



THE KING'S
SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019

INTRODUCING ACADEMY RUGBY & NETBALL AT THE KING'S SCHOOL

September 2019 will be an exciting time for The King's School PE Department.

DE LACY GARDENS

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Time certainly doesn't stand still at Pontefract Academies Trust and, whilst in many respects it only seems like two seconds since I wrote my piece for the last newsletter, in many ways it feels like much longer than three months given how much has gone on in our schools. Both secondary schools continue to move from strength to strength and it continues to be a pleasure to work with the young people and staff in our schools. Both schools continue to work closely with one another and collaborate to share best practice and professional development.

My time has been spent predominately at The King's School this term and it has been great to really get to grips with my understanding of the school and knowledge of the people. Taking ownership of the leadership of the school on a daily operational basis has really helped me to evaluate the strengths (of which there are so many) and areas for improvement. Mr Pinto takes up his position as Acting Head of School with immediate effect and we have both had conversations about The King's School now feeling like it is on a real journey towards being outstanding.

The improvement journey at Carleton High School (CHS) continues, the addition of a number of high quality, well qualified and experienced staff in January has really accelerated progress. Leaders are very confident that the school is now embedding good practice day to day and students are getting a great deal. The work that the staff have done at this school from May until now is extraordinary and the school is transformed. Now that some of the basics are embedded, leaders are developing every aspect of school life, including extra-curricular activities so that all young people have great experiences in and out of the classroom. I'm sure that students going to New York this week will certainly have some stories to tell when they get back.

I'm pleased to say that behaviour in both secondary schools is now exemplary and the feedback from visitors who have been before, and staff returning from maternity has been 'wow it feels really different, it's so quiet and calm'.

Attendance is also a huge area of progress and both schools are now running well above average on a weekly basis with CHS having the best attendance in the authority. There has been more positive work carried out around Special Educational Needs provision and the schools had a joint twilight Continuing Professional Development session on this to raise the profile in this area to ensure that students are getting the best provision and support.

Next term is a crucial one for Year 11. As they approach their exams the work being put in place by staff to support students is phenomenal, with daily after school sessions, Saturday morning lessons, holiday workshops, residential revision sessions, online tutoring and revision evenings for parents all ongoing. Please help us to help them at this critical time; we believe firmly in working closely to support our young people.

Yours faithfully

James Franklin-Smith
Executive Director of Secondary Education
Pontefract Academies Trust

WELCOME

I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce myself officially to all parents/carers and stakeholders of The King's School.

I would like to start by thanking all students and staff, who have made me feel extremely welcome since I took up post in January. I have only had limited opportunity to meet parents/carers so far but when I have, the positivity is tangible and it is evident that there is great support for what we aim to achieve at The King's School.

This is a very exciting time to be involved with The King's School and Pontefract Academies Trust. In the short time I have been here, I have seen first-hand the passion and potential of the staff, coupled with the bright, intelligent and articulate students we have at the school. My view is simple, if what happens in the classroom is outstanding and the students are cared for, we will achieve our aim of becoming an outstanding school.

I am fortunate to have worked at outstanding institutions throughout my career and have spent the previous eight years working at the most successful sixth form college in the country. Having taught Law for several years, I progressed to middle leadership and subsequently, senior leadership roles. I look forward to now imparting that knowledge and experience at The King's School moving forward. Whilst I am proud of previous achievements, I am genuinely excited at the prospect of being able to improve the life chances of the young people of Pontefract. Being a 'Ponte lad' myself, I know the local area and know how much talent we have in the town – it is my job to ensure that these students flourish and have the keys to success.

I have seen great strides made already and it is not an exaggeration to say we have moved forward significantly since January. This is in relation to the behaviour, attendance and crucially, individual subject and student performance. I have arrived with excellent systems in place and whilst there will always be tweaks, the key is consistency and staff executing these simple systems with precision.

I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing The King's School community in action and this has been exemplified by the various events that have taken place – more of which you will see on the following pages. I was delighted to see students engaged with Comic Relief, not just from a money raising point of view, but also

being sensitive and understanding of the cause. Other events have been successful, such as the Revision Evening for Year 11 last week. It is apparent the level of support and genuine interest parents/carers have.

