

## Message from Emily Verow, Headteacher

Dear all

It is my pleasure to tell you that this has been a particularly successful year for The King's. As you will see from the many articles in the newsletter it has been a busy term to end a busy, productive year. I am delighted to hear from feedback that our newsletters are very much enjoyed by parents and are giving you a real insight into the life of our school community. I am sure you will really enjoy this summer 2016 edition.



This year has provided many highlights; standards and expectations have been high and an ambitious culture of learning has been developed through a wide range of engaging and enterprising educational opportunities, both within and beyond the classroom. Our talented and highly committed staff remain resolute in their quest to ensure that all students are equipped with the academic success and personal leadership skills they need to become responsible global citizens, inspired and empowered to bring about positive change.

This year we have worked hard to ensure that every individual achieves and exceeds their potential and that students receive excellent personalised guidance as they move through school. We feel our rigorous programme of self-review has led to many positive changes which will undoubtedly have had an impact on student outcomes. We are pleased with the new initiatives such as Accelerated Reader and the Gifted and Talented Honours Programme, as these are self-evidently having a positive effect on student learning. We also now have three Subject Leaders for Education in school working in maths, English and science, and this is inevitably a real strength of the school.

Our reward programme, including praise postcards and extra-curricular trips, have provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all the learning, the many gifts, talents and the wide range of achievements demonstrated by our young people in all year groups. Many students have received praise postcards or have secured places on trips, which is testimony to the hard work of so many youngsters. Congratulations to every pupil who received an award to celebrate your success! We are very proud of you all. We also look forward to November 10th when we have our formal awards evening in our new school building – an evening not to be missed!

## Message from Emily Verow, Headteacher (contd)

I would like to thank all parents for continuing to support the school in maintaining a high standard of uniform across all year groups. Our uniform is an important symbol of the school in the wider community and the many favourable comments received from local residents is a clear indication that the smart appearance of our young people is highly regarded. I ask that you ensure that your child returns to school in September in full school uniform as outlined in the school policy.

Trips to France and The Lake District have taken place during this last term and they have been exceptionally successful, as you will see in this newsletter. The students represented the school incredibly well and I received glowing feedback from the staff who accompanied the youngsters. Pictures from these expeditions can be found on our website at [www.thekings.staffs.sch.uk](http://www.thekings.staffs.sch.uk)

As we start to look forward to well-deserved holidays our year 11 pupils – and their parents – will soon be thinking about the examination results arriving in August. On behalf of all the staff at The King's I would like to wish all of our students the very best of luck and hope that they achieve results which will allow them to continue to build a positive future. I am looking forward to lots of positive news and well deserved awards for young people who have worked very hard.

Finally, may I wish you, and your families, an enjoyable summer and restful holiday.

With best wishes  
Emily Verow

## Staffordshire Clubs for Young People

This year we have had Ian Atherton, from Staffordshire Clubs for Young People, working with our students on a range of community and activity based projects which are aimed at developing their interpersonal skills. Projects included visits to Hollins Grange, where students made cakes and helped to entertain the elderly residents. In addition, students have visited the indoor climbing wall at the YMCA and have developed their cooking skills. These sessions have also been used to develop students' leadership skills.

One specific project commemorated the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, with some students being involved in the production of memorial ceramic tiles, which will be displayed in the town.



This is the first academic year in which The King's has completed the Accelerated Reader programme. Students first took a STAR reading test to determine their comprehension age and appropriate level of book to read, which informed their choice of book from the school library. For each book selected, students have to make notes and then complete a quiz to demonstrate their level of understanding.

In total, students at The King's have read **1425 books** and **28,551,093 words** since September 2015! That's an average of 4 books per and 81,574 words per student!

Alongside their daily reading, students took three STAR tests during the year to monitor the overall impact of the Accelerated Reader Programme on students' comprehension ages.



All year groups have seen an average increase of approximately ten months to one year in comprehension age since the start of the programme. This demonstrates the progress our students are making with their reading and it will be of great benefit to them both in accessing and engaging with the curriculum.

Well done everyone!

## MNDA Fundraising

This summer the school raised £478 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA). Many activities took place, including a screening for students of the England v. Wales football match, which students much enjoyed. Proceeds from ticket sales went to this cause. Students also had the opportunity to wear clothes other than non-school uniform for the day.

