

Queen Elizabeth's School

# The Elizabethan

NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS

SUMMER 2021



**NO LOOKING BACK!** Boys from Years 8 & 9 enjoyed a sponsored walk for the Sai School Appeal. Turn to p10.

## From the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

**Happily, the end of this term has seen many of the traditional end of year activities take place in person. In the past few days, it has been good to observe the boys enjoying Sports Day together; to join our sixth-formers as they gained experience of formal occasions through attendance at our Year 12 Luncheon, and to celebrate with our younger prize-winners at Junior Awards.**

While such activities are undoubtedly important in our shared School experience, their return does not signify that life at Queen Elizabeth's School

has returned entirely to normal. And yet, as we come to the end of this Summer Term and of the 2020–2021 academic year, we can reflect on the past period with considerable pride. The School community has shown adaptability and a persistently positive attitude. Far from allowing the present difficulties to immobilise them, our boys have shown considerable initiative and determination, as evidenced, for instance, by the number of competition successes reported in this issue of *The Elizabethan*. These are all qualities that are championed in [our new School Development Plan](#).

Furthermore, this resilience on the part

of boys, staff and parents is not to be underrated. I am deeply grateful for the co-operation and extensive goodwill shown by families. We have endeavoured as a School to communicate regularly and clearly throughout this extended national crisis, and, as a result, families have had confidence that we have been proportionate and fair in the measures we have taken: in often trying circumstances, everyone's good humour has consistently shone through.

Please do look out for further communications from the School over the summer regarding arrangements for making the return in September Covid-safe for all our boys and staff.



**WELCOME BACK:** A casualty of last year's lockdown, Sports Day made a welcome return this summer. All boys in Years 7-10 took part in at least one event. There were more than 50 track races, field events, tug of war, table tennis, rowing, tennis, Eton fives and volleyball.



While we all hope for the best in terms of the national and international battle against the virus, in one sense, I doubt that life at QE will ever, in fact, return to how it was before; and rightly so. Through the pandemic, we have learned much that we can put to use in our attempts to continue to drive the School forwards. For one thing, there has been the explosion of online communication and the mass adoption of these internet technologies in the worlds of education and business.

We have made extensive use of such technologies ourselves, refining our eQE platform and integrating it with software such as Microsoft Teams to continue delivering our lesson timetable for boys and staff unable to be in School. Moreover, these and other technological tools are enabling us to do far more than merely replicate online what we do in the classroom. By combining in-School activities with online approaches, we are opening up new possibilities, as we have seen with the live-streaming of concerts and of [our recent Pianoathon fundraiser](#), and with the [YouTube Premiere of our main Founder's Day broadcast](#). [QE Collections](#) deploys specialised digital technology in order to make our archive readily available to scholars and local history enthusiasts alike. And this term's [TEDx conference](#) gives our School a bigger reach online, while also affording the boys an opportunity to practise their skills in oracy and to reflect on topics that matter deeply to them. Such reflection is never more necessary than in a time when lockdown and ongoing

restrictions have placed great pressure on young people's mental health.

Technology is proving again and again that it is a driver of global change. It is notable that just when the world has been struggling with the coronavirus, a number of other big issues, such as racism, sexism and gender equality, have also gained much greater prominence on the national and international stage. Through social media and the vastly improved opportunities for communication open to all, many previously unheard voices are now being heard. I recognise that this is an important moment. We are not complacent. I regard it as of cardinal importance that QE pupils are not perpetrating sexist behaviour, or any form of discrimination, harassment or violence, but that they instead behave towards everybody with empathy, compassion and understanding.

It is important to look beyond the School gates for opportunities to learn, as we aim to be outward looking and reflective as a School community. Our Year 12 Luncheon guest speaker, Old Elizabethan Elliot Hughes (2002-09), spoke wisely on issues of race, identity and self-worth, for example. We have a shared responsibility as a School and as parents to produce young men who are, as the mission at the heart of our School plan has it, 'confident, able and responsible'. We want to help our pupils

navigate the modern world, so that they emerge into adulthood as the lovely, rounded, decent people that we all aspire for them to be and then go on to play their part in making society better. I am looking forward to getting stuck into implementing the School plan when we return in September.

