

King's Colours

Summer 2020

The termly newsletter of the King's School in Macclesfield



We're nearly there!

The finishing touches are being put to the School's £60 million new home, with construction company Vinci on schedule to handover the campus this summer.

Phases 1 and 2, the main teaching blocks for the junior, senior and sixth form pupils, are now complete, while the inside fit is currently being finished in Phases 3 and 4 for music, art, drama and the Sports Centre.

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a short extension to the original handover date, but staff will still be able to transfer operations to the new campus over the summer holiday.

Fine weather has allowed the rugby, football and cricket pitches to be seeded. Two all-weather surfaces for hockey, plus tennis and netball courts, have floodlights, and work is underway on the new First XI cricket pitch in front of the main building. This, along with the bridge between the Sports Centre and the main building, have been made possible following two anonymous donations.

Vinci Senior Project Manager, Martin Horton, initially saw his on-site team cut from 300 to 100 by the lockdown

measures, but from Easter the numbers working on site increased to over 200. "We have implemented a new working protocol to enable safe distancing and assure the safety of our teams at all times," said Martin. "We have worked round the clock to ensure progress during these very challenging times."

In September, the impressive rural campus will open its doors for pupils and will boast more than 80 acres of Cheshire countryside surrounded by woodland and fields. More than eight years since the original concept of moving the School was proposed, the plans have evolved into the creation of one of the country's finest locations and facilities of any day school. The eco-friendly site will provide 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 hall, central library, art gallery and science gardens.

A separate Sports Centre provides a six-lane swimming pool, indoor three-lane cricket centre, dance/martial arts studio, large six-court sports hall, gymnasium, plus a café for pupils and parents.

King's Olympic Linguistics medals

Fin Ross, who is studying German, Latin, English Language and Music in the Sixth Form, has won an Olympic Linguistics silver medal, after proving he can speak in tongues whether it is Caribbean creole, ancient Greek or an Amazonian Forest tribal dialect.



The Sixth Form student (pictured) was one of only 50 students from over 1,500 taking part nationwide to win a prized silver medal in

this year's UK Linguistics Olympiad. The School also had a bronze medal winner in fellow Sixth Form pupil Josh Rajendran, who is studying German, Maths, Further Maths and Economics at A Level.

Both deciphered a series of evermore taxing translations using only their powers of logic to deduce the meaning.

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The King's School in Macclesfield 2019

WHEN I started back at King's in 2011, little did I imagine that my headship would be marked by the longest recorded closure of our premises in the school's history. I have always enjoyed a challenge and, in common with so many, the Covid-19 pandemic has presented the most challenging period of my career to date. Even the protracted intricacies of Cheshire East planning pale into insignificance.



Necessity, as one of my correspondents noted, is the mother of invention. We have devoted much of this **King's Colours** to the remarkable fruits of that

invention. As I noted in my first hesitant webcast to the school community in March, we have all been learning new things and working in different ways.

I am remarkably proud of what we have achieved. Everything has needed to become virtual. This does not happen by accident and I am enormously grateful to our fabulous senior management team for planning a staged and manageable leap into an unknown world. My colleagues on the teaching and support staff have worked

enormously hard to deliver work, instruction and pastoral care in new ways and, for the most part, our pupils have risen to the challenge.

Of course, the school has had its critics. We weren't going fast enough; our expectations were too high; communication was too slow or too long. The issue of fees has been contentious as some families struggled with the desperate financial consequences of the pandemic. But if you can't take criticism, then leading a school is not the job for you. Some will always see golden windows in the cottage across the valley, but as the fable teaches us, if something looks too good to be true, it generally is. Our perceptions are determined by our perspective.

Exegi monumentum
(I have built a monument) is a poem

(see below) to the transience of physical human legacy. Teachers rarely leave physical monuments, which, as Horace reminds us, always succumb in time to 'gnawing rain' and 'blustering wind'.

The results of a teacher's work, however, can live on in the minds and lives of their pupils. It may take years for these thoughts, attitudes or behaviours to spawn, but they will ensure a lasting legacy, even if it is unknown and unacknowledged.

It is difficult for now to predict the legacy left by Covid-19, but as I hope these pages illustrate, despite the losses our community has suffered, there is much to celebrate and be grateful for.

Dr Simon Hyde
Headmaster

Exegi Monumentum

*I have built a monument more lasting than bronze
And loftier than the pyramids of Kings,
Which neither gnawing rain nor blustering wind may destroy
Nor innumerable series of years
Nor the passage of ages.*

*I shall not wholly die,
A large part of me will escape Libitina:
While Pontiff and Vestal shall climb the Capitol Hill,
I shall be renewed and flourish in further praise*

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New senior prefects appointed

The School's new Head Boy and Head Girl have been appointed, with the age-old process of voting by staff and peers moving on-line during lockdown.

