

SUMMER 2020 EDITION

# THE QUEEN ELIZABETH ACADEMY NEWS



The Queen Elizabeth  
Academy



## Principal's Welcome



### Welcome to the latest edition of The Queen Elizabeth Academy newsletter.

Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter. I am proud and delighted to give my first welcome address well into my first term as the Principal of TQEA. Of course, it has been a rather unique term in the life of the academy with us being open for some pupils. However, staff and pupils have been working hard with parents to ensure that quality remote learning takes place at home. We have been posting quality work from pupils on social media and it has been wonderful to see the creativity at home that has led to the production of stunning submissions by pupils. Please keep sending your work to [showmywork@tqea.org.uk](mailto:showmywork@tqea.org.uk).

For Year 11 there has been disappointment with the cancellation of the GCSE and BTEC public examinations and the assemblies and events that mark the end of a students' time at TQEA. We have been working hard to ensure that students will receive the grades in August that their hard work deserves and we are still committed to holding an event later in 2020, if permitted to, which allows Year 11 to celebrate their five years at TQEA with their friends and with their teachers. It is crucial that we acknowledge the contributions that they made to the school and to their success as a year group. Now our Year 11 will be looking to their future colleges and courses and it is worth

noting that Mr Webb can be contacted to provide any advice or support with this transition. You can read about some of the exciting enrichment events that we are renowned for at TQEA in this edition. Our World Book Day celebrations involved all manner of costumes and was linked to our English Scheme of Learning very effectively. This was a huge success according to all involved! Please encourage your child to continue reading at home as the influence of reading and literacy on performance at school and in careers is well established. We also took a group of students to Outwoods Primary School, one of our feeder primary academies, to support younger pupils with reading and literacy. Our students took so much from the experience of teaching others and got a sense of the importance of human interaction, communication and sharing their knowledge and skills with others.

I have been so heartened hearing of all the kindness our pupils have shown to their families, to charities and to the NHS during these past weeks. It is a testimony to the wonderful families and pupils that we have at TQEA that they are so giving to those in challenging circumstances.

As Principal, I am passionate about every child at TQEA receiving an exceptional education in a safe, happy and thriving learning environment. It will be wonderful to have all of our pupils back with us learning in lessons at TQEA and taking part in the range of exciting enrichment opportunities that we provide. I will also be looking forward to meeting our parents at a time when it is safe to do so. For now, please stay safe.

Please remember that support is available at TQEA if you need it and please keep communicating with us. We are here for all of our pupils and parents.

TQEA is an innovative and forward-thinking Academy in Atherstone, Warwickshire; providing high quality education for the young people in the surrounding area and further afield.

At The Queen Elizabeth Academy we are committed to:

*'Securing the highest academic standards through the provision of:  
outstanding **learning** and **teaching** and student **welfare**'*

News, updates and current information can be found on our Twitter page @TQEA\_Principal and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1769515883351228/>.

Neil Harding - Principal

## School's out for lockdown!

### But not for everyone.

Some of our students have continued to attend school since the government officially closed the doors to life as we know it. But what has life been like for them? How have they coped being at school whilst everyone else has been at home? We asked some of our students to tell us about their experiences.

#### Life in lockdown is fun if not a little strange!

I have coped well and stayed safe with 2 metres distance in all directions. I have had to be in school because my mum is a key worker so is needed by the government. School is very much like normal; we start at 8.45am and finish at 3.05pm. All of our teachers have been keeping us busy with school work but we get free time too. Every week we have 2 different teachers with us to help with work but it is a little odd to only have about 8 students in school - it's so quiet! And the lunches - they're delicious! Half term has been the best because we have had nothing but fun! **Year 9 Student**

#### Honestly, life in lockdown is not as bad as I thought.

To stop myself going crazy, I have been coming into school but my mum is also a keyworker. When we get to school, we need to wash our hands and we stay two metres apart from each other unless we are a family that lives together. We've done lots of things to break up the school day; we've been doing painting, Joe Wicks' workouts and school work of course! Mr Harding even bought us all an ice-cream! **Year 8 Student**

#### Life in lockdown has been a bit of a nightmare for me but I have been able to get through it all by being at school with my sister.

