



THE KING'S  
SCHOOL

# NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2020

## FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We are proud to have held several fundraising events this term for Children In Need, The Poppy Appeal and Breast Cancer Now.

## MMU SESSIONS

This term has seen the launch of a new and exciting partnership between The King's School and Manchester Metropolitan University.

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP GROUP

Since September, the new Year 11 Student Leadership Group have been in post and they have made a superb start to the year.





Thank you for reading our annual Christmas Newsletter, where I hope you will get a flavour for the current 'happenings' at The King's School. You will see that this year, in keeping with 2020, it comes to you electronically as opposed to our usual paper copy. We have made a commitment to become a paperless school and I thank all parents/carers for engaging with My Child at School (MCAS), which is now our main vehicle for communication.

Where do I start when considering 2020? I am keen that this newsletter focuses on the positive events of the last four months but it is impossible not to make reference to Covid-19 and the challenges faced by us all. Looking back at our previous editions of the newsletter and all the wonderful trips, visits and enrichment opportunities that our students normally have, writing this has served as a stark reminder of the differences we have experienced since March. Despite this, we have done our best to offer as much as we can within the boundaries of national and local government guidance and I hope that will be evident on the following pages.

The students have simply been fantastic. I cannot speak highly enough of how they have responded to the changes they have experienced and how resilient they have been throughout. It is easy for us to forget over time, as the new logistical operations of the school start to feel less strange, that this is not normal and does provide a challenge for all members of our school community. The students are positive, good humoured and continue to display a 'can do' attitude. They are a credit to themselves and to you.

I would also like to mention the work of all staff at The King's School - both teaching and support. Due to the year group bubbles and their allocated areas of school, teachers have moved from classroom to classroom for every period of every day. They hustle from one side of the school to the other, often having to start their lessons whilst completing the register, settling the students, starting the activities planned and also setting up their live streamed lessons for students to access at home. No mean feat and I hope you feel that this commitment to the students has helped reassure all concerned. An equally important mention goes to all support staff who are the engine room and make it possible for teachers to teach and focus on the core business of providing first class lessons for our young people.

The King's School is built upon a partnership of staff, students and parents/carers and as Headteacher, I am incredibly proud of seeing this working on a day-to-day basis.

Having not had the majority of students in school from March - July, we hit the ground running in September with our 'catch-up' plans. There are number of strategies in place and I am delighted that Year 11 attendance at Achieve sessions has been at 98% so far this year. You will read about an exciting new partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) later, who are currently providing us with trainee teachers that are working with a number of students (virtually) in core subjects. MMU are one of the biggest providers of teacher trainees outside London and these sessions have been welcomed by the students to support their learning in class. Many of you will be aware of the government 'catch-up' funding that has been allocated to secondary schools throughout the country. We now have plans in place for the first wave of this additional support and communication will follow in the new year for those who will be involved with this.

We have just come to the end of our first formal assessment cycle for all year groups, including mock exams for Year 11. Again, the way in which the students conducted themselves was exemplary. This will inform discussions with you when we meet - again albeit virtually - at our Parents Evenings starting with Year 10 on Thursday 7 January. Please check our website for all dates and information.

It is fair to say that we are all ready for a break and to have a well-earned rest. This year has presented many challenges and whilst we might have to accept a far from normal festive period, the students deserve some down-time and to spend quality time with you and your families. It is unclear what the new year will hold but you have my absolute assurance that all staff at The King's School will look forward to welcoming students back on 4 January 2021 and will be ready to 'go again'.

