



Newsletter



February 2022

Reaching for the STARS! Working towards more sustainable travel

We are celebrating!

Once again, we have been awarded the **STARS** (Sustainable Travel: Active, Responsible, Safe) accreditation certificate, receiving a gold star from TFL to reward our hard work. This accredited status is now in place until August 2023.

The last 18 months have been particularly challenging, but our YTAs (Youth Travel Ambassadors) deserve a great big thank for their continued hard work and dedication. They have been resolutely committed to create surveys and assemblies, and they have kept the STARS website up-to-date with all our stories. They are continually trying to improve sustainable travel and road safety, in and around our school.

To our YTAs - you are all amazing! Thank you all for your hard work; keep up the fantastic work you are all doing.

In other news, we are hoping to start the annual pedometer challenge soon, with students versus teachers.



Mrs Oakley, Senior Cover Supervisor and Environmental Officer

February 2022

All the fun of the fair! Year 9 choose their options...

On Thursday 3rd February, Year 9 had an options fair to explore the different subjects available for study at GCSE. Current Year 10 and Post 16 students ran the stalls, enthusiastically promoting their subjects, and every subject was represented, ranging from Graphic Design and Drama to Astronomy.

The Options Fair was a great opportunity to showcase our wide range of GCSE subjects. It was held in the hall during Period 4 and 5; each form from Year 9 had a timeslot and had 15 minutes to look around, talking to the various subject representatives. Many Year 9 students have said that they now have a clear understanding of their options and what they involve.

Each stall had different props and a board, with pictures and information relating to each subject. There were two Year 10 students situated around it, talking to students and answering questions. Some stalls had leaflets to hand out with more information about their subject.



The feedback from the Year 9 students was extremely positive; they said speaking to older students was inspirational, helping them to make decisions about their GCSE options. It was a fun and enlightening experience for both Year 10, Post 16 and Year 9 students. Everyone was buzzing with enthusiasm and excitement about learning new subjects.

As a Year 10 student myself, I felt very wise sharing my knowledge and influencing young minds.

Trisha D, Year 10 student



February 2022

Why Should You Study a Language?

