



# King's Colours

1502

Autumn 2020

The termly newsletter of the King's School in Macclesfield



## New era of learning at King's

On 3 September, the School opened its new campus to pupils for the very first time. It was the realization of an eight-year vision to relocate one of the country's oldest schools to a brand new site during what has been a year like no other.

The stunning new £60 million campus is now home to all 1,200 boys and girls aged 3 – 18. The fabulous tree-lined site provides a large main academic building, designed to maximize space, natural light and outdoor areas. Facilities include a music recital hall, a conference hall, a lecture theatre, large drama

and performance hall, art gallery and science gardens. There are also outdoor learning areas, including outdoor classrooms and teaching areas.

A separate Sports Centre provides an impressive range of facilities including a six-lane swimming pool, an indoor three-lane cricket centre, a dance/martial arts studio, a large six-court sports hall, gymnasium, plus a café for pupils and parents. Expansive areas for outdoor sports include two floodlit all weather Astroturf pitches, six floodlit tennis and netball courts, rugby, cricket

and athletics facilities. The campus has not disappointed, with pupils enjoying all their fabulous new facilities. Monty, in Year 7, said: "I really love the buildings and the Sports Centre. There is so much space and I enjoy the outdoor areas and being able to spend time with friends outdoors." Winston, also in Year 7, added: "I've still got lots of the new campus to explore, but what I've seen already is great." Rosie summed up the feeling of most with: "The new school is amazing! I'm really looking forward to using the new swimming pool."

Head of Foundation, Jason Slack, said: "It was an incredibly busy summer for staff with the move as well as getting ready for opening in a Covid-safe way in September, but the prize of the stunning new campus, set in glorious Cheshire countryside and with enviable facilities, made all the hard work worth it. In some ways, the opening was even more special because of the lockdown. More than ever, the excitement of coming together as a single community feels so special."

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**T**HE only thing that has been constant about the last half term has been change! A change in the way we teach, a change in the way we operate, a change of Head, and the move into our brand new school. In the context of this happening in a global pandemic, I'm not sure we could have hoped for anything better than our experience of the last couple of months. It has been heartening for a new Head to see the school community pull together to make a success of a very challenging situation.

The start of term was uplifting and inspirational. Walking down the 'Boulevard' for the first time to see our incredible new school – and all the potential that it unlocks – was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for us all. And something I will never forget. It is the product of a huge amount of

work by so many people with imagination, tenacity, courage and many more intellectual characteristics that we endorse every day with our children. This really was a case of the school 'practising what it preached'.

There was also the very emotional aspect of seeing young people together in a school for the first time in almost six months.

Laughter, excitement, joy and (dare I say) a greater appreciation of what they had missed, were all evident. It's only when things that are taken for granted are removed, we really understand their true worth and there is no more basic entitlement than an education.

Once these instinctive emotions had passed, there was the realisation of routine; the important and fundamental task of educating our young people, and fulfilling our aims. Masks at the ready, children occupied their new classrooms, socially distant from their teachers, in a well-ordered fashion with a good deal more control than they previously needed. Once the classroom teaching was more settled, some extra-curricular activities were slowly introduced. These aren't as extensive as we would like, and many parents and teachers yearn for the pitchside support they once gave, or the concerts and productions they enjoyed watching. However, there has been gratitude for the Saturday sports and the music 'bubble ensembles'. It gave me immense satisfaction to see half our Year 11 pupils continue their Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award recently by carrying out expeditions (sadly without overnight camping).

The huge amount of effort and application needed to reinvent how we operate in the last half term means the half term break will be well received. But we should all remain thankful for the progress made since the (seemingly distant) days of worrying about lunch queues and where all the traffic was coming from at the start of September. We will reflect on our achievements as we cautiously step further into unknown territory with the continued resolve to do what is right for our school community.

**Jason Slack, Head of Foundation**

## Getting to know our new Head!

**Mr Jason Slack took over at the helm of the school in August, at a momentous point in our history as we opened our new campus. Here, we get to know Mr Slack a little better and learn a bit more about him.**

### What were you like at school?

When I was young, I had a big mouth and no self-control and this often got me into trouble. I went to Batley Grammar School and, as I went through adolescence, I was very busy and directed my energy into lots of different interests. I decided to enjoy school and be happy.