Good progress continues to be made with the Music School building, which is on schedule for opening during the course of the autumn, with the atrium and additional food servery to be brought into use first, in the early weeks of next term. My thanks again go to parents for the great generosity they have shown in contributing to this project, both through regular giving and by supporting the activities on and around Founder's Day which have raised in excess of £30,000 for equipment.

I look forward to seeing our senior pupils when they come in for the respective GCSE and A-level results

days next month. It will hopefully be a time of joy and celebration for many.

I hope everyone will take advantage of the summer as a time for recuperation and rest, an opportunity for the boys to re-charge their batteries in time for the new School year.

My best wishes to you all.

**Neil Enright**  
**Headmaster**

*"good humour"*

*"lovely, rounded, decent people"*





## So many positive notes!

The roof and all internal and external walls of the Music School are complete, with electrical supply works done. As the building nears completion – the focus now is on finishing the interiors – the QE community has redoubled efforts to equip it to the highest standards.

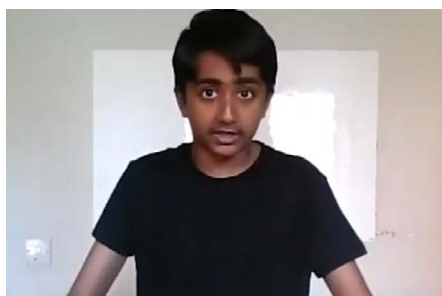
The inter-House Pianoathon saw dozens of musicians play six hours of non-stop music, raising over £8,200 – a sum that has now been combined with Piano Fund contributions from the Founder's Day Showstopper Bake and this month's sponsored walk.

Director of Music Ruth Partington said: "I am delighted to confirm that, thanks to the great generosity of our sponsors and much hard work from boys, parents, staff and others, we will be able to equip all six practice rooms in the new building with a high-quality upright piano."



## Biology's best

Final-year biologist Arnav Sharma was among an élite handful of young scientists picked to compete for a place in the UK team for the 2021 International Biology Olympiad. Arnav was one of eight QE A-level students to win gold medals in this year's British Biology Olympiad.



## Oratory in the face of adversity

Adithya Raghuraman's highly expressive rendering of Brutus's famous speech from *Julius Caesar* won him joint first prize in the English-Speaking Union's Performing Shakespeare competition.



The Year 8 boy was unexpectedly forced to live-stream from his bedroom in the grand final when he and classmates had to self-isolate.



But, says Head of English Robert Hyland: "Adithya rose to the occasion magnificently. With no other audience than the computer in front of him, he still made it feel like he was addressing the masses."



## Muscle power

Anubhav Rathore and Heemy Kalam's design for a device that harvests the energy of arm and leg movements to generate electricity in developing countries with unreliable power supplies won them first prize in a national competition. The Year 11 pair won the wearable technologies category of the 2021 TeenTech Awards.

# Often topical, sometimes provocative, always thoughtful

TEDx conference shows off QE boys' free-thinking scholarship and their skills in oracy

**The first-ever TEDx conference at the School provided an opportunity for pupils and staff to share with the wider world their reflections on an extraordinarily diverse range of topics.**

Filmed and produced entirely in-house, the specially licensed event featured 14 boys from across the year groups and three members of staff, each of whom were filmed giving short talks on a subject of their choice. The

international TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) conference created the TEDx programme so that 'ideas worth spreading' could be disseminated through local, independently organised events.





In just four weeks following QE's June TEDx conference, the 17 YouTube videos collated on a dedicated QE web page were viewed more than 22,000 times. Most watched is Year 10 boy Shuaib Adam's examination of racism in football. Sadly, his topic took on fresh relevance after England's Euro 2021 final defeat in a penalty shoot-out and the racist 'trolling' of the three unsuccessful penalty-takers that followed.



