

Queen Elizabeth's School

The Elizabethan

NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS

AUTUMN 2018



HEIGHTS OF SUMMER: QE pupils continued to set new records at GCSE and A-level this year, consolidating a long record of unbroken success.

From the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

This term began with Queen Elizabeth's School still in celebratory mood following our superlative results at both GCSE and A-level. New records were set in August, with the number of GCSE examinations awarded the A* grade hitting 78%. At A-level, we recorded our highest-ever total of A* grades, while 2018 was the 13th consecutive year in which the proportion of examinations awarded A*-B grades – a commonly used benchmark figure – has topped 95%.

Since then, external sources have further confirmed and corroborated our success. First came a Government league table showing QE as the country's leading selective school in terms of the progress made up to the end of GCSEs. Then we were crowned the top state school in the influential *Sunday Times Parent Power* survey.

QE may perhaps with some justification now lay claim to being considered the UK's leading state school. Precisely because of that, it is important that our horizons as a school are broad and expansive, and

that we encourage, train and nurture our pupils so that they can excel in our increasingly interconnected world. This term's commemoration of the centenary of the 1918 Armistice stands, among other things, as a warning, a sobering reminder of the potentially disastrous consequences of narrow nationalism. And whatever the outcome of the current turbulent period surrounding Brexit, Britain's future leaders in society, commerce and academia will need to be equipped to thrive both in Europe and beyond.

Major employers frequently lament the



SCHOOL OFFICIALS ANNOUNCED: 2019 School Captain Bhiramah Rammanohar is pictured, centre-front, with his senior team.



SUCCESSFUL FQE EVENTS: This team of Year 11 parents won the annual FQE quiz, while the Friends' inaugural Christmas Fayre, with 30 stalls, proved highly popular.



Powerhouse! QE's academic performance recognised

Queen Elizabeth's School's position at the top of two authoritative league tables has demonstrated the outstanding nature of the education it delivers for boys from Year 7 all the way through to Year 13.

Earlier this term, a Government league table revealed that QE is the top selective school in England when measured against the Department for Education's Progress 8 figure, which records progress between the end of Key Stage 2 (the last year of primary school) and GCSE results in Year 11.

Its Progress 8 figure of 1.22 placed it ahead of any other grammar school and 15th out of the 6,530 schools and colleges measured. Furthermore, QE comfortably outperformed all 14 schools above it when compared against two other Government measures, Attainment 8 and the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), both of which are methods of recording pupils' achievement in key GCSE subjects.

More recently, QE was named the country's top state school in the *Sunday Times Parent Power* survey, overtaking the 2017 winners, The Henrietta Barnett School, to head the table comprising the 150 leading state schools. Widely read, the survey determined ranking based on the percentage of examination entries gaining A* to B grades at A-level this summer (which is given double weighting) and the percentage of entries awarded A* and A grades at GCSE.

dearth of readily employable graduates who are globally-minded, cross-culturally competent, and, preferably, able to speak another language other than English. To gain such a global perspective, boys need to acquire 'soft skills' such as open-mindedness, the ability to listen carefully to others, interest in other cultures, adaptability and curiosity. All of these attributes are in fact adumbrated in aspects of our mission, which, for example, enjoins the School to encourage "independence of thought" and to focus "the boys' attention on their own development and aspirations, both at the School and beyond".

"broad and expansive horizons"

As part of our School Development Plan, we are starting work on our Lower School curriculum, following the reforms of recent years to GCSEs and A-levels, and taking into consideration especially employability skills. A greater focus on such skills is also to the fore as we look at careers education in the School. Our USP Sixth Form programme, with its use of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), equips boys in this way.

It is tremendously important that boys develop and maintain a broad outlook alongside their achievement of very strong academic results if they are to thrive. One foundation of such a holistic approach is that boys begin reflecting upon their own lives and attitudes as they start finding their place in the world. Two of our alumni, poet Anthony Anaxagorou (1994–1999) and social entrepreneur and podcaster

Bilal Harry Khan (2003–2010), addressed the sometimes-tricky areas of identity, masculinity and gender roles when they visited this term, with Bilal speaking to Year 11 and Anthony delivering a Sixth Form assembly. Alongside and related to these areas, we recognise the importance of boys looking outwards in their relationships, adopting habits of kindness, thoughtfulness and respect for others. By so doing, not only do boys establish better relationships, but they also stand to gain themselves.

