



8 April 2022

Dear students, parents, and carers,

It has been the most challenging term for student and staff absence in my 25 years as Deputy Head and then Headteacher. It is excellent news that far fewer people are becoming seriously ill with COVID. However, with both staff and students quite rightly respecting the recommendations on self-isolation, the affect on attendance has been considerable. I have been impressed with how students have responded to having many lessons covered by other teachers. In nearly all cases they have continued to work hard and support the teacher covering the lesson to teach the topic as effectively as they can. Let's hope that in the summer COVID rates decline and life can genuinely return to normal.

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1. Curriculum Update and Faculty Leaders

Over the past week students in Year 7 to Year 10 have been completing their end of half-term tests. In these tests, half the marks are allocated for work covered this half term, whilst the other half are for previous learning. We do this so that students are reminded that they need to be able to retain knowledge in their long-term memory and then apply that knowledge.

For students to be able to retain knowledge in long term memory they need to:

- Complete individual work in a quiet environment without distraction
- Revisit key knowledge many times
- Make clear notes in their books to help them learn the key facts, formulas, methods etc
- Learn how to apply this knowledge in a wide range of contexts

We constantly reinforce these ways of learning in lessons and encourage students to apply this methodology with their homework and revision.

Students will usually take a test at the end of each half term in every subject. However, as the first half of the Summer Term is only just over 4 weeks long, there will not be tests in May for the majority of subjects. In Years 7 to 9 students will take their next test at the end of the Summer Term in July. Year 10 and Year 12 students will have an end of year exam in late June or early July reviewing their learning so far on examination courses.

Curriculum Leaders have recently completed overviews of the curriculum for their subjects, each about two pages long and these can be viewed via the website or by clicking the link below:

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

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

Mr Ward – Curriculum Leader for History

Having left school at 16 and spending another 16 years working as a bricklayer, a back injury led me on what seemed an unlikely route into a career in education. I completed a History degree at University College Worcester, followed by a PGCE in History, ending up at JMHS in 2002. In the 20 years since then, I have been fortunate to work with a series of excellent, inspiring colleagues helping to build what we feel is an innovative and energetic department where students feel valued and encouraged to take pride in, and responsibility for, their learning.

Mrs Cullis and I have great faith in the magic of the 'wow' factor, which makes the narrative behind historical events, trends and turning points the foundation of all lessons. By engaging our students in the wonder and intrigue of the stories, we aim to develop their knowledge and understanding as a vehicle for the learning and critical thinking skills that will give them a secure base for lifelong learning.

We aim to support our students with their growing awareness of their place in their community, country and world, to help ensure they have the best chance possible of being confident when engaging with current affairs, and provide a base for expanding their cultural capital. It gives us great satisfaction to share our students' growth into thoughtful, socially aware young people who have a strong sense of how the modern world came to be.

Alongside my continuing fascination with my subject I like to escape from real life through my love of live music – attending and playing gigs, and indulging my five decades and counting obsession with Wolves (the football team, not the animals). I have to use my skills as a historian to research the last time they won anything really meaningful!

Mrs Wakefield - Joint Curriculum Leader for Geography

Whilst studying a Geography degree at Staffordshire University, I had the exciting opportunity to take a new module which investigated Geography teaching. After this I decided to continue my work in schools, setting up after school clubs in my local area to help the younger generations engage with environmental issues. From that point I've never looked back. After completing my PGCE from the University of Derby in 2016, I have worked in a number of places from sixth form colleges to joining JMHS in 2019, where I look forward to continuing the excellent standards of geography.

I am passionate about providing students with cultural capital, a deeper understanding of how the world works and the skills needed to help them achieve. An element we have instilled into our curriculum through new and engaging topics to incorporating geographic information systems (GIS) skills into our practice. Our teaching contextualises learning by putting it in a relatable, real-life context ensuring students can apply new knowledge to the world they see around them.

Miss Phillips - Joint Curriculum Leader for Geography

From an early age I was interested in the world around us and how the interaction between the physical and human world creates the fascinating world we see today. Whilst studying at the University of Liverpool I was lucky enough to explore the geography of three marvellous European cities and the way in which the power of humankind can work together to make real change. This inspired me to become a teacher and share my passions.

Growing up my hobbies included acting, singing and dance, and I was lucky enough to take part in a number of shows whilst at school and university. I joined JMHS in September 2018 and became a curriculum leader the following year. My aim as a curriculum leader in geography is to create topics that challenge our everyday understanding of the world. This includes dispelling outdated myths such as 'All of Africa is poor'. In a world where students can access a plethora of factual as well as fake news online, it is more important than ever that we provide them with powerful geographical knowledge about the complex world around us.

