



# QEGS PRESS

Question Edition

February 2018

## Hello From Your Journalism Team!

Welcome to the second edition of QEGS Press! Having been relaunched, we have a new team of dedicated Sixth Form students to write and edit the pressing questions of this publication.

Involved in this issue: Jacob Shipley, Leila Lockley, Ewan Shipley, Kira Coombes, Ana Schafer, and Ellen Symonds.

We hope you enjoy reading our stories and please get in touch if you have any questions, comments or stories you'd like to see covered.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE HEADTEACHER



'As well as this, on the Monday is the year 10 vocational curriculum and on the Thursday is the year 11 vocational curriculum so the day is moved to facilitate the students so that they don't miss any important GCSE core lessons. Most days these year groups don't have tutor periods to allow them to have an hour and a half lessons for extra help or learning, the only way to do this was to take it off tutor time. This is difficult as some tutors say they would like more tutor time because they see their form so little, so we try our best to work round it'.

### Why do PCE evenings start at 15:00 when most parents don't finish work until much later?

'We have found there is no typical work day but some can work flexibly with their job or company or if they look after children, so we've expanded it by an hour to fit more appointments in but made it earlier to create less rush and to comfort the teachers so they won't be there too late'.

### Why is there a £10 donation to sixth form? What does it go to?

'Each set of years has a certain donation that you can choose to give, years 7-9 have one, 10-11 and 12-13 have one, this donation goes to getting new facilities or items for use, so for the sixth form we bought 30 new laptops. The Government has frozen education funding at a low level so we ask for this donation to help fund the 'nice to have' and keep QEGS facilities at their best'.

On the 13th November, the journalism team questioned the Head Teacher, Mr Garrity on various aspects of the school. As the theme of the newsletter is 'question', we thought getting answers to questions surrounding our school environment would enrich the minds of the students and teachers at QEGS. The interview was conducted by Jacob Shipley and Leila Lockley; here is what was said:

### Why was the school day changed?

'On Monday and Thursday morning is staff briefing and we felt, having tutor period at the end of the day, messages we discussed as a staff weren't getting to the students as quick as they should, so we should try a couple of periods where we could do it in the morning'.

### **Should we have an LGBTQ+ group run by sixth formers for younger years?**

'I know we have a sixth form group run by Mr Bawden, so I see no issue for one for the lower years to have someone to guide and hear ideas from students, as long as it was guided by Mr Bawden. The school is inclusive in many different ways and this is a large part of it'.

### **What is your stance on gender neutral toilets? Should this be included in main site?**

'We have already requested for signs to be put up on the accessible/disabled toilets; unfortunately, as the toilets are already built we can't create new ones for gender neutral toilets so we have to put the signs on toilets we already have so they will now become accessible gender neutral toilets'.

### **What is your stance on gender neutral clothing should it be enforced in school?**

'We no longer have male and female uniform now so we now have a uniform list and the list is optional, as long as they keep within the regulations of the school's set uniform'.

### **Why in some cases is the school not tackling bullying that happens on social media in and out of school?**

'I'm not aware of any incidents of bullying that aren't dealt with; however the challenge you mentioned (out of school) is much more difficult to deal with. We still try to deal with it as best as we can but a lot of it is out of our control as it's on social media but we try to help as much as we can for our students and are committed to making school a safe place'.

### **With the action of trying to get phones switched off in school, is that to minimise social media being used in a poor way?**

'It's healthy that we are not addicted to our phones as we live in the time of expecting everyone to message back instantly so it's really to try and decrease the time we have on our phone because our minds need to not be attached to screens to be able to take in new information. Primary schools aren't teaching children to read from a tablet because it is less effective. However, we do believe this can be of valid use in some school studies, if students want to take photos of notes off the board then that's reasonable, but it can't be excessive'.

### **Is there a long term plan in place to accommodate ever decreasing budgets whilst tackling increasing costs? If so, does this mean loss of jobs or no salary increases?**

'We as a school are managing our resources well and we try not to spend our money on something that we can only use for a few years, so every staff position, subject and job we buy has a longevity value to it'.

'However the more courses we open up the more money it costs us as more courses lead to more teachers leading to higher costs. But the more courses we open the more students we get and for every new student we get a certain amount of money from the government, so we find it balances itself out'.

'We haven't had any staff made redundant recently unlike many schools and salaries have increased where eligible through appraisal'.

