

THE KING'S SCHOOL IN MACCLESFIELD

**Senior School
Parents' Handbook**


King's

Welcome Welcome to the King's Senior School Parents' Handbook.

Our aim in the following pages is to present to you, as concisely as possible, an outline of life at King's during your child's time at the school, as well as something of our expectations.

At King's we try to keep you fully informed through our regular mailings, but this publication is intended to be a handy source of reference about the School and its structures.

We hope you will find the information contained in this handbook helpful. If you do not find the answers to all your questions in these pages, please do ask, using the contact list at the back.

Our Aims & Objectives

King's aims to provide a caring, structured and disciplined learning environment in which all pupils enjoy a wide selection of opportunities to discover and develop their talents and interests to their full potential. The School seeks to promote the highest standards of academic achievement for all individuals in the context of their own abilities. It aims to provide as wide a range of extra-curricular opportunities as possible in order to encourage high standards and teamwork.

Objectives

To achieve its Aims, King's adopts the following objectives for its whole community:

To develop in students a respect for and enjoyment of learning as well as a desire for intellectual challenges;

To foster independent thought, self discipline, mutual respect and spiritual and moral awareness;

To expect and encourage responsible and mature behaviour in the context of a forgiving society where children and young adults can make mistakes;

To foster a sense of community in which co-operative learning and inter-personal relationships are the norm;

To understand the school's importance in society and to interact with and provide associated activities for the benefit of the wider community;

To encourage and develop skills and excellence in a range of academic, physical and aesthetic areas;

To prepare pupils for the challenges of higher education and the world of work.

The School Day

The school day starts with registration at 8.45am and ends at 3.45pm. Details of the timings of lessons, break and lunch can be found in the school calendar.

It is important that your son or daughter should arrive at school promptly. This allows him/her to begin the day smoothly and in good time to get organised for lessons. It also means that he/she does not miss important notices which may be given out in registration or in assembly.

Do not believe any assurances that it doesn't matter if pupils arrive late - it does!

As with all schools, parking problems and congestion occur at dropping off and picking up times. The school's car parks are NOT available to parents at these busy times, to ensure the safety of pupils on the premises. Parents are asked to park well away from the school.

Pupils may arrive at school after 8.15am. Once they have come into school, they may not leave the school grounds or premises again until the end of the school day - 3.45pm. As a privilege girls and boys in Year 11 are allowed to leave the school premises at certain lunchtimes as allocated by the Principals. These pupils are required to have parental permission to go out of school and must sign themselves out.

Pupils may remain in school after 3.45pm if they are on school business e.g. society meetings, debates, rehearsals, games and any extra-curricular activity under the supervision of a teacher. Pupils who wish to work quietly after school hours may remain in the Resource Centre at Fence Avenue or in the Alan Cooper Library at Cumberland Street until 6.00pm. They will be monitored by staff.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of our scheme of work and it plays a very significant role in the educational development of all pupils.

Homework is set regularly, marked or monitored as appropriate, and we aim to set an amount which should be realistically challenging for all pupils. Inevitably, some pupils will complete their set work more quickly than others and will, on occasions, have time to spare. If this is the case, we encourage pupils to use the extra time for school related activity such as reading or revising. Be very sceptical if your son or daughter tells you they have no homework. This should never be the case so please check their planner. Homework must not be done during the lunchtime or break.

The nature of the task set will, of course, vary significantly depending on the age of the pupil, and the demands of the topic. Assignments should normally occupy a single homework allocation and will usually be collected in at the next lesson. Some projects and coursework may be set over a longer period, covering several homework slots. Your son or daughter will begin to learn skills of time management and will need to keep a careful record in their planner to make sure they use their time wisely.

We hope you will take an interest in your child's homework. The King's

Planner is intended to serve as a channel of communication between school and home. In Years 7 - 11 we ask that you check the planner each week, and sign the appropriate space. Please feel free to use it as a means of getting in touch with a member of the teaching staff or the tutor.

Homework Allocations

Year 7

Two 30-minute homeworks per night, five nights a week with one extra Reading Project homework each weekend.

Year 8

Two or three 30-minute homeworks per night with no extra at weekends.

Year 9

Three 30-minute homeworks per night with no extra at weekends.

Years 10 and 11

Three 40-minute homeworks each night, with one extra homework on Fridays.

Years 12 & 13

Pupils should expect to be spending about 4 hours per week on each of their AS level subjects in year 12 and 5 hours on each A2 in year 13.

Reporting & Assessment

Like you, we wish to ensure that your son/daughter has a successful and fulfilling career at King's.

