



Parent Guide 2023-2024

Dear Parent / Guardian,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Queen Mary's College community. I am delighted that your son or daughter has chosen QMC to continue with their education, and am confident that they will have a happy and rewarding time here with us. Making the transition from school to College can be a little daunting for students, particularly in the light of the current pandemic. Please be assured that your son/daughter will be warmly welcomed and will be supported every step of the way, helping them to settle in quickly and easily.

At QMC, we value the importance of establishing a partnership with parents to support our young people through this important phase of their lives, and you probably have questions about how we do things. We kindly ask that you take the time to read through this short guide, it will provide you with an overview of the support and systems we have in place. It is our aim to enable all of our students to achieve their goals and reach their potential whilst at College. We hope you will familiarise yourselves with our procedures and we invite you to work with us in ensuring your child has a successful and enjoyable time at College.

Should you have any further queries, or want to talk to us about any aspect of your son's or daughter's education, please feel free to contact us.

Mark Henderson
Principal

Progress Tracking

Deputy & Assistant Principals

The Deputy and Assistant Principals responsible for curriculum are Kate Need and Helen Henderson. The subject your son's/daughter's Personal Tutor teaches determines which Curriculum Division they are in. If you have any major concerns about your child's progress speak to your child's Personal Tutor in the first instance but you can refer on to the above if you so wish. Call the Help Desk on **01256 417500** and ask to speak to a Division Administrator who will be happy to make you an appointment. In some cases, the Division Administrators may also call you to discuss any issues which arise.

Parents' Evenings (Meet the Tutor Evening & Making the Grade Parents' Evenings)

Online Parents' Evenings offer the opportunity to meet with your child's tutor and/or teachers to discuss progress and action-planning at various points throughout the year. We start shortly after term begins by inviting you to a group online meeting with your son's/daughter's Personal Tutor. Later in the academic year, we offer opportunities for online parents' evenings with specific subject teachers. We will communicate with you electronically about these evenings and include instructions for booking appointments online. If you do not receive an invitation you are welcome to contact teachers for

an appointment. You are also welcome to contact the Personal Tutor and/or teachers at any time to discuss your child's progress.

Personal Tutors

All students at QMC are offered a great deal of support to help them progress and succeed at College. Every student is assigned a Personal Tutor when they join QMC. Your son's/daughter's Personal Tutor will also be one of their subject teachers. They also have additional responsibility for ensuring that their overall academic and personal needs are met. Personal Tutors meet with their students as a whole Tutor Group in a timetabled lesson, and regularly on a one to one basis, to discuss individual attendance, progress and achievements. They may contact you if issues arise. Please make sure that you know who your son's/daughter's Personal Tutor is by looking at their timetable - you are always welcome to contact them.

Term and Other Key Dates

See 'Staff & Students' tab on the website for term and other key dates.

Termly Newsletters

We usually email you termly with important information, news, updates, term and other useful dates. Please advise us of any change in your contact details. You can do this by emailing us at **central.registry@qmc.ac.uk**. We may send out other information in a variety of ways depending on content. If you unsubscribe from email contact you will not receive critical information. Please also note that details of our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices can be found on our website.

Vista

Vista is our comprehensive online system which allows you to easily monitor your son's/daughter's progress at College. You can access a wide range of information relating to attendance, progress and reviews. It enables Personal Tutors, teachers, support staff, students themselves and parents to monitor progress effectively, and focus on areas for improvement. You will receive your Vista for Parents login details towards the end of September which you will need to access the system. Please email **v4p@qmc.ac.uk** if you require further information regarding access from October onwards.

Attendance and Absence Reporting

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes, support sessions, enrichment sessions, tutor sessions and one to one meetings. Attendance and success are very closely linked. Attendance, and punctuality, for each class is recorded electronically and Personal Tutors can see this live. Any absence is investigated and if a Personal Tutor is not satisfied with the explanation given they will contact you. You can monitor your son's/daughter's attendance online through Vista. However, if you are concerned about the amount of time that your son/daughter is spending away from College you should contact their Personal Tutor directly.

In addition, the College will endeavor to notify the primary contact, by the absence text messaging service, if their son/daughter has missed registration in a class. Information on attendance and punctuality is always available online through the Vista for Parents system.

First Aid

The College has a dedicated team of First Aid trained staff whose primary responsibility is to deal with medical emergencies that happen on site or on the way to College. Please be aware the first aid team **are not** medical experts and as such they are not here to respond to undiagnosed medical concerns or injuries that have occurred outside of College hours. Please seek advice from a medical practitioner in these cases.

Please be advised we are unable to dispense any medication.