### **How is the school planning to accommodate the possible increase in pupils due to all the new homes being built in the area?**

'At the moment the school isn't quite full, meaning we can take on more pupils which as I said leads to the more money we are given. In most year groups there are some spaces available, but we realise we at some point we will have to build and we have started to make plans for expansion, the only issue is finding places to build that won't impact negatively on the site, environment and local population'.

'We also get money from outside building developers for every new house built in the area as they have to put some money into an educational pot and we gather a small percentage from that fund'.

### **With the constantly increasing security issues around these days, does the school think that some kind of extra security should be put in place? As the school is so open, do you think it is vulnerable?**

'We have taken quite a lot of measures to make the school more secure, both sites are now on key card door locks, more CCTV and a new gate at the back, coming off Windmill Lane, that is closed at the start all the way through to the end of school. We've gone for measures that will make a difference, but I never say never, we are always looking for more ways to secure the school'.



**The number of teachers signed off with stress has almost doubled in the past 5 years, 54% suffer with insomnia or trouble sleeping and 17% were formally diagnosed with depression. How do you intend to tackle these numbers and situations in school and in some cases that have already happened?**

'In any industry this is happening so we have made it one of our priorities and you can see on our school website on our 'improvement plan' you'll see student and staff wellbeing has a high priority'.

'We have identified mental and physical health and the way we are in school is probably the most important thing and last year our focus was on the year 11s' mentality during and before the exams. We attempted many things to try and make them feel calmer and we do exactly the same with staff making them feel valued. Every half term we do treats in the staff room. I send cards to anyone that has recommended a staff member to me, we help them manage their job and work load. We don't impose the pressure of Ofsted on them, we don't do things to tick a box, we do them because we think it matters to staff and students'.

**Self-harm, depression and mental health is an increasing issue especially in school, this has increased among 70% since 2011, this rise is mostly due to social media, so how do you tackle this issue in and out of school with all years?**

'We do a lot on educating students on seeking support and we buy into many counselling services to open up the options as well as the safeguarding team we have on hand and having different people to talk to, and we help our students get referrals to more experienced agencies but also put money into training our staff in school to have a person to go to as soon as possible'.

**Some people struggle to go forward because they don't think their issue is that bad or they don't want to be seen going into that room, so what do you do about situations like these?**

'The pastoral team are always trying to oversee all of that and gain feedback from students so they do the best they can, and try to facilitate their concerns to fit them the best that they can whether its on or off of school site, there are so many variables that someone

may want we have to do it case by case but we are always on the lookout for new organisations and new ways to offer things we haven't had before'.

**Question Yourself (and us!)**

After the information given by Mr Garrity we could ask, where does QEGS head now in the current fiscal and educational climate?

If you have any thoughts or ideas, please get in touch with us. Our contact details are on the last page.

By Jacob Shipley, Year 12

# Was Supporting WW1 a Hindrance?

## WAR GIRLS

There's the girl who clips your ticket for the train,  
 And the girl who speeds the lift from floor to floor,  
 There's the girl who does a milk-round in the rain,  
 And the girl who calls for orders at your door.  
 Strong, sensible, and fit,  
 They're out to show their grit,  
 And tackle jobs with energy and knack.  
 No longer caged and penned up,  
 They're going to keep their end up  
 Till the khaki soldier boys come marching back.

There's the motor girl who drives a heavy van,  
 There's the butcher girl who brings your joint of meat,  
 There's the girl who cries 'All fares, please!' like a man,  
 And the girl who whistles taxis up the street.  
 Beneath each uniform  
 Beats a heart that's soft and warm  
 Though of canny mother-wit they show no lack;  
 But a solemn statement this is,  
 They've no time or love and kisses  
 Till the khaki soldier-boys come marching back.

- JESSIE POPE

## Who Was Jessie Pope?

As I'm sure you've already gathered from this strong and defiant poem portraying the women who remained home during World War 1, Jessie Pope was not one to shy away from her feelings and views. Born on March 18th 1868, Pope was an English poet, writer and journalist who today is mainly known for her incredibly patriotic poems published during World War 1. This talented writer was educated at North London Collegiate School before becoming a regular contributor to Punch, The Daily Mail and The Daily Express while also writing for Vanity Fair, Pall Mall Magazine and the Windsor.

Originally published in The Daily Mail, Pope's war poetry strongly urged boys and men to enlist, often going to the lengths of handing those who didn't a white feather as a symbol of cowardice. So it seems that saintly as her name may appear, there is more to Jessie Pope than meets the eye.

