

WELCOME from the Head



Welcome to the latest issue of *Vision*, our Academy magazine.

I want to start by congratulating all of our students in Years 11-13 who have received exam results this summer. It is testament to their hard work and positive attitudes, that despite the tribulations that Covid has brought over the last two years, they have moved on to the next step in their education with strong academic results and huge amounts of resilience. Well done!

You'll see from this edition that we didn't let Covid restrict our creativity and enjoyment at King James; whether it was through the development of our Forest School, virtual educational visits, using outdoor classrooms, or adapting Sports Days, we made sure that students had as full an experience as possible, both academically and socially.

Through our Chromebook scheme we were able to provide 100% of students with the technology they needed during lockdown, meaning that all could access the array of live lessons that teaching staff provided. In addition to this we made student wellbeing a top priority and employed more support staff to ensure that we kept in regular contact with students who needed additional support.

Looking forward, I am sure that this academic year will bring different challenges, notably catching up on any missed learning and preparing students for a post-Covid world, but I am confident that our students and staff will meet these challenges head on and overcome them.

Finally, thank you to all of the parents who have supported the Academy over the past year; as always, your support has been invaluable, and I look forward to seeing you in person soon.

Best wishes, Simon Whitehead



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Meet our SENIOR LEADERS

As we begin a new academic year, and welcome so many new students into Year 7 and into our Sixth Form, we would like to introduce you to our Senior Leadership Team.

Simon Whitehead, Headteacher

Mr Whitehead was appointed as Headteacher in January 2021 following 11 years as a Senior Leader, nine of which were spent as Deputy Headteacher with a responsibility for curriculum and timetabling. At university he combined two of his passions by studying a Degree in Geography and Sports Studies, and on graduating in 2001 he joined the Geography department at King James.



Joanne Aitkin, Deputy Headteacher

Originally from Sheffield, Mrs Aitkin relocated to the North East to take up a post at King James as Director of Learning for Art in 2010. She joined the Senior Leadership Team as Assistant Headteacher in 2012 with a particular responsibility for quality of education and staff training and was promoted to the role of Deputy Headteacher in January 2021.



David Longstaff, Deputy Headteacher

Former student, Mr Longstaff, was appointed as Deputy Headteacher in 2021 following 11 successful years as Assistant Headteacher. He studied a Degree in Business Management at university and returned to King James to teach Business Studies in 2003 before becoming Director of Learning for the Business department in 2006.



Morag Stead, Assistant Headteacher

Mrs Stead followed her passion for literature by studying a Degree in English Literature at Newcastle University. She joined the team at King James as Director of Learning for English in 2000 and in 2012, she was appointed to the Senior Leadership Team as Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for overseeing Key Stage 4 achievement.



Ross Brown, Assistant Headteacher

Mr Brown studied a Degree in Physiology and Sports Science at Sunderland University and joined King James in 2005 as a Teacher of Science, with specialist knowledge in Biology. He became Director of Learning for Science in 2012, and in 2014 he was appointed to our Senior Leadership Team as Assistant Headteacher with a responsibility for Key Stage 3 learning.



Gail Nicholson, Associate Assistant Headteacher

Another former student, Mrs Nicholson studied a Degree in Criminology at Teesside University before enjoying a successful career in the NHS. She qualified to teach in 2014 and returned to King James as a Teacher of Health and Social Care in 2016, becoming Director of Learning for the department a year later. In 2019, she took on the role of Head of Sixth Form and was appointed to our Leadership Team.



Stephanie Collinson, Associate Assistant Headteacher

Mrs Collinson studied a Degree in Biology at Newcastle University and came to King James in 2013. She was appointed as Director of Learning for the Science department in 2017 and in 2020 she joined our Leadership Team with a responsibility for developing students' ability to think critically and retain key skills and content from their studies.



Rachel Glen, Associate Assistant Headteacher

Mrs Glen graduated from the University of Southern Indiana, USA with first class Honours Degrees in Mathematics, French and Secondary Education and began her teaching career in Yorkshire where she stayed for seven years before arriving at King James as Director of Learning for Maths in 2011. She was appointed as Assistant Headteacher earlier this year and still leads the Maths department.



