



## More Top Grades at A Level...

Despite the widespread publicity around this year's A level results, 94% of our pupils were able to go to university in a year that was, by all accounts, the toughest there has been, for a variety of reasons, including the massive increase in tuition fees that come in next year.

Overall, 35% of the A level subjects taken by Queen Elizabeth's students were awarded the top two grades, A\* or A. At the same time, our pass rate was 100%, a measure that has seen year-on-year improvement.

Headmaster Simon Corns said: "With a significantly higher number of students taking A levels this year, the improvement in the top grades achieved, from 25% to 35% this year, is very gratifying indeed. Nearly one in five of our students achieved straight A\* or A grades in all their subjects, and it was particularly pleasing that Lutfi Al-Nufoury, our Head of School last year, achieved the grades he required to study Medicine at Lincoln College, Oxford."

## ...Swiftly Followed by GCSE's

There was also another significant increase in the top grades achieved by pupils in this year's GCSE results.

Over 43% of subjects were awarded the top two grades, A\* or A; including 13% at the highest grade, A\*. Following on from the strong A level results, one in eight of our pupils achieved Grade A\* or A in all the subjects they sat with an outstanding individual performance by Sam Westwood, who gained the top grade A\* in all eleven of his subjects.

The Headmaster added: "Congratulations to all our GCSE pupils, many of whom have performed exceptionally well. I was particularly pleased to see the strength in depth attained across such a broad range of subjects, with 100% A\* to C grade success rate achieved in eight subjects, where Art recorded 100% A\* to C grades for the third consecutive year and Drama and Spanish for the fourth year running."

## Now That's Magic!



Many congratulations to Ben Proos, who having just completed his GCSEs at Queen Elizabeth's with flying colours, went on to win the coveted Magic Circle Young Magician of the Year title in London.

Ben, who joined the School's Conjuring Club under the tutelage of English teacher Mr Brian Lead less than four years ago, has become a highly proficient and impressive magician and deserves enormous credit for achieving this national title, in the biennial competition held at the London headquarters of the Magic Circle. Ben fought off tough competition with a fast moving act featuring a dazzling array of billiard ball and card manipulations, parasol productions and an amazing routine with sunglasses that appeared and vanished in a flash!



## News in Brief

### Alex Davies Makes His Debut

Congratulations to Alex Davies who made his first team one-day debut for Lancashire CC against Glamorgan at Colwyn Bay. Alex made six runs from seven balls, finishing not out in Lancashire's innings, but unfortunately Lancashire went on to lose the match. Alex said after the game "I thought I'd be a bit nervous, but I was more excited than nervous when I was walking out, and it was an experience I won't forget."

### Junior Pupils Give Thanks for the Harvest

The whole of the Junior School took part in a special Harvest assembly, in which the boys and girls in each year group performed a short drama to illustrate a different aspect of the harvest and read selected poems. Many thanks to all the parents who provided produce which was donated to the local branch of the Salvation Army.

### Grenville Take Basketball Honours

Grenville House surpassed themselves when they came head to head with Howard House in the basketball tournament final. The match itself was turbulent and tense, with some real nail-biting moments. Miss Eggleston enjoyed watching her strapping, strong side of Adam Mathia, George Oxley, Jonathan Khan and Henry Bleasdale take Grenville all the way to the finishing line. Needless to say, Grenville House was ecstatic about their first victory in what has been quite a long wait.

### David Staff Memorial Cup

Congratulations to Alex Townrow of Hawkins House who won the David Staff Memorial Cup by coming first in the Inter-House Cross Country Competition for First Year pupils.

## Year 4 Summer Trip to Grassington



It was off at the crack of dawn (well almost) when Year 4 went to Grassington in the Yorkshire Dales for a walk in the countryside. Apart from the abundant nature and wildlife that could be seen as they strolled through fields and inspected rivers, the highlight of the day was crossing the wobbly bridge which took a while as Charlotte Hepworth got stage fright (or should that be bridge fright) and decided she was better off standing still in the middle of the bridge than going all the way across. The day ended on a high note with a visit to the 'brilliant' sweet shop, before a final play in the park on the slides, swings and monkey bars had to be interrupted to get everyone back on the bus to go home.



## Art and Design Technology Exhibition Creates the Right Impression

The annual exhibition of pupils' work for GCSE, AS and A2 level examinations in Art and Design Technology again drew a large number of visitors to the School. Those who came were highly impressed with the standard and quantity of the work on display in the Art Department, Brooklands, and in the Sixth Form Centre, where the DT work was showcased.

