



19 January 2024

Dear students, parents, and carers,

Following an excellent end to the Autumn Term which included two superb carol services and awards presentations to students in assembly, students have settled back in to working hard and making the most of the high-quality teaching and extra-curricular opportunities we offer

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1. Appointment of New Headteacher

The national advertisement for our next headteacher was placed on Wednesday 10 January with a closing date of Monday 29 January. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a thorough and rigorous selection process on Wednesday 7 February and Thursday 8 February led by our governors and two highly successful and respected former headteachers. Once we have appointed the new headteacher who will commence in post on 1 September 2024 we will let you know who has been appointed.

2. Progress Checks and Test Results

Progress checks will be shared with parents and carers over the next few weeks via the MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) app. If you require any assistance with MCAS, please contact the Data Team who will be happy to help. Their email is data@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk.

The progress check dates are below:

Year 10	31 January
Years 12 and 13	2 February
Years 7, 8 and 9	9 February

For Year Groups 7 to 10, information shown in the progress check includes your child's personal cumulative average test result (%) in each subject in addition to their subject class and Year Group average (%). Each subject teacher will also grade your child's Care and Concentration, and Quality of Homework.

Students in Years 7 to 10 will be sitting their third end of block subject tests in early March. Students will be tested on the content that they will have been taught during this half term, as well as on content from previous terms. Some tips to help students to prepare for tests include making sure that they know which topics will be tested – students should note carefully what their subject teacher tells them about the test. They could use each subject’s Knowledge Checklist to support the notes that they have made in their exercise book. Before revising a topic, they should read through the content and make a note of, or highlight, content that they are confident with, need to check briefly again, and are really not confident with. This will guide them as to what to focus on when they revise their notes. Revision needs to be active – not just reading through notes. Hiding the answers to questions and then trying them again, and using quizzes in resources like BBC Bitesize can be really helpful. A student should not leave revising for a test until the night before; it is helpful to go back and check their notes each week. A student can always ask their teacher if there is something that they don’t understand – teachers will do their best to find time to help.

3. Parental Survey Results

I would like to thank every parent who responded to our survey last term. Altogether we had 210 responses and I have read every response taking notes of the detailed comments made by respondents.

Question	Percentage who agree or strongly agree
Does your child feel he/she is making good progress this academic year?	89%
Do you and your child feel the quality of pastoral care has been good so far this year?	89%
Do you feel the quality of communication from the school has been good this academic year?	87%
My child is happy at JMHS.	85%
My child feels safe at school.	92%
JMHS makes sure its pupils are well behaved.	81%
My child has not been bullied.	73%
My child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively.	67%
JMHS makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year.	74%
When I have raised concerns with JMHS they have been dealt with properly.	Not raised 26% Effectively 63% Not effectively 11%
My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed.	62%
The school has high expectations for my child.	80%
My child does well at JMHS.	87%
JMHS lets me know how my child is doing.	80%
There is a good range of subjects available to my child at JMHS.	91%
My child can take part in clubs and activities at JMHS.	97%
JMHS supports my child's wider personal development.	79%
I would recommend JMHS to another parent.	81%

Many parents mentioned a wide range of positives with the most popular answers being ‘pastoral care’, ‘year leaders’, ‘great staff’, ‘quality of teaching’, ‘clubs’ and ‘communications’.

Parents helpfully gave suggestions for improvement which will be taken into account when formulating our School Improvement Plan. Common issues included student behaviour, homework, lunchtimes, the case for face to face Parents’ Evenings, for reinstating lockers and having even more school trips.

Where parents requested feedback on particular questions, Year Leaders and the SENDCO are responding directly to these.

4. Curriculum Plans

As a reminder, students in the current Year 7 and Year 8 and all subsequent year groups will choose their option subjects when they are in Year 9 to commence their GCSE and vocational studies from the start of Year 10. Curriculum Leaders have been working hard to further improve the quality of curriculum planning and resources for all students in the school whilst planning the three-year Key Stage Three and two-year Key Stage Four.

A number of parents commented in the survey that they were unsure of what their children will be learning this year. This can be found in the curriculum overviews and detailed curriculum plans which can be accessed through the school website or by clicking on the link below:

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

5. Sixth Form News by Mrs Laidler, Head of Sixth Form

I would first like to congratulate the sixth form students on their hard work last term and the strong progress they have made towards their studies. They have returned from Christmas with a strong focus for what is going to be a short but very busy term including mock exams, key assignments, work experience and international trips to CERN and Paris.

Year 13 are coming towards the end of their taught content and are currently preparing for their mock exams in February. Students who intend to go to university have been busy submitting their UCAS applications and many are already holding offers at their preferred universities. A number of students have applied for apprenticeships and are heading towards the interview process.

Year 12 students are currently finalising their work experience placements for February and are looking forward to experiencing placements which may help them to make decisions about their future direction.

Two elements which will support our students to succeed are strong attendance and independent study. Independent study is a vital element of being successful in their studies and beyond, and it is therefore essential that all students use their time effectively both in school and at home. We provide good facilities and support in school to allow our students to study effectively and make the most of their study time. It is important for students to also have a good environment to work in at home so that they can continue their independent work.

