





### SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## **THANK YOU ALL** Continuing Education In A Time Of Uncertainty

This academic year has been very different for us all to say the least. Whilst Term 1 began and ran as normal, the end of Term 2 saw the Covid-19 Pandemic hit the UK, followed by the closure of all schools and the country in Lockdown. Znaniye Russian School has now been running for 17 years, and we are incredibly passionate about the work that we do with our students - so whilst we knew the closure of schools was entirely necessary, and the safety of our all team and students is our main priority as always, the prospect of having to move online was a shock. Thankfully, as the only Russian School with  $\,+\,$ our own fully developed curriculum, books and courses for all ages (3-18) it meant that with the incredible hard work of our teachers out of school hours, support of parents, and enthusiasm from students, we were able to transition with ease, and provide endless resources. Znaniye staff and teachers worked all week prior to the closures to ensure we had options in place so that no lessons had to stop, and we could effortlessly continue teaching, online! Our students continued as groups, and through private tuition with their teachers, along with our GCSE and A Level Students who worked incredibly hard to continue their studies in the light of physical exam cancellations - all completing their work and additional tuition, who will all receive their grades later this summer.



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## TEACHER TO TEACHER TRAINING

During the adjustment period, not only did our team initially train our teachers on certain platforms, our teachers who grasped virtual learning quickly and in depth, held online training sessions to share tips with each other - supporting one another in expanding their learning and abilities and techniques to be able run the most effective lessons for all ages.





WWW.ZNANIYE.COM SCHOOL@ZNANIYE.COM 07769313090



### **1st Russian Education Symposium**

On Thursday 23rd January 2020, Znaniye, The Russian Embassy and Rossotrudnichestvo hosted the First Russian Education Symposium, which was opened by the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom, Mr Andrey Vladimirovich Kelin. Over 30 Russian Schools and Russian Departments from British schools were in attendance, to discuss a wide range of issues related to the preservation and dissemination of the Russian language in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The key theme of the meeting was finding a solution to common problems in the industry by the joint efforts of schools and teachers, which Znaniye followed with the announcement and launch of the Russian Education Consortium (REC). The REC will work to be the national champion for excellence, innovation and partnership in Russian Education outside of Russia, along with accrediting both schools and teachers in order to meet the global need for the delivery of high-quality Russian education.



# Maslenitsa

During Maslenitsa this year children celebrated within each branch by reciting poems, making art, learning about the history of the festival, and the meaning behind each tradition. Our parents supported each branch as always with pancakes, food, gifts and traditional clothing for the students performances.







locoльство России <sup>в Лондоне</sup> Russian Embassy

A highlight of the day was the first Teacher of the Year' Awards, whereby each school was asked to nominate one of their own teachers that they felt was the most worthy and hardworking, with diplomas awarded by Mr Ilya M. Erofeev the First Secretary of Information, Press and Culture at the Russian Embassy, and Mr Anton Chesnokov, Director of Rossotrudnichestvo, Russian Culture House of London.



For the 8th March this year, to celebrate all the incredible women in our lives, the students mothers, and women in their lives were invited to join us for a portion of the day – to be presented by works of Art from our Stratford Art Studio including portraits, and to listen to individual and personal recitals from their children!

### Virtual Round-table for Teachers and Parents of Pre-School Children

During June 2020, Znaniye held 2 Online Round-table events for Teachers and Parents of Pre-School Children learning Russian across the world. The First Session, attended by over 50 guests, centred around the 'Azbuka' set of 7 books which Znaniye cocreated with the leading Russian University, RUDN, led by Angela Doljnikova. Azbuka, or "Разноцветная азбука" / "Colourful Alphabet", are a set of 7 books for Preschool students from the age of 5/6 and up that are designed to teach preschool children the Russian language in the absence of a language environment. The set of books is intended for work in foreign Russian language schools. After extensive research was conducted within Znaniye Russian School, and the materials were produced, they were then trialled and tested inside our schools. Following presentations from our teachers on how to use the books within lessons, the writers, authors and specialists behind the creation of the book, specifically Marina Kunovski, Galina Mayers, Albina Sultanova and Adriana Pavlova elaborated on the content and its benefits, and announced a brand new book that is soon to be released. During the second Round-table, guests were introduced to the above mentioned brand new book, for Students Aged 3-4. Now teachers have even more materials to teach students from an earlier age. One of our teachers, Svetlana Jonikane, held a lesson example and talked through methods of implementing the books so guests could understand in a more tangible way how to use them. The books are used within all Znaniye branches, to add to our curriculum and teachers plans for each class, and additionally can be used at home for homework and revision. The books are now available online from us to purchase, and schools have begun to purchase them from us for their new year of teaching!