I haven't enjoyed getting up early like usual but it's good to keep a routine and we've had fun each day. I've been reading lots; I'm currently enjoying Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and I loved watching Matilda during half term. It has been good, excellent and fun really! **Year 9 Student**

**School has actually been quite fun;** it's not like school really because the day is slightly different to what we would normally expect. We come in at 8.45am but don't have to follow our timetable or move around much; we are based in the STEM room and are supported with the work we are given on the google classroom. The teachers make sure that we are not staring at the computer screens all day by getting us outdoors and doing some exercise! I've also had the chance to make new friends as the students that are in school are from different year groups; it's been nice to get to know them and find out what we all have in common. Lunch is great; we get to order in the morning so we can look forward to eating it later - no queuing for us! Overall, school has been fun for me although I am looking forward to getting back to normal! **Year 8 Student**





# World Book Day

March 5th saw the return of World Book Day to TQEA and for 2020 the staff and students went bigger and better than they have ever done! The staff all followed the theme of 'Ancient Greece' resulting in some phenomenal costumes of Grecians and Gods (and a fantastic play on words from Miss Rowan!).

The students spent the day taking part in a range of excellent activities provided by the staff. Year 10 were all invited to a live showing of Macbeth from the RSC; the departments across school all arranged Greek themed activities for their lessons on the day; in tutor time, there were quizzes, assemblies and even origami bookworms; and the whole school fell silent and took part in a 'drop everything and read' activity for ten minutes of a collective enjoyment of reading.

The World Book Day charity kicked off 2020's activities with the goal to 'share a million stories'. To help share stories, every pupil at TQEA was given a free book token to be redeemed for one of over a dozen books. But the message of sharing stories extended further

than that; the students were reminded throughout the week of World Book Day that their voices and their stories are just as important as any famous authors'. Their commitment to learning and their love of reading can help shape their identities and their ability to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings for the next generation.



## Year 6 Poetry Workshop

At the end of January, twenty of TQEA's Year 9 and Year 10 students designed their own lessons and delivered them to Year 6 students from Outwoods Primary School. All the lessons were centred around poetry but each TQEA group (and in some cases individuals) approached their poem differently, putting their own unique spin on the teaching and learning of a poem. There were a range of poems: some from three centuries ago and some contemporary. It was incredible to see the leadership of TQEA students and also the care they have for younger students in our community. Reluctant Year 6 students came away really enjoying the experience and gained a greater appreciation of poetry. With the Year 6 visit being such a success, hopefully more opportunities can continue in the future.





# Meet the New Staff

April saw the arrival of several new members of staff to TQEA, during the current climate they have introduced themselves below



## Mrs Cooke

My name is Mrs Cooke and I am the new Attendance Officer. I have worked within the housing sector for the last 15 years, managing young families housing schemes and working with young homeless. I have previously worked within the North Warwickshire area. Working in education is a new experience for me and I am looking forward to meeting all colleagues and students once everyone is back in school.



## Mrs Gibson

Hi I'm Mrs Gibson, I'm the new Assistant Principal and started at TQEA in April. I grew up in Atherstone and like you went to TQEA as did pretty much every member of my family who still live in town. I've been a teacher mainly of Geography for 13 years and I love it because every day is different and I spend all day talking about things that interest me, but have also been a flood manager, environmental health officer and even an assistant zoo keeper. Outside of work I have two children, love being outdoors and travelling and am more than happy to do any adventurous sports



## Miss O'Brien

Hello! I'm Miss O'Brien and I am the new Director of Maths at TQEA. I grew up in Manchester, and although I have been in the Midlands for the last 5 years my accent is still very strong. I studied Maths and Sports Science at University, so alongside my love of Maths, I also enjoy watching and playing sports especially netball which I have played for 22 years!! I am looking forward to my new adventure at TQEA and I am looking forward to meeting you all.



## Miss Coley

Hi, I'm Miss Coley - the Lead Practitioner of Mathematics. I grew up in Tamworth, spent a short time away to study Mathematics at the University of Leicester, returning to teach in a local school, then onto a school in Sutton. I shouldn't have been Miss Coley for long, I was due to get married this summer but unfortunately Corona Virus had other plans for us! In my spare time, I love to run, read and (due to lockdown) enjoy a new hobby of baking. My favourites include a biscoff cheesecake and crunchy millionaire shortbread!