### Did you always know what career you wanted to go in to?

My earliest memory of knowing what I wanted to be 'when I grew up' was being a long-distance lorry driver. I enjoyed the idea of freedom and adventure. I wasn't allowed to join the army as I was colour blind. Like a lot of children, I also thought that I might be a professional footballer, but I didn't realise that I had little, if any, skill!

### Have you done any other jobs?

In the Sixth Form, I learnt more about electricity whilst labouring for an electrician at weekends than I ever did in a physics lesson.

I worked as an accountant during a gap year and

also through university on a scholarship programme for the big firm, Arthur Andersen, who have since gone out of business (but this was nothing to do with me!)

### What do you love most about teaching?

Teaching is incredibly rewarding, and a real privilege to contribute and share in the development of a child into a young adult. The feeling of pride when a pupil increasingly becomes independent and then goes out into the world, equipped to make a positive difference, is very fulfilling.

### What are the biggest challenges facing young people today?

Growing up in a world full of digital media is very challenging. Having immediate access to everything online, with no sense of delayed gratification, is worrying when so much that is worthwhile in life is earned over time and with sustained hard work and patience. But also allowing the world to have immediate access to you, through your phone, can be damaging if you don't have the self-discipline to switch off. Developing the

mental toughness to not be too concerned about how others see you, and not to worry about 'fomo' is crucial. Children need time and space to understand and consider the kind of person they want to become.

### Which of your teachers had the most positive influence on you and why?

Too many to mention! Dr Knowles, the Deputy Head who rescued me from frustration and occasional rage as a younger child and put me into an environment where I was challenged and kept busy. Mr Blizard, the Geography teacher, who showed incredible compassion and understanding in motivating a teenager from a small mining village to become ambitious and think bigger. Mr Bunford, an incredible mathematician and teacher, who had an amazing ability to break complex problems down into manageable chunks and who inspired me to ask questions and 'figure things out'.

### What's the funniest moment you've had in the classroom?

I once smashed a giant model of the eye (by accident) that was full of a fluorescent liquid that made it rain 'green' on the teacher in the lab on the floor below.

I also managed to electrocute myself in front of a class whilst I was trying to fix a set of model power lines. The class were very understanding as I lay on the floor in a quivering heap!

### What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

Stay calm and think before you act.

### What attracted you to King's?

It is clearly a highly aspirational school, looking very much to the future. That forward thinking drive and ambition is very attractive to me. As can be seen from the new campus, the King's governors and staff have an extremely positive outlook which matches my own philosophy. They want to do the very best they can for every King's pupil and ensure they have a better education at King's than they would do anywhere else.

### How do you like to spend your spare time?

There isn't much, but I love hiking and enjoy my sport. I am a Leeds United fan, which might not be that popular this side of the Pennines. I also enjoy spending time with my wife and two daughters.



## Exam results set new records

Our Year 13 pupils produced a stunning set of A Level results at the end of an unprecedented academic year.

Overall, 61% of all grades were at A\*/A and 90% of grades were A\*–B. Mr Slack said: "I am full of admiration for this superb group of young people.

"Despite the challenges, their achievement has been recognised and this enables the overwhelming majority to join their first-choice university, whilst others have chosen routes such as higher-level apprenticeships, which are increasingly popular. The hard work of these students throughout their time at King's and their achievements not just academically, but across a range of musical, creative and sporting disciplines, will ensure their future success in their chosen fields."

In the prestigious Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), which is highly valued by universities, 82% of all grades were at A\*/A. Students are going on to study a wide range of courses – from Art to Medicine and Law – and 83% of students achieved their first choice of university, with just under 70% joining Russell Group universities.

At GCSE, King's pupils were thrilled with their achievements. Overall, 70% of all grades were at 9–7 (A\*/A) and 86% of all grades were at 9–6 (A\*–B).







# NEW DIRECTIONS...



*This term has seen a new and exciting addition to the school curriculum for all pupils: The King's Compass Programme. It is our school commitment to outdoor education and here, Mrs Rachel Cookson and Mr Paul Bartle, explain more about the programme.*



## King's Compass Ethos

The programme embraces the research-based belief that children grow, learn and thrive when they are connected with the natural world. Both physical and mental benefits are derived from spending time outdoors.