To that end, we monitor pupils' progress carefully during their time with us through a regular pattern of assessments, reports and Parents' Evenings.

In the Senior Divisions you will receive at least three regular assessment sheets which detail your son/daughter's attainment and effort in each subject. Organisational skills will also be included. Commendations may be awarded based on effort grades. The assessment gives you the opportunity to record your views on your son/daughter's progress.

Assessments are supplemented by full written reports, issued at different points in the year depending on a pupil's age group. These reports will contain targets to which you can refer as you assess your son/daughter's progress.

You will have the opportunity to discuss your son/daughter's academic progress with the staff every year at Parents' Evening. However, should you have any concerns at any other time, we are always happy to arrange a time to see you.

Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions

At King's we aim to promote high standards of behaviour, self-discipline and learning through positive encouragement and reward. Our pupils rightly look to their teachers to provide a firm framework of order and discipline where few sanctions are needed.

Rewards are many and varied and achievements may be recognised in a number of ways ranging from the unofficial word of encouragement or

support in private, the earning of merit marks, commendations for work, through to the presentation of certificates or prizes in public at assemblies or meeting with senior staff. We place considerable emphasis on the positive side of rewards for effort, commitment and achievements and rarely an assembly will go by without some presentation to a pupil.

When pupils fail to meet the required high standards of application, appearance or behaviour, they should expect to be disciplined in some way. There are a number of layers to our sanctions procedure, but there would be little point in drawing up a list of offences and sanctions as we treat each incident individually, whilst aiming to be as consistent as possible. The following will give an indication of our approach.

Bookings are for minor offences and are usually held on record for one term. Further action is only taken if several bookings are accumulated in a term. Full details for each Division are included in the relevant King's Planner which your son or daughter receives every year. Detention takes place for an hour after school on Friday. Parents receive an official notification from the School giving the reasons for the detention, which they are asked to sign and return. We consider detention a significant punishment and we ask that parents refrain from asking for a postponement of this sanction. Saturday detention or holiday detention is to be seen as a most serious punishment, not given lightly and the penultimate sanction prior to suspension or expulsion. It is policy that two suspensions lead to an exclusion. Detentions will take place at the school's convenience and take priority over all other school commitments.

It may be worth stating that we base our code of conduct on respect. Respect for the individual, staff, property and possessions. Discipline in the punitive sense is regarded as a contingency measure, our main emphasis being upon example, communication, sound working relationships and a belief that prevention is better than cure.

Pastoral Structure

Every pupil in the school has a Form Tutor who has over all responsibility for that pupil's well-being, and this includes academic progress, involvement in the school, social relationships and any signs of stress or unhappiness. It is the Form Tutor whom you should contact in the first instance (via a telephone call to the School Office) if you have any concerns. He/she will be glad to make an appointment to see you.

There is a Head of Year who has responsibility for the general well-being of the year group and who coordinates the work of the tutors. He/she will deal with more serious matters.

The Principal and Vice Principal have over all responsibility for the Division and will be happy to see you if you have major concerns.

Do not form the idea however that our pastoral work is all concerned with problems. A great deal of time is spent encouraging, commending, helping, advising and simply taking an interest in the pupils.

House System

Our House System is also an integral part of the pastoral structure. Instead

of the horizontal year-groupings, it emphasises the vertical, where pupils have contact with fellow House members in different years. The system aims to engender a spirit of House loyalty and pupils can gain credit for their House through a wide range of activities including sport and music and by accumulating Merit Marks. As your son/daughter enters the school, they will be assigned to one of four houses (Adlington, Capesthorpe, Gawsforth and Tatton) and they will wear an appropriate House tie.

Absence **Planned absence**

If you know that your son or daughter is going to need to be away from school, we ask you to write to the relevant Principal to ask for leave of absence two weeks in advance. However, any absence makes it more difficult for your son or daughter to keep up with the pace of work at a school like King's, so unless this is unavoidable we ask you not to take him or her out of school during term time.

Leave of absence will normally be granted on request to the Principal in the following circumstances -

- (i) to allow a pupil to attend a unique and important family occasion.
- (ii) in order that a pupil may join his/her family for the main family holiday of the year when the parental occupation dictates that this should take place wholly or in part during term time.
- (iii) unavoidable travel circumstances eg. Late notification of flight times.

We are fortunate to have extensive school holidays. In view of this, leave of absence will not be granted to avoid possible traffic congestion or for any other reason which would equally apply to all other parents.