For those seeking to learn how to operate effectively in a global environment, it is important, too, that their relationships

include some with people from other walks of life and from other cultures. As the centrespread of this newsletter shows, there are frequent opportunities for boys to broaden their horizons through purposeful international travel. Whether these are sports tours or subject-related trips organised by academic departments, such visits always deepen intercultural understanding. Indeed, boys who gain the opportunity to mingle with equally accomplished young people from other countries and cultures when they reach the latter stages of prestigious international competitions often report that they found this aspect to have been the highlight of their adventure.

For our senior boys, we are encouraging the increasing aspiration of many to study

abroad. A sizeable group of our Year 12 boys have been working this term with our visiting interns from the University of Connecticut and others as they prepare to submit applications to US universities. Visits from recent leavers, such as Valavan Ananthakumaraswamy (OE 2009-2016), the first QE boy ever to be offered a place at Stanford University, provide further inspiration.

Many of our QE families are already international in the sense that it is very common for them to have connections, family and otherwise, overseas. Boys should embrace the opportunities that this heritage affords. Foreign languages are an asset for boys seeking to make their way in a global market, and that applies to community languages spoken in the home or wider family just as much as to foreign languages taught in the classroom. I urge parents to encourage language proficiency at home and their sons' language-learning at School. In addition, I ask parents to do whatever

they can to instil in their children an appreciation and understanding of the wider world. It is helpful, in particular, if they can support

our efforts to introduce our boys to global issues and concepts by making time for such conversation at home.

I wish all our families a Merry Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Neil Enright, Headmaster

"Once more unto the breach..." once more!"

QE boys took on Henry V for their Shakespeare Schools Foundation performance for the second consecutive year – but for the first time, their production was in partnership with Rough Magicke. This drama school prepared and directed the large cast of QE boys, with Rahil Shah, of Year 13, taking the title role at the ArtsDepot in Finchley.

English teacher and Extra-Curricular Enrichment Tutor Micah King said: "A particularly moving moment was the battle scene between the English and French troops, performed in an emotional and visually stunning way with most of the cast on stage. I thought the students were a real credit to the School."



Top table

A QE team comprising Amogh Bhartia and Heemy Kalam, of Year 9, Bikiran Behera, of Year 10, and Year 11's Hari Gajendran has reached the national final of the prestigious *Top of the Bench* chemistry competition after winning the Chilterns and Middlesex Regional round.

Organised by The Royal Society of Chemistry, the competition presents children with scientific challenges which take them beyond the confines of the curriculum.

Going global: QE on the world stage

Whether in academic visits, in the final stages of international competitions or in extra-curricular activities such as sports tours, Queen Elizabeth's School pupils are increasingly making their mark around the world.

The reports on these pages represent a snapshot of international activities in which QE boys have been involved in the second half of 2018.

TORONTO

NEW
YORK

NORMANDY

BERLIN

ST
PETERSBURG

MOSCOW

BEIJING

TRANSATLANTIC TOURISTS: A QE touring party of senior rugby players spent a memorable 10 days in Canada. Read more on p8.



POWER OF ATTORNEYS: A Sixth-Form team's success in a UK mock trial competition took them to New York. See p7.



Putin and palaces

Sixth-formers on a six-day History and Politics trip to St Petersburg and Moscow learned about Russian life from the era of the Tsars right up to the present day.

The 30 boys deepened their understanding of a culture that is very different from the UK's, gaining insight, for example, into the reasons

for President Putin's evident popularity there. In St Petersburg, they were, said Head of History Helen MacGregor, "blown away by the beauty of the palaces," while in Moscow, a varied programme included a visit to Lenin's Mausoleum, a trip to an ice hockey stadium and a chance to sample traditional Russian fare, including borscht and cabbage soup.



