



7 January 2022

Dear students, parents, and carers,

I hope you had an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas break and would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. We continue to live in challenging times, but we had a successful Autumn Term with effective teaching, a good working ethos in classrooms, and students producing a large amount of high-quality teaching work. We aim to build on this strong start, with even better focus in class and a revised approach to feedback and assessment this term which is outlined in this newsletter.

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## 1. Revised approach to assessment at JMHS

**by Mr Hammond (Assistant Headteacher) and Mrs Males (Extended Leadership Team member)**

Following significant work on our whole curriculum, carried out by all teachers and leaders, we have a new framework that incorporates clear, specific, and measurable learning endpoints in all subjects. These will enable subject teachers to accurately assess attainment at more regular intervals throughout the school year.

Consequently, we are currently reforming our assessment processes in a number of ways, both during and following lessons. Lesson design is being refined so that assessment becomes a near-continuous process, with checks following the start of a lesson, after the main content has been taught, and near the end of a lesson. As part of this, students will be self-marking more of their own work, including some assessments, with the teacher checking the work, and responding to it where necessary. This approach is designed to enhance learning so that students are more frequently checking their understanding and, where needed, improving their work.

Additionally, every subject will conduct formal assessments more frequently. Assessments are being redesigned in order that they test how well each student has learned the specific components that have been taught. Formal assessment in most subjects will take place at the end of each block of learning; in most cases, this will be near the end of a half-term. The intention is that each student will mark the assessment, the teacher will then check the assessment and will re-teach any areas where understanding needs to improve.

During the Spring and Summer Terms of 2022, we are also changing school reporting in order to reflect the changes described above. Reports will focus on a student's attainment in each subject by giving a percentage score alongside the class and year group average in each subject. This will provide a much clearer indication as to how a student is progressing. Teachers will therefore no longer provide comments related to each subject but will continue to provide grading for Care and Concentration, and Homework. We will also continue to report attendance, and we aim to include the number of behaviour points given to the student, compared to the average within the year group.

There is a significant amount of work involved in moving to this new assessment framework, and we plan to have it fully in place for the start of the new academic year. As part of these changes, we will be moving away from our current Management Information System (SIMS) to a more user friendly and modern system. Details of the replacement and other related systems will be communicated over the course of the year.

## **2. Curriculum Plans for the Spring Term**

Subject Curriculum Summaries and Key Vocabulary for the Spring Term can be viewed on the school website or by clicking the link below. We hope that these summaries provide useful information so that parents can support students with their learning. We try to keep these summaries concise by only listing the key learning points and assessment methods for each subject.

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/curriculum/spring-2022-curriculum/>

## **3. COVID Precautions this term**

We would like to thank all parents, carers and students for continuing to support us with COVID precautions. Having nearly all the school attend for lateral flow tests before the start of term prevented asymptomatic individuals inadvertently infecting others. Having all students (other than the very small number of medical exemptions) wear face coverings in all lessons and in corridors helps protect our school community. As a result of this and other measures including keeping all doors and windows open in all classrooms to maximise ventilation, COVID cases at JMHS were lower than in other local schools in the latter half of the Autumn Term. We are continuing with the COVID measures listed below for the next half term:

- Requiring face coverings to be worn in all classrooms and corridors
- Continuing with all students and staff taking lateral flow tests twice per week
- Ensuring all doors and windows are kept open at all times to maximise ventilation
- Asking all parents and carers to ensure that students with symptoms self-isolate and take a PCR test
- Asking students to sanitise their hands on entering or leaving a classroom
- Continuing with our no physical contact rule
- Increased cleaning of touch points around the school

As we are expecting cold weather to continue, please could students attend school wearing base layers and warm coats. We will continue to allow students to wear coats in lessons.

We have been informed that later this term, the school vaccination service will be visiting the school to give all students aged 12-15 years olds the opportunity to receive their second COVID vaccine. We do not have an exact date yet but understand that this is likely to be just over 12 weeks after our first vaccination days of 5 and 6 November. This would mean the days would be either late January or in February. We were most impressed that a very high proportion of students elected to have their first vaccine and believe that this contributed to lower case numbers in November and December at JMHS.

Confirmatory PCR tests following a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test result are to be temporarily suspended from Tuesday 11 January. This will mean that anyone who receives a positive LFD test result will be required to self-isolate immediately and will not be required to take a confirmatory PCR test.

Since 22 December 2021, the 10 day isolation period for people who record a positive Covid-19 test result has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances. From the day after their positive test or onset of symptoms, students must isolate for 7 full days, but may now take a LFD test from day 6 and day 7 of their isolation period. Those who receive two negative tests are now no longer required to complete 10 full days of isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. Once two negative tests are reported and your child does not have a high temperature, they may return to school from day 8 of their isolation

period. We have redesigned the [Lateral Flow Self-Test Results Report Form for Students](#) to also include a section on tests taken for early release from the 10 day isolation period.

