



12 September 2025

Dear parents and carers,

It is hard to believe that we were welcoming most of our children back to school just one week ago, today. It has been wonderful to see them again, and to see them returning to their habits of excellent learning from the very first day. Our Year 7s and Year 12s, who have been with us a little longer, have settled into this new phase of their school careers incredibly well, and it has been a delight to welcome them into our school and Sixth Form community.

I have also enjoyed talking with the students about our successful results in assemblies this week. Our early analysis suggests that students in the Sixth Form made better-than-expected progress, with those studying vocational qualifications achieving a whole grade above expectation. This year, there are no progress measures for GCSE but our GCSE English and maths pass rate - already above average - continued to increase, as did our average GCSE grade.

I have said to the children that to continue this legacy of success they must believe in themselves, and work hard to meet challenging targets. I worry that, sometimes, children underestimate what they capable of and, as a result, settle for less than their best. We'll be talking to them about this a lot, this year, and we will also be making sure they do everything they can to achieve their best grades. I've said to them that if their work is not done to the best of their ability, if they rush homework, or settle for 'good enough' we will not accept this, and we will instead support them by insisting that they have to achieve the best they can. I would want this for my own children, and we will all work together to do this for the children in the JMHS community.

Site Safety: Travelling to and from school

I would like to take this opportunity to share our routines for pick-up and drop-off with those of you who are new to us. These arrangements are designed with the safety of children in mind, as we try to keep the hundreds of children walking to and from school, along a narrow pavement, safe whilst managing the entry and exit of numerous coaches and minibuses with limited space to park and turn.

In order to keep children safe, we are unable to allow cars to freely enter or exit our carpark between 8.25am and 8.45am in the morning, or between 3.00pm and 3.30pm in the afternoon. If you are arriving early to park and wait for a drop off or pick up please make sure you avoid using the marked bus bays. I know that during the first week of a new school, parents will want to come onto the site. Now that the new students are more used to the routine, I would very much appreciate your support with this.

Continued overleaf /

Those of you who drive onto site early for pick-up at the end of the day will have noticed us directing you to spaces further into the school site, and this is to make sure there is enough room in the turning circle for coaches to safely turn around.

Extra-curricular clubs and voluntary contributions

Tomorrow we will share details of our extra-curricular clubs offer, and these will begin next week. I am proud that we offer a wide range of activities, and that 96% of respondents to our parents' survey said their child can take part in clubs and activities.

One change that we will make this year, is that we will now ask for a voluntary contribution of £20 per term from families whose children attend one or more extra-curricular activity. This will appear on ParentPay once the activities have started, and we will not ask families of children who are receiving free school meals to contribute. This contribution will help us pay the costs of running the clubs: at the moment we are relying on teacher donations for some clubs, and where we are hiring specialist staff for some music activities, or paying for transport costs for sports fixtures, this is coming from the main school budget.

Whilst I hope that a voluntary contribution will help us make sure these activities are well resourced, I cannot emphasise enough that this is entirely voluntary. No child whose family choose not to make the contribution will be prevented from attending any activities, or treated any differently than those whose families do contribute. Those running activities will not know who has or hasn't made a contribution, and we will not track or record who does or doesn't contribute.

I hope to see even more children than last year take up one or more of these activities. If they would like something that is not currently on offer please ask them to let us know, or contact us yourself, and we will do what we can. It was a conversation from some of our current year 11 students that led us to start a philosophy club.

Recent fire in Ledbury

I was saddened to hear of the fire in the Lower Road Trading Estate area yesterday evening, which has continued into this morning. I know that many members of our community will be affected by this. If there is anything we can do to support you or your families in the aftermath of the fire, please don't hesitate to let us know.

Yours sincerely,



John Holmes
Headteacher

