

## **A message from the Head of Year 11. December 2018.**

Dear Parents

Year 11 have just completed their mock exams which is an important step in their journey to their summer GCSE assessments. The whole school community worked hard to make this a realistic exam period for the students and I am pleased to say that year 11 took it very seriously.

We have a mock GCSE results day on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Students will not be told their grades by individual teachers. In cases of individual underperformance, we will speak with students earlier. These mock exams are a very good indicator of future GCSE exam success and so it is right that we find out any reasons for underperformance as early as possible. Also, as you might expect, I would not want to send a student home with poor results without supporting them.

At this point it is worth reminding parents of the policy regarding the mocks and the measures that the school takes to help those who have not done as well as hoped. We do run a mentoring programme at the school and these mock grades inform us of who is most in need of our help. However, many factors are taken into consideration in choosing who needs our help the most. The school may also take the decision to reduce the number of GCSE subjects taken forward into the final exams in the summer. As I wrote to you on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, it might be better for some students to focus on fewer subjects. I have attached the letter to this email as a reminder. For most of the students, it will be very clear to them already, even before the results, which subjects they have struggled with. I know that successful QMGS students will already be working hard to learn better the subjects they found most challenging.

Looking forward, the school held an open evening for year 11 students from other schools on the 29<sup>th</sup> November. This is a very popular event and sadly we could not accommodate all of our own students at the same time. They already have the advantage of 5 years at QMGS and know what we have to offer. However, there are some important considerations that they have to make and I would ask that you help them in this important decision process. I have attached to this email a copy of the prospectus for 6<sup>th</sup> form study at QMGS. I also attach a PDF from the Russell Group of Universities which gives useful and unbiased advice about which A-level subjects to study to have the best chance to study different degree options.

Year 11 students and their parents will be offered an academic review meeting early on in the spring term. Between Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> and Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January, all parents and students will have the opportunity to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team at QMGS to discuss their options and give some guidance on which A-levels they might be taking. Options are not set in stone at this point but most students give an indication of what they might be taking at A-level. The school will write to you soon about making a booking using the same system as we used for parents' evening. Meetings last approximately 25 minutes and take place during the school day.

A theme that I have developed in my first term as Head of Year 11 is the promotion of "soft skills" which are so important for future employment success as well as future happiness. QMGS offers sports, CCF, music, trips from Walsall, Wales and overseas. I encourage all year 11 students to take a full part in these activities. They must be mindful of their studies but it should not be at the exclusion of all other activities. Recreational time should be developing these skills in the students. I suggest more time spent on this and less time on gaming machines and in front of screens.

I will finish my email by reminding parents of their importance during this time. The students have quick minds and can learn skills faster than us. Their brains can soak up new facts and figures like a

sponge. However, the links between the parts of their brain are undeveloped. They have few long term planning skills and do not have due regard to the consequences of their actions. They really do need you to help them plan their revision; to help them revise and get away from games and screens; to help them realise the importance of developing other skills to make them into happy, successful and fully rounded individuals. Adults are vital to them right now. It may not be popular, but we really do know best.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Regards,**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mr Rendu". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a period at the end.

**Mr M. Rendu**

**Head of Year 11**