## **4. JMHS Year Leaders**

In this newsletter Mr Bees (Head of Year 11) tells us about himself.

### **Mr Bees (Head of Year 11 and Lead for PSHE)**

This is my 9<sup>th</sup> year at JMHS as either Year Leader or House Leader. Two of the greatest days in the last decade were the two occasions that Holywell won the House Cup! However, it will make me equally proud to guide our current Year 11 students through to the Summer after what has been a particularly challenging few years for them. The Year Leader role is difficult and varied, but it is never dull. As is my teaching timetable, which usually includes a little bit of everything! And PSHE is a fast-changing, increasingly important faculty for me to lead too.

Originally trained as a PE teacher, when not busy bringing up my two children, it is sport that remains my passion. I have climbed many rocks and cycled many miles, but this year I have really got the golf bug for the first time. I have just received my first official handicap and having always thought I should be a single-figure handicapper if I committed to golf, I'm currently at 10.2!

## **5. Making JMHS the best place to be and the best place to learn: Equalities**

### **Mr Williams (Assistant Headteacher and Head of Pastoral Care)**

Work continues on our commitment to promote diversity and equality within the school. Last term all students revisited the Government's Prevent and Anti-Hate Crime agenda through an assembly and discussion in tutor time. Information is also available on our website for parents and students to signpost organisations, referral routes and support in this difficult area using the following links:

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/parents-information/keeping-children-safe/>

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/students/keeping-yourself-safe/> ).

Our Anti-bullying policy and approach is under continual development so we can achieve the best for our students, with the school now signed up as a member of the Anti-bullying Alliance. They are supporting us with our approach including the National agenda of how peer on peer abuse can impact minority and protected groups. All students are being encouraged within their tutor groups to "call out" discrimination and racism where they see it and huge numbers have signed a school pledge to stand up for equality and diversity.

Subjects within their updated curriculum plans are setting themselves objectives in this area, that include teaching materials, approaches and content that reflect a modern and diverse community. Within PSHE a series of one hour "workshops" have been developed and delivered for example on misogyny and toxic masculinity. Children in most school years have now been surveyed about their perceived "safety" and their views will inform our work moving forward. If parents would like to raise any points, ideas or concerns regarding this challenging but important area of our work please email me at [andy.williams@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:andy.williams@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk).

## **6. Enrichment activities for the Spring Term**

### **by Miss Newnes (Enrichment Co-ordinator and Head of Y10)**

Firstly, thank you to all parents and guardians who contributed to the Parental Survey and took the time to comment on our extra-curricular activities and clubs. It was fantastic to hear that despite the difficulties over the past two years, many of you recognised that staff had gone above and beyond to ensure that students had the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and clubs, both at lunchtime and after school during this difficult period.

Please find attached the enrichment programme for spring half term one, which begins the week commencing Monday 10 January 2022 until Friday 11 February 2022. If your young person would like to take part in any of these exciting opportunities, then parents and carers are required to sign up for these via Schoolcloud, which launches on Friday 7 January 2022 at 4pm. A guide to Schoolcloud can be found attached.

After school activities and clubs will require students to meet the club coordinator at their enrichment point in the Bus Park, where they will be collected by a staff member and escorted to the location their club will be held. The enrichment points are at the back of the bus park.

Furthermore, if your child would like to participate in a sports club then they should bring their PE kit to school, where they will have the opportunity to change prior to the activity and club starting.

In the event a club or activity is cancelled, a message will be sent to parents and carers via ParentPay and students will be informed at the earliest convenience. In the event students are unable to make travel arrangements, we ask students to head straight to Student Services where contact will be made with their parent/carer. If contact is unable to be made, Homework club will host students until they are able to access their transport.

There will be a variety of different activities throughout the Spring and Summer term as part of the enrichment programme and students will be informed of further exciting opportunities later in the year. However, if your young person would like us to offer a specific club or activity, then please do not hesitate to contact me directly via email ( [Hayley.newnes@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:Hayley.newnes@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk) ).

## 7. Key dates this term

Thursday 20 January: Year 8 Choices Evening

Thursday 27 January: Year 12/13 Parents' Evening

Wednesday 2 February: Faculty training afternoon, students depart 12.15pm approx.

Thursday 10 February: Year 8 Parents' Evening

Monday 14 February to Friday 18 February: Year 12 Assessment week

Monday 21 February – Friday 25 February: Half Term

Monday 28 February – Wednesday 9 March: Year 11 and Year 13 Mocks exams

Thursday 3 March: Year 10 Parents' Evening

Thursday 10 March: Faculty training afternoon, students depart 12.15pm approx.

Thursday 17 March: Year 9 Parents' Evening

Friday 8 April: Term ends at 3.15pm

### ... And finally

I am looking forward to an exciting Spring Term and hope that we all have a healthy, happy, and fulfilling 2022 with a return to normality as soon as is possible.

With my very best wishes



**Andrew Evans**  
Headteacher