Musician Zoë Griffiths and charity campaigner Rory McCabe will lead the unified Senior Division of girls and boys from September. A keen saxophonist and guitarist, Zoë said: "It's an incredible honour. I came to King's from a tiny village primary school and was worried if I'd ever fit in. However, I was welcomed into the fold immediately and now I'd like to be a role model for young children who might feel just as unsure in their first few weeks."

An ardent social campaigner, Zoë is dedicated to climate change activism and also took part in the sponsored all-night sleep out to raise money for Cheshire Streetwise and the homeless in Macclesfield.

A strong runner, Rory joined King's in Year 7 from Switzerland. For the last two years, he has undertaken an annual charity marathon, running 100km at the age of 13 to raise £2,500 for the brain injury charity 'Headway' and then last year recruiting his friends who ran with him to raise £5,000 for the charity 'Young Minds.' This year he has upped the mileage for the NHS Charities Together Fund and is running 100 miles in the month of May.

Rory said: "I am so honoured to be made Head Boy. Not only am I following in hundreds of years of tradition, but I'm also representing a school that has a mission to do so much for charity. I feel truly excited to be a part of a landmark year for King's, with the relocation to the new campus and the merging of the Senior boys and girls into co-education."



Making PPE for NHS heroes



Pupils, staff and former pupils have been helping manufacture essential personal protective equipment for our NHS heroes during lockdown. Sixth Formers Ben Mellveen and Bryn Barker, both highly rated science students, have manufactured over 2,000 face visors, with no intentions of slowing production while there is still demand for PPE.

Bryn knew Ben had bought a 3D printer when he won an Arkwright Scholarship, awarded to encourage Britain's top young engineers. Each working from home, they found a design and set up a Go Funding page to support their endeavours. Through family, friends and the wider school community, they raised £2,600, which

enabled them to buy another 3D printer, filament to manufacture headbands and acetate for the visors.

Ben said: "Current production is around 700 visors a week. We have given them to local GP practices, care homes, Buxton C-19 Hub, Wythenshawe Hospital, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust and The Christie in Manchester."

The School's staff have also been pitching in to manufacture PPE. Mr Nichols, Head of Design Technology, has been putting the School's 3D printers to good use, manufacturing around 150 visors for Belong Care Home in Macclesfield and more for East Cheshire NHS Trust.

The Blackwell family, which owns and runs Opus Technical, has also been running an out of hours operation from their garden shed. The team of dad John and his kids, former King's School pupils Harry, Tom and Tori and current Sixth Former Flossie, have made more than 2,000 visors. "We have two Intensive Care doctors and two nurses in our extended family so we know only too well about their needs on the front line," said John.

Trophy success for U12 Rugby Sevens

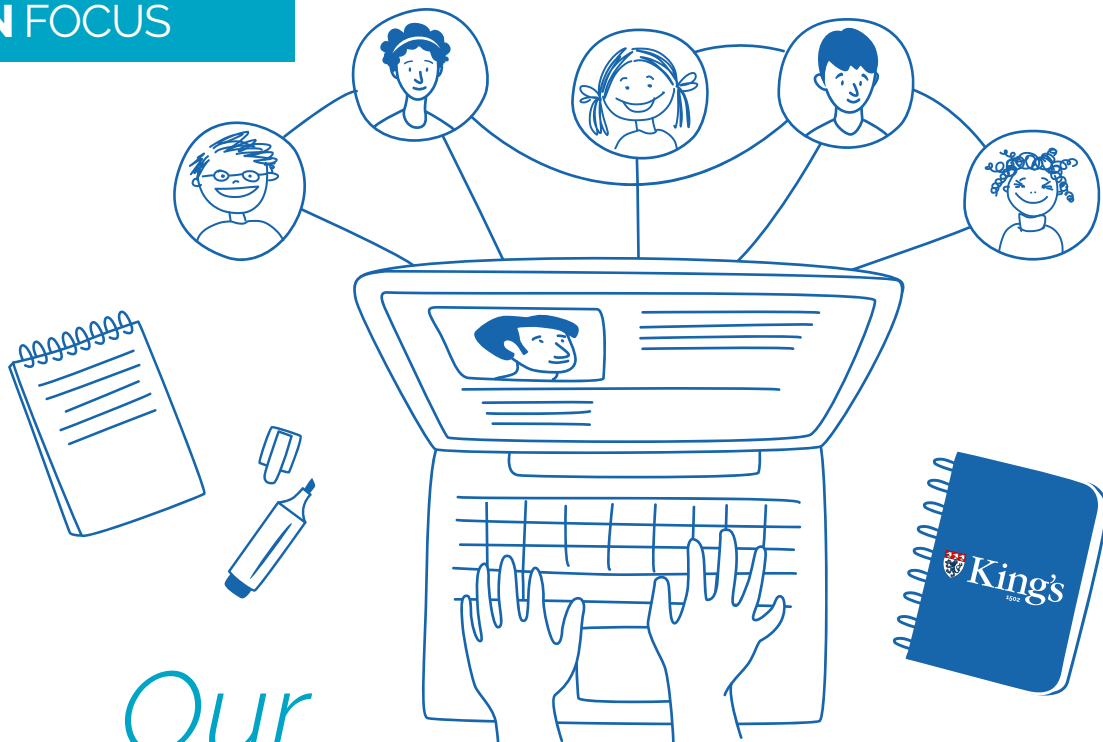
Our U12 rugby team lifted the Myles Marshall Sevens trophy, much to the delight of a large home support and coaches Mr Davies and Mr Langley.