Year 11 pupil's Zain Ahmad's bleak look at *What makes humans distinct?* has also proved popular online. Zain spans the millennia, from homo sapiens' killing of other early human species – "the world's first ethnic cleansing" – and the "ruthless" elimination of pre-historic mega fauna by our distant ancestors, through to the "simply shameful" mass extinctions of the present day: "We are the same breed of monster."

And a talk from committed animal rights proponent Yaamir Khurana, of Year 13, sparked some healthy debate on YouTube, generating around 40

comments from both supportive vegans and opponents of his position. The talk is entitled *How we will look back at eating animals*.

Putting on the conference, which included a day of rehearsals, was a major logistical and technical challenge, involving a curating committee, as well as camera, sound, lighting and operations crews. Under the guidance of staff organisers headed by Crispin Bonham-Carter (Assistant Head, Pupil Involvement), the teams made sure that everything ran smoothly when the speakers were on stage and edited the talks afterwards.

## THE TALKS

### BOYS

**Ayush Patel, Year 12**  
*Regulating AI for the safety of humanity*

**Ved Nair, Year 8**  
*Psychological effects of lockdown on young people*

**Yaamir Khurana, Year 13**  
*How we will look back at eating animals*

**Advay Bhat, Year 7**  
*A look at human behaviour and how it impacts the world*

**Sultan Khokhar, Year 12**  
*Why do we fight wars?*

**Ben Rock, Year 11**  
*How sport can improve academic achievement*

**Ashrith Kothapalle, Year 11**  
*Why do we respond to one person needing help, but not many?*

**Zain Ahmad, Year 11**  
*What makes humans distinct?*

**Shuaib Adam, Year 10**  
*Why is racism in football on the back foot?*

**Chanakya Seetharam, Year 9**  
*African children are starving... and other lies about development*

**Aadam Aslam, Year 8**  
*Covid-19 and the role of social media*

**Jeevan Thiyagarajan, Year 7**  
*Perspective*

**Sayon Choudhuri, Year 12**  
*Politics is nothing more than medicine on a larger scale*

**Prabav Santhosh Kumar, Year 12**  
*Your brain is blind*

### STAFF

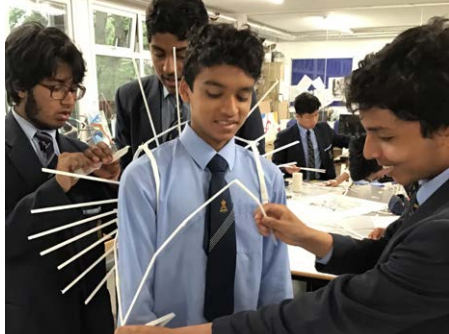
**Navjeet Swatch, Mathematics teacher**  
*Are we living in the Matrix?*

**Eleanor Pickering, English teacher**  
*Embracing vulnerability*

**Surya Bowyer, Head of Library Services and Curator of Collections**  
*Why save a tree?*



**TED<sup>x</sup> QESchool**  
x = independently organized TED event



## Wearing it well

Years 7–10 enjoyed trying something different during Enrichment Week.

While Years 8 and 9 stretched their legs on sponsored walks (see p10), Year 7 used their voices – in a singing workshop – and their brains: they had to bring some lateral thinking to an RAF-funded cyber security challenge. In Year 10, boys worked in groups to design and construct 'wearable architecture', with some managing to include moving parts. There were also drama workshops, featuring an ultra-abridged version of *Romeo and Juliet*.



## CCF at camp — at last!

It has been well over a year since their last exercise, so QE's Combined Cadet Force jumped at the opportunity to head off to camp.

The cadets from Years 10–12 tested their abilities in archery, drill, patrol & observation and mine clearance.

Contingent Commander Major Mev Armon said the event in Hampshire, was "a welcome return to something close to normality".



## Technology triumphs

The Technology department has enjoyed a vintage term, with awards, competition successes and no fewer than QE nine teams qualifying for the robotics international finals.

The four senior teams in the VEX World Championships, held virtually because of the pandemic, all qualified for their divisional knockout stages, with Hyperdrive winning an Amaze award for their division. These teams also competed successfully at an event hosted by Merchant Taylors' School. Five junior IQ teams qualified for the World Championships.