# George Eliot Visit

In January 8 fortunate Year 10 students were lucky enough to take part in an NHS careers taster day at the George Eliot hospital in Nuneaton. The event was held at their graduate training facility within the hospital. The Students participated in 8 different workshops throughout the day. I was exceptionally impressed by the confidence they demonstrated, they all actively engaged with each session and in the proactive questions they asked. They made the most of this excellent opportunity that was afforded to them. The day culminated in an NHS specific careers fair. The students were able to speak to representatives from a range of healthcare professions and came away with a much clearer understanding of the employment opportunities and requirements within the healthcare sector. Mr Webb



# Subjects to Jobs Workshop

In March, 24 of our Year 9 students participated in a Subjects to Jobs workshop held at TQEA. The morning workshop involved students learning about and developing key employability skills required in all workplaces. Students were mentored by representatives from local businesses such as Greencore. They were challenged to develop key communications skills, learned how to introduce themselves and make a good first impression and develop understanding of what employers look for during an interview process. It was amazing to see how students' confidence grew during the workshop. They developed bonds with their business

mentors and asked them probing questions to further their understanding. The highlight of the session was watching the students develop and apply the skills and confidence to approach adults, make eye contact, shake their hand and introduce themselves. It was a powerful experience for them and one I am sure will stand them in good stead in the future.





# 'We Can, We Will'

The last term has seen a huge amount of fantastic work happening across the TQEA community – both at home and in school.

Obviously the last 12 weeks has seen a completely unprecedented situation unfold however, as always, the students, parents and staff of TQEA have pulled together demonstrating unquestionably our 'We Can, We Will' motto.

Throughout the time of school closure, students and staff alike have been working extremely hard to ensure that learning has continued across all year groups, as well as ensuring outstanding pastoral support too.

Our new learning this half term is based around the five principles that the Education Endowment Foundation suggests: Activate, Review, Explain, Practice and Reflect. In their learning, the students have been required to recall previous learning before they begin to receive new knowledge. As a school, we are proud of how hard our students have worked at home and the quality of work that has been produced is amazing.

There have been so many fantastic examples of outstanding learning, however, we would like to share some examples with you:



Saffron Wilson(Y8) – has shared her superb Artwork. She is using wood and epoxy resin to create her Fine Art pieces.



Jorgia Downing (Y8) – STEM project. Bug Hotel with a fantastic message.



Lexie Amies(Y8) – who is entering this amazing self-portrait in a national competition for the Royal Academy of Arts.

## Notes from the school

Warwickshire County Council are proposing a change to the definition of the qualifying school for a pupil to mean either the closest qualifying school to the pupil's home address, with places available, that provides education appropriate to the age, ability, and aptitude of the pupil and takes into account any special educational needs that the pupil may have, or the priority area school in which the pupil resides. At the moment, a pupil's qualifying school is defined by Warwickshire County Council to mean only the pupil's closest school to home with a space available for the pupil by the shortest available route. This may not be the priority area school but will be the one physically closest to the student's home address.

Further information on the proposal and ways to provide feedback can be found on the Ask Warwickshire consultation pages <https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/>

The deadline for comments is Friday 17th July 2020

Alongside the academic work, each week we have been setting our Kindness and Well-being challenges, and we have been overwhelmed by the acts of kindness that our students are showing at the moment. This has ranged from helping and supporting peers with their school work like Aston Fielding in Year 7, who set up video conferencing calls to support his peers, to Amelia Moore in Year 8 who sent a letter to her doctors thanking them for their work in these difficult times. Amelia received a call back thanking her for the letter, which is now on display in the doctor's surgery.