The U12 rugby team, on the back of their unbeaten season in the full version of the game, entered their first Myles Marshall competition full of confidence on home turf at Derby Fields.

Sweeping through the first group stage, with resounding victories over Manchester Grammar, Haberdashers' Abraham Darby and Bishop Heber, the squad progressed to the Cup competition and much sterner opponents. Wins against Calday Grange (30-5) and Cheadle Hulme (40-5) set up a finale versus Audenshaw High School. The game remained scoreless for much of the match before King's finally broke the deadlock, going on to a 15-0 win.

While all subsequent Sevens competitions were cancelled due to Covid-19, our U15 VII did manage to complete all three of their competitions and were also successful, lifting the Plate at the Giggleswick School Sevens.





Our Remote way of life

School life during lockdown

Since 23 March, the School has been operating remotely while our premises are closed and the nation embraces new ways of working presented by the lockdown.

THIS has been a furiously busy time for all schools. We have all faced rather similar challenges, with our familiar learning environments closing with little more than a few days' notice and a wholesale shift to online systems not just for learning, but also the running and administration of the school, Governors meetings, parental communications and all other aspects of school life.

It seems that, since the introduction of lockdown, one positive outcome has been the widespread acknowledgement from all sections of society regarding the broad spectrum of services that schools provide: it is not just education.

Schools provide places for social interaction, safety, wellbeing, personal development, emotional support, physical education, creativity, performing arts and, overwhelmingly, a community to which all of our pupils belong.

We have grappled with the challenges presented by lockdown and our pupils and staff have risen to the challenge.

Key Worker Provision

Since our premises closed, we have remained open for the children of key workers throughout term time and the holidays, including Bank Holidays. We remain profoundly indebted to their parents for what they are contributing to our national fight against Covid-19. Numbers of children using this facility have fluctuated between around 10–20 children each day.

Remote Learning Strategy

At King's we are fortunate in having a number of robust online platforms for communicating with, and setting work for, our students. We have used Office 365 for several years now as a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) and as a way of sharing documents with students. In the Sixth Form, many staff have also made use of Microsoft One Note and Outlook. We also have the platform 'Show My Homework' as a way of setting and assessing work online for Years 7–11. Whilst these online platforms have been a useful addition to our classroom teaching for some time; during the period



of school closure they have become absolutely vital.

When we received the news regarding school closures, we developed a strategic plan for remote learning. We accepted that both students and teachers would initially be working outside their comfort zone and therefore decided to go for a phased approach to our use of technology for remote learning to ensure complete confidence. We also wanted to ensure that the technology would be able to cope given the huge demand.

Initially, our focus was on using robust platforms that were familiar to both pupils and staff. During the first phase, we asked teachers to use either 'Show My Homework' or email/

One Note to set work remotely for pupils. To give students the structure of daily work whilst also allowing them some flexibility in terms of when they completed the work, we set work at the start of each school day and requested it was submitted back to teachers by the end of the day.

During this first phase, we trialled other systems, undertook staff training and sought feedback from pupils, parents and staff on how they and their IT infrastructure were coping at home.

Phase 2 of our remote learning strategy saw a move to more interactive teaching using Microsoft Teams (part of the Office 365 package), which enables audio and video-conferencing. We also trained staff in producing narrated PowerPoints to give a more interactive feel to the set work. We were aware of a number of issues with online live teaching at other schools and wanted to ensure we got it right.