Presenting exciting opportunities for pupils aged 3 to 18, this new curriculum programme is an ambitious step for the school as it unites the existing opportunities within King's for adventure and extra-curricular learning, with more dedicated teaching of key skills within the core curriculum.

All pupils at King's will take part in the King's Compass Programme. Infant and Junior pupils have designated lessons which focus on specific units of study underpinning National

Curriculum objectives. Senior pupils will use PHSE lessons, dedicated enrichment days and outdoor learning sessions to focus on the principles of the programme.

## Teamwork, Leadership and Communication

The King's Compass Programme is designed to help develop an attitude of 'I can' and 'let's try again' amongst all King's learners. Curiosity, creativity and imagination blend perfectly as learners venture outside their classrooms and outside their comfort zones.

Key skills of resilience and collaboration are prioritised, as pupils face challenges, failure, setbacks and adversity in their learning – all of these experiences are recognised for



their value and necessity as part of the programme.

The King's Compass Programme is designed to enable all pupils at King's to develop different skills and experiences, leading to an extension of pupils' self-awareness, confidence and self-esteem. The Programme will develop collaborative-working and communication skills, providing physical and mental health benefits. Longer-term benefits include improved academic achievement, personal and social development, greater employability, improved wellbeing and mental health.

## Early Skill Development

The King's Compass Programme has started with great energy this term. After being away from school and their friends for such a long time, the King's Compass lessons have provided pupils with the opportunity to get to know their new class mates through a selection of teambuilding challenges. Lesson activities have tested pupils' trust, pushed the importance of listening to others and encouraged pupils to be adaptable with their approaches to tasks. Pupils have really enjoyed facing so many fun challenges this term.

A favourite activity amongst Infant and

Junior pupils is already the 'The Circle of Trust'. Here, pupils stand in a circle as they hold a rope. They lean their body weight back, trusting the rest of their class to do the same! In order for this to work, everyone must trust and support each other. Pupils have also loved the gutter challenges. The aim is to focus carefully, work as a team and slowly use balancing techniques as pupils collaborate to roll a ball at different speeds through the guttering. Much co-operation is needed to ensure the ball does not end up on the floor and remains moving at a steady pace. Feedback from pupils on their various activities or 'Missions' has so far been incredibly positive.

## Measuring Development and Personal Growth

As units of work are completed, pupils will be encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt, describing how they have benefitted and grown from the experiences they have had. Skills will be celebrated and recorded along the way. For younger pupils, this will be in their King's Compass Passport, and for Senior pupils, Unifrog will be used to record their activities and learning. All records will help pupils to build their portfolio and future CV, aiding university applications.



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## Whole school approach

The King's Compass staff team comprises of Infant, Junior and Senior colleagues. They have worked closely over the last academic year to plan and design the programme together. The programme will enrich and inspire our pupils, offering an experiential element to our curriculum on our beautiful campus. A further dimension of quality and enrichment has been created as our school strides forward as a leading light for education.

## Spaces and Experiences

So far three key outdoor spaces have been developed with the support of SOUL Education, a leading outdoor education specialist. A phased approach to developing key areas of the new site is already well underway. We are delighted that Friends of King's have supported a number of the projects, including two outdoor classrooms, a physical challenge area for all pupils and staff training.





## Focus on swimming

We are thrilled to have our new Sport England standard swimming pool in full daily use by pupils. Swimming has always been part of the Junior Sport programme, but now we are able to extend it to Infant and Senior pupils. Our new Swimming Team are putting pupils through their paces and instilling a love of swimming.

### Infant & Junior Swimming

All of our Infant and Junior pupils can now swim throughout the academic year. Each pupil has been assessed and assigned to an appropriate group, and pupils can progress during the term and year. Our programme follows Swim England guidance for swimming lessons in schools. Swimming and

water safety are included within the national curriculum PE programme. We aim to ensure all pupils can swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres, using a range of strokes and perform self-rescue, all by the end of Year 6.