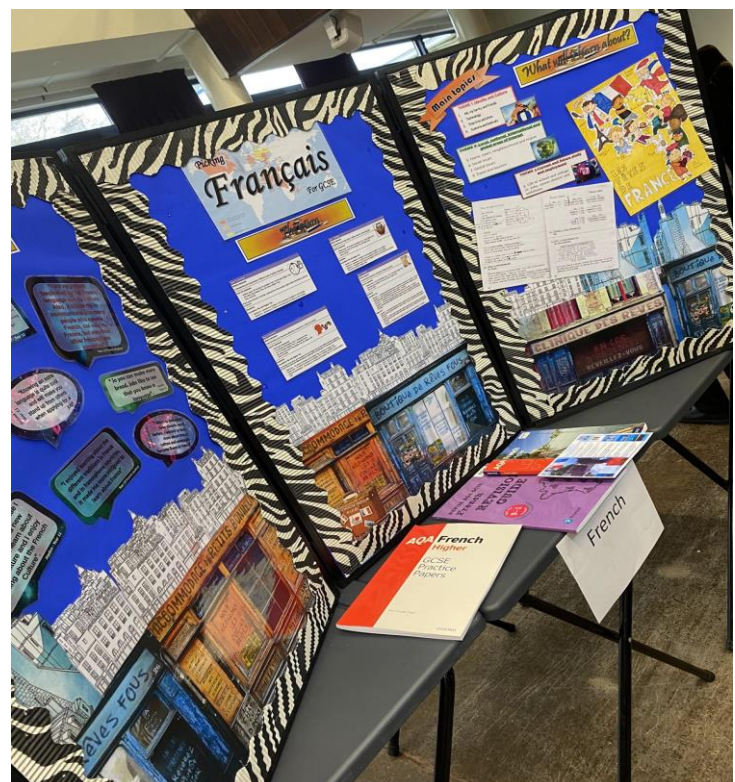
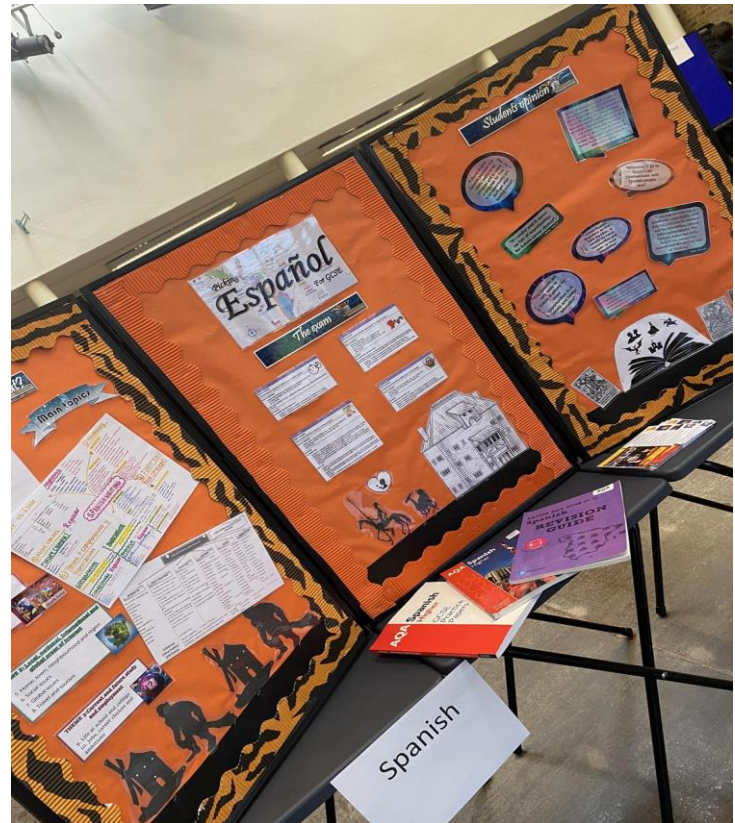
At Queensmead, we offer French and Spanish as well as the opportunity to take a qualification in your home language.

Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world; it is spoken in many countries such as Spain, Portugal, Mexico and most of South America. As for French, it's spoken in France, Canada and parts of Africa.

In order to travel the world - whether it's for your career or simply for pleasure - being able to speak the language is really beneficial. Not only can it make daily tasks easier, but you will be able to communicate with new people and it may enable you to appreciate the culture more immersively.

But also, one of the most important reasons to learn a language is that it opens up a vast number of job opportunities. It develops the ability to communicate with people from different parts of the world, in different sectors, and is a skill many employers look for. Language skills will allow you to stand out among the rest.

One of the natural outcomes of learning a language is being able to immerse yourself in that culture. In America, whistling at a sports tournament expresses approval. However, in Italy, it is considered a sign of disrespect, similar to booing. In addition, being bilingual makes you a better multitasker due to your ability to switch between languages while simultaneously "inhibiting" the others. Learning a language keeps your brain sharp and active!



Tuhina D, Year 10 student

February 2022

Bouncing back into school trips!

Since the pandemic began, trips have been difficult to run as we all had to isolate at home during the various lockdowns. Despite the fact that we are out of lockdown, the spread of Covid-19 has still had an increasing effect on many of our lives both in and out of school. As a result, we were thrilled when the usual reward trips could start up again. This year, we were off to Oxygen - for some freejumping!

Everyone was dressed in the school PE kit, ready for the activities ahead. We all met up with friends and peers in Goal's car park. After a short wait for all the students from both Year 8 and 9 to arrive, we were on our way to the trampoline park at around 3:30pm.

First, we were taken to the briefing room, where we sat together to watch the safety video; it included the various activities that we could participate in and the safety rules of the park. The instructor answered our questions, reassuring anyone in doubt, and then we were free to enter the park in an orderly manner.



There were many activities on offer: dodgeball, the tumbling track, an airbag, gymnastics trampolines and more. Everyone had different tricks that they wanted to do on the trampolines. In addition to this, there were many opportunities to enter competitions and win different prizes (one of which was a free slushie from the cafe just above the park).

