



Newsletter December 2025



A message from the Executive Head teacher

Dear Parents / Carers,

Since October, Queensbury School has been buzzing with purposeful learning and a strong sense of community. Pupils have thrived through creative projects and personalised support, while our focus on attendance continues to pay off. We've also strengthened inclusive communication across the school with the rollout of Makaton training, helping every learner to express themselves with confidence in lessons and around school. The recent trust schools Arts collaboration was a huge success focusing on artworks that represent the school and trust values.

Safeguarding and wellbeing remain at the heart of everything we do. A recent trust peer review commended our culture of vigilance, consistent routines and restorative approaches, which together help children feel safe, valued and ready to learn. Thank you for the partnership at home that underpins these routines—your support makes a real difference to daily learning.

We're delighted to share some brilliant news: Queensbury School has won the **West Midlands Mode Shift Stars School of the Year Award** for the **third consecutive year (2025–2026)**. This reflects our pupils' and families' commitment to sustainable travel and active lifestyles. We're proud to be representing the region at the **National Awards in London in February 2026**, and we'll keep you posted on how we get on. Special commendation to Mrs Richards that pulls all services together to help improve these vital life skills for our students and families.



Chris Wilson

Executive Head Teacher

Dates

Term ends:

Friday 19th Dec 2025

Staff Training days:

Monday 5th January
2026

Tuesday 6th January
2026

Students Return:

Wednesday 7th January
2026

A message from the Executive Head teacher



New Horizon Students recently took part in the 'Big Sleep'. Sleeping outside to support the charity – Centre Point, for youth homelessness. The students experienced sleeping outside on cardboard boxes in their sleeping bags under the stars. The students did incredibly well along with all the staff volunteers that supported the event. Special thanks to Mr Dennis and all those people that supported with contributions. The school raised over £1500 for the charity.

Looking ahead to the spring term, our **Personal Development** focus begins from **8 January**, exploring "Living in the Wider World," careers awareness and community participation. Curriculum enrichment in English will continue to build pupils' confidence in storytelling, reading and writing, with accessible, engaging texts tailored to different classes.

Over the Christmas holidays, many children spend more time online or on phones. Please consider a simple family plan – agree shared rules for screen time, encourage device use in shared spaces, and check privacy and parental-control settings. Modelling good habits helps, and when we return in January,

- **Agree a family plan:** Set shared rules for screen time, bedtimes, and device-free moments (e.g. mealtimes).
- **Use parental controls:** Check privacy settings, disable location sharing where appropriate, and set age-appropriate app/game restrictions.



A message from the Executive Head teacher

- **Keep devices visible:** Encourage use in shared spaces and talk regularly about what children are doing online.
- **Model good habits:** Adults' behaviour sets the tone – be mindful of phone use around children.
- **Know our school expectations:** Phones are restricted during the school day to protect learning and wellbeing; please support these routines when we return.

If you'd like our full Online Safety or Mobile Phone Policy, please contact the office or visit the school website.

Forthcoming SEND Reforms – What Parents Need to Know

The Department for Education is introducing significant changes to SEND provision nationally, aimed at improving consistency, accountability and support for families. Here are the key points:

• **National Standards:** Clear expectations for SEND support across all schools and local authorities to reduce variation.

• **Updated EHCP Guidance:** Streamlined processes for Education, Health and Care Plans, with a stronger focus on timely reviews and family involvement.

• **Early Intervention:** Greater emphasis on identifying needs earlier and providing support before escalation.

• **Local SEND Partnerships:** Improved collaboration between schools, health services and local authorities to ensure joined-up support.

• **Digital EHCP System:** Plans for a national digital platform to make applications and reviews more transparent and accessible.



A message from the Executive Head teacher

•Parent Voice: Increased opportunities for families to contribute to decision-making and shape local SEND provision.

Currently we have been engaging in the national debates and can recommend the following podcast for parents and families to keep up to date with potential SEND reforms. [BBC Sounds - SEND in the Spotlight - Downloads](#) .

Equally more info can be found [Government launches national conversation on SEND - GOV.UK](#).

Thank you for your ongoing support this term. We wish all our families a restful, joyful Christmas and a very happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming pupils back in January for a positive start to 2026—full of learning, collaboration and community celebrations.

Warm regards,

Chris Wilson

Executive Head Teacher

Queensbury School

Whisker World



Meet Pip and Squeak!