The King's School has always had a strong reputation for sporting success and nerves were shredded last week as both Year 8 and Year 11 football teams were victorious in their respective Wakefield Cup finals. Year 11 on penalties and Year 8 in extra-time – a great achievement. Fans of the arts were also given a treat recently as students performed 'High School Musical'. It was fantastic to see a packed house and again demonstrates the talent at the school. I would like to thank all staff and students for their work in ensuring these successes and further enhancing the reputation of The King's School.

We are entering the 'business end' of the academic year and this is especially important for Year 11. Rest assured that no stone will be left unturned in helping the young people in our care achieve to the best of their ability. As always, the support from home is crucial in supporting the excellent work that is taking place in the classroom, intervention sessions and during the upcoming Easter holidays.

I look forward to leading the school on the exciting journey that lies ahead. I will make no apology for having high standards and can promise an unwavering commitment to achieving the very best for our students.

Best wishes



Mr D Pinto
Acting Head of School



STAFF AND STUDENTS FROM THE KING'S SCHOOL C.L.E.A.N PROJECT VISIT TO VALENCIA

In February, seven students and two members of staff spent a week being hosted by their Spanish counterparts in Valencia, Spain. They experienced everyday Spanish school life, two days of cultural and historical visits and two environmental action days. The trip was the first exchange trip, part of an International project called Erasmus+, which is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport.

The King's School funded project is called C.L.E.A.N (Community League for Environmental Action Network) and they have secured a maximum grant of 29,000 euros.

The project focuses on one of the biggest problems in the world: the environment. It aims at preserving and restoring the environment by encouraging students in finding lasting and substantial solutions. Quotes from students include:

"My trip to Spain was a once in a life time experience".

"The city was amazing, the contrast between the historical terraces and grand buildings was immense.

You turned a corner and saw the modern and then the derelict buildings, there was an interesting "graffiti as Art walk". The city was busy but beautiful".

"We ate the traditional dish paella and visited the rice fields which are a designated nature reserve, and a place to watch wildlife and birds. We helped our Spanish friends prepare traditional dishes for the leaving party, my particular favourite was churros which are sweet sugary treats dipped in chocolate".

"I have made some lifelong friends, it was a wonderful week where we got to see how the Spanish school worked and were spoilt by our Spanish families in their homes".

"I learnt about the Environment and more Spanish words to use. I felt really welcomed by my Spanish family, they were so generous and made me feel at home, I will keep in touch and hope to go back and visit them".

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

The King's School's performance of Disney's Junior 'High School Musical', on Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 February was a huge success. Large audiences enjoyed their talented student's portrayal of iconic characters from the popular play, including Troy Bolton, Gabriella Montez and Ms. Darbus.

It was a whole school collaboration with 48 cast members ranging from Year 7 to Year 10 students. Year 11 students were also involved in the choreography of many musical numbers, while Year 9 and 10 students controlled the technical elements of the production. This confirmed that they truly were "All in this together".



BBC BITESIZE SCHOOLS TOUR

On Tuesday 5 February, The King's School was lucky enough to host the BBC Bitesize Schools Tour. The enthusiastic team delivered very informative 1 hour sessions to Year 8, 9 and 10 students. The sessions focussed on careers in the creative industries and featured a panel of three professionals from these industries - a BBC Apprentice, a games design company owner and the Senior Curator of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

The aim of the sessions was to offer inspiring insight into the world of creative work and shine a light on routes into, and opportunities within a sector that many of the students might not have considered.

Students asked the panellists a variety of very interesting and shrewd questions, and interacted well with the team.

NON-UNIFORM DAYS

The Christmas Jumper Day on Friday 21 December raised £695.72 for Pontefract Foodbank. The Non-uniform Day on Friday 15 March raised £932.27 for Comic Relief.

A huge thank you to all students and staff who donated money to these two fantastic causes.