Summer school adventures for NEW STARTERS

Each year, during the summer holidays at King James, we organise a week of fun, free activities for Year 6 students who are registered to start our Academy in September. This year our *Transition Summer School* took on the important theme of 'Catching Up'.

Following the huge disruption to children's lives over the last couple of years due to Covid-19, we created a programme of activities that focused on three main areas - catching up with key subjects, physical activity and social interaction.

Summer school participants spent the first two days in school where our team of transition staff delivered a range of fun lessons linked to key subjects in the curriculum, such as planning and budgeting for an overseas trip in Maths and writing a podcast in English. In recognition of the many missed opportunities for exercise during lockdown when grassroots sports clubs were closed and even leaving home to exercise was restricted, sport and drama-themed activities were also an important part of the programme to get pupils active.

Catching up with friends, and social interaction in general, is particularly important for both children and adults in maintaining a healthy body and positive mind. Socialising is also essential for

building confidence, so at our summer school we worked hard to make sure our new starters had plenty of opportunities to make friends. Activities were all designed to promote effective team working and to give young people the opportunity to support and encourage each other; this is an important aspect of school life at King James.

Students then enjoyed three exciting days at *Weardale Adventure Centre* taking part in a wide range of fun outdoor activities including Bush Craft, Canoeing, Rock climbing, Crate stacking, River walking, High Ropes, Archery and other challenges. In previous years, this environment has been proven to support pupils in building confidence, resilience and independence as they challenge themselves to complete things they may have never done before and experience a huge sense of achievement when they succeed. However, it also helps them to establish and reinforce new friendships with pupils from the many primary schools coming together to form our new Year 7 cohort.

Our Transition Programme ensures children feel confident and have lots of friends on their first day.

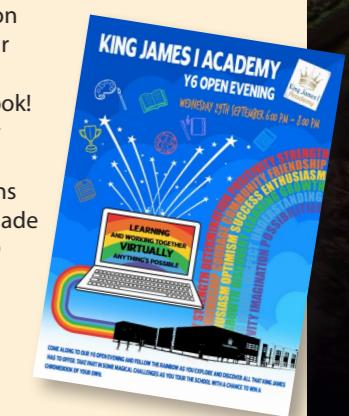
Miss Stephenson, Transition Lead Teacher

YEAR 6 Open Evening

Join us for our annual Year 6 Open Evening event on Wednesday 29th September from 6.00pm-8.00pm.

The event will give pupils who are currently in Year 6 the opportunity to visit King James with their family before making a secondary school application for entry in September 2022. Families will be able to take a tour of our buildings and outdoor facilities, talk to our staff and students, find out about our Academy curriculum, menus, transport and extra-curricular opportunities, and enjoy a wide variety of fun, themed activities in all departments around King James.

Pupils will also be able to 'follow the rainbow' to take part in an exciting competition to win their very own Chromebook! Secondary school applications must be made to Durham County Council by October 31st.





KJ to welcome OLYMPIAN

We will soon be welcoming former student and paralympic swimmer, Lyndon



Longhorne to King James to talk to students about competing in Tokyo and the power of a positive mental attitude.

At only 9 months old, Lyndon contracted meningitis and doctors were forced to amputate both legs, much of his right arm and the fingers of his left hand to save his life. However, this has never held him back and the determination we witnessed as a student at King James has continued into adult life and earned him a place on Team GB at this year's Olympic Games in Tokyo.

At only 25 years old, Lyndon has an amazing story to tell that we are sure will inspire our students. We look forward to his visit.

Photo taken from Instagram with permission from Lyndon Longhorne

GREAT RESULTS!

Despite the huge challenges faced by our young people in the past year, we are celebrating yet another year of excellent exam results in all A'Level, GCSE and vocational subjects.

There were a large number of notable achievers amongst our Sixth Form students; Rebecca Howarth, who is now beginning a Degree in Chemistry achieved A* in Chemistry and grade A in both Maths and Psychology; and Lia Banks celebrated a Distinction grade in Human Biology, Distinction* in Business Studies and a grade A in Criminology. Katie Frith achieved A grades in both A'Level Biology and Psychology, plus a Distinction* in Health & Social Care; Beth Hannan celebrated a grade A in Criminology, a Distinction in Human Biology and Double Distinction* in Health & Social Care; Gabriella Ramage achieved a Distinction grade in Human Biology, a Distinction* in Health & Social Care and an A* in Criminology; and Emily Richards celebrated A grades in both A'Level Psychology and Geography and a Distinction* in Health & Social Care.