Among the visitors, it was nice to see so many former pupils taking the time to revisit the School for what has become a very popular evening and one of the highlights of the calendar.

Both Mr Birtwistle and Mr Hart, the Heads of the Art and Design Technology Department respectively, were quite rightly very pleased when their pupils achieved the results they deserved when the public examination outcomes were announced later on in August.



## Any Dream Will Do

The Junior School year was brought to a spectacular end as every member took part in their production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

The children loved the wonderful music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and sang the lyrics of Tim Rice songs wholeheartedly. Special mention must be made of Max Stirpe who was superb as Joseph and Leanon Leech who was a magnificent Pharaoh. Every single Junior School child sang or danced or acted with great professionalism and confidence to make this a performance to remember!

Our thanks to the parents for providing the splendid costumes and the staff who worked so hard in their direction of the children, the choreography, the props, the sound and lighting, the scenery and the production of the programmes and tickets.

A very special thanks also to Max's aunt, Manny Stirpe, who works in film and theatre and was able to add a very professional touch to the hair and make-up of all the lead performers. Mrs Blakemore of course did an excellent job as the Musical Director!

## Jazzing It Up Around the Borough



The School jazz band is gaining an excellent reputation and, in a new initiative, members of the band accompanied by Director of Music, Mrs Emma Lashbrook and Head of Complementary Studies, Mrs Margaret Foxley visited three schools in the borough. The schools visited were Newfield School, which caters for children with complex learning difficulties, Lower Darwen Primary School and Lammack Primary School.

At each venue, the band members were made very welcome and set themselves up to play a selection of their favourite

pieces. They also gave the children at each school the chance to hear their instruments individually and (at Newfield School especially) the boys and girls loved to be able to touch the instruments and to dance along with the music.

Mrs Lashbrook said the visits were a great success, although after setting up and dismantling three times (as well as playing their sets) the band members were quite tired by the end of the day! It is hoped to undertake a similar programme of visits in the future.



## All Booked Up



Boys and girls in the First Year of Senior School (Year 7) received free books during their lessons in the school Library under the Booked Up initiative, a national programme that aims to give a free book to every child starting secondary school in England.

The pupils made their choice of book in September and have now been able to make a start on reading their individual book - with an excited hush descending over the room as this happened! Pupils also received book bags, bookmarks and stickers from Booked Up.

The School's Chartered Librarian Mrs Valerie Dewhurst said: "Once again the Booked Up scheme has managed to create much buzz and excitement with their wide variety of free books on offer this year.

## Queen Elizabeth's Goes Pink In Aid Of 'Candle 4 Katy' Appeal



The air at Queen Elizabeth's turned pink when pupils at the School raised £1080 by holding a non-uniform day to support the 'Candle 4 Katy' campaign in aid of the charity Breast Cancer Care.

The campaign is very close to the heart of pupils as it was set up by nine-year-old Bethany Rose whose father, Andy, teaches German and French at the School, in memory of her mum Katy who lost her battle with breast cancer in April 2010.

The non-uniform day was also supported by a special 'Conjure 4 Katy' magic show staged at lunch time by Sixth Form pupil Ben Proos, who has recently been awarded the prestigious title of 'Young Magician of the Year 2011' by the Magic Circle.

Rebecca Cox, the Charities Co-ordinator at Queen Elizabeth's said 'The School has a very close affinity to the Breast Cancer Care charity due to the very sad events involving Andy's wife last year. When Bethany set out with the goal of raising £5000 to help other people with breast cancer and to 'remember her mummy' we were behind them both right from the start, and it is amazing to see the work they have done resulting in them recently breaking the £20,000 barrier.'



## 'Sports School of the Year 2010 – 2011'

In what proved to be a very difficult task for the Blackburn and Darwen Sports Council as all nominated schools excelled in many areas, Queen Elizabeth's triumphed in being voted 'Sports School of the Year 2010-11'. The School now goes on to represent the borough at the Lancashire Sports Awards later on in the year.



## Roald Dahl Day is a Piece of Cake

Roald Dahl Day takes place every year on September 13th, the birthday of the World's No. 1 Storyteller. On what would have been the author's ninety-fifth birthday; Queen Elizabeth's, celebrated the day by holding a gigantic cake sale in order to raise funds for the Roald Dahl Foundation.