Childrens Conference!

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One thing that has become evident, is that children see no borders, and whilst fighting something so significant together globally, we have to choose to think this way as well. At Znaniye, our goal has always been to integrate communities through education, so with feedback from our students, charity board and through our Confidence and Wellbeing Project which aims to enhancing wellbeing through communication and interaction - we planned a brand new project to enable children to continue to be together and communicate in this troubling time, to learn and practice languages, to bring together various cultures and backgrounds and importantly, to make friends. We have held 2 virtual conferences so far, with children joining from Russia, Germany, Israel and London, and over 20 different languages present! Students practised languages, introduced themselves in both native and non native tongues, drew posters to share with each other, and used the chat function to talk about interests and connect further. They shared presentations about their homelands, and practised different languaes and helped each other when stuck! We will continue run



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## **Znaniye Accreditation**!

Znaniye is incredibly proud to continue to elevate ourselves to the highest level. We are constantly working and adapting to achieve the highest standards, and this year we are very proud to have acheived the NRCSE Quality Mark, The Ealing Assurance Mark, and the Safer Schools Award.

Znaniye was the first school to receive the NRCSE Special Distinction award, and we have now achieved their Quality Mark. The Quality Mark shows that our supplementary school "provides a well-organised learning environment with teaching, record keeping and resources that support children's and young people's achievement and raise their self-esteem." Additionally, we received "beyond advanced" in all 7 categories, which is incredibly hard to achieve, and retained our double distinction. The director of NRCSE and the educational expert from the University of Westminster were incredibly impressed by our work, attention to detail, our policies and work we do outside of lessons - and appreciated the different and creative approach we use to work with children. We are very grateful for all the efforts our team put into working on this accreditation over the past months and we couldn't be more proud to get this award!



Additionally, Znaniye received the Ealing Assurance Mark, a mark of excellence from Ealing Council (Znaniye was started in Ealing, and our West branch is still located there!) Similarly to the Quality Mark, this ensures that our company, not just a school, are running in the safest way for those that we service. And lastly, Znaniye successfully was marked a Safer Supplementary School, a new initiative which looks in detail at the running of our school practices.







At the start of the academic year, the children, parents, teachers and staff began learning, teaching, preparing and anticipating the long awaited celebration: the 75th Anniversary of V Day. The school quickly became filled with excitement as many children rushed home to find out stories about how their grandparents and great grandparents were affected by the Second World War. Pictures were found in archives and old photo albums were rediscovered as the students at Znaniye became more intrigued by sacrifices that their family members and countries had made. And so, as the school year unfolded, more and more stories were shared by all the students which then quickly became incorporated into all the heritage, art, choir, music, and video projects that the school was running.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, our team were working with various partners, friends, charities and other organisations to prepare a entire weeks visit for our Veterans, including visits to our schools, concerts, evenings at which the veterans would share their stories, the laying of the wreaths for the fallen soldiers, and for the big finale - the V Day 2020 Gala Concert at the Kensington and Chelsea Great Hall. The concert event plans grew each day as more performers joined the programme and more organisations began to get involved, with the programme being finalised at 900 guests and 250 performers.