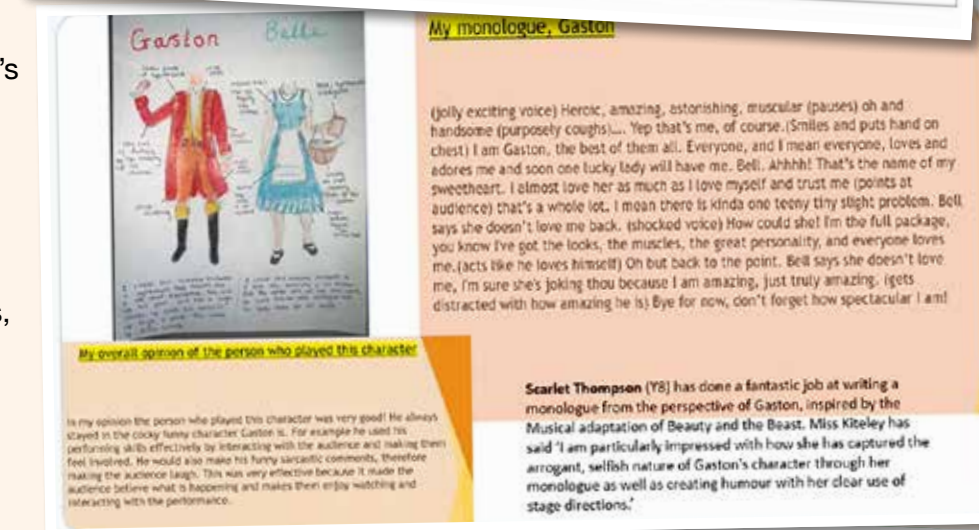
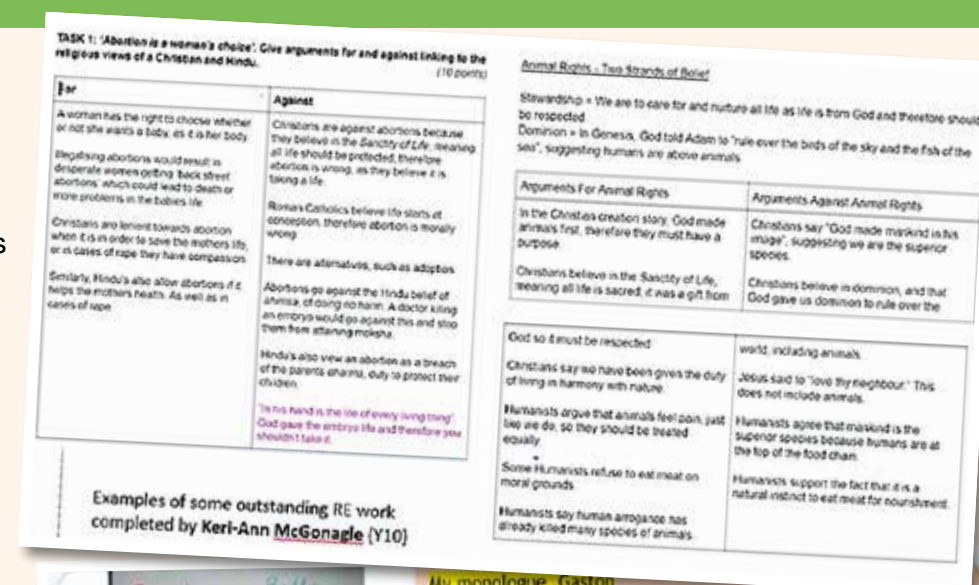
We also had news of some amazing acts of generosity too. Grace Riley in Year 7, having heard about the challenges faced by NHS workers, used her savings to send pizza, chips, garlic bread and beverages to the George Eliot hospital for the staff to have a hot meal. Cameron Reid in Y8 has also been busy spending 8 hours chipping golf balls into an umbrella in order to raise money for Cancer Research UK. He and his family raised a fantastic £1500 for charity!

It is often during times of uncertainty and difficulty when we see examples of great character and the students and community of TQEA have shown superb examples of our school character values. We are incredibly proud of each and every one of them.

**#resilience #pride  
#kindness #endeavour**

Not to be outdone by our amazing students, the staff about TQEA wanted to do something to say thank you to the students, make them smile and to let them know that we are missing them very much. Thanks to the co-ordination and editing skills of the exceptionally talented Mr Cope, the staff at TQEA put together this amazing staff video. If you have not had chance to view it yet, please do!

<https://tqea.attrust.org.uk/academy-life/a-special-staff-message/>





## Our fantastic key worker students:

Who have been beyond amazing! They were the first students to experience what school would be like with safer distancing measures in place. They have also had to adapt to the changes happening around the school each week, and they have done each and every day with a smile on their face. During their time in school they have had some creative opportunities, from painting 'Thank You' posters to the NHS with Mr Stewart and Mr Snell to a health and well-being yoga session with Miss Kiteley.



This year, on 8th May, it was 75 years since the end of the war in Europe. It was important to commemorate this important time in history at TQEA. This included sharing our interactive VE Day assembly with students. Students and staff were encouraged to join their neighbours for a 'Stay at Home' street party. Activities that were completed were: making red, white and blue decorations and window displays; learning the Lindy Hop; joining in with the national sing-along to 'We'll meet again' with Dame Vera Lynn. We enjoyed seeing all the fantastic photos that were sent into our special email address: [showmywork@tqea.org.uk](mailto:showmywork@tqea.org.uk).