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

Year 12 and Year 13 Biologists have had the opportunity to attend a masterclass on Wednesday 16 March at the University of Birmingham. The day provided an excellent way to see how the learning in lessons can be translated into real-life scenarios. This particular masterclass involved students working in teams to try and control a disease outbreak in a clinical setting. It was also an excellent opportunity to have a look around the campus of one of the best universities in the country with an expert guide, Dr Jennings - JMHS Science Faculty Leader, who worked in both the Medical School and School of Biosciences for nearly 10 years. The students also had the time to have a campus tour and get a feel for life at university.

Sixth Form Student Leaders have co-ordinated a brilliant whole school initiative to collect a variety of essential items to support the brave people of Ukraine at this extremely challenging time. The student leaders constructed a list of the most essential items needed by families. The response from the school community was great and the JM6 students got to work sorting and boxing the donations. Not satisfied with this, our superb students also organised a bake sale and bucket collection with the proceeds split between the Ukraine appeal and Comic Relief. A fantastic £1,101 was raised for the Ukraine Appeal.

3. School and House Sport by Mr Kontarines, PE Faculty Leader

House Sport

Matches were played in the penultimate week of term. Students enjoyed volleyball, hockey and football, and played the matches in a great spirit and with a high level of skill and competitiveness showing real passion for representing their House. The house points totals for Year 8 to Year 11 have been calculated and we will know the overall totals once the Year 7 competition concludes on Friday 29 April.

Year 8 points: Beacon – 142; Holywell – 143 ; Jubilee – 161; Midsummer - 136

Year 9 points: Beacon – 142; Holywell – 85; Jubilee – 110; Midsummer - 122

Year 10 points: Beacon – 85; Holywell – 78; Jubilee – 118; Midsummer - 105

Year 11 points: Beacon – 59; Holywell – 100; Jubilee 80; Midsummer - 59

Football

Attendance at Football Club on Mondays for Year 8 has been very consistent and the numbers at Year 7 and Year 9 training have been impressive. About 25 students regularly trained from Year 7 and a solid 15 from Year 9.

The football season has started well for JMHS in the leagues. Year 7 came from behind for a well earned draw against St Mary's High School and Year 8 lost a closely fought and well-spirited match against the same opposition. Year 11 had a sensational game against St Mary's High School which they drew 3-3 coming from two goals down to secure a well-earned draw. Fixtures against Aylestone School took place this week: Year 7 dominated their match but somehow lost 0-1 in the dying minutes of the game; Year 8 had a splendid match that finished 1-1; Year 10 won their match comfortably 4-0.

Well done to all students who represented our teams.

Girls' Indoor Cricket

Year 8 girls played in an indoor cricket tournament this term and showed some real promise. Some fine displays with the bat from Hosanna and Ella and some excellent work bat and ball from Phoebe, saw JMHS win one of our 4 matches, but compete valiantly in the others. We are looking forward to the girls playing more cricket in the summer and we hope to be working with Herefordshire Cricket Association in core PE lessons in the Summer Term.

Rugby 7s

There have been three year groups that have enjoyed Rugby 7s tournaments this term. Year 11 played some sensational rugby in their competition and scored a number of amazing tries. 'That' offload from AJ Hammond will be spoken about for years to come. Year 7 also played very well and put on some great performances against very strong teams. Year 9 also played some superb free flowing Rugby 7s and played with passion and pace scoring a number of excellent tries in their matches.

Support

I would like to thank the coaches at Ledbury RFC for working tirelessly with our teams and supporting them on the days of the tournaments as well as organising extra training sessions. Thank you to Mr Powers, Mr Pugh, Mr Spiller and special thanks to Mr Seager who has coached the Year 7 team every Monday since September. It is wonderful to have such a supportive rugby club working so closely with the school.

We are extremely grateful to the Adam Stansfield Foundation for their extraordinarily generous donation of £850. JMHS bought some excellent pop up goals with the money as well as a huge bag of footballs that the students have benefitted from using in their lessons and at after school clubs. This has improved the quality of our football offer at JMHS. Adam Stansfield was a professional footballer who played for Hereford United amongst other clubs, who tragically died from bowel cancer in 2010. The foundation was set up in September 2010 and aims to promote community participation in healthy recreation for the benefit of young people. More information about Adam, his playing career and the work of the foundation can be found at www.adamstansfieldfoundation.com.