Motor Neurone disease is a medical condition which is relatively rare but becoming increasingly more common. Muscles throughout the body slowly stop working and it becomes progressively difficult for sufferers to move around and to speak and swallow. The money which we have raised for MNDA will contribute towards further research and to help support families who have been affected by the disease.

Thanks to Hermione Hooper, Elisha Thomas and Rebekah Lemon for organising the events!



# La Rochelle Trip



On Friday, we got up really early to school to get the buses to the airport. We listened to music and played games until we got there where security was a bit chaotic! On the plane to La Rochelle the views were amazing and Joe the flight attendant looked after everyone rather nicely. We took a coach to the youth hostel which was modern, colourful and perfect for teenagers. After dinner we went to the beach to have a paddle and play in the sand before a well-earned sleep!

On Saturday we got up early for breakfast and a market visit where some of us tried snails and frogs' legs! We then went on a coach to Ile de Ré, an island off the coast of La Rochelle. We went straight to a honey farm where a French lady gave us a talk about the bees, showed us how it was made and we tasted lots of types of honey. The lady had even visited Stoke before because she went to Keele University! Then we climbed a REALLY tall lighthouse, the view was worth it! We finished off Ile de Ré with some crabbing, a spot of shopping and an ice cream. In the evening we went bowling where Katie was the winner.



Sunday was Lucy's birthday! In the morning, we started with croissants, chocolat chaud and an hour on the beach before climbing a medieval tower, a picnic lunch in the park and mini golf. On the way back to the hostel we went to the aquarium where we saw some fish and funny looking sharks. For dinner we went to a restaurant where the food was 'très magnifique' and Lucy opened her card and presents we had chosen in secret for her.

On Monday we went on a boat to see Fort Boyard (the one from childrens' TV), ate lunch and devoured a final crepe or ice cream before heading back to the airport. On the way back from the airport we made a strategic McDonalds stop en route to school.

Thank you to Miss Warner, Miss Stevenson and the staff who drove the minibuses for an amazing trip.

Written by Lucy, Emily, Emma, Leah, Heidi, Sam, Hermione, Jade, Elisha, Thea, Katie and Nicole.

# Super Skills Week in The Lake District

## Can 21st century students cope without a mobile phone and television for a week?

Well, students from The King's, proved that they were up for the challenge when they spent a week at The Birks Outdoor Centre in The Lake District.



The centre is not staffed, so students take a full role in looking after themselves and others. From preparing and cooking meals to taking care of their equipment and keeping the centre clean and tidy. Add to that a daily hike from the doorstep up and down the lovely hills and valleys of the Duddon valley. Our first hike covered 9 miles and took in Seathwaite Tarn, bogs, streams and a chance to observe the wonderful wildlife that makes up this beautiful part of the Lake District.

The weather was glorious and the food wasn't too bad either! Another successful trip and another set of fabulous memories.

Well done to sixth formers Becky and Sian and to key stage 3 students: Josh, Lewis, Craig, Brynn, Dylan, Jake, Sian, Hawa, Paige, Shannon, Kayla, Chloe and Gabby.

Mustn't forget the staff: Mr Hughes, Mrs Norris, Mrs Greene and Mr Atherton.



# The Main Mission – KMF Young Engineer of the Year 2016

We all attended RAF Cosford on the Launch Day and were given a short time to be scrutinised and checked for air worthiness. We made all the preparations necessary to be able to track our capsule using a radio tracker and a GPS tracker (separate due to the GPS stopping working over 15 miles high!!). The purpose of the experiment was to observe the reaction of maggots to high altitudes.



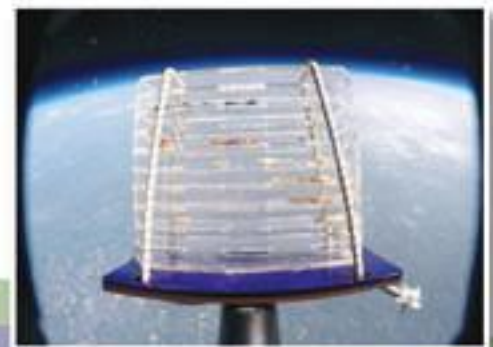
Twenty-five teams were present to launch their balloons and our team was tightly controlled for a launch window. The team sprung into action and we were very effective in getting our balloon inflated to the correct pressure needed to lift our payload without it being too fast or too slow. Luckily, the breezy day was not too hard to cope with and our balloon behaved itself.