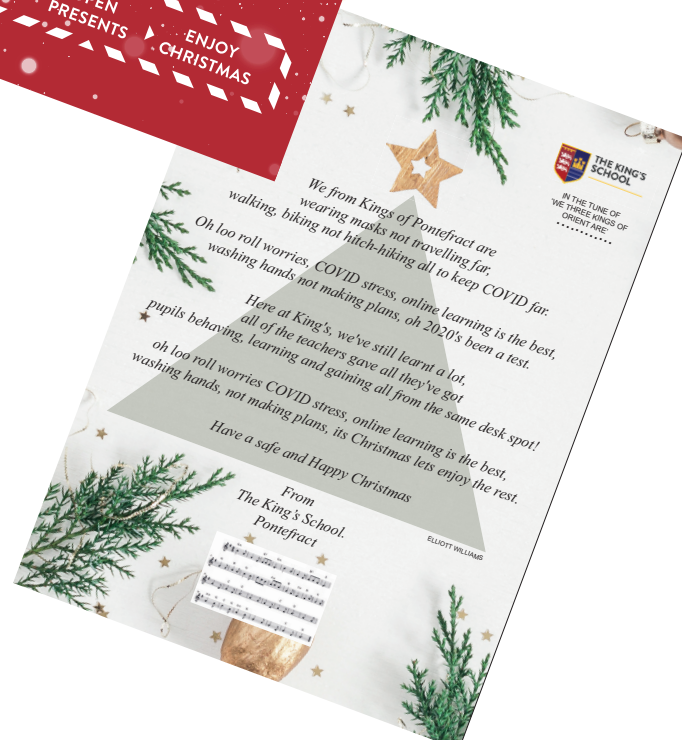
On behalf of all at The King's School, I wish you a merry Christmas, a peaceful new year and share in the hope that a return to normality is on the horizon.

**Mr Dominic Pinto**  
Headteacher



# CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

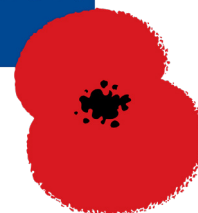
We had over 100 wonderful entries into our Design A Christmas Card Competition and were blown away by the creativity of our students. It was a tough decision but congratulations to the 10 winners who were chosen to appear on the front cover or inside this year's card which we have sent to staff, Governors and friends of The King's School. All winners received a card to keep, as well as a gift voucher. Well done!







## A REMEMBRANCE PARADE



We were so pleased to welcome members of The Royal British Legion to take part in our Remembrance Parade on Wednesday 11 November. We are extremely proud of our school community and the students should be incredibly proud of themselves for the respect they showed. It was an incredibly humble, heart warming and moving morning. Here are some staff and student comments about the event.





*"As always, it was an absolute pleasure to host members of The Royal British Legion at our Remembrance event. The students and staff are always so excited to share the events of the day, and year upon year, we welcome the familiar faces of The Royal British Legion to The King's School. This year, in line with the general events of 2020, it was a little different. We had to think creatively and step away from the usual location of the school hall. Students paid their respects with a silent walk around the school field, whilst the talented Stage Band played a range of fantastic songs. The Royal British Legion members stood on top of the grass banking and took in the wonderful scenes of more than 1000 students and staff, paying their respects. Staff and students felt very proud, as they made their journey back into school, being congratulated and thanked by the men and women from The Royal British Legion. There is always a real buzz around school when we have such special guests and we can't wait to host future events."*

*"As a teacher at The King's School, I was proud to take part in The Remembrance Parade, which brought together The King's School community in an act of thoughtful reflection. The event was extremely moving for all who took part. The morning arrived with a sense of stillness and peace. The King's School grounds gave host to The Royal British Legion and the students stood like statues holding the names of the fallen from WW1 and WW2, buried in Pontefract Cemetery. All the students from the school walked in complete silence around The King's School grounds, reading the names of the servicemen who gave the ultimate sacrifice and never made their own walk home. The School orchestra echoed gently across the fields, then the whole King's School community stopped, turned and faced The Royal British Legion and listened intently. Everyone fell silent whilst the gravitas of the act of remembrance took hold."*



*"The students conduct was commended by The Royal British Legion and in turn many children gave thanks and applause to them as the ceremony was brought to a close. It was a remarkable and dignified coming together of The King's School community which will be remembered."*

*"At King's, we are incredibly grateful to have such a close partnership with The Royal British Legion and are extremely fortunate that they join us each year on Remembrance Day. Usually, we host Remembrance Day in the hall, however this year's event had to be different due to the pandemic. Instead, students and staff walked around the school field reading signs held by younger students with the names, ages and positions of local war heroes. This was a particularly moving and memorable moment and it really brought home the sacrifices local soldiers made for our freedom today. Hearing The Last Post played and members of The Royal British Legion read 'We Will Remember Them' was a truly poignant moment in the day – one that I am confident both staff and students alike will remember for many years to come. The silence and the Remembrance Day Parade was a truly incredible way to pay homage to soldiers from Pontefract who died in service of our country. We feel very privileged to have such incredible students and colleagues, as well as our partnership with The Royal British Legion."*

