



# 2026 GUIDE FOR PARENTS

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 for the next stage of their education, and I am confident they will have a happy, rewarding, and successful time with us.

Making the transition from school to college is an exciting step, but it can also feel a little daunting. Please be assured that your son or daughter will be warmly welcomed and supported every step of the way to help them settle in quickly.

At QMC, we strongly value working in partnership with parents and guardians to support our students through this crucial phase of their lives. Below, you will find key information and answers to commonly asked questions from reporting absences to university applications to give you a clear overview of our support and procedures.

Our primary aim is to enable every student to achieve their goals and reach their full potential. We invite you to familiarise yourselves with our key guidelines and work alongside us to ensure your child prospers during their time here. You can also find further details on our website, including links to our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.

Should you have any queries or wish to discuss any aspect of your son or daughter's education, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Progress Tracking

### **Deputy Principal & Assistant Principal**

The Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal responsible for curriculum are Laura Cook and Helen Henderson, respectively. 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 the 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 (Making the Grade Parents' Evenings)**

Online Parents' Evenings offer the opportunity to meet with your child's teachers to discuss progress and action planning at key points during the academic year. Following our earlier Meet the Tutor events, we offer online Parents' Evenings with subject teachers later in the year where a specific need is identified.

We will contact you electronically regarding these evenings with instructions on how to book appointments online. If you do not receive an invitation, you are always welcome to reach out to teachers directly to request an appointment.

You may also contact your child's Personal Tutor or subject teachers at any time to discuss their progress via the QMC App. Details regarding the App will follow on or after enrolment.

### **Personal Tutors**

All students at QMC receive dedicated support to help them progress and succeed at college. Every student is assigned a Personal Tutor when they join QMC. Your son or daughter's Personal Tutor will also be one of their subject teachers and holds overall responsibility for ensuring their academic and personal needs are met.

Personal Tutors meet with their students as a group during timetabled sessions, as well as regularly on a one to one basis to discuss attendance, progress, and achievements. They may contact you if any issues arise. You can see who your son or daughter's Personal Tutor is by checking their timetable, and you are always welcome to contact them.

### **Term and Key Dates**

Please refer to the 'Staff & Students' tab on our website for term dates and other key calendar events.

### **Termly Newsletters**

We communicate regularly with parents and guardians to share important updates, news, and key dates. Please ensure you inform us of any changes to

your contact details so you do not miss critical information. Please note that if you unsubscribe from email communications, you will not receive essential updates. Details regarding our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice can be found on our website.

### **QMC Vista App**

The QMC Vista App is our online platform that allows you to monitor your son or daughter's progress at college. Through the app, you can access information regarding communications, attendance, progress, and reviews. It enables tutors, teachers, support staff, students, and parents to track progress effectively and focus on areas for development. Further details on how to access and use the app are shared during enrolment and early term communications.

## **Attendance and Absence Reporting**

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all timetabled classes, support sessions, enrichment activities, tutor sessions, and one to one meetings. High attendance and punctuality are directly linked to academic success. Attendance is recorded electronically for every class and monitored live by Personal Tutors.

Any unexplained absence is investigated, and a Personal Tutor will reach out to you if an explanation is unsatisfactory. The College will also endeavour to notify primary contacts via text message if a student misses registration for a class. You can track attendance and punctuality at any time via the QMC Vista App. If you ever have concerns regarding the amount of time your son or daughter is away from College, please contact their Personal Tutor directly.

### **First Aid**

The College has a dedicated team of staff trained in First Aid whose primary role is to handle medical emergencies occurring on site or while traveling to College. Please note that First Aid staff are not medical practitioners and cannot diagnose conditions or treat injuries that occurred outside of College hours. Please consult a GP or healthcare professional for external medical concerns.

Please be advised that College staff are unable to dispense any medication to students.

### **Holidays**

We kindly request that holidays are not booked during term time. Group work, continuous assessments, and coursework are essential elements of study, and term time absences can severely impact progress.

If an absence during term time is unavoidable, please inform the Help Desk in advance by emailing [help.desk@qmc.ac.uk](mailto:help.desk@qmc.ac.uk), addressed for the attention of the Principal, outlining the duration and reason for the absence. Before leaving, your son or daughter must consult each of their subject teachers and Personal Tutor to put an action plan in place to catch up on missed lesson content, coursework, and homework.

### **Illness and Absence Reporting**

If your son or daughter is unwell and unable to attend College, a parent or guardian only must notify the Help Desk using the Absence feature on the QMC Vista App. Alternatively, you can call us on 01256 417500 or email [help.desk@qmc.ac.uk](mailto:help.desk@qmc.ac.uk).