4. Year 11 exam preparation by Mr Hammond, Assistant Headteacher

Following the recent mock examinations, students are currently either being taught the final few components of their subjects, revisiting previous content, or completing coursework for their vocational or practical subjects. Mock examination results will be included in the forthcoming Year 11 report which will be posted home in the next few days. Students have been invited to a number of revision/catch-up classes during the Easter holiday. Students were offered a printed copy of the programme and it was emailed to parents and carers on 28 March. As a reminder, the school cannot be responsible for supervising students before or after each Easter holiday revision class, and we cannot phone parents if students do not attend. Subjects have provided a summary of revision areas for Year 11 students. These can be accessed from the Year 11 section of the school website, <https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/parents-information/year-groups/>.

This summer's Year 11 final exams will take place between 16 May to 28 June. In a recent letter sent to parents and carers, Mr Peggs (Exams Officer) provided information about the exam contingency day scheduled for 29 June. He explained that this is a date scheduled in case there is an event of national or significant local disruption to examinations in the United Kingdom. Please plan for your Year 11 child to be in school up to and including 29 June 2022. The contingency day does not cater for a candidate who is absent for any of their

examinations, and Mr Peggs outlined the process for that eventuality. Individual examination timetables will be issued to candidates this week.

In the recent mock examinations, the vast majority of students conducted themselves very well, and it was clear that most students had undertaken exam preparation. At the start of each exam session, students were reminded of the formal exam regulations, just as they will be in the summer exams. It was, however, noticeable that a significant minority of students attended exams without bringing even basic equipment such as pens, pencils, rulers and, where needed, a calculator. We would ask that parents and carers ensure that their child has the correct equipment at all times, but most importantly, during exams.

The school website, in the Students – Revision Resources section, has a number of summary subject revision guides for Year 11 students. Form tutors have already been asked to direct their tutees to this page. It can be found at: <https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/students/revision-resources/>

Lastly, as explained in the recent letter from Mr Bees and me to Year 11 parents and carers, for safety and safeguarding reasons, all Year 11 students are required to attend school as normal until at least the half-term holiday (30 May to 3 June). Lessons will take place, with subject teachers focusing on revision for their subject. Once a subject's examinations have been completed, in those lessons, students will be supervised with revision for their other subjects.

5. Enrichment activities and school trips and visits in the Summer Term

This term we have started to run school trips and events again. These have included:

- Visits to Birmingham University for our Year 10, Year 12 and Year 13 biology students
- The 'Maths Feast'- a competition for some of our young 'mathletes'
- Geography fieldwork for our Year 10 geographers on a rainy day in Worcester

Sadly, we had to postpone the Art trip to Bristol and the History trip to Ludlow due to staff absence with COVID. We very much hope we will never have to do this again and we intend to build on this next term with trips, visits and activities through the term and on Challenge Days in the final week of term.

We intend to run a full programme of enrichment activities next term as we know how important it is to develop students' experience of the world, character, and sense of adventure. Our Enrichment programme for the Summer Term will be released on Friday 29 April, and parents and carers will be able to sign their son or daughter up for a club and activity from this date onwards via SchoolCloud. All clubs and activities will begin during the week of 2 May 2022 and we encourage all students to try at least two clubs or activities during a term.

6. Theatre fundraiser: Sherlock's Excellent Adventure, Friday 6 May

We are delighted that Our Star Theatre Company will perform their critically acclaimed comedy, 'Sherlock's Excellent Adventure' at JMHS for one night only on Friday 6 May at 7:30pm. This is a special fundraiser performance by Our Star, a local professional theatre company, with all proceeds going to the JMHS' 'New Seating Fund'. The Performing Arts Department have raised 50% of the costs to install brand-new tiered Theatre seats into our auditorium and we would welcome your support to help reach their goal by coming along and enjoying this excellent show. Tickets can be booked now at:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/masefieldarts

7. Key dates

Spring and Summer Term

Monday 25 April: INSET day

Tuesday 26 April: Start of term

Monday 2 May: Bank Holiday

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

Monday 16 May – Tuesday 28 June: Year 11 & Year 13 exam period

Monday 30 May – Friday 3 June: Half Term

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

Monday 20 June to Friday 1 July: Provisional Year 10 exam dates

Monday 27 June to Wednesday 6 July: Provisional Year 12 exam dates

Sunday 26 June - Thursday 30 June: Year 8 French trip

Friday 8 July: INSET day

Friday 15 July: Sports Day

Sunday 17 July to Thursday 21 July inclusive: Y10 French trip

Tuesday 19 July & Wednesday 20 July: Challenge Days

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

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 would like to wish all students, parents and staff what I hope will be a relaxing, enjoyable and sunny Easter holiday

With my very best wishes



Andrew Evans
Headteacher