### Senior Swimming

Although not in the national curriculum for Key Stages 3–5, we are keen to offer a wide variety of swimming experiences for pupils in Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9) to help them progress and gain water confidence during their time at King's. Pupils will swim for at least one half-term block each year. This way, pupils will experience swimming as well as a full range of other sports

through their PE curriculum. At Key Stage 4 and 5, swimming can be continued as part of the GCSE PE curriculum and in Sixth Form.

MEET THE TEAM



**Mrs Jocelyn  
Swim Teacher**

- UKCC Level 2 and 3 Swim Coach, ASA Level 2 swim teacher
- Former coach with British Swimming and British Para Swimming
- Experienced at teaching all levels and abilities
- Former junior and senior swimmer for GB



**Miss Pepper  
Swim Coach**

- ASA Level 2 swim teacher and swimming coach for 9 years
- Experienced at teaching all levels and abilities
- Former competitive swimmer

### Extra-Curricular & Competitive Swimming

We know that we have a good number of pupils for whom swimming is a real passion and we have a number of very talented swimmers. There will be numerous extra-curricular swimming opportunities available for pupils although, at the moment, Covid-19 restrictions mean that these are currently limited to year-group bubbles.

When Covid-19 guidelines allow, we will offer all pupils a range of exciting opportunities to take part in competitive swimming through House swimming galas and interschool swimming galas. For junior pupils, we also participate in AJIS galas and, for Senior pupils, we offer ESSA galas (Secondary Team Championships).



£3MILLION

+£2.5m

## Fundraising Update

The school is delighted to have exceeded the £2.5m mark of its £3m fundraising target for facilities at the new campus. We are extremely grateful to all of our supporters, who have helped us to achieve this exciting milestone.

One of our supporters, **James Hurrell** (1986) (pictured above) has supported our new school campaign and explains his reasons for getting behind the appeal: "I'm heavily involved in Scouting and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, and firmly believe the more high quality opportunities we can give to our young people to prepare for the future, the better our country will be for everyone. I see contributing to King's (and my own children's state schools) as part of that investment."

"Choice in education is extremely important to me, there is no 'one size fits all', and if we can lift everyone's experiences then the world will be a better place. Having a world class facility will benefit not only King's pupils, but the other educational and charitable groups in the surrounding area – that's a vision I can buy into."

If you'd like to find out more about supporting the school or our Bursary Fund, please contact [lauren.tidey@kingsmac.co.uk](mailto:lauren.tidey@kingsmac.co.uk) or visit the Support Us page on our website.

## School ties...



We have had a new batch of Former Pupil ties made in both Silk and Polyester and produced here in the UK. Prices are £25 for a silk tie and £15 for a polyester tie, and all proceeds will go towards the School's Bursary Fund. If you would like to purchase a tie, please contact [former.pupils@kingsmac.co.uk](mailto:former.pupils@kingsmac.co.uk) with your name and address.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO...

**Aiman Aslam** (2016), who is studying Medicine, has been awarded the UK Society of Academic Primary Care annual prize for her discussion on the challenges faced by the South Asian community in the UK, with regards to dementia diagnosis, health provision and social support.

**Kelly Corcoran** (2017), who graduated from Newcastle University with a First Class BA Honours in English Literature with Philosophy, will shortly begin a Masters in Early Modern English Literature at King's College London.

**Ben Cree** (2015), who was awarded a 2:1 in his Chemistry MA and is going on to study his PhD in Molecular Science at Newcastle University.

**Jamie Edgerton** (2015), who achieved a MSci in Chemistry at Cambridge University, winning the Dudley Williams prize for outstanding performance in Biological Chemistry. He also achieved his cross-country Blue representing Cambridge in the competition against Oxford. He is now going to study his PhD in Nucleic Acid Chemistry under Professor Sir Shankar Balasubramanian.

**Christian Harrop** (2017), who graduated from the University of Exeter with a First in Economics and Politics. He will be joining the Mergers and Acquisitions team of PwC in Dubai as a Graduate Trainee in October.

**Nicole Hughes** (2016), who has graduated from the University of Bristol with a First Class MSci in Chemistry, and will be starting her graduate scheme with Deloitte in September 2021.