Other achievers include: Ukendar Vadivel, Year 13, who won the Lord Mayor's COVID-19 Livery Award for his work with QE boys and staff on NHS face shields; Nirmay Jadhav, Year 12, MTA TDI Challenge runner-up; Devia Karia, Year 13, Triumph Design Awards finalist, and Dhruv Syam and Ashwin Sridhar, Year 11, Amazon Explorer Longitude Prize finalists.

## "Deep dive" comes out on top

Year 12 pupil Vineeth Rajan won a national video essay competition with his "deep dive" into the linguistics of South Asia.

The Cambridge Language Collective's joint first prize in the senior individual category was for his entry on retroflexes – the distinctive sounds formed by curling the tongue back behind the upper jaw's alveolar ridge. His video included hand-drawn illustrations and time-lapse photography.

## Rare opportunity

Final-year pupil Deshraam Ganeshamoorthy has won a coveted Year in Industry placement – one of only 750 awarded nationwide annually. The scheme places young people with companies, where most work full-time before going on to university. Deshraam capitalised on his competition successes with a QE robotics team to impress bosses at the Cambridge engineering consultancy interviewing him for his placement.





## Remembering six million – and Lanie

Year 11 boys, including members of QE's Jewish Society, lit a candle to commemorate eight-year-old Lanie Dworski, of Kovno in Lithuania – one of the six million people killed in the Holocaust. Pupils Ryan Bentley and Dylan Domb prepared a talk for the event on the Holocaust and the history of the persecution of minority groups.

## Rich fare for Founder's Day

There was something for all tastes at virtual Founder's Day 2021, as families, staff and other supporters of the School gave generously, with a final total that exceeded £30,000, easily beating the £20,000 target.

The Saturday got off to a visually varied start: a YouTube Premiere broadcast combined traditional elements – including hymns, the Roll Call and the reading of the School Chronicle – with several surprises, such as musicians performing in 'hi-vis' at the Music School construction site.

During the video, in her own inimitable style, TV presenter and celebrity Mel Giedroyc invited everyone to take to the kitchen for the sponsored Showstopper Bake Challenge. After declaring herself "overwhelmed by the amazing standard" of the entries, Mel later chose as winner

Year 12 pupil Manomay Lala-Raykar's music-themed cake in QE blue and gold.

- **Two FQE online events organised by the Parent Ambassadors raised around £1,200, which was added to the Founder's Day total. A *Bingo Night* was followed by a *Night of Variety*, which included a live auction. The prize lots included tea with TV presenter Mel Giedroyc and several artworks by Old Elizabethan Sumit Sethi (OE 2012–2019), known professionally by his artist name, EmperorSessle44.**