Shortly after the Easter holiday, we moved to Phase 3, with the introduction

of live 'Teams' meetings for pupils. We felt it important to keep a 'mixed economy' of remote work, narrated PowerPoints and live Teams lessons. We know that students appreciate interaction with their teachers and we wanted to give them some of this without the restrictions that come with every lesson being online. We were also conscious that sitting in front of a screen all day would not be good for pupils' wellbeing.

Students have, on the whole, appreciated our approach. We survey them regularly and they have reported feeling they are being set appropriate amounts of work and receiving good feedback from teachers, with an appropriate balance between remote work and online teaching.

** Turn the page for how we have supported our pupils' wellbeing*

Pupil wellbeing & pastoral care

THROUGHOUT lockdown, staff have provided pupils with a whole host of activities, competitions and events designed to keep pupils active, support their wellbeing, keep them connected with their peers and teachers, and support them through an otherwise unsettling and uncertain period in their young lives.

We recognise that the abrupt end of the Spring term, two weeks earlier than scheduled, left our Year 11 and Year 13 pupils without their usual range of events or opportunities to say farewell to friends and teachers. Despite this, some hastily organised events on Friday 20 March helped pupils mark the major milestones of leaving the Senior Division or leaving the School. Our Year 11s are now on a 'Springboard to Sixth Form' programme which will allow them to prepare for A Level study ahead. Mrs Foster, our Careers' Officer, has also published a series of Careers Bulletins to signpost pupils to resources, virtual work experience and university course information which they can peruse and action this summer.

During the lockdown, our pastoral staff have been setting pupils across the school a series of 'Wellbeing Challenges' in the Seniors and 'Amazing Me' challenges in the Infant & Junior Division. These have inspired our pupils to undertake yoga, build Lego versions of the School, get outside and celebrate nature, get creative, to be kind and support others, amongst a whole host of other things.

The school is renowned for its extra-curricular offering, and some people may be forgiven for thinking that this couldn't possibly be re-created during lockdown and social distancing. However, this term has seen it go from strength-to-strength with a great range of clubs and activities on offer remotely. These include various music groups, Fantasy Gaming, Chess and a wide range of sporting activities, to name but a few. Our Art Department has launched a Creative Challenge with the

Despite the school's premises being closed, this has been an incredibly busy period for staff, pupils and parents adjusting to new ways of doing almost everything.

most exquisite entries coming through already: our pupils are a talented and creative bunch! The House System is also in full swing whilst 'Under House Arrest'. Entries to the 'Come Dine with Me' House competition are worthy of note and staff were delighted to see that so many families enjoyed culinary delicacies care of their teenagers.

The Music Department was swift to develop provision for remote learning. Our team of instrumental/singing teachers has continued to deliver hundreds of lessons each week to

which they play games, chat and discuss the group's musical works-in-progress.

THE PE & Games Department has provided a variety of exercise options to keep pupils active. A wide range of PE sessions have been posted on a new YouTube channel, including high-intensity fitness sessions, cardio-vascular endurance, agility and power, as well as important stretch and recovery sessions. Mr Lees and Miss Hopkin have provided the expert examples and guidance for the pupils to follow. Games lessons have taken the form of a programme of skills, practices and activities in Cricket, Athletics, Healthy lifestyles and "Girls Fit Zone".

After school, PE staff have arranged Teams meetings with different student groups to share ideas, answer questions and stay connected. Pupils on our Elite Athlete Programme (KEAP) have also been put through their paces by Mr Lees, with regular strength and conditioning sessions. Pupils in the Infant & Junior Division have been encouraged to stay physically active, with physical challenges set each week for their PE lessons. There have been further opportunities for practice and development in extra-curricular time with tasks and technical tips posted on Teams for Athletics and Cricket, as well as through an Infant Sports Club.

Also shifting into the virtual arena were other elements of normal school life, including assemblies, Open Events, parents' evenings, VE Day celebrations and updates on the new campus from the Headmaster. It seems necessity really is the mother of invention.

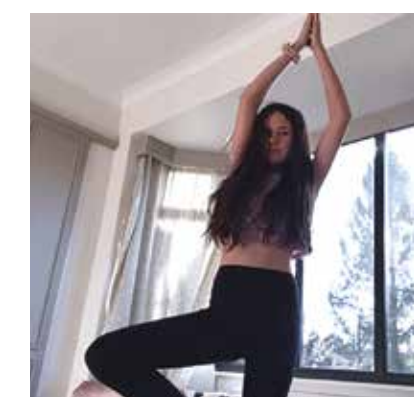


Challenges have inspired our pupils to undertake yoga, build Lego versions of the School, get outside and celebrate nature, get creative, to be kind and support others.



pupils via online platforms. Pupils and parents have loved having music lessons continue despite the site closure, and the amount of practice pupils are managing to do is hugely impressive!