If you know in advance that your child will be absent for a necessary commitment, such as a medical appointment, please inform the Help Desk prior to the date so it can be logged in our registration system.

If a student becomes unwell during the College day, they must report directly to the Help Desk. Staff will contact a parent, guardian, or emergency contact before confirming that the student may leave the site. Please note that we do not have a school nurse or medical facilities to care for unwell students on site. If an illness results in long term absence, please contact your child's Personal Tutor so appropriate support can be arranged.

### **Timetable**

Normally, the College day starts at 9.00am and finishes at 3.55pm. All timetabled lessons, tutorials, one to one appointments, and enrichment or workshop sessions are compulsory, in line with the agreement students sign upon enrolment.

Your son or daughter will not always have taught lessons in every session, but will have classes every day. Any gaps in their timetable are intended as study periods.

Parents and guardians can view their son or daughter's timetable at any time via the QMC Vista App.

## Timetable Structure

The weekly timetable is structured as follows:

| Time                         | Monday                            | Tuesday                                | Wednesday                         | Thursday                               | Friday                            |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>09:00 – 10:40</b>         | Lesson A<br>(1 hr 40 min)         | Lesson B<br>(1 hr 40 min)              | Lesson C<br>(1 hr 40 min)         | Lesson D<br>(1 hr 40 min)              | Lesson E<br>(1 hr 40 min)         |
| <b>10:40 – 11:00</b>         | Break<br>(20 min)                 | Break (20 min)                         | Break (20 min)                    | Break (20 min)                         | Break (20 min)                    |
| <b>11:00 – 11:40</b>         | 1:1 /<br>Enrichment /<br>Workshop | Year 1<br>Group<br>Tutorial<br>or 1:1s | 1:1 /<br>Enrichment /<br>Workshop | Year 2<br>Group<br>Tutorial<br>or 1:1s | 1:1 /<br>Enrichment /<br>Workshop |
| <b>11:40 – 13:20</b>         | Lesson D<br>(1 hr 40 min)         | Lesson E<br>(1 hr 40 min)              | Lesson A<br>(1 hr 40 min)         | Lesson B<br>(1 hr 40 min)              | Lesson C<br>(1 hr 40 min)         |
| <b>13:20 – 14:00</b>         | Lunch<br>(40 min)                 | Lunch (40 min)                         | Lunch (40 min)                    | Lunch (40 min)                         | Lunch (40 min)                    |
| <b>14:00 – 15:40 / 15:55</b> | Lesson C                          | Lesson D                               | Lesson E                          | Lesson A                               | Lesson B                          |

**Note:** Afternoon lessons end at 15:40 for Year 1 students (1 hr 40 min) and at 15:55 for Year 2 students, which includes an additional 15 minutes of retrieval practice.

## Expectations of Students

## **Behaviour**

In the Learning Agreement students sign before entering the College, your son or 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 issues arise, we are usually able to resolve them and support students to succeed through working closely with students and parents or guardians. However, please be aware that if a student's behaviour becomes difficult, 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 are issued with their QMC ID card and a lanyard. It is a strict requirement that all students and staff wear their ID lanyards while on site. Any assistance in reminding your son or daughter of this is greatly appreciated. ID cards are required to access gates, buildings, and certain classrooms throughout the day.

## **Part Time Work**

Part time employment can be a valuable aspect of a student's life, offering financial independence and work experience. However, students must balance this with adequate time to study and relax to achieve their full potential. Part time jobs must not interfere with College work and should never be undertaken during timetabled College hours. We recommend a maximum of one full day of work at the weekend and one evening during the week.

## **Parking and Driving onto Site**

QMC operates a Green Travel Plan committed to reducing vehicle use on site to benefit our neighbours and minimise environmental impact. When planning travel, please choose the most environmentally friendly option possible. Walking or cycling is strongly encouraged for students living within Basingstoke. We also offer four College contracted bus services from outlying areas; details can be found on our website.

If your son or daughter is being dropped off or picked up by car, drivers must use the turning circle and drop off point at the far end of Cliddesden Road. Please be considerate to our neighbours by avoiding parking in adjacent streets or blocking driveways. Vehicles must not enter the main College site, as all entry points are strictly access controlled.

Passing a driving test does not grant automatic permission to park on site. Students must apply for a parking permit, with priority given to second year students who are over 18, require transport due to a disability, have strong attendance records, reside in areas with limited public transport, or travel long distances. Application forms are available at the Help Desk.