Our newest arrivals are two adorable guinea pigs, Pip and Squeak. With the colder weather setting in, they're being kept indoors overnight to make sure they stay warm and comfortable. Students have been learning all about how temperature changes affect animals and what we need to do to keep them safe, happy, and healthy. From providing extra bedding to checking their environment regularly, it's been a fantastic opportunity for students to develop practical animal care skills and understand the importance of seasonal routines.

Keeping Animals Safe in Winter

This term, students have explored how to protect animals during colder months. They've learned why warmth, shelter, and proper nutrition are essential, and they've taken an active role in making sure our furry friends are well cared for. It's been inspiring to see their sense of responsibility grow as they put these lessons into practice.

A Massive Thank You! 🐾

We couldn't let this update go by without giving a **HUGE shout-out to all the amazing staff** who've helped make Whisker World such a roaring success for the Venture curriculum. From setting up cosy corners for Pip and Squeak to braving the hay storms and veggie chaos, your hard work and humour have kept this project running smoothly. You've turned Whisker World into a warm, welcoming hub of learning – and we think you deserve a medal (or at least first dibs on the carrots)!

Whisker World



A Wild Adventure at The Jungle Hut!

Students also had the incredible opportunity to visit *The Jungle Hut*, where they enjoyed a hands-on experience with creatures they wouldn't normally encounter. From amphibians to invertebrates and other fascinating species, this visit gave them a chance to learn about different habitats, adaptations, and the importance of biodiversity. The excitement and curiosity on their faces said it all – this was a truly memorable experience!



Whisker World

Festive Cheer & Looking Ahead 🎄 ✨

As we head into the festive season, Pip, Squeak, Smoke, and Cinders will be enjoying extra treats and cosy bedding – because even guinea pigs and rabbits deserve a little Christmas magic!

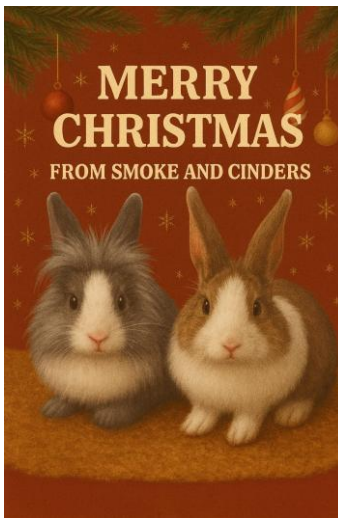
And as for the New Year? Well, let's see what exciting adventures 2026 brings for Whisker World... more furry friends, new projects, and plenty of opportunities for students to learn and grow. Watch this space!

Want to Get Involved?

If any parents or carers would like to contribute to the maintenance of Whisker World – for example, by donating fruits, vegetables, straw, or hay – your support would be greatly appreciated!

If you'd like your child to have a special meet-and-greet with the animals, please provide **written permission to Mrs Wilkinson**.

Thank you again to everyone who's supported these activities and helped make Whisker World such a special part of school life.



Maths & Science

Discovery & Quest Maths Workshop

On Thursday 23rd October, we were pleased to welcome parents of students on our Discovery and Quest pathways to a Maths Workshop. The session provided a valuable opportunity for families to gain insight into how we support the development of early numeracy skills through practical, engaging, and sensory based learning. Parents explored a range of resources and strategies used in school and took part in discussions around how these approaches can be supported at home. It was a lovely morning filled with collaboration, curiosity, and shared learning. A big thank you to all the parents who attended and helped make the workshop such a positive and enriching experience.



Maths & Science

9N and 9V Explore the Heart and Body Systems in GCSE Biology

This term, students in 9N and 9V took part in an exciting hands-on heart dissection as part of their science learning. The activity gave them the chance to see the incredible structure of the heart up close, including its **four chambers** – the left and right atria and ventricles – and the **valves** that keep blood flowing in the correct direction.

This practical experience links directly to their **further learning in GCSE Biology**, where understanding the circulatory system is a key topic. It also builds on their investigations into other body systems such as the **nervous system, muscular system**, and how these systems work together to keep us alive and healthy. By examining a real heart, students could connect theory to reality, making concepts like blood flow and oxygen transport much clearer.

The session also highlighted an important message: **looking after our hearts and blood vessels is vital for lifelong health**. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and avoiding harmful habits all help keep the cardiovascular system strong and functioning well.

Well done to 9N and 9V for approaching this challenge with curiosity and care – a fantastic step toward becoming confident biologists!