**Alex Galbraith** (2017), who has graduated from Durham University with a First Class Honours BSc in Biological Sciences, was also awarded the Biological Sciences prize for his efforts throughout his degree. He will be starting as a trainee patent attorney at Mewburn Ellis LLP in October.

**Zoe Richmond** (2016), who has graduated from the University of Bristol with First Class Honours in her Master in Science in Chemistry with study in continental Europe.

**Max Thompson** (2018), who made his senior Premier League debut for Burnley Football Club in June against Manchester City. He was also nominated the winner of the Youth Team Player of the Season.

**Millie Turner** (2016), who graduated from the University of Newcastle with a First Class Honours degree in Accounting & Finance. She is looking forward to starting as a Trainee Accountant at Saffery Champness later this year.

**Dmitri Whitmore** (2016), who secured extremely high Firsts in Mathematics in every year of his studies at Cambridge University. He was described as 'the strongest maths student at St John's in the last five years.' He has also won multiple prizes during his time at Cambridge.



## National Show Jumping

Pupils representing King's put in some excellent performances at the National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) Show Jumping event. In Class 2 (Novice 80-85cm), the team of Olivia Bray, Poppy Holding, Ella Bray and Lottie Dennett finished in second place and qualified for the National Schools Championships. In Class 1 (Mini 70-75cm), Olivia Bray came second individually and also qualified for the National Championships. Rubi Ambrey, Olivia Bray, Matilda Machin, Lottie, Ella and Poppy have also qualified for the Championship Plate in their respective class.





## A harvest of riches for charity

Generosity was on display for our Harvest celebrations in the Infant & Junior Division. This year, all donations are going to the Silklife Foodbank in Macclesfield.

Pupils brought in hundreds of items that will go to support local families struggling in these difficult times, and we express our gratitude to our parents for their kindness and generosity.

This academic year, our pupils in the Senior Division have chosen a number of charities to support through their fundraising activities.

Our Charities Prefects (*pictured below*) have shared with the rest of the pupil body their vision to support Friends For Leisure, a local charity supporting young disabled children in Cheshire East. Pupils are now coming up with inventive ways to raise funds for this worthy cause.

In September, Senior pupils also supported 'Choose Love', a charity that is supporting refugees, displaced and vulnerable communities in Greece. Pupils across all Senior year groups donated basic hygiene products such as soap, toothpaste and deodorant. Thank you to all the families that kindly supported this.



### PUPILS

**Sam Danson**, who recorded a long jump of 6.76m which ranks him 4th in the U17 age group.

**Thomas Danson**, who jumped a new personal best of 5.47m in the long jump, which ranks him 17th in the UK (U15B).

**Joey Chong** (U17), **Liam Yahathugoda** and **Joe Moores**, both in Year 7 (U14 EPP), who have been selected into the Cheshire Cricket Emerging Player Programme (EPP).

**Phil Goodfellow**, who smashed his 800m personal best to run 2:05.60, which ranks him 8th in the UK (U15B).

**Reece Grady**, who has been selected for the next stage of the Swim England Talent Programme.

**Solomon Lever, Jake Jones, Ollie Davies, Fred Riordan** (Year 10) and **Billy Griffiths, Sam Worthington, Alex Davies** (all U18), who have been training as part of the Ultimate Rugby Sevens (North) Development Programme.

**Olivia Mackenzie**, who has been awarded a place at the Junior RNCM this year where she will study Double Bass and Voice.

**Fin Nash, Joey Chong, Christian Smith, Leo Burns, Alfie Usher and Liam Yahathugoda**, who were selected to the Cheshire Cricket teams in 2019 and progressed to the last stage of the trials for 2020.

**James & Alex Price**, who have been fundraising for Macclesfield Hospital, The Christie and East Cheshire Hospice, raising over £1000 in total.

**Harry Sasse**, in Year 7, who has been selected for the Hallé Children's Choir.

### STAFF

**Mr Robin Jackson**, who has published the latest in his series of children's fantasy novels 'The Search for Jewel Island'.

**Mr Mike Walton**, who completed his first Ultra Marathon, running the 35-mile 'Gritstone Grind' from Kidsgrove to Disley in 7 hours 45 minutes.

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