Oxygen is not only a great place for physical activity, but a place where pupils are able to socialise, and escape from the pressures of hard work. We were able to enjoy the time at the park together, both as friends but also as a school community. It was also an excuse for people who don't talk to each other much in school to get to know each other - a chance to strengthen their trust in each other through physical activity.

Overall, a great afternoon out!

Nadine A, Year 9 student

Skating on ice: learning to pick ourselves up again

On Friday 10th December, Year 10 went on an ice skating reward trip to Slough Ice Arena, accompanied by Mr Rajabali, Mr Fernandes and Miss Kallmeier. Everyone had an amazing time and they are looking forward to their next visit!

We were allowed to leave school early, finishing at 2:30pm to go to the locker room, where we all met up. Everyone was dressed in their PE kit, and some were even in their Christmas jumpers, as part of Christmas Jumper Day. After a quick register, we went outside to Goals, where a coach was waiting for us.

As we watched the scenery pass by, we were buzzing with excitement. When we finally reached the Slough Ice Arena, we stared in awe at the professionals. They were so talented!

Our shoes were fitted and then we were on the ice! The warm lights and jolly Christmas music created a lovely ambience.

Admittedly, it was a rough start for us all. Everyone fell over at some point. But this is a hugely important skill,



as everyone was learning to pick themselves up when they fell and carry on (although, sometimes it was hilarious to watch!). Students were helping each other out, and making sure everyone was ok.

I'm proud to say that the Queensmead values were being demonstrated by all: kindness, respect and independence, and, most importantly, resilience!

Trisha D, Tuhina D, Rahma M, Year 10 students



February 2022

PE makes a change for the better!

For a long time, physical education has had a reputation for being grouped into clear and distinct categories; 'boys' or 'girls' and 'top set' or 'bottom set'. Suddenly, the select few that play for school teams are 'cool' but so few get a chance. The boys get to do 'boy' sports, while girls are limited to those deemed 'fit' for girls. Students in a 'top set' class might feel that they are better than everyone else, while those in a 'bottom set' might feel that they will never be good enough. Consequently, those who are lucky enough to represent the school in a sports team tend to belong to a small minority whilst the remaining majority of students are left out and lose motivation.

But Physical Education (PE) should be for everyone. It is not just about being accomplished at performing specific skills to a predetermined ideal model. It is about giving children the confidence and knowledge of the physical, mental *and* social aspects of life. This will enable a lifelong habit of physical activity. Students are no longer assessed by their ability to perform a skill until they choose either GCSE PE or A-Level PE; instead they are assessed on the performing, decision making and the health aspects of Physical Education.

In an attempt to challenge these issues, I felt there were a few easy things that could have maximum impact: remove 'sets' in PE; enable all students to complete the same activities, regardless of ability or gender; and introduce an 'Head. Heart. Hands' style assessment, so more students can enjoy and value the subject.

So far, we are seeing positive results. Year 7 students are in mixed ability and mixed gender classes, and all participate in the same activities. In Year 8, most classes are now mixed ability and this will continue to change going into Year 9.

We are trying to challenge the stereotypes and the students are responding well - after all, rugby is not just for males and netball is not just a sport for females. We have also played football matches against other schools with both boys and girls in the team.

Another positive is that the numbers attending extra-curricular sessions are very high in comparison to pre-Covid levels, especially in traditional team games. Post 16 extra-curricular student sport is also growing, while interest in KS5 options, such as A-Level PE or Level 3 Sport course has been higher than previous years.

It's a promising start.

Mr Walden, Head of PE



February 2022

A hilarious twist on football: play it in a bubble!

On Thursday 3rd February, an exciting Bubble Football tournament took place for Post 16 students. It was most definitely an event that none of the students had ever experienced before!

The tournament took place in Goals, and great fun was had by all. Not only was it a superb experience, it was also held in celebration of one Post 16 student: Max Turner in Year 12 was awarded the Jack Petchey award for outstanding services to PE through community service within extra-curricular football, granting him money to run an event.