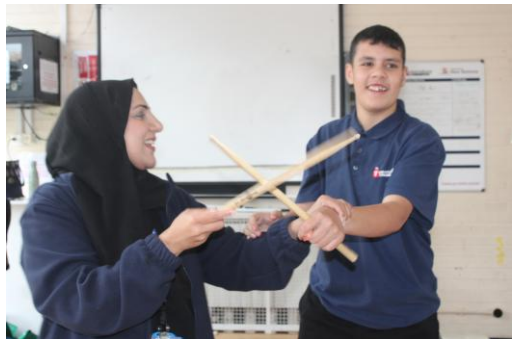
Diwali Celebrations

📍 Celebrating Diwali at Queensbury School

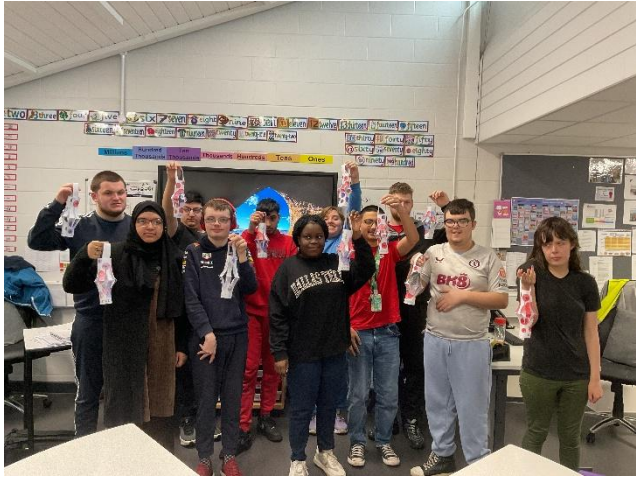
On **Monday 3rd November**, Queensbury School and New Horizons began the week by embracing the vibrant traditions of **Diwali, the Festival of Lights**, as part of our commitment to celebrating the rich diversity within our school community.

During morning registration, students learned about the significance of Diwali, deepening their understanding and appreciation of different cultures and traditions. To make the celebration even more engaging, many students had the opportunity to take part in a lively **30-minute Bhangra dance workshop**—a fun and energetic way to experience an important aspect of South Asian culture.

Recognising and celebrating cultural events like Diwali plays a vital role in fostering **inclusivity, respect, and a sense of belonging for all**. Thank you to everyone who helped make this celebration such a success!



Remembrance Day



On the 11/11/25 6.5 took part in remembrance. They started the day making poppy lanterns before going to St Barnabas church on Erdington high street where they had a drink and biscuits and then observed the 2 minute silence. Before leaving we went to the war memorial to pay our respects and see the poppy's that were laid on Sunday.

6.5 were complimented on their excellent behaviour and respectfulness during the silence by 2 members of the public.



Celebrating Creativity: Arts Collaboration at Queensbury School

Queensbury School recently hosted an inspiring Arts Collaboration, bringing together talented students from Queensbury School, Wilson Stuart, Mayfield, and The Hive for workshops of creativity and teamwork.

The event featured two engaging craft workshops delivered by Mrs Weston, Mrs Gill, Mrs Shubb and Mrs Urosevic where students explored new artistic techniques to create stunning **3D flowers**. Using a variety of materials—including laser-cut shapes, tissue paper, watercolours, acrylic paints, gems, and glitter—students learned how to combine textures and colours to produce vibrant, eye-catching designs.

After mastering these skills, participants returned to their classrooms to continue creating over the following weeks. Their efforts culminated in a **final tea party celebration**, where staff and students admired the collaborative artworks. Five beautiful canvases, each depicting vases filled with 3D flowers, showcased the creativity and dedication of everyone involved.

To mark the occasion, each school received one of these unique canvases to display proudly, serving as a lasting reminder of the power of collaboration and the joy of artistic expression.

This event truly highlighted how the arts can bring schools together, fostering creativity, confidence, and community spirit.



Celebrating Creativity: Arts Collaboration at Queensbury School



Celebrating Creativity: Arts Collaboration at Queensbury School



The Adventures of 7V

Lapworth Museum - On the 13th November, our amazing students travelled by train to the Lapworth Museum of Geology, diving into topics like Evolution of the Earth, Active Earth, and the fascinating stages of mammals and dinosaurs. They also explored incredible rocks and minerals!

Afterwards, we headed to Selly Oak for lunch at McDonald's, where students practiced independence, communication, budgeting, and decision-making skills.

7V were an absolute credit to Queensbury School – curious, respectful, and enthusiastic throughout the day!