A week in Normandy

Boys enjoyed the chance to immerse themselves in French language and culture during a week at a Normandy château.

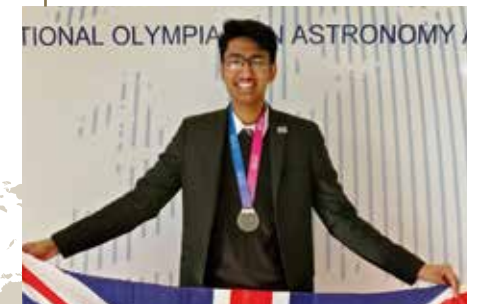
Fifty pupils, drawn mostly from the current Year 8 and with a smaller number of Year 13 boys, stayed at the Château de la Baudonnière, near Avranches. While the younger boys practised their conversation skills with native speakers and enjoyed team-building activities, the sixth-formers went on work-experience placements.



European debate

Five members of QE's debating team qualified for the international round of the Berlin-based European Youth Parliament competition.

Ibrahim Al-Hariri, Aditya Ravindrakumar, Miphram Samten, Akshat Sharma, Anake Singh put in strong performances at the national session at Liverpool Hope University, engaging in formal debates that looked at the very diverse challenges facing Europe. They were all assigned to different European locations for the international leg.



Star quality of sixth-former shines in China

Niam Vaishnav returned triumphant from Beijing, where he won one of the UK's two silver medals at the International Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad and cemented his position amongst the world's foremost young astrophysicists.

He relished meeting other young astronomers: "We had lots of fun learning about our different cultures and exchanging card games!"

From the archives: The Old Elizabethans Association Dinner, then and now

While the venue may have changed, a modern Elizabethan calling in on the Old Elizabethans Association Dinner in the early years of the 20th century would find much that was familiar. A recently discovered menu card, c1924, reveals a familiar format: in fact, the only significant difference is that the food is described in French, as was then common for formal dining.

The association itself began life as a dining club in 1886, and there have been 123 recorded dinners, including those shown here – one just after the Boer War (c. 1902, pictured below), another also in the early 1900s (pictured middle right) and one

from 1930 (pictured top right). The fourth photograph (shown bottom right) shows this year’s dinner, which featured the customary speeches and time-honoured toasts, as well as opportunities to catch up with old classmates. There was a strong turnout from the ‘ten-year leavers’.

Guest speaker Alan Ingham (OE 1987–1994) entertained with his recollections of School life during an era of great international uncertainty, recounting the confident prediction of one teacher that the Berlin Wall would not fall in his lifetime – just months before it did.



Helping the homeless

A group of sixth-formers are developing a new charity called *youthconnectionlondon* to help the homeless in the capital. Kieran Dhrona, Humzah Hameed and Kabishan Sivarasan, with a dozen QE friends and some from other schools, handed out packs of essential non-perishable provisions.



Broughton battle through

In a fiercely fought battle, Broughton overcame Stapylton in the final of the QIQE inter-House quiz. Both teams, each comprising one boy each from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10, had topped their respective groups in the earlier round. The contest took the format of the BBC’s *University Challenge*, with a starter-for-ten, then three bonus questions.

US politics red and blue

Two former US congressmen from opposite sides of the political fence shared accounts of their time in the House of Representatives at a conference at the British Library. Visiting QE A-level Politics students benefitted from the insights of Republican Tom Petri and Democrat Martin Lancaster and from the expert analysis of leading academics at UK universities. The boys also enjoyed the opportunity to look around the British Library itself.



Going on to great things

QE’s Careers Convention brought Year 11 boys and their parents together with a record number of volunteer advisers – many of them Old Elizabethans. Several visiting experts gave structured presentations, while on the main conference floor, delegates seized the opportunity to ask questions of volunteers. Representatives from more than 50 businesses and organisations attended.

Separately, more than 300 sixth-formers participated in a careers event at the School attended by representatives of some of the largest employers and professional associations. Among the ‘hot’ topics were new graduate apprenticeships that allow students to earn and gain practical experience while they study.