*"The Remembrance event at King's truly was a touching and immersive day for both staff and students. It was an immensely proud moment seeing members of my form holding the names of those soldiers who did not make it back home to Pontefract. It was wonderful to see members of The Royal British Legion leading the Remembrance service. I hope we are able to connect with the Legion again in future and host another extremely important and emotional event."*

*"Our Remembrance event was the perfect way to remember and pay respects to soldiers of past and present, under current circumstances. The way the school pulled together showed the community spirit and compassion of the school community. Looking around at all the students arching across the field, I felt extremely proud to be Head Boy at The King's School."*



# YEAR 7 WELCOME EVENING

On Wednesday 21 October, The King's School held a virtual Welcome Evening for all Year 7 parents/carers. During this event parents/carers were given the opportunity to meet their child's Form Tutor, ask any questions and see how well their child had settled into secondary school since the start of September.

The transition from Year 6 to Year 7 has been somewhat different this year, with the majority of events being held virtually. We therefore knew how important this event would be, as it was designed to establish how well the students have transitioned. Overall, the event was a huge success with many live meetings taking place throughout the evening.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our current Year 7 students for all of their hard work, dedication and perseverance through what can only be described as an 'unusual year'. The Year 7 students have not let the current situation phase them, have met our expectations and have made a great start to life at The King's School.

# OPEN EVENING

On Tuesday 13 October we welcomed Year 6 students to The King's School at our Virtual Open Evening. The evening was streamed on Facebook Live and gave Year 6 parents and carers the opportunity to meet with some of the staff and students and ask questions about the school. The evening was launched with an excellent musical performance from The King's School Stage Band and was followed by introductions from our Headteacher, Mr Pinto, Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Martinson and Key Stage 3 Leader, Mrs Carrington. The Student Leadership Group shared some of their experiences about being part of The King's School and were keen to share some of the positive events and lessons they have enjoyed during their time in school. They shared how supported they had felt in school and how the wide range of activities on offer had given them experiences they normally wouldn't have been able to access, such as trips to the Belgian Battlefields and enrichment clubs.

Our panel of staff answered parent and carer questions on a range of topics from uniform to Science experiments, which we hope helped our Year 6 feeder school children to feel confident about joining The King's School in September 2021.



**Culture + Consistency = Excellence**

**The King's School**  
@KingsPontefract

Culture + Consistency = Excellence

📍 Pontefract, England 🔗 [kings.patronet.org.uk](https://kings.patronet.org.uk) 📅 Joined June 2019

97 Following 693 Followers

Not followed by anyone you're following

Tweets Tweets & replies Media Likes

**The King's School** @KingsPontefract · Dec 14

Last but not least, we have the Year 9 winner of our Design A #Christmas Card Competition. Well done for such a beautiful drawing! All staff received a copy of the card this morning and are really impressed by the student's designs and creativity

**TWITTER**

Keep up to date with all the great things that happen at school every day by following us on Twitter @**KingsPontefract**

Pontefract Academies Trust are also on twitter @**PontefractAT** Make sure you follow to keep up to date with all the updates, news and events from across all 8 of our schools!



# FUNDRAISING

Despite restrictions, we are proud to have held several fundraising events this term. The first one was on Friday 23 October, where students got involved in 'Wear it Pink Day' in order to raise money for the charity Breast Cancer Now. We are pleased to report that we were able to donate £446.00 to this worthy charity.

We also sold poppies in support of The Royal British Legion, where we collected £297.87.

And finally, we held a non-uniform day on Friday 13 November when we raised a fantastic £604.00 for Children In Need.

As always, it is encouraging to see how generous many of our students and their families are, even in such difficult times. Thank you!



**£446.00**  
raised

WEAR IT  
PINK

**BREAST  
CANCER  
NOW** The research  
& care charity

**£604.00**  
raised

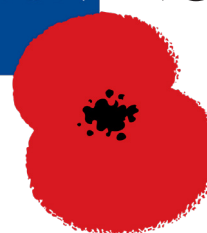


**BBC**

**Children  
in Need**

THE ROYAL BRITISH  
LEGION

**£297.87**  
raised





# 2020 BIOLOGY CHALLENGE

In March, before the first lockdown, 30 Year 11 students from King's, alongside 23,695 students from 367 schools worldwide, took part in the Royal Society of Biology's 2020 Biology Challenge.