Pupils and Staff had obviously been busy through the night baking a wide variety of cakes and biscuits, which were very quickly devoured during morning break time. The end result was lots of full stomachs, many smiling faces and over £200 raised for the Foundation.

This event was followed by the Junior School holding their own Roald Dahl day, when the children all came in dressed up

as their favourite characters. There have never been so many Willy Wonkas and Oompa Loompas in the same place at any one time.



## Focus on Fulfilling Potential at Prize Giving



Guests at the school's annual Prize Giving ceremony held at King George's Hall heard the school praised by the Chief Guest, Dr Lance Knight, for its wide range of activities and achievements.

Dr Knight, an Old Boy of the school who has gone on to establish a powerful reputation within the dental community and has built a prestigious practice in Manchester, stressed how important it was to establish goals and objectives in order to achieve and not to be afraid of failure as long as you learn from your mistakes.

The Prize Giving celebrations were chaired by Mr Jeremy Gorick DL, the Chairman of Governors at Queen Elizabeth's, and were attended by a number of VIPs, including the Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen, Councillor Karimeh Foster. The Vote of Thanks to Dr Knight was given by Head of School Dean Ward, who presented him with a framed painting of the school.



## Words from the Headmaster

I am very pleased to be able to introduce the first of our slimmed down editions of *Q-news* and am quite sure that although it is less substantial in itself than its predecessor, there will be no absence of interesting material, and you will have the opportunity to see some of the stories in more detail on the school website. As usual, this edition contains a summary of examination results, which is given in more detail in *Q-review* once that appears later in the term, but even at a cursory glance you will see that, for the first time, we have managed to gain 100% pass rate at A level, which is excellent, and reflects well on last year's Upper Sixth. At the same time, the number of A\*/A went up by 12% over the previous year. Predictably, this has now become the standard measure, rather than the A/B rate that used to be used. At GCSE, while unexcitingly close to the school average over the last ten years, the Fifth Year's results were a lot better than the previous year's where we suffered a strange blip.

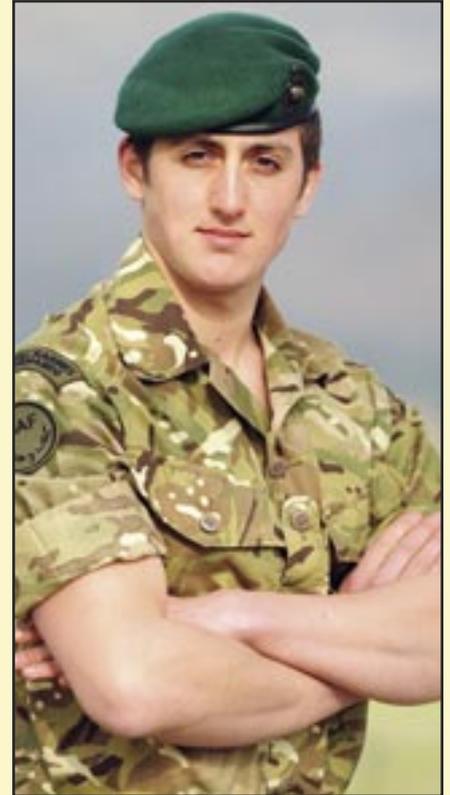


As ever, what follows shows a great deal more than merely academic achievement, as the school represents so much more than this, and our pupils remain well-rounded human beings largely because of the wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom, from which they continue to benefit. These range from individual and team distinctions in our major sports, via the jazz band performing for the Borough, a pupil becoming Young Magician of the Year in a national competition (and gaining 10 A\* at the same time), our annual Art and Design Technology exhibition, to splendid drama productions in the Senior and Junior Schools and a plethora of visits, local, national and international, all of which were much enjoyed.

I hope very much you enjoy it – and congratulations to Mr Richard Leech, our newly appointed Director of Development and Admissions who is the editor!

**Simon Corns** Headmaster

## Old Blackburnian David Fairbrother Killed in Action in Afghanistan



It is with great sadness we report that former Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School pupil, Royal Marine David Fairbrother, 24, of Beardwood Brow, was shot dead in the early hours of Monday 19th September 2011 after his ambushed patrol came under close range fire in Helmand province.

David, a member of Frobisher house, joined Queen Elizabeth's in 1998 from Lammack Junior School. He was an active member of the School's community holding a variety of positions of responsibility including School Prefect and Deputy House Captain.

