:

- Ensure all doors and windows are kept open at all times to maximise ventilation
- Ask all parents and carers to ensure that students with symptoms self-isolate and take a PCR test
- Ask students to sanitise their hands on entering or leaving a classroom
- Continuing with our no physical contact rule

COVID Vaccines

We are delighted that following the government announcement that 16 and 17 year olds could have vaccines, many of our sixth formers have had their first vaccine. We would encourage all students who are eligible for the vaccine to book as soon as possible. By doing this you will be contributing to keeping yourself, your family and our community safe. We always authorise absence for students to have their vaccine.

We have so far received limited information about vaccines for 12-15 year olds from the NHS and the Department for Education. The information received so far can be viewed by clicking the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-schools/covid-19-vaccination-programme-for-children-and-young-people-guidance-for-schools>

When we have further details about how vaccinations for 12 to 15 year olds will be organised, we will let you know.

3. ASPIRE by Mr Collard, Deputy Headteacher

I am extremely pleased to report that in my frequent visits to lessons, all year groups have started well and that there is a positive approach to learning demonstrated by almost all students. Given the difficulties of the past two years it is interesting to see a renewed determination in so many students to focus and ensure that they maximise their chances of doing well.

The current focus of ASPIRE is predominantly on the standard of 'Set your work out neatly. Always show pride in whatever work you are doing'. We have therefore been pushing students to demonstrate a pride in their work and I am pleased that students have responded really well. This is not about a handwriting competition, this is about every student trying their best to show they are taking care with their work.

Parents/carers can support this focus by praising your child, or making a constructive comment, on any of the following areas:

- Date and title of work is underlined
- Any crossing out is a single neat line
- Space is used effectively in books
- Capital letters start sentences
- Written work is in ink whereas any illustration is in pencil
- Rulers are used for diagrams and graphs
- Mathematical calculations have all stages of working shown, with one line set out under the previous line
- Presentation shows that your child has tried hard

4. Sixth Form News by Mr Hawksworth, Head of Sixth Form

Sixth Form students have now settled in to the new independence and responsibility that comes with sixth form study and are balancing independent study and social time. Many of them are getting involved with competitive sports fixtures that have already started and a range of other enrichment activities including walking club, book club and learning to sign. Our fantastic JM6 student leaders are making huge contributions to JM6 and whole school life, and have helped Mr Hawksworth deliver an assembly to Year 11 about how to get help in choosing A Level subjects and also the support that is available from the Year 13 students in the Competitive Applicants Club and JM6 subject link students.

Year 13 leavers help with COVID testing

We were very grateful to welcome back a number of our recent JM6 leavers at the start of term to help with the on-site COVID testing of our students. They were great role models, working long hours with early starts and late finishes and ensuring all our students were put at ease, particularly the very youngest. It was a delight to have them working alongside support staff and invigilators demonstrating the core values we promote at JMHS. We wish them well in the future as they go in various directions from University and College studies to the world of employment.

5. Attendance

After the disruption we have all experienced in the last two school years, it is more important than ever that students have excellent school attendance. Evidence is overwhelming that those students with excellent attendance are more likely to succeed socially, emotionally and academically.

Please can I remind all parents and carers that we need to be contacted as early as possible on every day of absence. This can be done by phone, 01531 631012 Option 1, or email studentabsence@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. We will only authorise absence for illness where sufficient detail and explanation is provided. Students can attend school feeling 'under the weather' and should be encouraged to do so. Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside of school time where ever possible. Planned absences are only authorised in exceptional circumstances and JMHS should be informed as soon as possible.

6. Progress Checks by Mr Hammond, Assistant Headteacher

During the Autumn Term, all students will receive a Progress Check. For this year, both types of document will contain the same information as in previous years. In the Autumn Term for Years 7 to 9, Progress Checks focus on Care & Concentration, Contribution, Cooperation, and Quality of Homework for each subject. For Year 10 students, we also include a projected end of Year 11 grade for the Core subjects only; English, Maths, and Science (projected grades for all subjects will be provided from the Spring Term). For Year 11 students, details are provided for all subjects.

Year group	Sent to parents or carers
Year 11 Progress Check	Final week of October
Year 8 Progress Check	First week of November
Year 12/13 Progress Check	Final week of November
Year 7 Progress Check	Final week of November
Year 9 Progress Check	Second week of December
Year 10 Progress Check	Third week of December

7. Curriculum Plans for the Autumn Term

Each curriculum subject has produced single page summaries of the topics they will be covering during the Autumn Term with the key learning points and assessments for all year groups. A link to these summaries is included below:

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/curriculum/autumn-2021-curriculum-overviews/>

8. Open Evening – Thursday 7 October

We have had a fantastic response to our Open Evening on Thursday 7 October and both sessions are now fully booked; we look forward to welcoming these families to JMHS. The evening will include an introductory talk from me and a tour of the school led by our Year 11 Prefects. The tour will take visitors to all faculty areas where staff and students will be available to talk about each subject at JMHS. Staff will also be available to discuss SEND, student services, uniform, and transport.