WORLD BOOK DAY

Thursday 7 March was World Book Day! As well as being the perfect opportunity to promote literacy, this was also the picture-perfect time to dust off the fancy dress boxes and get dressed up as our favourite book characters! The English Department followed a theme of their favourite heroes and villains, ranging from Matilda, Cruella DeVil and a dalmation, Spiderman, Batman, Fantastic Mr

Fox and Hermione Granger! Also getting transformed into an assortment of their most loved book characters, the Humanities Department converted into an amazing adaptation of Murder on the Orient Express! Students took part in a range of activities including a book swap where they swapped their old, favourite books with each other to share their passion for literature.

MATILDA

On Wednesday 27 February, the English Department took 30 Year 7 students to the Alhambra Theatre in Bradford to see the truly fabulous performance of Matilda the Musical! A spellbinding, jaw dropping performance from all the actors, particularly the children, who lit up the stage and brought literature to life for all staff and students in the audience. One of our Year 7 students, Macey Jenkinson, said: "This is the best thing I have ever seen in my life."

A magical day for all involved; the students left the theatre glowing with emotion.

LITERACY

Exciting news for all you Accelerated Reader quizzers! You will now be able to quiz your books before and after school, to give you even more chance to become a Word Millionaire! Accelerated Reader will now be available between 8am and 8pm by using the following link <https://ukhosted95.renlearn.co.uk/6700577/Public/RPM/Login/Login.aspx?srcID=s>

Students can log in with their usual username and password

PASTORAL CARE

At The King's School we place great emphasis on the pastoral care of our students and the Student Liaison Officers (SLOs) play a key role in this area. They are integral members of the Pastoral Team responsible for supporting each year group in terms of academic, pastoral and personal development in close liaison with the Progress Leaders (PLs) who lead each year group within school.

Every student is assigned to a form and sees their Form Tutor each day. Along with the SLO and PL there are other members of staff who support students with issues including attendance and welfare, and work closely with a range of external agencies.

If you have any concerns please contact your child's Form Tutor, Progress Leader or Student Liaison Officer.



Year 7 SLO
– Mrs R Smith



Year 8 SLO
– Mr J Grandfield



Year 9 SLO
– Mrs J Williams



Year 10 SLO
– Mrs M Watts



Year 11 SLO
– Mrs S Levey



Additional SLO
– Mrs H Stewart

What qualities does an SLO require? Parent, Nurse, Counsellor, Negotiator...

A day in the life of an SLO is a varied one. We are the face that greets at the start of the day and the one to send the students on their way at the end of the day.

- The morning starts checking form rooms, making sure our students are set up for the day.
- Period 1 is dedicated to attendance. This plays an important part in our role; building relationships with parents/carers, offering support and guidance where needed.
- Throughout the day we spend a lot of time supporting students and teachers with learning, promoting positive behaviour and dealing with student issues.
- Lunchtime already. "Pizza or Pasta?", echoes along the dining room corridor. It is Friday so there's an extra-long queue for chips as the team undertake their lunch duties.
- In the afternoon, we make calls to parents/carers and arrange meetings.

DE LACY GARDENS

Once a week, after school on a Tuesday, Mrs Gardner and 12 Year 10 students spend their time with the residents of De Lacy Gardens as part of an Intergenerational project which supports IT awareness and usage.

The residents have given some really positive feedback: "She showed me so much and told me how to do things. I sent a message to my granddaughter on my own! It was so lovely to mix with young people I had so much fun".

"She was brilliant and very patient. I learned about catch-up TV and Google, which is something I have wanted to learn for a while".

"I got on very well with Grace. She was very patient. She showed me what to do and then I had a go and that worked very well. I asked to start from the bottom and she wrote instructions down for me. She did exactly what I asked. She is a very nice girl".

The Manager of De Lacey Gardens praised the students, saying "I have been very impressed how polite and considerate the students have come across when

communicating and engaging with the residents".

Mrs Gardner added "It's a real highlight of my working week - watching the students build relationships and develop effective communication skills. They are all an absolute credit to the school and I feel very privileged to work with such a caring and fun group of young people".