The Adventures of 7V

The Jungle Hut - Students from 7V and 10V took part in an educational visit to The Jungle Hut as part of our Animal Care curriculum. During the trip, they enjoyed a hands-on learning experience, interacting with a range of reptiles and invertebrates. This opportunity allowed them to deepen their understanding of animal behaviour, challenge common misconceptions, and build confidence in safely handling animals.



The Adventures of 7V

Class 7V has been embracing the festive season with lots of Christmas activities!

They've decorated their classroom Christmas tree, designed beautiful Christmas cards, enjoyed a cozy coffee morning with mince pies alongside their parents, and even headed out for a delicious lunch at Oikos Café.

To top it all off they joined in the fun of Christmas Jumper Day, spreading cheer and festive spirit throughout the school.



3D3 Cinema Trip

3D3 had a fantastic time on our trip to the cinema. We watched Zootropolis 2 and really enjoyed all the funny moments, colourful animation, and new characters. We also enjoyed popcorn and chocolate, which made the experience even more fun!



The Nutcracker

Students in 4Q and 4D enjoyed a wonderful trip to the Hippodrome to see *The Nutcracker*. The performance brought the classic holiday story to life with beautiful music, dazzling costumes, and captivating choreography. Our students were fully engaged, whispering with excitement as each scene unfolded. For many, it was their first time experiencing a live ballet, making the trip especially meaningful.



No Such Thing as Wolves

The Quest Classes had a fantastic time at the Hippodrome this term, where they watched the brilliant show *No Such Thing as Wolves*. The performance was full of energy and imagination, and the pupils were completely drawn in from start to finish. They came back buzzing with excitement, sharing their favourite moments and talking about the themes of the story. It was a wonderful trip that left everyone inspired and eager for the next theatre visit.



8N Pantomime



8N enjoyed a very festive visit to the Pantomime at Sutton Coldfield Town Hall. The Dame in the show even took a liking to Mr Swain!

Pupils behaved fantastically and got the chance to go backstage and meet the cast of the Beauty and The Beast Show. This was because Mahdiyah had produced an amazing sketch of Belle and requested an autograph. The cast members were so impressed with Mahdiyah's artistic skills, they allowed the Queensbury pupils backstage access for a photo!



8E Winter Wonderland

A Magical Day at Winter Wonderland 8E

8E recently enjoyed an incredible visit to Winter Wonderland, where they played in real snow, watched an entertaining panto 'Beauty and the Beast'. They took part in joyful activities. It was a truly enchanting atmosphere. Students explored and met some animal friends and embraced the holiday spirit together. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the season and make lasting memories as a class!



8E Winter Wonderland



3Q2 Ash End Farm

As part of their English lessons, pupils from 3Q2 have been exploring the story *Farmer Duck*. To enrich their understanding of farm life, they visited Ash End Farm where they were able to experience it firsthand. The children enjoyed meeting and learning about a variety of farm animals, gaining a deeper appreciation of how they are cared for and the role they play on the farm. Throughout the visit, the pupils represented Queensbury School with great pride, showing excellent behaviour, enthusiasm, and curiosity at all times.



The Big Sleep Out



The Big Sleep Out: Making a Difference at Queensbury New Horizons

Students from **6.2N** showed incredible commitment to supporting their community by braving the cold and sleeping outdoors in the school playground as part of the **King's Trust initiative**. This project challenged the class to plan an activity that would have a positive community impact, and after individual research and a class vote, they chose to support **Centrepoint**. A charity dedicated to helping homeless young people.

RG showed this empathy after waking up the following morning 'I can't imagine how hard it must be to sleep like this every night' and KK said 'This was such a challenge for me, I've never stayed away from home before and this experience has really be good for my social anxiety as it allowed me to work on my social skills in a safe place'

On **Thursday 11th December**, students and staff gave up the comfort of their beds to spend the night outside in the playground. Their goal was to raise awareness and funds for this vital cause — and they've already raised over an amazing **£1600**, with more donations still coming in!

You can still support this fantastic effort by donating via the **JustGiving QR code**:

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/daviddennis-68fa45399fc76a04e1469bc9?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL



Christmas Fetes

📍 Queensbury School/ New Horizons Christmas Fete Brings Festive Cheer!

Queensbury School celebrated the season in style with **Christmas Fetes held at both sites** — New Horizons on 11th December and Queensbury Main on 12th December. The events were a fantastic showcase of creativity and teamwork, as form groups were given a **£30 budget** to plan and run their own stalls. From tasty samosas and sweetie bags to fun party games and exciting raffles, students put their entrepreneurial skills to the test and delivered an unforgettable experience.