Achievement in Sport was impressive across the board but Kaci Showler and Lauren Burney both celebrated Triple Distinction*. Likewise, Creative Media students achieved excellent results but Logan Ladd attained a Triple Distinction* alongside a Double Distinction* grade in IT; he is now embarking upon a Degree in Film and TV Production. Amelia Coser, who is now beginning a Degree in Professional Policing, achieved A grades in A'Level Criminology and Extended Project, a Distinction in Human Biology and grade B in Religious Studies; whilst Emily Hamilton celebrated Distinction grades in both Human Biology and Applied Psychology, a Distinction* in Food Science, grade A* in Art, grade A in Photography and grade C in Geography.

Year 11 students also celebrated outstanding results with many achieving a high number of top grade 9s including Zoe Munro, Jake Dobinson, Nathan Dunn, Liam Proud, Cameron Dobson and Sophie Foster. There were excellent results in all subjects with much to celebrate in Triple Science and Maths but some, including French, Statistics and Photography, celebrated 100% pass rate at grade 5 and above. Congratulations everyone!

We have worked hard to compensate for lost learning and these results show that our catch-up strategies have paid off.

Mrs Nicholson, Head of Sixth Form

Outdoor learning at FOREST SCHOOL

new



A plot of land on our Academy site has been developed into an exciting new learning environment which takes a unique hands-on approach to teaching subjects such as Maths, Science, Geography, Enterprise and Art. At 'Forest School' students learn through a wide range of innovative projects which are all linked to gardening and the environment.

Our Forest School is maintained by Mr Blackburn, one of our Learning Support Assistants, following his completion of the Level 3 Forest School Leader course. It gives students the opportunity to get outdoors and develop their knowledge in Biology and Geography by growing flowers, plants and vegetables, observing insects and birds and studying eco-systems and sustainability. However, students also develop mathematical and enterprise skills via a range of construction projects including building raised beds, planters, fencing and furniture, which all require accurate measurement and calculation, and budgeting for materials.

Of course, Forest School is also an excellent environment for building confidence and personal skills in communication and team working. Participants have a great sense of achievement as they watch the garden take shape and they are now beginning to develop lots of new ideas for the future, including the installation of a pond and a shelter for those times when the weather is not on their side!

Local residents and businesses alike have shown their support for the initiative by making donations. Individual members of the public donated our garden shed, poly tunnel and paving slabs, and their generosity

resulted in a considerable saving which allowed us to buy timber and fixings to build fencing and raised beds. *Homebase* kindly donated the fence paint to treat our shed and fencing, *Asda* donated some plants and garden tools and *Morrison's* provided a selection of seeds.



This year, Mr Blackburn hopes to re-establish working links with the *Auckland Project's* 'Incredible Edible' scheme, which was sadly brought to a halt due to Covid-19. *Incredible Edible* encourages people to transform unused space in their local community into vegetable plots and havens for wildlife. Our Academy is keen to get involved with a view to donating our school-grown produce to local charity, 'Feeding Families', which aims to alleviate food poverty by providing food boxes to those who need it most.

If you would like to support our Forest School, we are always on the look out for donations of clean timber and fixings for new construction projects, firewood and logs, seeds and plants, plant pots of all sizes, gardening tools and decorative stones. Please email david.blackburn@kingjames1academy.com

Hands on SCIENCE

Oobleck is a non-Newtonian fluid, but if you have no idea what that means, then you are certainly not alone! However, Mrs Lumley-Imerson's Year 9 Science students can explain!

Oobleck is a substance made from a mix of cornstarch and water; it feels like a solid when you hold it in a ball, but it becomes liquidy when you let your hand go loose. It takes the shape of whatever is holding it and students took part in an experiment to learn more about it.