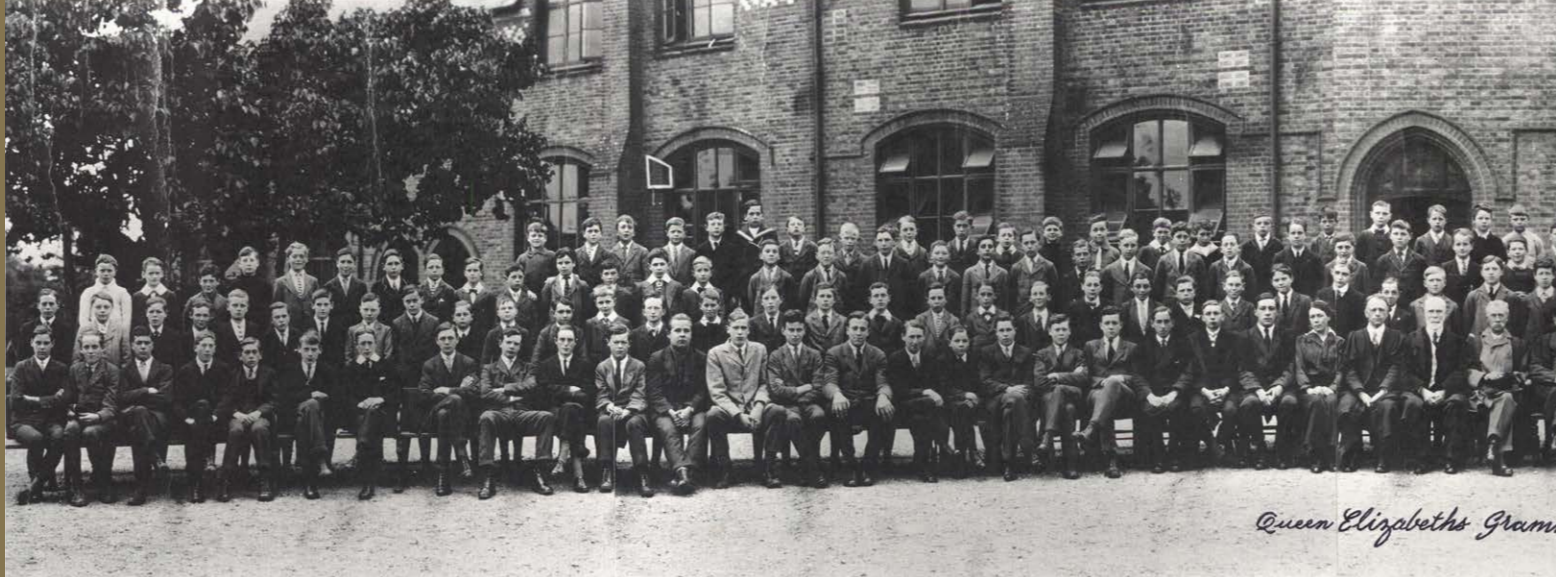
## Life lessons at luncheon

Old Elizabethan Elliot Hughes urged sixth-formers to keep perspective and focus on their own journey when he returned to the School as guest speaker for the Year 12 Luncheon. The meal is arranged to give pupils early experience of this type of formal function.

Elliot (2002–09), who reflected on identity, racism and his own life and career, told the boys: "If you keep working hard, everything will fall into place in time." The current School Captain, Siddhant Kansal, led the proceedings.

## Heart and soul

Rishi Watsalya threw himself into the national *Poetry By Heart* competition – and duly won a Highly Commended certificate. Judges praised the "spirited way" in which he brought out the humour of James Reeves' nonsense poem, *Mr Kartoffel*, and the "mystery and suspense" in Walter de la Mare's supernatural poem, *The Listeners*. Rishi was entered after winning an internal poetry recitation competition for all Year 7 boys.



# Sharing our 448-year heritage through QE Collections

2,500+ items in new online archives – and counting!

**QE Collections** is a new, user-friendly online facility making the School's extensive archives available to all free-of-charge.

The fully digitised service went live earlier this year and was presented this term at a 'town hall' event to a specially invited audience of alumni and others with an interest in local history.

The School holds an extensive collection of historic material. As well as formal records, there are artefacts touching on the history of the local area, and shared social histories compiled by former pupils, staff and others.

In recent weeks, QE Collections has continued to attract attention, with the School's Curator of Collections, Surya Bowyer, invited to give a presentation to the School Archives & Records Association. "It was very well received



and many attendees requested a longer session in which I could go into more depth." This follow-up session, which was organised jointly with the archivist at Westminster School (Westminster uses the same digital archive software), took place in the last week of term.

