

THE KING'S SCHOOL IN MACCLESFIELD

**Sixth Form
Parents' Handbook**


King's

Welcome Welcome to the King's School Sixth Form 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 son's or daughter's time in the Sixth Form, 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 students 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 students on the premises. Parents are asked to park well away from the school. There are specific regulations that apply to Sixth Form students who wish to drive themselves to school. Students should contact the Sixth Form Office for the relevant details and permission slips.

Students may arrive at school after 8.15am. Once they have come into school, they should remain on site except at lunch time: Sixth Form students are permitted to leave the site during the lunch hour but may not do so during morning break or private study lessons. Year 13 students only may apply, through tutors, for exeats if they do not have a timetabled lesson during the last lesson of the day. In this case, students need to sign out at the Sixth Form Office. Exeats are not available to students in Year 12.

Students 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. Students who wish to work quietly after school hours may remain in the Sixth Form Centre until 5.00pm.

Homework

Homework is, of course, vital to Sixth Form students. Typically, students might expect to undertake four hours work per subject per week outside the classroom in Year 12 and five hours in Year 13. Some of this will be done in private study lessons in school, but much of it will be homework. In addition to set homeworks, there is always research and reading around a subject that will help students to reach their potential at A Level. Students should seek their teachers' advice about what might be most helpful to them.

Reporting & Assessment

Like you, we wish to ensure that your son/daughter has a successful and fulfilling career in the Sixth Form.

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

You will receive at least three regular assessment sheets which detail your son/daughter's attainment and effort in each subject. 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 in the two year groups. 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. Our students 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, cards or letters of congratulation from Heads of Year, Vice Principal, Principal or the Head of Foundation, and 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 student. Positions of responsibility, such as School Prefect, are available to students who have responded well to what is on offer in the Sixth Form.

When students 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.

Students will be entered in the Sixth Form Offenders' Book for serious misdemeanours. They should bear in mind that this includes deliberately missing a lesson.

- A first entry in the Offenders' Book leads to a reprimand from the Principal or Vice Principal and a letter to parents.
- A second entry leads to a reprimand from the Head of Foundation and a further letter to parents.
- A third entry leads to suspension from school, for a period to be decided by the Head of Foundation.
- Further entries could lead to permanent exclusion.

Pastoral Structure

Every student has a Form Tutor who has over all responsibility for that student'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 overall 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 students.

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 Principal to ask for leave of absence. 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 student to attend a unique and important family occasion
- (ii) in order that a student 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, e.g. 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 Sixth Form Office. If you have not got in touch with us after three days, your son/daughter's Form Tutor will contact you. When your son/daughter returns to school, we need a note from you explaining the reason for the absence. 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 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.

Dress & Appearance

Although there is not a Sixth Form uniform, students are expected to adhere to our guidelines. A sheet providing detailed guidelines is sent to parents in the welcome pack and appears in Student Planners. Students wear a plain, dark suit and there is a general expectation of good taste and smartness, as if dressing for the office. Leather and denim are not acceptable in any form. Hair should be neat, well-groomed and of natural colour; boys'

hair should be neither excessively long nor excessively short; facial hair is not acceptable; extremes of fashion should be avoided. Wearing of jewellery (bracelets, necklaces etc.) is not condoned but one plain ring is acceptable for boys and girls; also, girls may wear ear-studs, if necessary. Any make-up worn must be discreet.

Personal Possessions & Valuables

Items of value, including MP3 players or i-pods must not be brought to school. We realise however that many students 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 the Sixth Form Centre. During the school day mobiles should never be used in public areas or when walking about. Students should not bring large sums of money to school. If this is unavoidable, the money should be handed to the Sixth Form Secretary for safe keeping. When changing for games students should hand all valuables to the games staff. Students are responsible for collecting valuables at the end of the lesson.

Although the school will in most cases provide equipment needed for sports activities, some students will prefer to bring in their own equipment. Please note that the School does not accept liability for loss of, or damage to, a student's 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 student'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 acts 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 students. Thousands of images have been reproduced in local papers and this has brought a great deal of happiness to many parents and students. 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 students 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 students are usually proud to be seen in the newspaper etc.

Should you not wish for your son/daughter to be involved, we ask that this is made known to the Principal, in which case the school will ensure that your son/daughter 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 student, 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, which 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 students 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 Sixth Form Office and leave a message. Only urgent messages can be delivered directly to students.

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 Sixth Form 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. Please try to avoid making such appointments during school time if possible.

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. Students with a note will be allowed to work in the Sixth Form Centre.

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. Students who miss the bus are asked to go to the Sixth Form 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 the Sixth Form Secretary at the earliest opportunity. It may be possible for you to speak to staff at an alternative, mutually convenient time or we may be able to send you a written progress report.

You want to make a complaint

Contact the Sixth Form 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, which are published 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 students.

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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