



18 February 2022

Dear students, parents, and carers,

It is unfortunate that students and staff have had to work from home today due to the extreme weather conditions forecast. This was not an easy decision but we felt with school transport cancelled, concerns about the school site, and the advice not to travel that this was the safest option.

This has been a challenging half term with between 10 and 20 staff absent due to COVID for much of the time. This has meant that with supply teachers unavailable, a huge workload for the remaining staff in school covering lessons in subjects they have never taught and staff duties to ensure the school can function smoothly and safely. We also have some teachers who are suffering badly with Long Covid or broken bones who have bravely continued to teach. Their tremendous effort is commendable as is the way that students have been especially kind and supportive to these teachers.

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## **1. Curriculum Update and Faculty Leaders**

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/>

In addition to these termly summaries, Curriculum Leaders have been revising their curriculum overviews for the website. These give a brief overview of the curriculum in each subject including:

- Key Stage Three (Years 7 & 8)
- Year Stage Four (including our transition year in Year 9, and GCSE and BTEC courses in Years 10 & Year 11)
- Sixth Form courses (Years 12 & 13)

The revised Curriculum Overviews will be placed on the website by Tuesday 8 March.

In this newsletter I have asked two of our Curriculum Leaders to briefly outline their philosophy for developing their subject at JMHS and telling us a little bit about themselves.

## **Mrs Lehmann - Faculty Leader for Modern Foreign Languages**

At JMHS, we are passionate about languages and our enthusiastic team of language teachers endeavour to transmit our love of languages. There are many advantages and positive aspects to learning a foreign language and by studying languages, students will:

- Have greater cultural curiosity and empathy towards other countries to increase tolerance in British society. Resources will be authentic, relevant and current to extend text books and motivate students. Classwork will be enhanced by extra-curricular experiences such as films, music and trips.
- Be confident communicators
- Be leaders: Students will be given opportunities to lead as languages role models – in class group work, as Year 9 Language Leaders and as Sixth Form Language Assistants
- Be inspired: The enjoyment and challenge of languages will motivate students to work to the best of their ability
- Be independent learners and have linguistic curiosity and resilience
- Develop a wide range of vocabulary
- Be able to share and justify their opinion
- Understand grammar concepts and master grammar in another language
- Be able to connect with other subjects
- Be aware of the value of languages in the world of work

I trained to become a language teacher in 2001 at Reading University and developed my career as an Modern Foreign Language Faculty Assistant and Faculty teacher in 3 schools in Hampshire and Wiltshire before starting at JMHS in 2020. My family is Swiss but I was born and lived in France until 2001. Like all language teachers, I am keen to share my passion for languages and encourage students to develop a curiosity for other cultures.

## **Mr Kontarines - Faculty Leader for Physical Education**

During my teaching career, I have developed the firm belief that PE offers more to students than the opportunity to excel in sports and compete in games; it provides rich contributions for a holistic education. I believe that through the medium of PE and Sport, students can be taught key life skills, such as: decision making, leadership, developing a competitive edge and striving to be the best one can be. I also believe in building student leadership opportunities, developing extra-curricular enrichment and promoting whole school competitive engagement with sport. Therefore, the PE team and I are developing a curriculum which will hone these skills in all students. It is our hope that upon leaving JMHS, students will engage with sport in some capacity or another, deep into their adulthood.

I was born in Greece and lived there until I was 12. I have always enjoyed competing in various sports and was lucky in that my parents always encouraged me to do so. I enjoyed playing football, cricket, squash, rugby and rackets at school, and went on to represent Greece at cricket. Nowadays, I enjoy padel (a game that is relatively new to England, which is a combination of squash and tennis), mountain biking and trail running.

## **2. Sixth Form News by Mr Hawksworth, Head of Sixth Form**

With Year 13 Mocks straight after half term Year 13 students have been focussing on thorough preparation in order to lay a sound foundation for the A level exams in the summer. For many there is now the added incentive of knowing they have an offer of an exciting university course at an excellent university. Presently over 98% of students who applied to university have received offers, including English at Bristol, Marine Biology at Southampton, Neuroscience at Exeter, Liberal Arts at Warwick, Robotics at Plymouth and Sports Science at Swansea. As reported in the last newsletter we were delighted that Tom Hill has an offer to study Earth Sciences at St Peters College Oxford and Sam Palmer an offer to study Natural Sciences at Homerton

College Cambridge. Over the coming months these students will be sharing their experience of the application process and advice on preparation with our younger Oxbridge aspirants. We are delighted at the range of universities and courses our JM6 students are continuing to and are confident that their sixth form experience stands them in good stead for the challenges to come.