King's choirs and ensembles continue to thrive despite the lockdown. Ensembles going online include the Wind Bands, the Medieval Music Group and all five of King's choirs. Each group is hard at work rehearsing and recording their contributions for a multi-tracked 'virtual performance' of music written/arranged by their dedicated teachers. Each group has weekly meetings (via Teams) during



CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Sef Cooper in Year 4 and **Ted Hayes** in Year 7, who both made it through the first round of the BBC Radio 2 '500 Words' writing competition.

Kieran Cullen, who achieved a Gold Award in the RSC Chemistry Olympiad and **Aisling Day**, who achieved a Silver Award.

Lottie Dennett, who achieved 2nd place in the National Pop-up Dressage competition.

Alex Davies, who undertook a 40km sponsored run for charity, raising £1,215 for Cancer Research UK.

Matthew Ennis, who has been doing weekly shopping for his elderly neighbour and helped her set-up Skype (over the phone) so she could stay connected with relatives.

Cosmo Evans (5SM), who passed his Grade 2 Piano Examination with merit.

Oliver Gandy, who has been volunteering his time to help the NHS by collecting and delivering supplies to and from hospitals in the North West.

Ross and **Craig Hallinan**, who have been busy delivering flowers, cards and cakes to their neighbours.

Jad Kazzaz (8MAT), who has been cooking and delivering food to neighbours during lockdown.

Cordy Kight, Year 10, who has been making scrubs bags for local NHS staff.

Thomas Krassowski, who has been collecting food to donate to the local food bank.

Sol Lever, who is supporting a non-profit community group, Sandwich Angels, by sourcing food donations and helping provide emergency hampers for the homeless.

Rory McCabe, who has set himself the challenge of running 100 miles in the month of May to raise £1,000 for the NHS Charities Together Fund.

Jake O'Donnell (8GJH), who has been selected for a British Junior Orienteering training tour.

James Price (8GJH), who has raised over £500 for East Cheshire Hospice, through his 'Bake my day' activities. See: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sarah-price54. His brother **Alex Price**, has also raised over £500 for resources and supplies for patients in Macclesfield Hospital, East Cheshire Hospice and The Christie. See: www.gofundme.com/f/alex-fundraiser-for-macclesfield-hospital

Aadya Sinha, Year 2, who made cards and gift baskets for her elderly neighbours.

Charlie Taylor, who has been volunteering and doing community work

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KEEP IN TOUCH

during the lockdown with 'We Are Knutsford', and shopping for his elderly neighbours.

Annabel Townsend, who has been shortlisted in the national 'Home of 2030' Young Persons' Design Challenge.

Former pupil **Lydia Rex**, who has received her Doctor of Medicine degree from Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, Massachusetts. She will be training in her chosen speciality of Family Medicine in Lawrence, Massachusetts, amongst a primarily Spanish-speaking immigrant community, with a focus on women's health and mental health.

Former pupil **Neil McNair** (1996), who owns a factory in Yorkshire making McNair shirts has been supporting efforts to provide PPE by producing gowns for the local NHS staff.

King's Groundsmen **Carl McCormack** and **Rick Astley**, who created a giant 'Thank You' to the NHS at our Derby Fields site.

Fundraising Update

At the start of 2020, we launched the second phase of our fundraising campaign – **Our Shared Future** – with the aim of raising funds for both our new campus and our bursary fund.

The earlier, first phase of the fundraising campaign had successfully raised £1.75m of our original £3m target for the 2020 Project.

The second phase has also been successful with staff, parents, former pupils and former members of staff all getting behind the campaign and taking the opportunity to dedicate a room, plant a tree, or record their name on a seat in the Conference Hall or Lecture Theatre.

We are delighted to announce two recent significant donations, which have brought our fundraising total to near the £2.5m mark. The donations have allowed us to commence work on the new First XI Cricket pitch at the front of the new school building, which will be named after former member of staff Ian Wilson, and also to complete the bridge across Dumber Wood, connecting the Sports Centre with the main academic building.

We are incredibly grateful for all donations, large and small, and would like to thank everyone who has supported the campaign so far.

See: www.kingsmac.co.uk/about/support-us



Former staff reunion

Just before lockdown, we were able to welcome back to our Cumberland Street site around 85 former members of staff, for a trip down memory lane and a final farewell to the old buildings.

• See our website for more photos!