After careful research, he decided that Bubble football sounded fun - certainly something neither he nor the other students had done before. And so it began. It was filled with excitement and laughs from start to finish.



Bubble football involves the same rules as normal football with a twist! For added difficulty (and hilarity!) players are enclosed in an orb over their upper body so they are unable to use their hands to control themselves.

The experience was incredibly hilarious to watch as the students and Mr Fernandes attempted to play against each other for victory. As the tournament unfolded, the competition increased, and the air was filled with the laughs and struggles of students and teachers as they rolled about all over the place.

Mrs Bamrah, Teacher of English



All for a good cause: Year 7 sports event

On 8th March, Year 7 will take part in a miniature sports day. The event will consist of a range of activities, as part of a friendly competition, including dodgeball, football and indoor athletics. Students will be asked for a contribution of £1 (minimum) to take part in the event in order to raise money for charity. The money will be donated to Cancer Research and the Motor Neurone Disease Association, in support of their crucial work.

With the donations, Cancer Research fund scientists, doctors and nurses, carrying out fundamental research to help beat cancer. The Motor Neurone Disease Association uses donations to ensure that the people and families affected by MND are able to get the care and support they need, whilst also funding research into treatments and cures.

Who is running the event?

It is being organised by two of our Year 13 students - Reece P and Arjun M. They have recently been awarded the Jack Petchey Award, an award given to students for their academic excellence. Reece and Arjun received the reward for their outstanding effort in their Business Studies coursework, where they planned, promoted and hosted a similar sporting event.

As the reward, they received a budget of £250 from the Jack Petchey foundation, in order to give back to the community. With this budget, they decided to host another sporting competition, for Year 7, to raise money for two important charities, both of which are very close to their hearts.



What is the Jack Petchey Foundation ?

The Jack Petchey Foundation was set up to inspire and motivate young people across London and Essex, providing exciting projects and programmes for them to get involved in. They recognise the outstanding achievements of today's young people by awarding them for their hard work and the positive impact they have in their communities.



Reece P and Arjun M, Year 13 students

February 2022

Queensmead Diversity Club

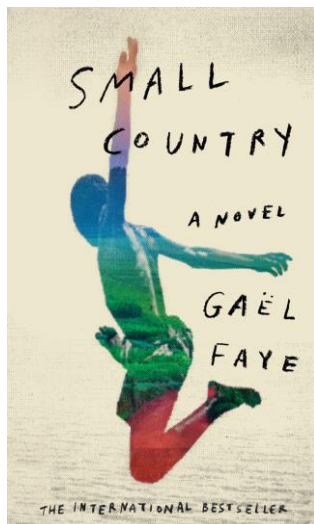
Holocaust Memorial Day

On 27th January, the school commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day, a national day to remember those lost during the Nazi Holocaust and other genocides in history.

Year 7, 8 and 9 students learnt about how the Holocaust happened under the Nazi regime in Germany, and they also considered how it is remembered today through their history lessons.



In English, students were taught a lesson based on an extract from 'Small Country' by Gael Faye - a haunting, but powerful coming-of-age story, vividly portraying the end of innocence, but also survival. Set during the Rwandan genocide, it is a compelling story of the protagonists search for a sense of home.



QM Diversity

Sharing our similarities, celebrating our differences



Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year, also known as Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival, is the most important festival in China and a major event in some other East Asian countries. It is the festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar.

1st February marked the 2022 Chinese New Year. The canteen put on a delicious spread for us to celebrate this vibrant and colourful festival. 2022 is the year of the Tiger, which is the third zodiac animal in the rotation of the calendar. Those born during the year of the tiger are believed to be kind, adventurous and enthusiastic.

Ms Bhudia, Lead Teacher and Teacher of English



February 2022

LGBT+ History Month

February is LGBT+ History Month. We wanted to celebrate this community and the contribution its members have made to our society.