But then in light of the lockdown, our events had to be cancelled - and although, there was a wave of sadness, anxiety and uncertainty that spread across all those who had been involved in the organisation of the event we knew we couldn't give up, after all, we were celebrating the victory of all those who never gave up and never allowed any obstacle to overcome them! So the team all sat down (remotely) to re plan how we would execute the organisation of the Victory Day celebration 2020. And so our projects continued and we are very proud to share with everyone just how much the Children at Znaniye have managed to achieve.

The children at Znaniye Russian School's Art Studio created art work in their lessons each week in preparation for V Day. Using what they have learnt in lessons they have created wonderful tributes for our veterans, and emblems of remembrance. This preparation began long before lockdown, and we are so pleased to be able to share this with you at this time. Alongside this art project, more children, including those who do not study at Znaniye, sent through their VDay artwork. We received hundreds of photos via email, facebook and more.







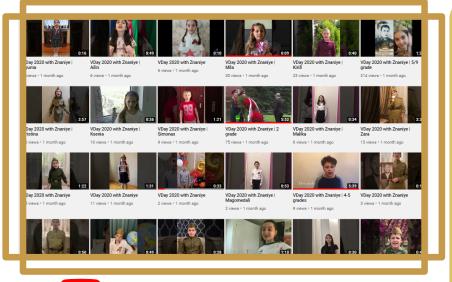












#### Take a look at our YouTube to watch!

Znaniye and Maksatics camp also came together in running a video competition -Maksatics camp visited Znaniye Russian School in early 2020 and spoke with children about the importance of the 75th anniversary, and taught children how to best put together videos, as this competition was announced. Children aged 8-16 had the opportunity to send through their creative videos along with their wishes for the children of the veterans and those who fought in the Second World War. These were all compiled together and shared online during the V day bank holiday. The children with the most creative videos are now being awarded with a trip to Maksatic Camp, and a free week at Znaniye!

Over 350 children from around the world sent in their video messages for Veterans. Videos included songs, poems, recitals, messages and more, and some classes at Znaniye Russian School even made video compilations remotely. Znaniye Russian School in Germany sent through their incredible children's work and Bilik (Azerbaijani school) also created a video with their students! These are all now available to watch on our Youtube channel.

Znaniye HQ also wanted to make a contribution, and had a project of their own. The team worked together to create a unique V Day, 75th anniversary card for all veterans, families and friends. The idea - to bring together two countries in celebration. The 7 and 5 were filled with the British and Russian flag with the name of every child, teacher, and staff member from Znaniye Russian School and partner schools in Germany, Russia and Bilik (The Azerbaijani school in London) imputed into the numbers. The card also saw the two symbols of the war from both countries, the poppy and the carnation brought together with the Ribbon of Saint George. Each member of the team had their input and after a very long day of typing up over 400 names, the card was finalised and sent personally to every Veteran. We were delighted to then receive responses from various veterans, thanking the children and school for our appreciation, and even inviting us to meet them once lockdown has been lifted.



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Although things did not go as originally planned, we have enjoyed every moment. The 9 months of preparation were incredibly insightful and brought a new appreciation to each person involved. Overall it was amazing to see the inclusion, diversity and happiness which was shared by all those who participated. One thing is for sure: we will never forget the 75th anniversary of Victory Day.

We are hopeful that things will resume back to normal life in due time and we will be able to welcome back all our wonderful students and teachers, and we will continue to celebrate the incredible victory throughout the remainder of 2020. We continue to hope that one day this year we will be able to celebrate at the Kensington and Chelsea Grand Hall with the event we had planned and be able to welcome and honour all the Veterans with the wonderful performances which would have taken place on the 9th of May. Thank you to each veteran and all those involved for all you have done.

We are, and will forever be very grateful for the sacrifices you made to give us the life, our freedom and the world we have today. Thank you for everything you have done to give our children a life of opportunity.

SEPTEMBER 2020 Admissions open! DUE TO OUR SUCCESS ONLINE, ZNANIYE IS NOW ABLE TO OFFER A SELECT NUMBER OF FULL COURSES, <u>ONLINE!</u> MEANING NOW ANYONE CAN TRULY ACCESS OUR SCHOOL AND LEARN WITH US! TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT IS AVAILABLE BELOW...