Sangani (OE 2005–2012) and Izzet Hassan (also 2005–2012), as well as Civil Service economist Andrei Sandu (OE 2007–2014).

Evidence of the School’s success in providing high-calibre careers education emerged in a national survey conducted by recruitment consultancy Rare, which found that more boys from QE apply to graduate recruitment programmes run by blue-chip law, finance and management firms than from any other state boys’ school.

Alumni continue to support QE by giving careers talks. This term’s included lawyers Samir Manek (OE 2001–2008), Suraj



Different perspectives

Two visiting speakers gave boys the opportunity to consider Brexit from opposite sides of the media fence.

Firstly, Finchley and Golders Green MP and former QE governor Mike Freer told sixth-formers that media reports about divisions within the Conservative Party over the Brexit negotiations were well wide of the mark. But Mark D’Arcy, the BBC’s Parliamentary Correspondent, gave a journalist’s perspective during his separate talk to the Politics Society. Politics had not been “normal” over the last two years: “It is unusual that you have Cabinet ministers threatening to resign, or actually resigning, almost daily.”

Mr Freer described an MP’s job, explaining that it is to scrutinise the law, not to make it. However, he outlined how MPs can achieve a change in the law through lobbying, building consensus, and trying to amend legislation as it progresses through Parliament.

Mr D’Arcy added that politics is currently split into Brexit and ‘everything else’, including all the usual big issues such as the NHS, housing and education.

Young lawyers head stateside

Seven sixth-formers became the first-ever QE team to take part in the Empire Mock Trial competition in New York, after qualifying through the UK Bar Mock Trial finals.

Although not among the overall winners, the team achieved close results against the four schools they faced and won their final case. Academic Enrichment Tutor Lucy

Riseborough reports that the judges praised the QE boys on “their knowledge and grip on the procedures of the US court format”.

Team member Miphram Samten said afterwards: “We felt we represented what Britain has to offer on the world stage: Confident, capable individuals with open minds and buckets of enthusiasm.”



International camaraderie

QE's first-ever rugby tour to Canada not only offered the experience of a different culture but also had a positive effect on senior rugby back home, reports Head of Rugby James Clarke.

During the ten-day visit, the 19 senior players took on several leading youth rugby sides, losing two matches and winning one, and enjoying the post-match camaraderie. They also visited Niagara Falls and the theme park, *Canada's Wonderland*.

Thanking QE's Canadian hosts for their hospitality, Mr Clarke reflected that the trip had been especially beneficial in enabling the tourists to 'gel' as a squad.

The show must go on

The first concert of the academic year featured many of QE's younger musicians, with a dozen ensembles taking part. Showcasing the breadth and depth of talent especially in the Lower School, it especially featured music from the world of show business.

Hits from *The Greatest Showman* were performed alongside the Queen song borrowed for the concert's title, *The Show Must Go On*. There was great diversity, too, with the programme including both Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, played by the Flute Ensemble, and Paapanaasam Shivan's *Singara Velavan*, performed by the Junior Indian Ensemble.

Stars of the future

Joshua John and Andreas Angelopoulos, of Year 7, made significant contributions to the School's achievement in finishing fourth at the 2018 Millfield International Schools' Chess Tournament. After performing strongly in the two qualifying rounds, the QE team were selected for a place in the Championship section as one of the top six teams.



Lest we forget

Service and sacrifice informed the special remembrance assembly held at the School to mark the centenary of the Armistice in 1918. All boys from Years 7–10, together with staff and many senior pupils, took part in the ceremony, which featured music, poetry and a procession by the Combined Cadet Force.

The Headmaster, Neil Enright, read aloud the names of the 48 Old Elizabethans killed during World War I, whilst the names of the 65 who died in World War II were projected on to a screen.

The two-minute silence at 11 o'clock was heralded by six of QE's senior trumpeters sounding the Last Post.

Year 12 historians had a special tour of the Imperial War Museum's World War I centenary exhibition, courtesy of alumnus Ian Kikuchi. Dr Kikuchi (OE 1997-2004) curated the exhibition and answered questions both about the war and about the logistics of curating major exhibitions.



**Queen
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FOUNDED IN 1573

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