## Pope – Saintly Or Sinful?

Contrary to her perhaps misleading name, Pope implored the use of poetry tactics viewed by some as being distasteful with an extensive use of rhetorical questions to persuade, but mainly pressure, young men to join the war. This patriotic motivational style of writing is a sharp contrast to the likes of anti-war soldier poets like Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon who strongly disagreed with Pope's views; perhaps due to the fact they had experienced war first-hand and had a real, first-hand perspective.

Owen in particular was so against Pope that he wrote the poem 'Dolce et Decorum Est' as a direct response to her writing, going as far as dedicating it 'To Jessie Pope etc' (though the later draft was amended to 'To a certain Poetess' before turning it more general and addressing anyone sympathetic to the war).

## Was Pope Pro Girl Power?

The truth is, we have to ask ourselves if women would have been given such a great amount of respect during the war if it had not been for people like Jessie Pope who spoke out and highlighted the importance of women on the home front, instead of shining all the glory onto the men alone.

As seen in Pope's passionate poem above, the war revolutionised the industrial position of women, opening doors to them that were previously closed and allowing them to do what today most of us take for granted- work freely in the same employments as men. An estimated 2 million women replaced men in employment between 1914 and 1918. They became drivers, butchers, milk-distributors, ticket officers and much more which eventually resulted in women getting the vote. By no means was this a short and simple journey, however, poems like War Girls managed to unite these 'strong, sensible, and fit' women by encouraging them to slowly move away from the stereotypical domesticity they were associated with.

## Where Would We Be Without The War?

So my question is - should we judge Jessie Pope for her stance on World War One and her ethics? Even though we might disagree with her patriotic view and her methods for making it clear, none of us can deny that the world we live in today would have been extremely different had people like Pope not encouraged soldiers to enlist. Furthermore, this enabled women to earn rights they may never have had the chance to achieve otherwise.

We are ever indebted and grateful to those who lost their lives so bravely in order for us to be able to live ours.

## Question Yourself!

What is the most inspirational piece of poetry you have read? Research the poet it is written by and find out more about what influenced them.

By Leila Lockley, Year 12

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an adventure from beginning to end, with students enjoying many new experiences, discovering talents that they did not realise they had, challenging their potential, and standing out from the crowd. Many businesses and universities value the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and believe candidates to be more rounded and employable individuals.

The Academy provides opportunities for students from year 9 to complete Bronze, year 10 and 11 Silver and Gold in the sixth form. QEGS is one of the leading DofE providers within Derbyshire offering all three Awards. The Award involves four sections that students have to complete: Physical, Skill, Service and Expedition. The Expedition section of the Award is fully organised by the academy, using Approved Activities Providers. The Academy offers Bronze Walking Expeditions, Silver – the option of Walking or Canoe Expeditions and at Gold Canoeing Expeditions.

The students work through the other sections independently and many choose to do activities that they are already involved with and many others challenging themselves to new experiences. At Gold level, there is also a 'residential' section where students have to complete a week away from home involving themselves with group activities that can be linked with their other sections or, as many participants do, an activity which is linked with further study or/and career options.

The Academy also organises a Training Day at the Sixth Form Centre, which is a great day full of Team Building, First Aid and Route Planning where the Teams get to meet staff they will be working with during the Expeditions and get to know the groups they are in better.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards are a fantastic way in which participants can experience new challenges, make new friends, explore their own abilities as well as becoming more involved with the community. Stand out from the Crowd and discover who you are!



For more information about the Duke of Edinburgh's Award try the following...

**DofE Website** <http://www.dofe.org>



[https://twitter.com/QEGS\\_DofE](https://twitter.com/QEGS_DofE)

**QEGS DofE Coordinator Miss Wilband - Wilband@qegs.email**

# What are the effects and possible challenges of cultural diversity in the UK?

The UK is often described as having a truly multi-cultural society, where after decades of immigration, there is now a wide range of ethnicities present all over the country. There are often conflicting views about immigration, particularly in our contemporary society, as many living in the UK feel it is a cause of tension whereas others see it as enhancing our own culture and economic situation. So, looking at the topic from a national perspective, how will cultural diversity affect us presently as well as in the future?

