

What does QES mean to me?

Isabel Pearson

QES has certainly given me an education. It would be easy to explain that I come to school every day, leave with homework, and gain some good grades. However, when I say 'an education', QES has given me one that exceeds all barriers, both social and academic.

Upon my arrival in Year 7, my main excitement sprung from the concept that I would be meeting new people. Friends I met in those first few moments as a year 7 student have become more important to me than I could ever have imagined, and I have shared times with them that only tears and laughter could rightly illustrate. These same friends have taught me things about myself and helped me grow as a person in ways that are indispensable to my upbringing. It's fair to say that a very significant life lesson that QES has taught me is not to impose judgment on what you initially see in a person just because they are different from what you know. After all, they may become an essential part of your life, both in and outside of school.

As well as owing some lifelong friendships to this school, it would seem appropriate to mention some kind of academic education I have gained coming into my seventh year here. Perhaps my decision to stay here for sixth form was a significant demonstration of what the school has done for me, and what I believe I can achieve here. Going to another Sixth Form was an option I had never really considered as the dedication I had received from my own teachers, whether it was over a problem at home or an issue with algebra was more than enough reason for me to stay. I don't believe this kind of relationship and dedication from any teacher can be found in any other school in the area, or even the country. QES has always inspired me to achieve, to always have faith in my own ability and most importantly to take risks, as there is a lesson to be learnt no matter what the outcome is.

This ethos gave me the confidence to join the school hockey team from an early age. I must admit, I'm not incredibly sporty, but there was always a match to be played and I loved piling on the bus on the way to matches feeling very proud to represent my school, even if I was on the sub bench mind. I have loved playing in two school orchestras for the past 5 years. There is no greater feeling than contributing to such an incredible sound, and there is a real sense of achievement and purpose in learning an instrument when you can collaborate and create something quite wonderful with others. There is a real sense of community in our school orchestras, and it will always be a part of QES that meant a lot to me.

QES has encouraged me to seize new opportunities, such as school trips to Iceland and Berlin. Having a taste of another culture has taught me so much about the world beyond my everyday lifestyle and compelled me to discover more upon my return. This eagerness has seamlessly transferred into my school work. I know I'm in the right place when at the end of a lesson, I find myself already eager to find out more. I am currently hoping to apply to the London School of Economics and Political Science to study International History, with the intention to then do a Law conversion year to train to become a barrister. Although academic achievement is one of the vital components in order to embark on a future of this sort, my personal statement would have been virtually empty without the opportunities and education this school has given me.

I can imagine, looking round a school of this size, you will have reservations as to whether this is the best place for your child. As someone who came to this school as an eleven year old and is leaving as a young adult, I can say that there is no other place where I would have rather spent my teenage years. In everything I have experienced, both social and academic, it has *a/ways* been an education. I'm not saying that every child at QES has a halo round their head (although it's pretty close), what I'm trying to say is, you know you're in a safe environment when even if you're having a bad day a student you've never met before holds the door open for you and smiles.

At QES, it's not about wealth or your straight A average, it's about who you are as a person and how you support and enthuse those around you. This is what my school means to me.