Parents were warmly invited to join the festivities, adding to the joyful atmosphere across both sites. A huge thank you goes to our amazing **PTA**, who generously donated items and supported on the day, helping make the events such a success. The Christmas Fete was a wonderful celebration of community spirit, creativity, and festive fun — a perfect way to end the year!



Christmas Fetes



Mobile Phones

We have recently seen a rise in the use of group chats and social media by our students outside of school hours. This has led to an alarming number of incidents stemming from inappropriate online interactions, which have had a significant negative impact on both the learning environment and the wellbeing of our students.

These incidents include, but are not limited to, cyberbullying, harassment and the spreading of harmful rumours. Such behaviour not only disrupts the school community but also causes severe emotional distress to the students involved. The consequences of these actions are grave, and we have already begun to see the detrimental effects on academic performance and overall school morale.

In light of these issues, we must emphasise the critical need for parental support and intervention. Monitoring your child's use of their mobile devices and social media is essential to safeguard not only their well-being but also the well-being of other students within the school.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to:

- Regularly check the content and nature of your child's group chats and social media interactions
- Have open conversations with your child about appropriate online behaviour and the potential consequences of their actions
- Reinforce the importance of kindness, respect and responsibility in all forms of communication
- Assess whether your child is cognitively able to safeguard and be responsible for having their own mobile device



Mobile Phones

Please be aware that serious breaches of our school's Code of Conduct, whether occurring in person or online may result in disciplinary action which could include:

- Confiscating a student's phone or device for a reasonable time, until it is possible to meet with families, discuss and hand the device to parents
- Fixed term or permanent exclusion

We trust that you understand the gravity of this situation and will join us in taking proactive steps to ensure a safe and positive school environment for all students. Your co-operation is vital in helping us address and mitigate these issues effectively.

The school has legal abilities to confiscate, keep or dispose of items that cause harm or risk to the safety of others under Section 91 of the Education Act 2006. A mobile device that causes harm (intentionally or not) is categorised as bullying and harassment and the school has a duty to keep all of its students safe and has a strict zero tolerance policy on any form of bullying or harassment. If these rules are breached, if required the school will pass any devices onto the Police for their investigations and procedures.

If you have any concerns or require guidance on how to monitor your child's online activities, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We are happy to support you and work together in the best interests of our students.

Thank you for your continued support with this matter.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Join the PTA!



What is the Queensbury School PTA?

Our School PTA is a group of parents and teachers who meet to organise events and activities to improve communications and experiences amongst all members of our school community: school as an organisational body of staff and teachers, parents and pupils. Our primary purpose is to raise funds for items the school would not normally be able to afford and to have fun whilst doing so. Every parent automatically becomes a member of the PTA when their child enters the school. Meetings usually take place via Zoom 1 per half term, and last approximately an hour.

Why do we do this?

Simple – for Our Children whose welfare and best interests are our paramount consideration. We try to organise fun events for them. What does the PTA do? The PTA usually gets to organise a lot of the fun stuff! Main events may include: Christmas/Summer Fetes; school discos; parents' social evenings. The PTA always welcomes feedback and new ideas.

Join Queensbury school PTA team by emailing us on pta@queensbury.eiat.org.uk
OR
Contact us on 0121 373 5731 to speak with PTA team



Useful Information

PLEASE NOTE - There is NO Staff supervision in School before 8.30am.
Students must not be in School unaccompanied before this time.

Also, if your child is being collected by a different family member/friend
please notify Reception.

Without prior permission we are unable to let your child off school
premises until we have contacted you.

Magic Breakfast

"Breakfast in the Classroom

We have re-joined the National School Breakfast Programme alongside
Fareshare-go.

This means students will be offered a breakfast of bagels, toast or
pastries in class every morning free of charge"



A message from our CEO



Jon Harris
CEO





It has been a very busy and productive term for all of the students. The physical environments at both Queensbury main site and New Horizons are really supporting the students to achieve and enjoy school. We have worked hard across EIAT to ensure that our staff are trained really well to meet the needs of students. There was a training day on the 5th December where staff travelled to different sites to learn about different communication strategies. I enjoyed hearing about the projects that Mr Edmunds and Mr Matthews have developed to further engage students. Queensbury is a very popular school in Birmingham and continues to grow and improve.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas. I am very aware that the change in routines can have a negative impact on students and I know that our pastoral teams have tried to provide advice and signpost other sources of support

Jon

We believe all students have
the ability to unleash their
limitless potential.



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