Broadly in the UK, there is a certain degree of acceptance and inclusivity when it comes to migration and ethnicities – the UK has had a rich history of cultural diversity, partly due to the rise and fall of the British Empire and up until present day, there is a certain degree of pride for this heritage. Over 300 languages are spoken daily within the UK and our current culture includes influences from all over the world in terms of food, clothing and music. Whereas in the past, ethnic minorities would have been concentrated in major cities, modern day migrants can be found spread throughout the country, having integrated into smaller communities successfully. It is this positive outlook on migration which provides the country with a range of benefits as well as presenting itself as desirable and welcoming – culturally diversity is a key positive aspect however there is also a certain degree of economic diversity. Within 10 years, external migrants have provided the UK economy with around £25 billion, positively effecting the country, even though some still hold the view that they may be a 'drain on resources'.

The prejudice which ethnic minorities face within the UK is becoming increasingly prevalent and is potentially heightened with the severe threat of terrorism and the divisions caused by the Brexit vote. Whereas we do not experience the scale of prejudice and violence that countries such as the U.S. must face, as immigration levels increase annually, tensions within the UK continue to rise. The demand on services, schools and housing is seen in the eyes of many as increasing due to immigration and the idea that jobs are being given to migrants rather than British citizens continues to plague the minds of many. Political agenda has been noted to contribute to this prejudice, particularly far-right groups which promote nationalism and choose to blame foreign settlers for the problems the UK experiences (whereas in fact, the problem is often thought to be rooted elsewhere, including the ethos of those with far-right thinking).

Looking at the whole issue, we should continue to celebrate cultural diversity. The social and economic benefits of immigration and diversity are profound and as we continue to be influenced by a wide range of cultures, our own culture continues to develop and grow. The more open-minded we become, the more we will achieve harmony and cohesion within our society. The far-right minority should not taint our view on immigration and if we ever need reassurance of the benefits of diversity, we simply need to look at our past and how our culture has grown to what it is today. The future is bright for Britain – as migrants continue to contribute to our economy and culture, we are able to develop and alter our social structures, making society more inclusive and a representative of a wider range of identities.

**Question Yourself!**

**What do you believe are the effects and challenges of cultural diversity in the UK?**

By Ewan Shipley, Year 12

PROMOTED EVENT

Making Memories...

# CHICKS



## Music Concert

Saturday 7th April, 7pm to 9pm  
St Oswald's Church, Ashbourne

£8 in advance, £10 on the door

#CHICKSConcert

All proceeds go to CHICKS

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The Year 12 QEGS Creative Digital Media CHICKS Campaign Team



# War. What is good for?

War. What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing. The word creates a feeling in our minds of fear and loss and pain. It seeps through our veins like poison, to every inch of our bodies, and switches our thoughts suddenly creating images swirling around the mind into some of our greatest nightmares; the utter of a single word. War.

War can mean something different to everybody. When you think of war is it of people fighting over a small piece of land, a small rise in power, a small change in society? You ask yourself, why? Why does this small idea create an overwhelming result in individuals, impacting so many lives, for so little? Why, then, has it caused me to end up in this metal box, on this creaking mattress, in the middle of my personal hell.

My first day starts tomorrow, the day I have been training for throughout the last five years of my life, the day my hard work gets put to the test. I am hundreds on the field, I am the organisation behind the losses, I am the cause of death. Do not think I am happy for this by any means, in fact it is my duty to cause as little loss as I can, but as much death as I can. This probably doesn't make any sense to you, I try to keep my soldiers alive by killing the other side, although I am still not sure whether this makes me a good or bad person, but I think I am doing what's right.

The commanding office is dark and dingy, a single white light shines dimly down on the hundreds of small figures, with the exact same faces, in the exact same position. The three hundred white figures stare at the lines of red, stretched out before them, their fate pointing at them in the form of a small red plastic gun. My officer handed me the short black disperser, and I stared down at the white cross on the end of the handle, unable to rid my mind of the negative connotations impending on my brain. At the end of his briefing, I transposed it into my right hand, it strangely felt a lot heavier.

The days go very slowly. Little progress here and there, but everyone seems to be ignoring the ratio of the pile of plastic men at the side of the board: mounds of white figures with red dotted within like little spots of blood. Is the blame on my shoulders? I would like to think not, but as I remove the white people from the table, I feel like their ghosts are gracefully gliding across the room, and resting their grey heads upon my army green gilet, and in my sleep they wail of their weeping families morning over their losses, and their war widowed

lovers wishing to welcome them home again. The war has touched everyone's hearts, and those little cards that arrive home are not Christmas love, they deliver devastating news that affects the people like a hurricane swooping over the nation, blowing away the normal pleasantries in life we take for granted, replacing them with the little red stamp of approval, verifying the losses of someone who used to be so special.