### **3. Prefect appointments for Year 10**

On Thursday 3 February I met with the fifty Year 10 students who had achieved the prefect criteria when reviewed in January. I congratulated these students on first being nominated by their form tutor and then on meeting the challenging criteria. I explained about the role of the JMHS Prefect and the valuable contribution they can make to building our school community so that we all support each other. These fifty students were invited to submit an application for JMHS Prefect in which they are expected to demonstrate how they have been conscientious, considerate and co-operative at JMHS. I am currently reviewing these applications and have so far been delighted with the standard of applications that have been submitted. We will notify all applicants after half term if their application has been successful.

There will be an opportunity for Year 10 students who did not meet the prefect criteria in January to apply in March after their next progress check.

### **4. COVID Update**

We would like to thank all parents and students for continuing to support us with COVID precautions. It was disappointing that we had to reintroduce face mask wearing in classrooms and indoor areas in the fortnight before half term in response to a spike in positive cases amongst students and staff. We appreciate that it is difficult for students and staff to work for long periods of time wearing face masks and are pleased that cases now appear to be decreasing amongst both groups. It is our intention not to require face masks when we return after half term. However, students and staff may choose to wear a face mask if they wish to do so.

We were also pleased that the vast majority of students who were eligible for their first or second vaccine, took the opportunity to have their vaccine in school last week. This means that they will be less likely to have to self-isolate and also protects our community. Details of how to arrange vaccinations for those students who were unable to have them in school were sent by ParentPay earlier this week and the attached posters give details of age 12+ vaccinations centres in Worcestershire and Herefordshire during half term.

We are continuing with the following COVID precautions:

- All students and staff taking lateral flow tests twice per week
- Ensuring all doors and windows are kept open to maximise ventilation
- Asking all parents and carers to ensure that students with symptoms self-isolate and take a PCR test
- Students sanitising their hands on entering or leaving a classroom
- Continuing 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.

### **5. School Production**

Owing to staff absence we have sadly been forced to postpone the whole school production of 'The Show Must Go On'. We will look to rearrange this and will announce the new date as soon as we are in a

position to do so – the show most definitely must go on! We are very much hoping that other planned Performing Arts events in the Summer Term will still proceed.

## **6. Enrichment Activities after Half Term by Miss Newnes, Enrichment Co-ordinator**

During this half term, students had the opportunity to participate in a range of exciting enrichment activities, such as Chess Club, Guitar Group, Badminton Club, Creative Writing Club, as well as much more. It was fantastic to see students from all year groups, engaging successfully in our extra-curricular programme, as well as voluntarily sharing their own successes from their participation within these.

Our extensive, free of charge, Spring Enrichment programme, will continue after half term from Monday 7 March. Despite there being an academic focus to some of the sessions, our aim of enrichment is to give students an opportunity to enjoy their learning further and to continue to love spending time at school. For many students, our Enrichment programme supports their emotional and social needs, increases their confidence, and gives them the opportunity to grow as individuals.

Although our Enrichment programme is non-compulsory, we encourage students to choose at least one enrichment opportunity per half term.

During the first week back after half term, you will receive our Enrichment Newsletter. This letter will include the new and exciting clubs and activities available for your young person during the next half term, as well as further information regarding Schoolcloud, which is the booking system we use for our extra-curricular activities.

## **7. Key Dates**

### **Spring and Summer Term**

Monday 21 February – Friday 25 February: Half Term

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

Thursday 3 March: Year 10 Parents' Evening & World Book day event

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

Thursday 17 March: Year 9 Parents' Evening

Monday 4 April – Friday 8 April: House Sport events

Friday 8 April: Term ends at 3.15pm

Monday 25 April: INSET day

Tuesday 26 April: Start of term

Bank Holiday: Monday 2 May

Wednesday 11 May: Faculty training afternoon, students depart 12.15pm approximately

Monday 30 May – Friday 3 June: Half Term

Monday 13 June: Faculty training afternoon, students depart 12.15pm approximately

Friday 8 July: INSET day

Friday 15 July: Sports Day

Tuesday 19 July & Wednesday 20 July: Challenge Days

Thursday 21 July: Last day of term, students depart 12.15pm approximately

## **2022-2023 Term Dates**

Autumn Term: Wednesday 7 September 2022 – Friday 16 December 2022

October Half Term: Monday 24 October 2022 – Friday 28 October 2022

Spring Term: Wednesday 4 January 2023 – Friday 31 March 2023

February Half Term: Monday 20 February 2023 - Friday 24 February 2023

Summer Term: Tuesday 18 April 2023 – Tuesday 25 July 2023

May Half Term: Monday 29 May 2023– Friday 2 June 2023

## **... And finally**

I have been impressed with how students have prepared for their end of half term tests this week. I have seen classes working extremely hard on the tests and students responding positively in feedback and marking sessions, showing determination to learn lessons and improve their knowledge and understanding. I would like to wish everyone an enjoyable and well deserved half term break.

With my very best wishes



**Andrew Evans**  
**Headteacher**