Teachers across the school have been highlighting any prominent members of the LGBT+ community who have had a significant impact on their subjects; notable examples are Carol Ann Duffy, for English; Alan Turing, for Maths and Computing; and Frida Kahlo, for Art.

Key Stage Three English students are also reading novels based on experiences of the



In addition, for a Personal Development (PD) lesson this month, we had speakers from 'Just Like Us', an LGBT+ charity for young people. They shared their experiences and educated our students about the history of the movement. They taught us about the Stonewall riots as one of the first protests for LGBT+ rights and what Pride represents, as well as highlighting successful members of our society today. They also gave advice on how to be a good ally to anyone who might identify as LGBT+.

We are selling rainbow ribbons to raise money for charity and are holding film screenings in the library of films about people's lived experiences from the community.

Ms Bhudia, Lead Teacher and Teacher of English



just like us



February 2022

Post-16 - Spring Quiz Night

After weeks of hard work, both sixth formers and staff were able to take a well-earned break to participate in the Spring Quiz Night, offering both humour and an intellectual challenge! The event was a huge success, thanks to the organising committee and the Queensmead Values Team.

The quiz consisted of seven rounds with ten questions each, the favourite round undoubtedly being the bonus round, in which teams had to 'Guess the Teacher!' from a baby picture. It was a lively night, as the 'Quiz Master' (Mr Luck) read out the questions, including some humorous jokes in between the rounds and refreshments. There were many prizes for the winning teams, including Amazon gift cards for first place. Not to mention the wooden spoon awarded to the losing team, who had to carry out a walk of shame.

The competitive spirit was at an all time high and there was a palpable sense of rivalry! Ultimately though, it was an event that brought together both staff and students. Huge congratulations to the winning teams, (Pink Panthers, Meeaps and La-quiz-icon española y amigos) who fought valiantly for their titles.



All of the proceeds from this event will be donated to Grief Encounter, a charity which offers much needed support to bereaved children and young people.

*In loving memory of Bethany Horchover,
2005-2021*

gr'ef
encounter

Jagoda Z, Year 12 student



Post-16 Students Interview Former Cyclist

On Tuesday 25th January, a few classes were lucky enough to get the chance to interview a decorated cyclist and renowned sports commentator - Jez Cox.

The Sunday Times had once dubbed him as “more machine than man.” Once ranked Britain’s number 1 duathlete, it was a real honour to learn about his experiences and his insights into the sporting world.

A select few students from the PE and Media departments, were given the opportunity to delve into Cox’s sporting history, as well as his recent endeavours in journalism. Many questions surrounding preparation for commentating and how COVID has affected his job were raised.



It was an incredible and engaging experience for all of the students involved, for both Media and PE. Media students gleaned an insight into the world of sports journalism and the PE students were inspired by his successes to be confident to excel in their own sporting skills.

Hearing his story allowed us to understand how we can reach our own aspirations, despite any setbacks that may stand in the way.

Harry F and Bailey M, Year 12 students

RACE SCENE

Jez Cox took the lead going into the gruelling bike leg

The final run featured bitterly cold thigh-deep water

THANET MOUNTAIN BIKE DUATHLON

Mud and freezing water hampers athletes at the 17th Thanet Duathlon

Minnis Bay, Birchington, 2 Jan '11

Seventy robust duathletes took to Kent's North Sea coast for the 17th annual Thanet Duathlon. The event started with a short tarmac run along the sea wall and back again, before two laps of a bog-like bike course and a one-lap run of the same course. A highlight of the route is the five dykes on the final run, many of which were thigh deep with freezing cold water. At the sharp end of the race it became a contest to see who could cope best with the muddy conditions. Jez Cox took the lead at T1 only to be caught by local favourite Jon Lyons (Deal Tri), who had opted for the more conditions-appropriate cyclo-cross bike. Going into the final run, Cox had Lyons in his sight and quickly reeled him in to push on and win by nearly 5mins at the end of the long, final run, taking his 60th duathlon victory to date in the process. In the ladies' race the mud took its toll as all but one of the female entrants were forced to retire, leaving Sally Clark to take a well-earned victory.