A keen sportsman, David was an accomplished swimmer and captained the School's swimming team as well as representing the School at football playing for both the second and third teams. After successfully completing his A levels he went on to Leeds University and graduated in 2008 with a BSc in Geography. It was during his time at University that he became interested in a military career.

The Senior School lined West Park Road to pay their respects as his funeral cortege passed on its way to the funeral held at Blackburn Cathedral. The service was attended by many of David's former classmates and teachers who had taught him throughout his time at the School.

## New School Website

The new School website is now up and running and hopefully you will agree that it is a lot more user friendly, allowing you to find the information you need more quickly. As with all good websites, we are constantly looking to update the information and to add new sections e.g. a sports section including upcoming fixtures and weekly sports results. If you have any suggestions about additional sections you would like to see included, please contact the Development team on 01254 686320.

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 THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE

# Development and Old Blackburnians News

## Annual Dinner 10 December 2011

The Big Diary event for December is the OBA Annual Dinner in Big School on Saturday 10th December. If you haven't yet bought your ticket now is the time to do so before they are sold out.

We are delighted to welcome Mr Nigel Evans MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons as our chief guest. The Toast to the School will be given by the retiring Chairman of the Association, Mr Richard Bennett.

The Annual Dinner is an opportunity to meet old friends and teachers from School and a chance to make new friends from other eras. This year the Association is pleased to introduce a new ticket for the 2011 leavers called a 'First Timer's Ticket'. This will cost just £15.00. Student tickets for those who left school between 2006 and 2010 are still available with a £5 discount at £25.00 and full price tickets cost £30.00. A booking form is enclosed with this mailing or you can download a booking form from the website under 'Former Pupils Events'.



## Fred Dewhurst (QEGS 1948-1985)

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Mr Fred Dewhurst a stalwart of Queen Elizabeth's who died on Sunday 10th July 2011. His funeral at Blackburn Cathedral was attended by a sizeable gathering of former colleagues and friends, as well as by Fred's widow Margaret and his family.

Canon Andrew Hindley, who led the memorial service, reminded those present of how widely respected Fred was by all those with whom he came into contact. As a boy he attended St Gabriel's Primary School in Blackburn, before winning a scholarship to Clitheroe Royal Grammar School. He then won an Organ Scholarship to read English at Brasenose College, Oxford, where his studies brought him

into close contact with J R Tolkien and C S Lewis. Fred joined the staff at Queen Elizabeth's in 1948 and taught English throughout his career until 1985.

He was also a splendid musician, and a great ally to the school's Heads of Music, including Messrs T L Duerden and T J Longstaff. For many years, Fred also served faithfully as the organist at St Gabriel's, as well as playing regularly at Blackburn Cathedral.

At Queen Elizabeth's, his keenness and ability at sport shone through, helping many boys improve their skills at football and cricket. Many more will remember him as a very intellectual, but always very personable, teacher of English, who had a

reputation for firm discipline in the classroom.

Although Fred retired from Queen Elizabeth's more than 25 years ago, he remained a true friend to the School and was to be seen at many events, never missing the OBA Annual Dinner in December when he accompanied the school song. He will be sorely missed.

"This model schoolmaster – who wore his Oxford hood with pride – I remember for his quiet efficiency, his careful and caring discipline, and – above all – his enthusiasm for music, all abiding memories of a schoolmaster whom I greatly admired"  
Philip Johnston, Headmaster 1977-1994.

## Archives Online Coming Soon

The archives online project will enable you to look at the whole school photographs dating back to 1874. Some form pictures and team photographs have already been added to the site. You will be able to access the link via the website or directly through [www.qegs-archive-images.org.uk](http://www.qegs-archive-images.org.uk)

## War Memorial

Many of you will have heard of the sad death of Marine David Fairbrother who was killed in Afghanistan in September (see inside for a full tribute). The war memorials in Big School commemorate those Old Blackburnians killed in action in the First and Second World Wars, but there is nothing to pay tribute to those who have died in conflicts since that time. The School and the Association would like to install a new memorial but before any design can be commissioned information is needed. If you are aware of any Old Blackburnian who has lost his or her life in the armed services since 1945, please contact the Foundation office on: 01254 686308 or email [jlavelle@qegs.blackburn.sch.uk](mailto:jlavelle@qegs.blackburn.sch.uk)