Holidays

Please do not arrange to go on holiday during term time. Group work, continuous assessment, and coursework are now a feature of many courses and absences can have serious consequences. If it is absolutely necessary for your son/daughter to be absent, please ensure that you inform the Help Desk in advance. This can be done by email or letter, addressed for the attention of the Principal, giving the duration and reason for the absence. Your son/daughter will need to consult each of his/her subject teachers including their Personal Tutor to ensure that they have an action plan in place, prior to departure, which will enable them to keep up to date with any lesson content, coursework and homework missed.

Illness and Absence Reporting

If your son/daughter is unwell and unable to attend College, a parent/guardian ONLY should notify the Help Desk on each day of their absence by calling **01256 417500** or emailing **help.desk@qmc.ac.uk**. Likewise, if you know your child cannot attend College because of an important appointment (i.e. a medical appointment) you must inform the Help Desk prior to their absence. This information is coded in our electronic registration system and Personal Tutors are informed.

If a student is taken ill during the day they must report to the Help Desk. The Help Desk staff will contact you or another named person in order to confirm that the student wishes to leave site. Unfortunately, we are unable to look after poorly students on site as we do not have appropriate facilities, or a school nurse. If the absence becomes long term please contact the Personal Tutor to discuss the situation.

Covid 19

We have followed Government guidelines throughout the pandemic and these currently state that testing is only required if specifically instructed to do so by a health professional. If your son/daughter has a high temperature they should remain at home until their temperature returns to normal and they feel well enough to attend.

Timetable

Normally, the College day starts at 9.00am and ends at 4.00pm. Group Tutorial (separate for first and second years), one to one meeting (booked with you by your Tutor), lunch break and/or enrichment opportunities take place from 1.00pm to 2.10pm variously throughout the week. Below is an example timetable:

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
09:00	A		B		C		D		E	
10:00-10:10	Mini-break		Mini-break		Mini-break		Mini-break		Mini-break	
11:10										
11:10-11:30	1:1*/Break		1:1*/Break		1:1*/Break		1:1*/Break		1:1*/Break	
	Break		Break		Break		Break		Break	
11:30	D		E		A		B		C	
13:00										
13:00-13:10	1:1*		Y1 30min Group Tutorial		1:1*		Y2 30min Group Tutorial		1:1*	
13:10	Enrichment /				Enrichment /		Y2 1:1*		Enrichment /	
13.30	Lunch		13.30 Lunch		Lunch		13.30 Lunch		Lunch	
14:10										
14:10	C		D		E		A		B	
15:40										
15:40-15.55	Y2 Revision	Y1 1:1*	Y2 Revision	Y1 1:1*	Y2 Revision	Y1 1:1*	Y2 Revision	Y1 1:1*	Y2 Revision	Y1 1:1*
16.05	College buses leave site									
	*Booked appointments/scheduled by tutors									

Your son/daughter will not always have taught lessons in every session, but will be taught every day. Any gaps in the timetable are study periods.

Expectations of Students

Behaviour

In Year 11, and in the Learning Agreement students sign before entering the College, your son/daughter will have been made aware of their new responsibilities as a member of the College community. The vast majority of students welcome this invitation to be part of a more mature working environment. When things go wrong we are usually able, through working with students and parents/guardians, to resolve issues and help students to succeed. However, you need to be aware that if a student's behaviour becomes difficult and destructive, or has a serious impact on others in the College community, immediate action will be taken which could lead to suspension and ultimately exclusion from the College.

Lanyards and ID

At enrolment students will have been issued with their QMC ID card, together with a lanyard. It is a requirement that all students and staff wear their ID lanyards whilst on site and any assistance in reminding your son or daughter of this, would be very much appreciated. They will need their ID to access gates and buildings at certain times of the day.

Part Time Work

Part time work is often an important aspect of a student's life, giving financial independence and valuable work experience. However, students need time both to study and relax if they are to realise their full potential. Part time jobs should not interfere with their College work, nor should they be undertaken during normal College hours. We recommend no more than one full day's work at the weekend and one evening during the week.

Parking and Driving onto the Site

QMC has a Green Travel Plan which commits us to cutting down car use to the site as much as possible - both for the benefit of the neighbourhood and to reduce the College's impact on the wider environment. When thinking about travel to College please look for the most environmentally friendly form of transport. We encourage students to consider walking or cycling to College if they live within Basingstoke. Normally we would encourage the use of public transport but we appreciate that this is less straightforward in the current circumstances. We currently have seven College contracted bus services available from the outlying areas – see our website for details. Please note that College is a relatively short walk (20 minutes) from the train station and the bus station.

If your son/daughter is being given a lift to College they must be dropped off and picked up from Cliddesden Road, using the turning circle and drop off point at the far end of the road. Please be considerate to our neighbours and do not park in neighbouring streets or block driveways.