### **Smoking and Vaping**

The College is a strictly non smoking and non vaping site. Smoking or vaping anywhere on the College campus is strictly prohibited, and disregard of this rule will result in formal disciplinary action. We provide support for any student seeking help to quit smoking or vaping.

Please note that it is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase cigarettes or vapes. Furthermore, following changes in the law coming into effect in January 2027, it will be illegal to smoke or vape outside or in the immediate vicinity of an educational site. Consequently, students cannot smoke or vape anywhere in or near QMC.

## **Examinations**

### **Overview**

Examinations take place at various times throughout the year, with the primary series running from early May to late June. Students can view their personal examination timetables via VISTA. In addition to formal exams, critical assessment periods and coursework deadlines occur across the academic year.

Examination boards establish national contingency days during June. These days are reserved in the event of significant national disruptions preventing an exam from taking place on its scheduled date. Contingency dates are published on our website and in College communications; please ensure these dates are kept free from travel plans.

### **Access Arrangements**

If your son or daughter received extra time or other access arrangements for exams at secondary school, these do not automatically transfer to College. Please ensure we are notified of any examination requirements as early as possible so that formal arrangements can be put in place. Encourage your child to discuss this with their Personal Tutor promptly.

# Student Protection and Support

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

By law, anyone under the age of 18 is defined as a child, and the College has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. In line with our Child Protection Policy, we work in partnership with statutory agencies when welfare concerns arise.

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns with parents or guardians before making a referral to Children's Services. However, we are not required to inform parents if doing so would place the student at increased risk of harm. The child's views are also considered where they are evaluated to be of sufficient maturity. Decisions regarding parent notification are handled by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in consultation with statutory agencies as required. The complete policy is available on our website.

## **Counselling Service**

Personal challenges can impact a student's academic progress. To support our students, we offer a confidential and easily accessible on site counselling service. Information on accessing counselling is widely publicised across the College.

## **Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures**

An emergency site evacuation drill is conducted during the early weeks of the autumn term. Additionally, students complete a tutorial session on government guidance regarding critical safety procedures (Run, Hide, Tell), followed by a practice lockdown drill. Personal Tutors discuss procedures with students in advance, and communications containing official safety links are shared with parents and guardians.

## **Extra Academic Support**

Staff regularly provide individual subject assistance during free periods. Additionally, Advanced Level courses dedicate structured time to differentiated work, offering targeted support for skill development alongside extension tasks to stretch high achieving students. Students can self refer for additional learning support at any time through their Personal Tutor.

## **Financial Support**

Information regarding financial support and eligibility criteria is available on our website at [www.qmc.ac.uk/financial-support](http://www.qmc.ac.uk/financial-support). If financial constraints are impacting a student's studies, please speak with their Personal Tutor or the Help Desk Financial Support Team.

Applications for the College Bursary are submitted online via PayMyStudent, alongside required supporting evidence. Students may also apply for supplementary funding via the QMC Foundation (Registered Charity 307257) at [www.qmcfoundation.org.uk](http://www.qmcfoundation.org.uk).

## **Insurance**

Students remain responsible for the safety of their personal property at all times, and the College does not accept liability for personal losses on site. Standard educational activities are not covered by separate College property insurance. However, comprehensive insurance cover is provided for official College offsite trips, residentials, and hazardous activities.

## **Specialist Support Services**

QMC provides specialised support covering learning support, counselling, careers guidance, and study skills. Personal Tutors liaise directly with these services to ensure students receive appropriate assistance and signpost students to talks on Higher Education, employment, and personal wellbeing.

# **Progression Beyond QMC**

## **Higher Education**

We actively support students exploring Higher Education pathways. Comprehensive guidance is provided for university applications via UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service), alongside opportunities to attend university fairs and open days.

First year students attend the regional UCAS Higher Education Exhibition during the spring term, providing direct access to university representatives nationwide. In addition, the College hosts a Higher Education presentation evening for first year parents and distributes guidance regarding student finance and funding during the second year.

## **Careers and Future Options**

Career planning is integrated throughout a student's time at QMC. Students use Unifrog, an online research platform, to explore career pathways, research university courses, and log work experience activities. Individual careers guidance interviews can be booked with our qualified careers advisors, and parents are welcome to attend these sessions.

## **Work Placements, Volunteering, and Social Action**

All first year students complete a compulsory three day work placement in July

at the end of their first academic year. Students arrange these placements independently with support from their Personal Tutors.