Students have also been engaged in a fun forensic investigation activity which required them to solve the crime 'Who ate Mrs Lumley-Imerson's packed lunch?' The two suspects were her son Josh and Harry the dog! The 'criminal' had left hair at the scene of the crime, so Mrs Lumley-Imerson took hair samples from each of the the suspects and students were challenged to match the crime scene hair to one of the suspects using microscopy techniques.

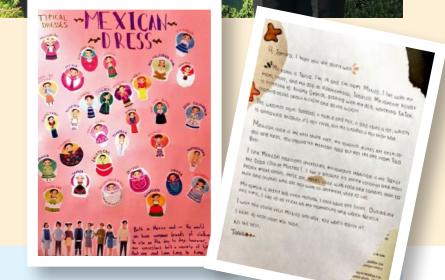


Languages students write to PENPALS IN FRANCE & MEXICO

Key Stage 3 Modern Foreign Languages students have been taking part in an exciting penpal project with pupils in France and Mexico.

Teacher, Miss Grand, who is pictured right with participating students Sophie Gargett and Oliver Smith, established a working partnership with teachers at *Patria Nueva School* in Mexico and *Collège François Rabelais* in France earlier in the year, and students have been corresponding via email and post. Students have shared information about their daily lives and their culture through letters and pictures, some of which are pictured here.

Miss Grand said, "Our students have really enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions about life for young people in another country. They have been really enthusiastic about the project and have put so much effort into the letters and pictures they have sent. Hopefully, this is just the beginning and the project can expand to include other countries too."





Caring for STUDENT WELLBEING

Year 8 students have been learning techniques to relax and look after their own mental health in a series of fun 'mindfulness' workshops with Student Support Worker, Mrs Bainbridge.

Mindfulness is a therapeutic technique which means focusing on the present moment, being fully aware of your surroundings and accepting your feelings, thoughts and sensations to become more calm. It combines simple breathing exercises with techniques to focus on things such as sounds, smells and tastes; this leads to a greater sense of wellbeing and a new appreciation of the simple things we often take for granted.

Students particularly enjoyed the 'Mindful Eating' session which began with Mrs Bainbridge teaching participants how to sit quietly and breathe to relieve stress and anxiety; the technique takes only a few minutes so can be done in school, at home, or even on the bus!

Mindfulness is a therapeutic technique which helps students to become more calm. It's easy to do and can make a huge difference to every day life.

Mrs Bainbridge, Student Support Worker

Next came an unexpected activity which involved focusing on a range of food items from grapes and jelly sweets to Maltesers. Students were challenged to pay particular attention to the way each one looked and felt, then close their eyes and focus on the smell before finally being allowed to taste each one. They noted that the taste seemed more intense following the exercise, and that the experience of eating became more pleasurable.

They also considered how mindfulness techniques such as these could be applied to other scenarios; for example, focusing on the feeling of the sun's warmth on their face, or the way sunlight enhances the colours of nature, or the smells from summer's flowers and cut grass.



MEDIA STUDIES with The Joker

Three of our Sixth Form Media students have been collaborating on a range of projects featuring Sam Hobbs transformed into a modern interpretation of iconic comic book villain, The Joker!

Year 14 student, Brooke Moore, pictured above, who aspires to a career as a special effects make-up artist in TV and film, completed this amazing transformation and photographed the various stages to demonstrate her skills in her personal online portfolio. This is an essential way to showcase creative work for anyone working in the media industry.

Sam had no problem channelling his inner Joker for a photoshoot for Year 13 student Liam Moore, who wrote and designed a magazine spread featuring the top 5 iconic super villains. Sam then went on to shoot and edit footage for his own music video production for the classic Jimmy Durante song, 'Smile'; adding special effects to create a fantastic finished product. For her own music video, Brooke produced a beautiful piece for 'Somewhere only we know' by Lily Allen, where she invited a number of participants to consider the things in life that made them happy and

be filmed with a written sign; the result is a thought-provoking video which encourages us to appreciate simple pleasures. Also in Year 14, Callum Lauder produced an outstanding music video for Arctic Monkey's 'The Bad Thing', which was shot in various locations in Bishop Auckland and Darlington, and Paige Priestley produced a video for a track by 'Lil Peep. This year group are now working on a TV news production unit.

Year 13 students are currently analysing modes of documentary to study presentation styles and camera techniques in readiness for their own production. The unit of study involves developing a concept for a documentary product followed by script writing, filming, editing and voiceover recording.