Please be aware that passing a driving test will not give students the automatic right to park at College. They will need to apply for a parking permit and preference is given to student drivers who have completed one full year at the college, are over 18, need to use their own transport for reasons of disability, have a good attendance record, come from an area where access to public transport is poor, have paid all their course resources costs and/or travel the furthest distance. Application forms are available from the College Help Desk. The permits cost £120 for the whole academic year, or £40 per term. We do anticipate relaxing the rules and accommodating more student cars on site during the current pandemic.

Smoking and Vaping

The College is committed to becoming a non-smoking site. To this end we provide support for any student trying to quit. For those who choose to smoke or vape there is a designated smoking area on the College site. We will not tolerate smoking in any other area of the College (this includes vaping) and flagrant disregard of this rule will result in disciplinary action.

Examinations

Examinations

Examinations take place at various points in the year. The busiest time is early May to the end of June when the vast majority of examinations take place. Students can view their exam timetable in VISTA and they will also receive a paper copy. Beyond examinations there are many critical periods of assessment and course deadlines throughout the year. For further information please contact your son/daughter's Personal Tutor. Examination boards recently introduced a new timetable feature of an examination contingency day during June (tbc). This will be used if a significant, unexpected event arises nationally which means that no students are able to take a planned examination and a substitute day needs to be used. Please keep this day free for such an eventuality.

Access Arrangements for Examinations

If your son/daughter had extra time or any other arrangement for examinations at school, these are not automatically applied at College. It is important that we are made aware of any exam requirement as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be put into place in good time for their exams. Please encourage your son/daughter to speak to their Tutor, or enquire at the Help Desk who will direct them accordingly.

Student Protection and Support

Child Protection

Legally, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18. The College therefore has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students. This responsibility necessitates a Child Protection Policy and we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. In general, we will seek to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to make a referral to Children's Services. However, we are not obliged to inform parents if we consider that by doing so a child would be at increased risk of significant harm. The child's views will also be taken into account if the child is considered to be sufficiently mature to make informed judgements about the issue. Decisions about informing parents will be made by Beth Linklater, who is the Assistant Principal responsible for Student Support and Safeguarding. Beth is also the College's designated Child Protection contact. Where appropriate, Beth will make these decisions with the guidance and advice of statutory agencies such as Children's Services and the Police. A copy of our Child Protection Policy can be found on our website.

Counselling Service

Personal problems can have a detrimental effect on students' work. Sometimes students have concerns which are, or are perceived to be, topics that cannot be taken to anyone they know. To assist students we offer a confidential counselling service which is easy for them to access and well publicized throughout the College.

Extra Support

Some students may need additional support from a member of staff. Staff frequently, and willingly, help students on a one to one basis at a time when they are both free. In addition, each Advanced Level course devotes time to providing work at a variety of levels. This ensures that those students who need extra help in developing a particular skill for a subject receive assistance. At the same time, those students who are achieving high grades can be given the opportunity to explore and investigate topics which will stretch them and enable them to reach their maximum potential. Students are able to refer themselves via their Tutor at any time in order to receive additional support, if considered appropriate. Students work with a member of staff on either an individual basis or in small groups, according to their needs. Support can be given for just a few sessions or it can be a regular session for the duration of a student's time at College.

Financial Support for Students

Full details of the support available and how to apply can be found on our website (www.qmc.ac.uk/financial-support). If you have a financial problem which is making it difficult for you to study at QMC you should talk to your Personal Tutor or the Financial Support Team at the Help Desk. College has a variety of funds which can help in specific cases of need. Application for the College bursary is made online using PayMyStudent and you must provide all the requested documentary evidence before any application can be considered.

QMC students may also be eligible to apply to the QMC Foundation (Reg. Charity 307257) for additional funding. Please see the website for further information www.qmcfoundation.org.uk

Insurance

Students are responsible at ALL times for the safe keeping of their personal property and the College is not responsible for losses that arise. For official activities on education sites and for many off-site activities, the risks involved do not differ appreciably from those which occur within the family situation and therefore the College has not taken out insurance cover for these. We do, of course, have insurance for offsite trips and visits and cover residential and/or hazardous trips/activities. Details can be obtained from the College Finance Office.

Support Services

At College we offer specialist support services including learning support, counselling, careers services and skills support. Personal Tutors will liaise with the relevant services to ensure students receive the support they need. Personal Tutors can also signpost students on to appropriate talks and presentations, be these to do with Higher Education, employment, or general health and welfare.

Beyond QMC

Higher Education

We encourage a variety of entry routes into Higher Education which we discuss with students and are always happy to discuss these with you too. Students will have full support in applying to university through UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admission Service) and the chance to attend Higher Education fairs and open days.