RESULTS
3.85km run | 14.48km bike | 7.24km run

MEN

1 Jez Cox	1:25:00
2 Jon Lyons, Deal Tri	1:29:55
3 Tim Kingston	1:35:03
4 Steven Groom	1:35:44
5 Ben Lockwood, GS Invicta Eto	1:36:11

WOMEN

1 Sally Clark	2:24:47
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Post-16 Psychology Students interview a psychiatrist

1st February 2022 marked an exciting opportunity for the current Year 13 Psychology students to participate in a Q&A session with Dr D Pang, a psychiatrist. It was a wonderful opportunity to contextualise the current topic they are learning about: schizophrenia.

Schizophrenia is a severe long-term mental health condition and it is often described as a form of psychosis. This means the person may not always be able to distinguish their own thoughts and ideas from reality.

Students had the opportunity to ask questions about the impact and effects of such an important condition and they were able to gain an insight into how those dealing with schizophrenia are supported by professionals.



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Here is an insight into the interview:

Gabriela O: *What are the ethical implications of prescribing/administering medication should the person deem to have the capacity?*

Dr D Pang: *That is a tricky situation ... though a person is deemed to have the capacity, the patient may undergo further assessment if they are a danger to themselves or others*

Ky-Neisha C: *How has the pandemic affected your work?*

Dr. D Pang: *The pandemic has certainly played on individuals mental health and we have seen cases increases during this pandemic*

The students had so many more questions to ask and the current Year 12 (currently studying biopsychology) also wanted the opportunity to ask some questions.

Although it is difficult to organise an on-call doctor, there will be another opportunity to participate as the Social Science department are arranging for another Q&A session after the half-term.

We will update you with further news via Twitter - follow us @QM_News.

Mr Pilois, Head of Social Sciences

February 2022

Calling all 'Young Artists'! It's the Summer Show...

Queensmead are proudly participating to show off our young artists!

The Young Artists' Summer Show is an open submission exhibition for young student artists aged 4 - 19. To enter, make any artwork using any media of your choice!

Artworks are judged by a panel of passionate artists and arts professionals, with selected artworks displayed online and on-site at the Royal Academy of Arts.

For more information, speak to Ms Evans or Ms Bates in Room 49, or use the link below to see the information of the Royal Academy's website.
Submissions are open until 25th March.

Tuhina D, Year 10 Student

A snapshot of last year's winners:



Fancy a game? Join the fun at the Board Games club!

Come and join the Board Games club! Take a break from the stresses of school and exams. Make new friends from any year group with a variety of different games!

Amna was the recipient of the Jack Petchey award in November. She very generously donated her funds to the Board Games club that we run here at Queensmead. The club has grown exponentially this year since its induction, with a growing collection of over 20 different board games!

Amna's kind donation allowed us to purchase a large proportion of these games, including a brand new Carrom board which has proven

Amna is an excellent student who is currently in Year 13 studying for her A levels. Next year, she plans to go to university to study Law. Board Games Club is incredibly grateful to Amna and the Jack Petchey Foundation for helping us to grow the club for all year groups.

Board games club is every Wednesday after school, rotating between A1 and A11 on a fortnightly basis. Students are free to try out any of the selection of games on offer or they may bring their own from home. If there are any games that we don't have, please speak to Mr Firth in A1 to see if we can get a copy.

Mr Firth, Head of History



Safer Internet Day

Tuesday 8th February 2022

#PlayYourPart

On Tuesday 8th February, Queensmead School celebrated Safer Internet Day (SID) to promote the ways in which young people and adults alike can be safe online. This year there is a primary focus on gaming, a popular extra-curricular activity for many students!

Our amazing E-Safety ambassadors have been working hard to make sure that as many students as possible see and hear our message. Here are just a few of the things we did to boost our message:

- Posters were placed in high traffic areas round school
- A pop up on the school website reminded all visitors about Safer Internet Day
- All students had an assembly to raise awareness within the school community
- All KS3 students had a special lesson, teaching them about safer Internet use



With the internet being such a huge part of all of our lives, our ambassadors would like to help advise our school community of a few ways that you can stay safe online, particularly while gaming:

- Choose a safe username
- Be careful what you share, especially in open forums
- Make sure you play with people you know.
- Take regular breaks - this can help to reduce anger, if things get tense!
- Check and secure your privacy settings in games

Mrs Young, Teacher of Computing



February 2022

World Book Day - it's Coming Soon!