The competition consisted of two, twenty-five-minute multiple choice papers to be taken online under exam conditions. Questions were set on the school curriculum, but the competition also rewarded those students whose knowledge of the subject has been increased by undertaking wider reading of books and magazines and taking notice of world issues.

Three students from The King's School did remarkably well and were awarded with bronze and silver certificates. Congratulations Hana, Alex and Tilly, you were amazing!

**Mrs Spawton (Biology teacher)**



# INTER FAITH WEEK

This year, Inter Faith Week took place between 8 – 15 November. Each year, Inter Faith Week begins on Remembrance Sunday and runs until the following Sunday. This is an important time for us to recognise, not only the sacrifice made by the local soldiers who risked their lives in the wars, but also the number of people from various religious backgrounds who did the same.

During these 7 days, Inter Faith Week aims to highlight the good work done by local faith based groups where they can help to draw new people into learning about the importance of religious belief. Not only this, but Inter Faith Week also enables a greater interaction between people from different backgrounds and further allow us to develop integrated and neighbourly communities.

The aims of Inter Faith Week include: Strengthening good Inter Faith relationships at all levels, increasing awareness of the different faith communities, and increasing the understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.

## JUSTHELPING

Registered charity number 1149068

## CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION

in aid of

### THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPICE

Charity No: 514999

and other local charities

### LEAVE THE EFFORT OF GETTING RID OF YOUR TREE TO US!

Our aim is to collect 600 trees which could run the Hospice for a whole day!  
Our volunteers are collecting trees from postcodes: **WF6, WF7, WF8, WF9, WF10, WF11 & LS25 5** on 13th, 14th & 15th January.

To arrange a collection, in exchange for a donation please visit:

## www.pwh.org.uk/christmas

After costs, 90% of the monies raised will go to the Hospice and the remaining 10% donated to other local charities.



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP GROUP



Since September, the new Year 11 Student Leadership Group have been in post and they have made a superb start to the year. Towards the end of Year 10, students wishing to apply for the Student Leadership Group went through a challenging application process, whereby they had to submit an initial application, have an interview with Miss Daly and Mrs Curran and make a video for their peers to share their campaign message. The competition was incredibly strong (so strong that we extended the number of positions available!) and we are delighted to have our Year 11 Student Leadership Group in place as ambassadors for the school.

In position we have: Elliot Prentice and Ella Hume, our Head Boy and Head Girl. They are supported by Will Johnson and Poppy Byford our Deputy Head Boy and Deputy Head Girl. We also have our Assistant Head Boy and Girls: Alex Fletcher, Leo Cawkwell, Jodie Byles and Tilly Wood.

The students have played a significant role in the events that have occurred this term; the students spoke confidently and maturely at our Virtual Open Evening and held a key role in the school's Remembrance Day event.

This term, the group have met weekly to discuss ways they can further support the school's development. The team have created four new Student Leadership Committees, which they feel will have a positive impact upon The King's community.

## **The committees are:**

- 1. Teaching and Learning**
- 2. Wellbeing**
- 3. Diversity and Inclusion**
- 4. The Environment**

Our Year 11 leaders worked together to shape visions for each committee, and each committee is led by two members of the Student Leadership Group. Recently, students in Year 7 – Year 10 were invited to join these committees, and we received some incredibly thoughtful and mature applications from students in each year group. The Student Leadership Group have chosen twelve students to join each committee, from across all year groups, and these students have had their first meeting over the last two weeks.

The Year 11 Student Leadership Group cannot wait to work more closely with their new committee members and are excited to consider some of the excellent strategies and ideas that were shared in the applications.

We are so proud of all of our students who have chosen to take up a leadership position, and we know that they will be superb ambassadors for the school.

***Miss Daly, Assistant Headteacher***





## MMU SESSIONS

This term has seen the launch of a new and exciting partnership between The King's School and Manchester Metropolitan University. The partnership sees selected students from Years 8, 9 and 10 accessing online tutoring sessions delivered by subject specialists who are training to be teachers at the University.