## Supporting our community:

We are incredibly lucky to have such fantastic links with our community and support from Ediblelinks. As a result, we have been able to put together food parcels to support some of our families. These have been delivered by Mrs Ressel and Mrs Johnson and many have seen them, Mr Harding and TQEA minibus out visiting families across Atherstone and into Nuneaton.



We have thoroughly enjoyed delivering the parcels and chatting to some of our parents and students. Following the success of the Red Box campaign, we have also been able to deliver free sanitary products to families where needed. If you need any support, please do contact us at [pastoral@tqea.org.uk](mailto:pastoral@tqea.org.uk) and we will be able to help you.

## Safer School App:

This term we have successfully launched Safer Schools with staff, students and parents. This is an app designed to support and protect young people by educating and empowering them both at school and at home. By downloading the app, they get access to information that is relevant to them and you will receive tips and advice on how to keep them safer online. It is a simple go-to app on yours and your child's phone which gives easy access to informative videos, the latest safeguarding information on all aspects of well-being and e-safety. This half term we have focused on topics such as Mental Health, FGM, Personal Information with 100% completion from all staff at TQEA and a high uptake from students as part of their Kindness and Well-being challenges each week.

If you have not downloaded this app yet we would strongly recommend that you do so by following the instructions below:

- Download the app on your mobile phone
- You will be asked which school: The Queen Elizabeth Academy
- Enter the appropriate code:
  - Pupil – Lower Secondary: 3447
  - Pupil – Middle Secondary: 4898
  - Pupil – Upper Secondary: 1544
  - Parent/Carer – Secondary: 7675



## Year 10 Return to School:

*This week we have seen our fantastic Year 10 students successfully return to the Academy with a brilliant 75% attendance. In preparation for this return the Year 10 tutors and Pastoral Team have made welfare calls home and provided the opportunity for parents and students to ask any questions about our arrangements. Our Estates and Site Teams have done an amazing job in ensuring the Academy was prepared and safe for the return of students on Monday.*

*This week students have had face to face tutorials in English, Maths, Science and Humanities to support their remote learning and Y10 assessments, which they have also started this week. These tutorials were preceded by an excellent pastoral session about making sense of the pandemic and the lockdown, whilst addressing the concept of loss. Our students have practised outstanding hygiene throughout and commented on how much they needed the return to structure and routines.*



## Y6 Transition:

In normal circumstances, this half term would have seen our transition programme begin and would have given our new Year 7 students the opportunity to visit the academy and ask any questions they may have regarding the move from primary to secondary education. Unfortunately, due to the current situation we are in a position where that is unable to happen. Mr Cope and the Transition Team have been working extremely hard to adapt our transition programme to appease any anxieties students or parents may have.

All students who will be attending TQEA in September will have received an email from Mr Cope entitled 'This is Me', which includes a PowerPoint for the students to work through to them look at the different elements of the school day. We have also launched our transition page of the academy website (<https://tqea.atrust.org.uk/parents/year-7-transition/>). This webpage includes a virtual tour of the school, a welcome video from Mr Harding, along with other videos from key members of staff and current students. If you have not seen the page, we would highly recommend that you visit it.



# LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The Supreme Court recently reached a decision in the case of *Platt v Isle of Wight Council* which has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time. The parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they attend school on a regular basis. The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. When considering such requests for a leave of absence, the school are obliged to act within the law. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted, head teachers are able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

It is for the Head Teacher to decide what is 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent.

Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on

a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service, part of Warwickshire County Council

**It is important to note**, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices in the amount of £120 each, totalling £240 for both children, this is reduced to £60 per child if paid within 21 days).

Where a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within the required timeframe as set out on the notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal proceedings under S444 Education Act 1996.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.

## Your child's progress, academically as well as socially, is our shared priority

**Warwickshire Secondary School pupils recorded 10,017 half day sessions of absence due to holiday in the Autumn/Spring term during academic year 2017/18. This is an increase of 1,122 on the previous year.**

Information  
on our website

Please see the  
parents area on our  
website for copies of  
letters, information  
and key dates.



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