Out on the battle field there are little flecks of white, the soldier's beards are dotted with icy droplets, and their hats are coated with a light dusting like white icing sugar falling from the dark sky above. Tonight will be a cold one, I was not looking forward to wrapping that thin, grey sheet around myself, wrapping my arms around my shivering body, wishing they were my wife's, whom I have not heard from for a couple of months now, I wonder how they are doing back at home. I have missed so much; Robert's birthday, Lacy's first day at secondary school; I can imagine them, all tucked up in bed, dreaming of their own little world without harm or hurt, or hate. I feel a sudden shock of realisation, it will be Christmas day tomorrow, the festivities and joy that contrast with this situation will be missed by us all. I hope it is a quiet day tomorrow, for all our sakes.

I jump, mid trail of thought, at the sight of a cloaked black figure who has just entered the room. The messenger hands me a note, the ink still wet, with written:

Unexpected gas attack. Section E. 23 dead. 15 survivors.

I find section J on the board, counting out 23 white plastic skeletons I grasp them in two handfuls, and the little arms and feet poke through my black gloved hands reaching out towards me, as if to say "just give me a chance!" Death has taken them, at least they won't have to suffer at Christmas, and why should they? War is good for absolutely nothing.

By Kira Coombes



## Can You Help Your School?

This is the perfect time to get involved with the FPTA and support the school.

The FPTA has a vital fundraising role in enhancing the resources that mainstream school funding provides, and to improve the experience of our children at QEGS. We are a small but keen group of volunteers, and we have successfully raised funds for major projects recently.

- Last year the school opened its own Observatory. This winter, pupils and the wider community have been using the telescope for the first time.
- This term we have funded the purchase of stage lighting for the main hall which should be installed in time for the school show in March.
- The next project that the FPTA are raising funds for will benefit all of the pupils, staff and parents. The school has plans for a Wellbeing Week in March of this year in order to educate staff, parents and particularly students how to take care of themselves and others.



The 2017 FPTA Summer Fair raised over £3,000

It's not all about fundraising though. It's easy to feel more distanced from a secondary school when you only receive limited feedback from your teenager on the school day

(three years of 'fine' in my case) and you're not at the school gate

twice a day to get a feel for the school and meet other parents. Through the FPTA, I've met staff, teachers, governors and other parents and families as well as meeting Councillors from the Town Council, Old Ashburnians and the organisers of the Ashbourne Show.

It would be great to see you at the monthly meeting; we meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.15pm in the library. Dates are on the FPTA section of the school website, if you are thinking of coming along, get in touch with our Secretary, Cat, she can tell you more about the FPTA. If that's not for you, then there are lots of other ways you can support the FPTA and the school.

If you haven't been before, come along to one of our events. We have a Fashion Show on 15th March and the FPTA Quiz Night on 20th April. We hope to have a new event in May and the Summer Fair is set for 7th July this year (save the date).

We are putting together a list of 'volunteer' contact details for people who can't commit to join us every month, but would be happy to help occasionally. My email address is tessabyron@hotmail.com ; if you might be able to help in future, please get in touch and I will add your name to the Volunteer List.

Finally, one thing that we can all do, with no effort or cost, is to support the school on Easyfundraising. This is the link: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/qegsptaashbourne>. You can search for us under the name 'Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School Parent Teacher Association - Ashbourne' or follow the link on the FPTA page on the school website.

Just register once with Easyfundraising, choose to support QEGS FPTA and when you shop online remember to access your favourite retailers via the icon on the Easyfundraising site or using an Easyfundraising App on an iPhone/iPad. If you use your PC to shop you can download a 'Donation Reminder' so that you don't forget.

If you have new ideas for fundraising or events you would like to see, let me know or get in touch with Cat Garrett, Secretary, caterinajg@icloud.com or Greg Kimber, Treasurer, gregkimber@nelsonsgin.co.uk

Thank you, I hope we'll hear from you soon or see you at an event.

Tessa Byron, Chair | Cat Garrett, Secretary | Greg Kimber, Treasurer

### GET IN TOUCH

We encourage all members of the QEGS community to contact us with their questions, comments or ideas for stories. Please do so using one of the methods below:



@QEGS\_Media



studentpress@qegs.email

### Next Issue

Keep an eye out for our next issue on the theme of 'Explore' to be published in April 2017. Deadline for entries: Friday 13th April 2018.