The sessions commenced last month and will continue into the new year, running for 8 weeks in total. There is a regular programme of sessions, with students working in groups of no more than three. The online sessions are being delivered through Google Classroom; the virtual platform that all students are familiar with. We have ensured that the computer suites have new webcams and each student has their own headset with microphones so they can communicate effectively with their tutors during the sessions, although members of our teaching staff are also always present.

This initiative is not only developing knowledge and skills in the subject sessions but also proving to develop student confidence too. Students have settled in well over the first few weeks and the feedback from students in all year groups and Manchester Metropolitan University is overwhelmingly positive. Grace Painter (8AFO) and Charley Dixon (8ADA) have both commented on how useful and helpful they are finding the sessions, especially recapping learning from Year 7. We receive regular communication from the University who always comment on the excellent engagement of the students involved in the online sessions.

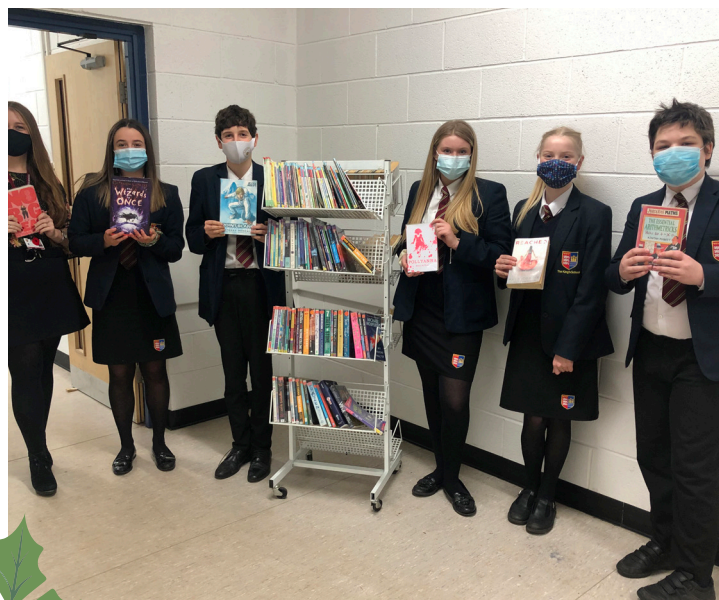
The sessions drew to a close on Wednesday and they will begin again in the new year until this first programme is complete. We look forward to providing an update later in the year.



# MOBILE LIBRARY TROLLEY & DROP EVERYTHING AND READ - DEAR

Despite restrictions limiting our use of the LRC this term, students have still been able to borrow library books in school with the introduction of the Mobile Library Trolley! Each year group has had the opportunity to visit Miss Draper and her selection of books during form time every week, which has been really popular. It has been lovely to see that students are still keen to come and choose an exciting book to read. It is a school expectation that all students have a reading book with them in their bags at all times, and having access to a wide variety of library books again has been excellent for students.

This has coincided nicely with D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read), which has been re-introduced each week for thirty minutes. It is a lovely time in school when everyone spends some quality time reading together, and it is a really important opportunity to continue improving our reading skills across school.



ATTENDANCE ABOVE

**96%**

TOWARDS THE END  
OF TERM

## ATTENDANCE



It has been great to see student attendance bouncing back to consistently above 96% towards the end of term. This will put our students in a strong position compared with their peers nationally. We are looking forward to celebrating this with them in our Virtual Christmas Celebration Assembly. Please continue to support your child's attendance at school and if we can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Attendance team.

# VIRTUAL PARENTS/CARERS EVENINGS

Our upcoming Virtual Parents/Carers Evenings are taking place on the following dates:

**Year 10 - Thursday 7 January 2021**

**Year 11 - Thursday 14 January 2021**

**Year 9 - Thursday 21 January 2021**

**Year 8 - Thursday 28 January 2021**

**Year 7 - Thursday 04 February 2021**



Letters are being uploaded onto the website three weeks before each evening, containing information on how to book, along with guides on how to use the SchoolCloud system.

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH & JUMPER DAY



**WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS. STAY SAFE AND HAVE A HAPPY, HEALTHY BREAK WITH YOUR FAMILIES.**

**REMINDER: THE FIRST DAY BACK TO SCHOOL FOR ALL STUDENTS IS MONDAY 04 JANUARY 2021.**