



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

Educating Women of the Future

Friday 4 October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you all with information about the school's start to the academic year. We have already entered the month of October and the number of activities and events we have held at school so far, demonstrate how purposeful the school is, how engaged our students and you all are with school, and how committed our teachers are to doing everything they can to support your daughter's/s' progress in learning and personal development.

Our first event was in the second week of term when we held our annual celebration of students who were awarded prizes for academic progress and personal development in the previous academic year. This year we took the opportunity to initiate an additional aspect for the event when we celebrated the long service of our staff. Almost half of our teaching staff and a third of all school staff together, have worked here for over ten years, some as many as over 25 and 35 years - their whole career. Families, students, staff and other invited guests, who this year included, the Deputy Lieutenant for Barnet (the King's representative), the Mayor and Mayoress of Barnet, the Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning in Barnet, our Academy Members, Trustees and QEGSA Chair, all recognised that such commitment and dedication to the school is remarkable.

We have also held our annual Open Evening for families who are considering sending their daughters here next September to start their secondary education. As usual we welcomed well over 1000 visitors who spoke highly of the displays, activities and talks they experienced on the night. Your daughters, who either supported department activities or acted as guides, were wonderful ambassadors for our school.

Following on from Open Evening last week, we have held information evenings for our families, on separate occasions for each of Y12, Y11 and Y10 students. The programme of these curriculum and *meet the tutor* events will continue.

QEGSA, the school's association for parents/carers, held a successful coffee morning in September and you will be hearing more about QEGSA activities and events directly from the Committee Chair, Sara Badvie. Please remember that all families are automatically part of the association. I hope that you will want to take an active role to support the students and the school in any way possible.

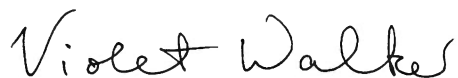
As always happens at the start of the academic year, students have been involved in sports team trials and many have enrolled into over 40 extra-curricular clubs offered by staff either at lunchtime or after school. Clubs this year include Chess, Science, Chinese, Latin, World Economics, Foreign Films and Juggling - there is certainly something for everyone.

Next week a group of Y12 students will be attending the 2024 International Coalition of Girls' Schools (ICGS) Student Leadership Symposium. This will be a great opportunity to hear keynote speakers on leadership and exchange ideas with sixth form students from girls' schools around the UK, Europe and other continents. I will leave more detail for the half termly Newsletter; half term being not so far off now.

Families new to the school this year will not know that last October I shared a message to our whole school community about the expected response among students and staff to events that unfolded on and after 7 October in Israel and Gaza. As a learning community we worked throughout the year to fulfil government obligations for schools, and to manage relationships, so that every member of our school community, students and staff, felt safe in our environment. That included being mindful of everyone's sensibilities and sensitivities around the conflict as it developed. It also included working with organisations such as *Solutions not Sides* and *Stand Up! Against Hate Crime*. You may know that the DfE, the Metropolitan Police and the Local Authority issued directives to schools about expectations to support neutrality, to report hate crime and to safeguard our community, including using the school's Behaviour policy. Expectations of our students are always extended to online behaviours towards anyone in our school community or the wider community; students are ambassadors for our school at all times. Yesterday I presented a whole school assembly to students and staff to remind them that our work in this area continues. Most regrettably there are a number of conflicts around the globe and in our diverse community many are impacted directly or indirectly. On a humanitarian level everyone is impacted. I will not include the details of the assembly here; I hope your daughters will be able to speak to you about those. However, I do want to share the final message of my assembly which was about the fact that research indicates females have a propensity for empathy and therefore the related ability to be compassionate and kind. I suggested that empathy was a super power of females and encouraged all our students to make good use of it.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable weekend with family and friends.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Violet Walker". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent 'V' at the start and a long, sweeping 'er' at the end.

Violet walker
Headteacher