The launch was quickly upon us and, with cameras rolling and maggots wriggling, the capsule was released under our balloon, which was soon soaring above the launch site.

Now came the frantic scratching of heads and seeking reassurance from others that our radio tracking device was working and we could actually track the location of the capsule with our maggots safely aboard. Sure enough, the data stream started to flow and under the expert guidance of Ben, Kai (our Pi) and tracking experts we could see where, how high and how fast our balloon was moving.

Once the balloon burst we knew we would have quite some time before it touched ground. We set off westward watching the data closely; the balloon was now falling at great speed and predictions of the landing spot were narrowing down – then disaster! We lost our signal. We had to do some quick thinking but thankfully Subway came to the rescue – free wifi!

Our capsule had landed sure enough and it couldn't have been more considerately done. It was clearly visible from a good distance right in the centre of a newly ploughed and harrowed field. We all climbed the fence and started the trek to see what had become of the maggots. On arrival at the capsule it was clear the maggots had not survived but nor had they popped (quite a relief actually) so when had they succumbed to the cold? Only the video evidence would tell.



**Well done to the Year 10 Young Engineering Group!**

# New School - Almost There!

When we start our summer break we will be just 105 days from moving into our new school building. It is really taking shape now. All the windows are fitted, rooms are being decorated and floor coverings are being laid. The building is roomy, light, airy and very modern – it really is a wonderful facility. If you would like to take a look round, please phone reception or email [csmith@thekings.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:csmith@thekings.staffs.sch.uk)

We have already started our preparation for moving, as there is a lot to be done. We estimate that we will need around 1,300 plastic crates just for moving books, teaching materials, files and small items of equipment – we start packing at the end of September. In addition, there is all our specialist Technology and Catering equipment to move, alongside desks, tables, chairs, cabinets, computers...and much more! Although some equipment will be moved during the summer break, most of the moving (and unpacking!) will take place during our extended half-term closure which, as previously advised is from 21 October to 4 November.

We trust that you are looking forward to the new school as much as we are.



## Sixth Form Success

CACHE recently launched a new set of qualifications that focused directly on Early Years Education; this was then offered as a vocational learning course to our sixth form students in the September of that year.



The course has 14 mandatory units with a large element focusing on the real work environment, where students are able to link classroom learning to hands on experience.

Over the two years the course has been running it has proved to be highly successful, with all students leaving us either with a place gained at their first choice university or entering employment in the childcare sector. Also, following a very successful moderation in June 2016, the school has now received an outstanding status in CACHE qualifications. The King's is the only sixth form in Stoke-on-Trent to offer these nationally and internationally recognised qualifications to students aged 16 and over.

# A day at Bletchley Park



Earlier in the summer term our year 7 students went to stunning Bletchley Park. Our students learned all about how the arrival of 'Captain Ridley's Shooting Party' at a mansion house in the Buckinghamshire countryside in late August 1938 was to set the scene for one of the most remarkable stories of World War Two.



They had an air of friends enjoying a relaxed weekend together at a country house. They even brought with them one of the best chefs at the Savoy Hotel to cook their food. But the small group of people who turned up at Bletchley Park were far from relaxed. They were members of MI6, and the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS), a secret team of individuals including a number of scholars turned Codebreakers. Their job was to see whether Bletchley Park would work as a wartime location, well away from London, for intelligence activity by GC&CS as well as by elements of MI6.



The GC&CS mission was to crack the Nazi codes and ciphers. The most famous of the cipher systems to be broken at Bletchley Park was the Enigma. There were also a large number of lower-level German systems to break as well as those of Hitler's allies. At the start of the war in September 1939 the codebreakers returned to Bletchley Park to begin their war-winning work in earnest.

Our students had a lesson on how the Enigma machine worked and used it to send a simple coded message and then had to decrypt the sent message.