INTRODUCING ACADEMY RUGBY & NETBALL AT THE KING'S SCHOOL

September 2019 will be an exciting time for The King's School PE Department, seeing the introduction of the Rugby and Netball Academies to Year 7 students. Students will have the opportunity to compete for a place in the academies which will allow them year round access to rugby and netball. Up to 25 boys and 20 girls in the year group will be selected and additional rugby and netball lessons will be added to their timetable to help develop and consolidate the skills and tactical awareness they acquire from core PE lessons. There are other incentives which include extra strength and conditioning sessions, team bonding sessions and trips to see the professionals plying their trade.



LEPRA

This term the whole of Year 7 took part in various fund raising activities to raise money for the charity LEPRA. All students in Year 7 took part in a Zumba workshop and many other students raised money from their own events including: washing cars, making cakes and holding a bake sale.

Jill Richardson from LEPRA was delighted with the fantastic amount of £1,710.38 that was raised. She said

"I would like to thank the school for such great support for LEPRA, your fundraising really does change lives and will be used to have a maximum impact in our programmes overseas."

The picture shows Jill Richardson presenting students from Year 7, who went the extra mile to raise money for the charity, with a certificate.



NEW YORK! NEW YORK!

Over February half term, 39 students from Years 8-11 jetted off to New York for a trip of a lifetime. Students had the opportunity to spend a few days living it up in The Big Apple, tucking into authentic meals in Little Italy, to more local delicacies in Dollar Pizza. The students had the opportunity to fully experience the bustle of New York: riding the subway, visiting the Statue of Liberty, watching

WICKED on Broadway and time to reflect and pay tribute at the 9/11 Memorial.

There was no time to rest, with sights to be seen and shopping to be done. All that Manhattan has to offer, the students explored.





BELGIUM BATTLEFIELDS TRIP

A holiday for us, yet a nightmare for them; the Belgium Battlefields Tour was a beautiful and poignant way to remember the sacrifices the soldiers of World War One made for our freedom today and in understanding the historical context behind the memorials and museums. Throughout the trip, we visited Lijssenthoek Cemetery, Passchendaele Museum, Lochnager Crater, Ulster Tower, Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, Thiepval Memorial, Menin Gate, the Flanders Fields Museum, Essex Farm Cemetery and Tyne Cot Cemetery.

All these places are monumental in the face of history and walking in the footsteps of heroes was a humbling and emotional experience.

Delving deeper into what we learnt on our trip, within Belgian cemeteries dedicated to the fallen of WW1, there are only two women buried amongst the thousands of men. One of these is Nellie Spindler, a nurse from Wakefield, who helped the war effort in Ypres. She was buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, a place we visited on the

first day to pay our respects and we took pride in knowing a Wakefield-born nurse provided great effort for the war. Another place we visited was the Menin Gate Memorial, of which the walls bear the names of over 54,000 soldiers who have no known graves. Witnessing the ceremony was an unforgettable experience. As the Last Post played, it was almost as if you could feel the respect everyone at Menin Gate held for the soldiers' valour, bravery and sacrifice resonating within them. Undoubtedly, we too took pride in laying a wreath of poppies for our school to commemorate the fallen.

Overall, the Belgium Battlefields Tour was an unmissable experience in understanding the changing face of history and the hardships the soldiers faced during World War One. We shall forever remember them for their strength, selflessness and sacrifice.

Lest we forget.

2019 TERM DATES

Bank Holiday: Monday 22 April 2019 (school closed)
Bank Holiday: Monday 6 May 2019 (school closed)
Term 5: 23 April 2019 – 24 May 2019
Term 6: 3 June 2019 – 19 July 2019

ATTENDANCE

It's great to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support with attendance. At King's we're committed to ensuring that students access consistently good and outstanding teaching, day-in-day-out. We set our attendance target at 97% which reflects our high expectations and aspirations for students. It's fantastic to see well over 50% of students at or above this number.

During the final week of each term, we take the opportunity to celebrate the attendance of students so it's important they keep coming into school! As the saying goes, 'if you don't buy a ticket you can't win the lottery.'