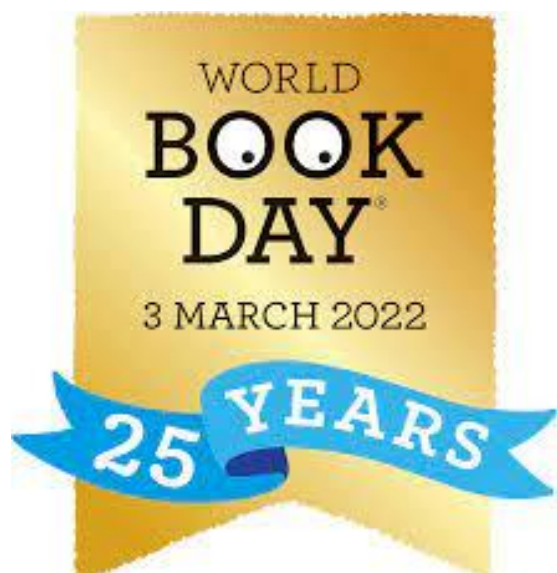
#worldbookday

Thursday 3rd March 2022

World Book Day changes lives through a love of books and shared reading.

The charity's overriding mission is to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own.

Reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a child's future success – more than their family circumstances, their parents' educational background or their income. We want to see more children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, develop a lifelong habit of reading for pleasure and the improved life chances this brings them.



As we continue to evolve into a school that enjoys reading for pleasure, World Book Day is a big event, and with this year marking 25 years of World Book Day, we intend to make it the best one yet!

To celebrate World Book Day, this year we are going to be running several activities throughout the week such as a book swap, a book hunt, staff and Y7 students dress up - and more...

Each activity will cost just £1 each and the money raised will go towards World Book Day's chosen charities, all of which help to provide a book for every child, encouraging more children to read for pleasure and ensuring access to books for every child. Each KS3 child will receive a book token, which can be swapped for one of the World Book Day £1 selected books or can be used to go towards a different book.

Stay tuned for the upcoming newsletter next half term to find out how our school celebrations turned out!

*Mrs Antony, Teacher of Music and Charity
Coordinator and
Mr Fellows, Teacher of Drama and Literacy
Coordinator*

February 2022

Queensmead Musical Artist Success

Finally after two years of disruption from COVID-19, Queensmead's incredibly talented Year 11 music students are recording two albums which will be released in March: the albums will contain covers of popular songs and even original songs created by the students themselves!

All the money raised from selling the CDs will be donated to two charities, Mind and The James Ahern Foundation. Each album contains its own cover art and logo, displaying the excellent creativity from the students.

To see more of the process, please follow @suiirenty and @dilusion7 on Instagram and keep an eye out for posters around the school after half-term which will be advertising when the CDs are being sold!

What an amazing achievement by our students!



Max S, Year 11 student

Puzzle of the Week

Queensmead School has registered to take part in a free, international puzzle competition called Puzzle of the Week. We want our young mathematicians to show off their problem solving ability and compete against schools from over 50 different countries.

There will be 16 puzzles this year, each published on a Monday with the first one going live on 14th February. You can find the puzzles and enter the competition by going to the website www.puzzleoftheweek.com or scan the QR code.

We will be posting student leaderboards and puzzle solutions on the display board outside M4.

We encourage all students, staff and parents to register and then participate each week. Every answer counts towards Queensmead's position on the international leaderboards. With a correctly submitted solution to the puzzle you will also be part of the random draw to be the proud recipient of PRIZE.

Visit the website for some advance practice with previous puzzles, have a look at last year's results or simply have a look at our competitors!



*Mrs Morrissey,
Teacher of Maths and
Numeracy Coordinator*