Illness

If your son or daughter is ill, we ask you to contact the relevant Division on the first morning of absence but not by email please. Divisional Secretaries will contact home during the morning of an absence if no notification has been received. When your child returns to school, we need a note from you explaining the reason for the absence (also not by email please). This is not a whim on our part; the Department for Children, Schools and Families requires us to provide them every year with figures for authorized and unauthorized absences. Absences which are not supported by a note are counted as truancy.

School Nurse There is a qualified school nurse on each site who is available between 8.30am and 4.30pm. Further information can be found in the Health & Medical Support leaflet contained in the welcome pack.

School Uniform All King's pupils wear a school uniform. Pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their appearance and we ask parents to support us in our aim of upholding a smart dress code.

For practical reasons (and despite the best efforts of a few pupils!), school

uniform cannot reflect fashion trends. Please beware of being seduced into buying non-regulation items, especially shoes, by the promise that “everyone else is wearing them”. We would prefer not to be put into a position where we have to ask parents to replace expensive items because they do not conform to our uniform regulations.

If you need advice on the suitability of any item, please contact either the relevant Principal or the School Shop.

Inevitably, items of clothing can be mislaid, and if we are to have any chance of reuniting them with their owner, they must be clearly labelled. An investment in name tapes at the beginning of your son or daughter’s school career invariably pays dividends at a later date.

Appearance King’s pupils are expected to look neat and tidy at all times.

Boys may not have extremely long (over collar length) or extremely short hair (lower than clipper size number 4). Girls with long hair should tie it back. Bizarre styles are unacceptable for either sex as is unnatural hair colouring. Hair gel is discouraged and pupils should have their hair well groomed. Boys may not wear any jewellery; girls are allowed one pair of plain stud earrings worn in the earlobes and one plain ring. Facial piercing and tongue studs are not allowed.

Personal Possessions & Valuables

Items of value, including MP3 players or i-pods must not be brought to school. We realise however that many pupils find it convenient to carry a mobile phone. Since these are brought in by choice, the school can accept no liability for loss or damage. The use of the picture facility on mobile phones is forbidden in school or on school related activities. To avoid disruption, mobiles should be switched off throughout the day. They should receive only messages, not incoming calls. Outgoing calls may be made at break and lunchtime only from pupils’ form rooms. During the school day mobiles should never be used in public areas or when walking about. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in confiscation. Pupils should not bring large sums of money to school. If this is unavoidable, the money should be handed to the Divisional Secretary for safe keeping. When changing for PE pupils should hand all valuables to the PE staff. Pupils are responsible for collecting valuables at the end of the lesson.

The sports department will provide all equipment needed for sport lessons, but we appreciate some pupils prefer to bring their own equipment (particularly for cricket). It is compulsory for mouthguards to be used for all forms of contact sport (for example, in rugby and hockey) but these are not provided by the school. Please note that the school does not accept liability for loss of, or damage to, pupils’ personal property including sports clothing and equipment whilst it is on or left at any of the School’s premises. Such items should be clearly labelled with the pupil’s name and, if necessary, high risk items should be covered on a parent’s household insurance policy separately. Such items should never be left overnight at School.

Financial Matters Most financial matters in the school are dealt with by the Finance Office.

The Director of Finance is available to discuss financial problems with parents either by appointment or on the telephone. His direct line is 01625 260010. The earlier that any difficulties are shared, the easier it usually is to agree the best way forward.

Security Entrance into the school is controlled by security keypads. If you come into school during a working day, you will notice that all staff, teaching and non-teaching alike, are wearing an identification badge. This is a security measure, designed to deter intruders from wandering onto school premises, and the simple fact that we do this does act as a deterrent and improves security. If you are likely to be on the school premises during the day for any length of time, (perhaps helping prepare for a play or concert or organising a Friends of King's function) please report to the office when you arrive and request a visitor's badge.

Publicity & Marketing The school employs the services of Johnson Carter for our press coverage in order to promote the significant successes of our pupils. Thousands of images have been reproduced in local papers and this has brought a great deal of happiness to many parents and children. Although there is a marketing element attached to these pictures and stories, one of our main aims is to ensure that the achievement of our pupils is celebrated in the widest possible sphere. In addition we use literature, slide shows, a DVD and a website to market the school. Our parents and children are usually proud to be seen in the newspaper etc.

Should you not wish for your child to be involved, we ask that this is made known to the Principal and the school will ensure that your child is not included in any photographs likely to be used.