One of the most important careers talks we attend is the Surrey University UCAS fair in February. This did not run last year due to the pandemic but we hope it will be reintroduced this academic year. It gives students the opportunity to meet a wide range of universities and to decide whether Higher Education is the correct route for them. It is absolutely essential for students to keep an open mind about their future at this stage in their education. The Fair is an easy way to find out more about university life and the prospects it opens up. Regardless of whether a student ultimately goes, the experience affords them a chance to speak to professionals, network with like-minded people, expand their knowledge about the choice that is out there and, ultimately, assists in arriving at an informed decision. There is lots of help and support available at QMC and this is a vital component to the decision-making process that is not to be missed.

In the first year we hold an evening presentation for parents about Higher Education, and in the second year we will send you information about applying for student finance and HE funding.

Options

We will be talking to your son/daughter throughout their time at QMC regarding their options for when they leave us. One of the careers tool we use is Unifrog, where students can carry out extensive careers and university research. They can use the system to record any activities or work experience they undertake. We also offer a lot of careers advice, education and guidance through tutorial meetings and our links with external providers. If your son/daughter would like a careers interview, please encourage them to book one with us. You are welcome to accompany them.

Work Placements, Volunteering and Employment

Students are encouraged to undertake work placements and volunteering as this is valuable in preparing them for their future careers and in writing their personal statements. We are always looking for employers for new placements so if you are able to help by providing a work placement please contact the College Work Placement Co-ordinators, via the Help Desk. Students who want to go into employment after College will be given advice and guidance, and we encourage them to explore their options.

Governance

Queen Mary's Sixth Form College is an academy within the North Hampshire Education Alliance (a multi academy trust based in Basingstoke). The NHEA Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that the College operates professionally and is financially sound. However, QMC has a Local Governing Body with responsibility for the educational experience at QMC. Full details about the Governors, including how to contact them can be viewed at <https://www.qmc.ac.uk/about-local-governing-body>

You are welcome to contact the Governors should the need ever arise.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Basingstoke YPI Counselling Service	01256 423878	www.ypicounselling.co.uk
British Pregnancy Advisory Service	03457 304030	www.bpas.org
Beat Helpline	Helpline: 0808 801 0677 Studentline: 0808 801 0811	help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk fyp@beateatingdisorders.org.uk
Beat Youthline (Mon – Fri, 12 – 8pm)	0808 801 0711	studentline@beateatingdisorders.org.uk
British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS)	03457 30 40 30	https://www.bpas.org/
Catch 22 – see ‘Hampshire 247’ below		
ChildLine	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Hampshire 247 – under 25s (formerly Catch 22) Drugs and Alcohol misuse	0800 599 9591 (24hr line) 0845 459 9405 (Basingstoke)	www.catch-22.org.uk Email: 247hants@catch-22.org.uk
Hope Line UK – Suicide Prevention	0800 068 4141	https://www.papyrus-uk.org/hopelineuk
Kooth – Wellbeing Support Service – up to 25 years Parents reaching out	020 3984 9337	www.kooth.com Parents@Kooth.com
Mermaids (gender support) Helpline (18-25, 9am-9pm)	0808 801 0400 Text Chat: 85258	https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/
National Domestic Violence Helpline 24 hour helpline	0808 2000 247	www.refuge.org.uk
North & Mid Hampshire Safe Haven – Support to those in crisis in a safe, confidential space. Drop in 6-10pm.- 365 days	0300 303 5772	www.andovermind.org.uk/services/north-and-mid-hampshire-safe-haven/
Options Wellbeing Counselling - Help with addictions etc. Online, Telephone, In Person. Bournemouth & Southampton only. Costs involved	0238 063 0219 0120 274 0044	support@optionscounselling.co.uk
Police		101 or 999 in emergency
Pregnancy Crisis Centre – see ‘The Safe’ below		
Rape and Sexual Abuse Crisis Line now under Start UK	01962 868688	https://start-org.uk/
Relate – nothing available in Basingstoke. Nearest: Winchester, Reading, Wokingham. All via Zoom or telephone. No face to face contact.	023 8022 9761 0118 987 6161 0118 987 6161	www.relate.org.uk
The Safe (formerly Pregnancy Crisis)	01256 460100 (M) 07973 738861	https://the-safe.org.uk
The Samaritans (National Helpline) Basingstoke Samaritans	116 123 01256 462333	www.samaritans.org/basingstoke
Sexual Health Services, Crown Heights, Basingstoke	01256 300430 0300 300 2016 Option 6	www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk
Talk to Frank (National Drugs Helpline)	0300 123 6600 Text 82111	www.talktofrank.com