Students are also encouraged to participate in our annual Social Action Project in June, working in teams to support local community initiatives while building experience for university and job applications. Employers interested in offering work placements or volunteering opportunities are invited to contact our Work Placement Coordinators via the Help Desk.

## 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 maintains overall financial and operational oversight of the College.

Educational provision at QMC is overseen by the Local Governing Body. Governance information and contact details are available at <https://www.qmc.ac.uk/about-local-governing-body>.

## Useful Contacts

### **Emergency & Crisis Support**

#### **Emergency Services**

Call 999 for immediate emergencies or 101 for non emergencies.

#### **Hopeline247 (Suicide Prevention)**

Prevention advice and support for young people experiencing thoughts of suicide.

Phone: 0800 068 4141 | Website: [www.papyrus-uk.org/hopeline247](http://www.papyrus-uk.org/hopeline247)

#### **SHOUT**

Free, confidential, 24/7 text support for anyone struggling to cope.

Text: Send SHOUT to 85258 | Website: [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org)

## **The Samaritans**

24/7 listening support.

National Helpline: 116 123 | Basingstoke Branch: 01256 462333 | Website: [www.samaritans.org/basingstoke](http://www.samaritans.org/basingstoke)

## **Mental Health & Wellbeing**

### **North & Mid Hampshire Safe Haven**

Drop in mental health crisis support in a safe, confidential space (6pm to 10pm, 365 days a year). Located at 3 Vyne Road, Basingstoke, RG21 5NA.

Phone: 0300 303 5772 | Website: [www.andovermind.org.uk](http://www.andovermind.org.uk)

### **Basingstoke YPI Counselling Service**

Confidential counselling for young people aged 11 to 25.

Phone: 01256 423878 | Website: [www.ypicounselling.co.uk](http://www.ypicounselling.co.uk)

### **Kooth**

Online wellbeing platform and digital counselling service.

Parents Contact: 020 3984 9337 | Email: [parents@kooth.com](mailto:parents@kooth.com) | Website: [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

### **ChildLine**

Free, confidential support for young people up to age 19.

Phone: 0800 1111 | Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## **Specific Youth Support & Health**

### **Beat (Eating Disorders)**

Helpline support for individuals and families dealing with eating disorders.

Helpline: 0808 801 0677 | Student Line: 0808 801 0811 | Youth Line (Mon to Fri, 12pm to 8pm): 0808 801 0711 | Email: [help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

### **Mermaids**

Support for gender diverse and transgender youth and young adults.

Helpline (Ages 18 to 25, 9am to 9pm): 0808 801 0400 | Text Support: Text 85258 | Website: [www.mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk)

## **Hampshire 247 (Formerly Catch 22)**

Drug and alcohol misuse advice and intervention for under 25s.

24hr Line: 0800 599 9591 | Basingstoke Office: 0845 459 9405 | Email: 247hants@catch-22.org.uk

## **Talk to Frank**

Honest, confidential information and advice about drugs and substance abuse.

Phone: 0300 123 6600 | Text: 82111 | Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

## **Sexual Health, Pregnancy & Relationships**

### **Sexual Health Services (Basingstoke)**

Free, confidential sexual health services located at Crown Heights, Basingstoke.

Phone: 01256 300430 or 0300 300 2016 (Option 6) | Website: [www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk](http://www.letstalkaboutit.nhs.uk)

### **The Safe (Formerly Pregnancy Crisis)**

Local support for pregnancy choices, pregnancy loss, and baby equipment support.

Phone: 01256 460100 or 07973 738861 | Website: [www.the-safe.org.uk](http://www.the-safe.org.uk)

## **Relate**

Relationship and family counselling (Available via Zoom or telephone).

Phone: **023 8022 9761** or **0118 987 6161** | Website: [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

## **Specialist Safety & Family Support**

### **Start Org (Formerly Rape and Sexual Abuse Crisis Line)**

Support for survivors of sexual violence and abuse.

Phone: **01962 868688** | Website: [www.start-org.uk](http://www.start-org.uk)

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline**

Free 24hr support line for victims of domestic abuse.

Phone: 0808 2000 247 | Website: [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)

**Simon Says**

Child and young person bereavement support.

Phone: 023 8064 7550 | Website: [www.simonsays.org.uk](http://www.simonsays.org.uk)

**Options Wellbeing Counselling**

Counselling for addictions and personal health (Charges apply).

Phone: 02380 630219 | Email: [support@optionscounselling.co.uk](mailto:support@optionscounselling.co.uk)