School Governors Although you are unlikely to encounter the School Governors very often while your son or daughter is a pupil, they are very important people as they have ultimate responsibility for everything in the school. The Governing Body consists of some twenty men and women, some of whom represent various other institutions such as the Church of England, the local Council or local universities, who give their time voluntarily to running the school. They meet in full once a term and they have a number of sub-committees, responsible for various aspects of the school such as Education, Finance, and Bursary Fundraising who meet more regularly.

The Head of Foundation assumes their delegated authority for every aspect of the school and ultimately for the well-being and education of every pupil. He reports regularly to the Governors, and is accountable to them for everything that goes on.

Friends Of King's All parents of pupils at King's are automatically members of the Friends of King's, which is a body of parents, with staff representatives, set up to support the school.

It does this in a variety of ways. There is an executive committee which organises a number of events (Christmas Fair, Summer Ball, etc) partly to

raise money and partly to provide an opportunity for parents to get to know each other. The money provides a number of "extras" for a whole range of school activities, and over the years these have amounted to a very significant enhancement of what the school provides.

You can support the Friends of King's by joining the committee, volunteering to help at functions and by attending the various events throughout the year.

Details of how to become involved are given at your first Parents' Evening. Do join in and give us the benefit of your expertise - whatever it may be!

The Chair of the Friends of King's can be contacted via the Foundation Office.

What To Do If...? [You need to contact your son/daughter urgently at school](#)

You should ring the appropriate Divisional Office and leave a message. Only urgent messages can be delivered directly to pupils.

If your son or daughter has a mobile phone at school you may wish to send a message to them. Mobile phones must be kept switched off and should not receive incoming calls. However, your son or daughter can respond to a message at break or lunchtime.

[Your son/daughter is absent from school](#)

Contact the Divisional Secretary and let us know how long he/she is likely to be away. In cases of prolonged absence, it may be appropriate to arrange for some work to be sent home.

[Your son/daughter needs to attend a doctor's or dentist's appointment in school time](#)

Write a note to your son/daughter's Form Tutor in advance. Collect him/her from the Divisional Office at the agreed time and receive an exempt slip from the Divisional Secretary which should be returned after he/she arrives back at school.

[Your son/daughter is not fit enough to do games](#)

You are asked to send in a note detailing why he/she is unable to do games and excusing him/her. This must be handed in to the teacher in charge of their activity. Pupils with a note may be allowed to work in the Library/Resource Centre or at the teacher's discretion, they may be given a useful activity (eg. timing events) to do outside.

[Your son/daughter misses the school bus at the end of the day](#)

We ask parents to have a contingency plan so that your son/daughter knows what to do. Pupils who miss the bus are asked to go to the Divisional Office and inform the Secretary so that we are alerted to any difficulty and can help contact parents.

[You are unable to attend a Parents' Evening](#)

Contact your son/daughter's Head of Year at the earliest opportunity. It may be possible for you to speak to staff at an alternative, mutually conven-

ient time or we may be able to send you a written progress report.

You want to make a complaint

Contact the Divisional Office or Foundation Office who will make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the Principal who will follow the appropriate steps. A copy of the Complaints Procedure is available to parents on request.

Other Information & Policies

The school's website www.kingsmac.co.uk is kept up to date and is increasingly becoming a key source of information for you and a communication mechanism between school and home. If you cannot find the answer to a question in this document then the website may provide the information you require.

Policies and procedures including the school's Anti-bullying, School Curriculum and Child Protection policies can all be found on the website. The school's Exclusion policy is available to parents on request.

Keeping you in touch

As you can imagine, there is a great deal going on in a school the size of King's - concerts, plays, trips, language exchanges, Parents' Evenings and much more besides. There are many functions to which we would like to invite you and numerous activities which may interest your son or daughter. To ensure that you are kept up-to-date with these events, we have regular mailings when material is given to our pupils to bring home to you. The school has included all letters on the website.

Mailing dates can be found in the school calendar which will be given to your son or daughter at the beginning of each term. This includes a wealth of information about functions, fixtures etc., and also has a list of term dates. The Calendar is also posted termly on our website.

Every term, you will also receive a copy of our newsletter King's Colours. This aims to give each King's parent an overview of what is happening throughout the whole King's Foundation and to keep you informed about the many successes and achievements of our pupils.

Contacting King's

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they wish to discuss any concerns they may have. The switchboard is open from 8.00am until 5.00pm during term time. If you ring the school during the holidays, you will be able to speak to the member of the office staff on duty from 9.00am until 4.30pm.

Switchboard 01625 260000

Finance Department 01625 260010

Please see back cover for further contact information.



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