Of course, we recognise that sometimes students, through no fault of their own, must have days off and this can't be helped. In such instances our pastoral team are on-hand and dedicated to supporting students through any health or well-being issues, or other barriers to their learning. Through the ongoing work of our Student Liaison Officers and Education Welfare Officer, we hope to see continued improvements in this important area of school life.



YEAR 11 REVISION EVENING – WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH

It was great to see so many parents/carers taking a very active role in the last stages of the Year 11's time at King's, thank you for the many positive responses we had from you on the evening. Parents/carers and students received a fantastic pack of revision resources and information on how to prepare for exams and were able to speak directly to the subject teachers about what they need to do in the lead up to the final exams.

If you were not able to attend and did not receive the pack, please contact school for information on how you can do this.

Good luck with the final exams but remember, the harder you work, the more successful you will be!

COMMUNICATIONS

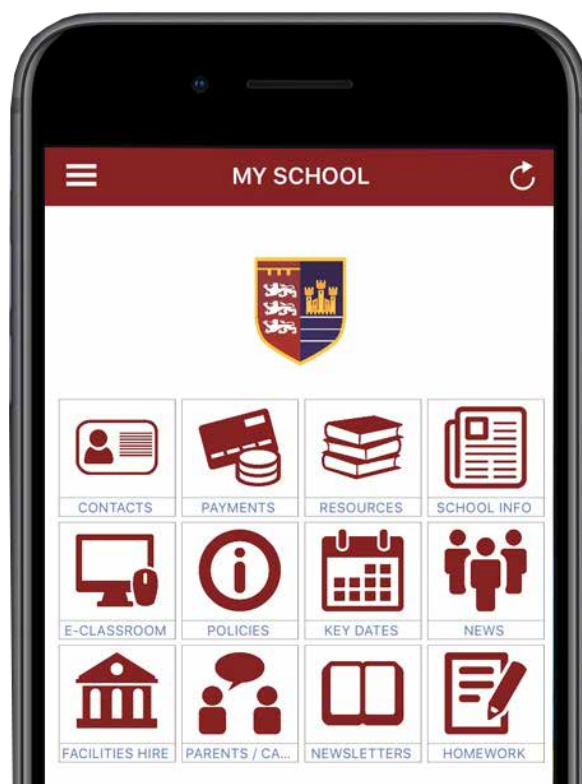
Our main methods of communication from The King's School are emails, text messages and telephone calls, so it is important that we have all your most up to date contact details. If you change your telephone number or email address please remember to inform school. If our records aren't up to date you may miss important information.

The King's School uses the MyEd app as the main way of distributing letters. This app provides information about your child and the school on a range of different areas of school life, such as your child's attendance details and achievements, important key dates that you need to know about and all the latest school news.

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SHOW MY HOMEWORK

In February we were thrilled to launch Show My Homework at The King's School. This is an online tool designed to help students and parents/carers to keep track of homework.

Homework set by staff is aimed to develop student's knowledge, understanding and application of content in the subject areas which they are studying. However, Show My Homework is also improving students time-management and organisational skills, in turn helping them to keep on top of their workload.

Within two weeks of launching Show My Homework it was pleasing to see that 95% of students had set up their accounts and were actively logging in. Discussions with students from all year groups one month into using Show my Homework confirmed that they particularly like the free mobile app, which allows access to homework tasks quickly and easily from any mobile phone, device or tablet. Another feature which has proved popular with students is the messenger service, giving students the ability to securely message their teachers to seek support about tasks set.

Show My Homework has enabled The King's School to improve communication with parents/carers with regard to homework, providing a deeper insight into the homework their child receives. By logging in at the following website www.showmyhomework.co.uk parents/carers can access all details of homework tasks and due dates for their son/daughter. The notifications feature can be set up to send automatic notifications to a selected device as homework is set and as a due date approaches and this has proven to be very popular with both students and parents/carers alike.

Students, parents/carers who have any questions, need help to log in or who would like to provide feedback about the service are encouraged to contact the Student Liaison Officer or Progress Leader of the relevant year group at The King's School.