We are also offering tours of JMHS during the school day and would encourage anyone who has not secured a place at the Open Evening to contact us at transition@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk to arrange a tour.

9. Sixth Form Open Evening and Sixth Form Taster Day

JM6 Open Evening is on Thursday 14 October starting at 5.30pm with presentations in the Theatre followed by a carousel of subject sessions. Whether a student has already decided to continue to JM6 or has not yet decided, the evening is crucial in helping all students intending to study A levels to make informed choices about subjects. Students will be able to sign up to sessions this week.

A further important part of our support in helping students choose A level subjects wisely, and a chance to experience being a sixth former for the day, is provided by our Sixth Form Taster Day on Friday 12 November. Students will be able to sign up to this straight after half term.

10. Staff Training Afternoon - Friday 8 October

For the past five years at JMHS, we have scheduled seven Faculty Training Afternoons during the year. On these afternoons, students leave at the start of lunch and teachers work together in their faculty teams (eg English, languages, arts) to plan the curriculum and improve the consistency and quality of teaching. Since we have started using this additional training and planning time for teachers, we have made significant progress in improving the

quality of the curriculum, sequencing teaching to help students understand better and remember more and to make teaching more engaging and motivating.

The dates for this academic year are as follows:

Friday 8 October	Thursday 10 March
Thursday 11 November	Wednesday 11 May
Monday 6 December	Monday 13 June
Wednesday 2 February	

The first afternoon is on Friday 8 October. On this day students will finish the school day between 12.10pm and 12.20pm and be escorted to the bus park by their teachers at the times listed below:

Year 7 & Year 8: 12.10pm	
Year 9 & Year 10: 12.15pm	Year 11 & Sixth Form 12.20pm

Students will then walk home or await their bus whilst being supervised by staff. Parents picking students up in cars should arrive after the buses depart at or after 12.35pm.

11. Enrichment activities for the Autumn Term

At JMHS, we know how important it is to develop students' experience of the world, cultural capital, character, and sense of adventure. For this reason, JMHS follow an Enrichment programme that supports and develops their character in line with our expectations of students, which is to ASPIRE to be the best we can be. To empower them to become happy and successful in life, education, and employment.

Hence, why we have launched a new and exciting enrichment programme for the autumn term. If you are yet to sign your young person up to any of these exciting opportunities, then please follow the sign-up instructions alongside each specific club and activity as published on our website at:

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/parents-information/clubs-and-enrichment/>

Some clubs and activities require parents/guardians to sign up via Schoolcloud. A guide to Schoolcloud can be found attached. Overall, our enrichment programme has been extremely popular, and students who have participated in our extra-curricular activities and clubs have thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

12. Key dates this term

Thursday 7 October: Open Evening 5pm to 7.30pm (sessions now fully booked)

Friday 8 October: Staff training afternoon – students leaving at 12.15pm approximately

Thursday 14 October: Sixth Form Open Evening – registration from 5.15-5.30pm

W/c Monday 18 October: House Sport

Monday 25 October – Friday 29 October: Half Term

Tuesday 2 November – Saturday 6 November: School Production 'The Show Must Go On'

Wednesday 3 November: Year 11 GCSE History visit to Ludlow Castle

Wednesday 10 November: Year 11–13 PE visit to Gloucester University

Thursday 11 November: Staff training afternoon – students leaving at 12.15pm approximately

Friday 12 November: JM6 Taster Day for Year 11 students / Visit to Hereford & Ludlow College

Monday 22 November – Thursday 2 December: Year 11 Mock Exams

Thursday 2 December: Year 7 Parents' Evening

Monday 6 December: Staff training afternoon – students leaving at 12.15pm

Wednesday 8 December: Year 11 GCSE German – German experience day to Birmingham

Thursday 9 December: Year 11 Parents' Evening

Thursday 9 December – Saturday 11 December: JM6 Performing Arts trip

Friday 17 December: Term ends at 12.15pm

Tuesday 4 January: Staff training day

Wednesday 5 January: Spring Term starts

... And finally

At the start of term, I challenged students to make this academic year 2021-22 their best so far. Every day I spend some time circulating the school and visiting lessons for all year groups. The excellent concentration and focus from students, the pride they are taking in their work, and the thoughtful, intelligent responses in class discussions and group activities indicate that many students are responding magnificently to this challenge. It's been an impressive first month. Let's keep going and together we can achieve great success!

With my very best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Evans". The script is cursive and fluid.

Andrew Evans
Headteacher