Independent Study

- Is crucial for preparing students for exams and assessments
- Allows them to review and reinforce class materials or pre-learn materials to support understanding in future lessons
- Helps students identify areas of personal strength and weakness so that they can tailor their work to suit their learning needs and seek support where needed
- Enables students to practice applying their knowledge in a variety of contexts

School Nurse

We have now set up for sixth form students a regular weekly session on a Tuesday morning with our school nurse. The students have had an assembly with the nurse so they know what support she can offer and how to access the confidential sessions. This is an excellent provision that can help support our students with their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

6. School Production – Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat

We are excited to present Andrew Lloyd Webber's 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' from Thursday 8 February to Saturday 10 February. All students in the cast, crew and orchestra have been working exceptionally hard to deliver an energetic and completely fabulous version of this classic piece. It would be wonderful to welcome as many of you as possible to support and enjoy the performance. Tickets are available to purchase through the link below, which is also available on our website:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/herefordshire/john-masefield-high-school/joseph-and-the-amazing-technicolour-dreamcoat/e-orgyax>.

7. City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra trip

On Wednesday 17 January, the Music department led a trip to see the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham. They were privileged to see the UK Premiere of Dai Fujikura's new piece 'Wavering World', William Walton's Violin Concerto and Symphonie Fantastique by Hector Berlioz. The incredible orchestra delighted all students and conductor Kazuki Yamada was hugely entertaining enabling the audience to connect with the music. The students also got to see the Duke of Edinburgh who was sat a few seats away! A late, but incredibly rewarding evening for all.

8. Enrichment Programme by Mrs Newnes, Enrichment Coordinator

During the Autumn Term, students had the opportunity to participate in a range of exciting enrichment activities, such as 'Fitness Fridays', 'Robotics Club' and 'Rock Band 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, started on Monday 15 January 2024. 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 February 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 MCAS, which is our parental and guardian sign up system we use for our enrichment activities.

9. Year 10 Basketball County Champions by Mr Morgan, Faculty Leader for PE

Congratulations to our Year 10 basketball team on being crowned County Champions. After winning their group, the team qualified for the tournament finals held this week at Whitecross School. In the team's first game against The Hereford Academy they overcame a 6-0 deficit to win the match 9-8, before beating Aylestone 5-0 in their second match to go undefeated and become the overall winners. The winning team included Charlie W, Freddie F-M, Fin J, Daejaun T, Ben W, Lewis P, Liam B, Harley L and James S. The students involved represented the school brilliantly and demonstrated a fantastic attitude and determination. Well done to the Year 10 basketball team.

10. Girls' Football

Starling Bank's 'Kick On with Starling' campaign involving Lioness, Jill Scott, aims to help grow the women and girls' football community at grassroots clubs and schools. Last summer they offered clubs and schools the opportunity to apply for a Starling Bank sponsored team pack. We are very grateful to Ms Davies for successfully submitting a JMHS application for this support. We received at the start of term a complete girls' football strip for 16, training equipment, match balls, and a lot more. Thanks also to 'Your Name on it' for adding the JMHS logo to the kit. The Year 9 girls' football team wore the new the strip for the first time this week and we hope that their 5-0 win against St Mary's School on Tuesday is a good omen for a winning streak now the new kit is available. The winning team included Holly R, Eden M, Poppy B, Stella R, Angela M, Lily M, Gracie C, Eloise T, Tilly O and Bea P.

11. Key Dates

Key dates for the Spring Term

- w/c Mon 22 Jan: Year 11 Mock Exams
- Wed 24 Jan: Year 12/13 Performing Arts trip to Belgrade Theatre Co
- Fri 26 Jan: Year 12/13 Business - External speaker 9:00am
- w/c Mon 29 Jan: Year 11 Mock Exams
- Tue 30 Jan – Thur 1 Feb: Year 12/Y13 Cern trip
- Wed 31 Jan: Year 10 Progress Check to parents/carers
- Fri 2 Feb: Year 12/13 Progress Checks to parents/carers
- Mon 5 Feb - Fri 9 Feb: Year 11 French and/or German Mock Speaking exams. Each student will receive a specific day and time to sit their exam.
- Wed 7 Feb & Thur 8 Feb: Primary school matinee – Joseph and the Amazing Technicoloured Dreamcoat 12:00-14:30
- Wed 7 Feb & Thurs 8 Feb: Headteacher interviews
- Thur 8 Feb – Sat 10 Feb: School production – Joseph and the Amazing Technicoloured Dreamcoat 19:00 (& 2pm matinee on Sat 10 Feb)
- Fri 9 Feb: Year 7, 8 & 9 Progress Checks to parents

2023/2024 term dates

Spring Term: Tue 9 Jan 2024 – Fri 22 Mar 2024

Half Term: Mon 12 Feb 2024 – Fri 16 Feb 2024

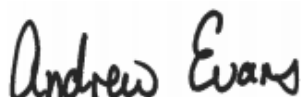
Summer Term: Mon 8 Apr 2024 – Fri 19 Jul 2024

Half Term: Mon 27 May 2024 – Fri 31 May 2024

... And finally

Over the past few months I have spent a total of 9 mornings walking around the school with Chief Executive Officers for Multi-Academy Trusts, Headteachers of local schools and potential candidates for Headteacher. All have commented on the positive ethos they have observed, the enthusiasm and teaching skills of staff, how hard the students are working and the respectful nature and good manners of our students. I would like to thank all students, parents and staff for their positivity and excellent contributions.

With my very best wishes



Andrew Evans
Headteacher