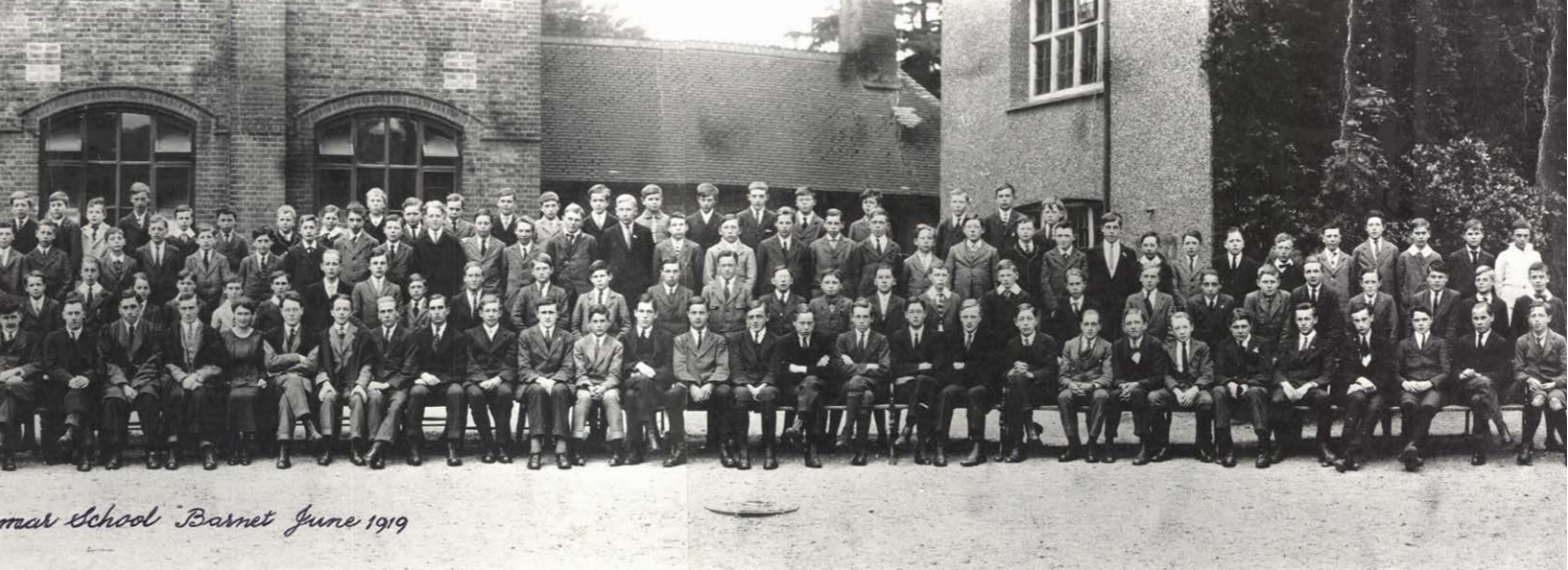
QE Collections uses professional-quality digitisation and its files are 'future-proofed' using an industry-standard digital preservation system. "My colleague, Dr Corinna Illingworth, and I have been hard at work getting more material digitally preserved and

uploaded online: the total now stands at more than 2,500 items, and it's going up every week," says Mr Bowyer (OE 2007–2014).

The service was made possible through a donation from the late Richard Newton (OE 1956–1964). The Headmaster says: "We are deeply grateful to him for his generosity and his commitment to bringing the vision to fruition: QE Collections stands as his magnificent legacy to the Elizabethan community."





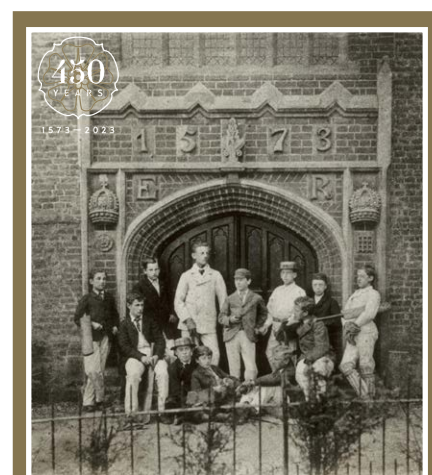


Mr Bowyer highlights a number of items uploaded in the past few weeks:

- **The earliest extant Governors' minutes book**, 1587–1665. This covers the appointment of Headmaster William Sclater in 1654, during the Protectorate under William Cromwell: "Somewhat surprising, since Sclater was a prominent and unrepentant Royalist officer," says Mr Bowyer.
- **An indenture (legal contract)** under which Captain John Owen, Alderman, fishmonger of London and Governor of the School (1651–1679) promised to pay £9 12s annually to the Governors. As late as 1935, this sum was still being paid by the Fishmongers' Company.
- World War II leaflets and the programme of the post-World War I Barnet Peace Celebrations (overseen in part by the then-Headmaster William Lattimer). These documents are part of the **Twentieth-Century History Project** – a record of the School's history during that period begun in 2009 by QE archivist Rosemary Baldwin and completed earlier this year.
- **Three drawings of Tudor Hall** – QE's pre-1932 home – produced in 1923 by Frank Collier, artist and QE Art Master, to celebrate the School's 350th anniversary.
- **A photograph of Prince George opening Main Building** as QE moves to its current Queens Road site in 1932.



QE Collections was recently introduced to QE's youngest boys. "For a while now, the History department has taught the history of the School in the summer of Year 7," Mr Bowyer explains. History teacher Simon Walker was self-isolating and "this provided a perfect opportunity to start using the Collections, as they are accessible from anywhere," says Mr Bowyer, who himself contributed to the lesson remotely. "We are keen to continue to explore how we can integrate use of the Collections into teaching."



## Pre-order your copy of the new history of the School

A new book by former Headmaster Dr John Marincowitz (1999–2011) will set out the definitive history of Queen Elizabeth's School from its foundation in 1573 to the present day.

The culmination of extensive research, the book is being published to coincide with QE's 450th anniversary in 2023, and the School is offering an opportunity to pre-order a copy now through the the School is offering an opportunity to pre-order a copy (from 1st September 2021) through the School Shop.





## Supporting the Sai School

Two sponsored events saw boys getting into the great outdoors in aid of QE's long-running Sai School Appeal.

The appeal raises funds for the Sathya Sai School in Kerala, India. The boys were inspired by a special assembly in which Major Charles Russell (OE 1997–2004) spoke about visiting the school in 2004. He still sponsors a child there. Boys from Years 7, 8, 9 and 12 played in a football

tournament organised by Year 12 prefects Vishruth Dhamodharan and Varun Vijay Kumar, who are leading the 2021 appeal team. Then Year 8 and 9 boys set off on a 10km walk. Overall, almost £5,000 was raised, with half the funds from the walk going to QE's Piano Fund.

## On the money

Mukund Soni's essay on the decline of cash won him first prize in the national Young Financial Journalist Competition.

Mukund, of Year 11, saw off hundreds of other entrants in the 14-15 age group of the London Institute of Banking & Finance's competition, run in collaboration with the **Financial Times**. Competition judge, FT columnist and TV mathematics expert Bobby Seagull wrote: "Excellent article! With a clear, nuanced view about how society might transition to cashless and a judicious use of data to back up key points!"

An abridged version of Mukund's 830-word essay was published in the FT and he appeared in a LIBF podcast with his Economics teacher, Gus Ornelas. Dr Ornelas said: "This was an extremely well researched piece exploring the reasons for the waning use of cash, but also pointing out the dangers of a cashless society." Mukund won £150, as well as ten free places for QE on LIBF's **Lessons in Financial Education** programme.



## County cup finalists

Year 8 cricketers reached the final of the Middlesex County Cup after sparkling performances in the earlier rounds. Their path was capped by a ten-wicket victory in the semi-final, where bowler Krutarth Behera's 5–8 helped them dismiss The Fulham Boys School for 37 all out. In the final, the team fell 57 runs short of St Benedict's School's 151-7. Head of Cricket Richard Scally said: "They were ably led by captain Ved Nair and we're proud of their performances, and of our Year 9 and Year 10 teams, who reached their semi-final and quarter-final respectively." Year 10 were boosted by star batsman Ranvir Sinha, who has scored three centuries during the season.



Queen  
Elizabeth's  
School

FOUNDED IN 1573

Queen Elizabeth's School  
Queen's Road, Barnet,  
Hertfordshire EN5 4DQ

020 8441 4646 enquiries@qebarnet.co.uk  
@qebarnet1573

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Photography: eleanorbentall.com  
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qebarnet.co.uk