New Year 12 students are learning how to plan a media product effectively and the many considerations that media producers

face in industry; this will help them to get the very best results in their production units this year. Students will soon be producing their own digital magazine using Adobe software and developing skills in journalism, digital photography, photo manipulation and graphic design in the process.

Following the creation of outstanding magazine products last year, our Year 11 Media students are now analysing the production techniques involved in a wide range of media products including TV shows, movies, radio programmes, computer games and advertisements. This will lead to a series of practical film and editing workshops with students creating their own movie trailer.

Meanwhile, our Year 10s are discovering the benefits of producing effective moodboards and thumbnail sketches to communicate ideas in a production team setting in the publishing industry. The hand skills and professional terminology that they learn at this stage will help them achieve highly in both their coursework and in their forthcoming exam component.

THE YEAR AHEAD...

This year, providing it is safe to do so, the Media department hopes to resume its programme of educational visits to venues such as *Emmerdale Studios, National Media Museum, BBC Newcastle, Teesside University and Sunderland University*.



Euro 2020 Predictor COMPETITION WINNER

In July, Mr Bushby announced the results of his Euro 2020 Predictor Competition and presented the overall winner's trophy to Sixth Form student, Lily-Beth Howarth, pictured above.

Participants were awarded points for correctly predicting the score for all football matches in the Euro tournament, and a winner declared for each year group. Alongside Lily-Beth, winners were Mia Jardine in Year 7, Luke Edwards in Year 8 and Dylan Baldam in Year 9; all received a commemorative football.



Despite the pandemic, Year 10 student, Ruby Sheridan has quickly established herself as a talented equestrian eventer and we are delighted that she has chosen to represent King James in competitions.

In May, Ruby, pictured above with her horse Kalli, represented King James in her first National Schools Equestrian Association competition at Northallerton Equestrian Centre, where she placed second in a class of 32 competitors in the Eventers Challenge. This earned her a place in the National Equestrian Championship in Hickstead where she placed 16th in a huge class of 180 riders; this was an outstanding achievement as a very tough technical course meant that over 80 riders did not manage to complete it. Equestrian competitions are one of the few activities in which riders compete as equals, regardless of their age, sex or the size of their horse. As an Independent Partner of the British Horse Society, the NSEA is the recognised body for equestrianism in schools throughout the UK, providing inter-schools competitions for team and individual riders at both schools and colleges.

In our Food Department students take part in a variety of innovative challenges designed to promote a passion for cooking whilst developing both their practical cooking skills and their understanding of nutritional value.

Students begin their journey in Year 7 with a combination of theory and practical sessions to help them gain knowledge in food hygiene, nutrition and kitchen safety; they can build upon these skills as they progress through Key Stage 3. Students learn how to make a range of savoury dishes from rice and pasta to pasties and pizza. They then move on to make a variety of desserts, which enables them to learn about nutritional content in foods which are considered treats. In Year 8, students learn about food from around the world and conduct research into food provenance and sustainability.

Last term, Year 9 students were given a list of ingredients and two weeks to design a recipe around the theme of 'Street Food', pictured below right; they then had just one hour to cook and present their dish. As part of the challenge, students had to consider the nutritional value of their dish and the time constraints involved to prepare it. Dishes included chicken skewers, tacos, chicken wraps, stir fry and colourful 'Buddha Bowls' with fresh vegetables, tortillas and home-made guacamole.

Year 10 students took part in the 'Tunnock's Teacake Challenge', which is designed to develop skills in creative decoration and eye-catching presentation; this will help them to reach their full potential in the practical element of their Hospitality and Catering exam. Students had great fun and there were some outstanding results, some of which are pictured below.

Year 12 Food Science and Nutrition students completed a mock exam at the end of term which involved designing and producing a three-course meal which they cooked within a four hour time constraint using high-level cooking skills. Students produced a wide range of dishes including soups, bread and chicken dishes; there was also chocolate mousse cake, brownies and shortbread with a choice of ice-cream!

This year, if restrictions allow, the department hopes to relaunch the weekly after-school *KJ Cooking Club*, which had to be halted due to Covid-19. The club was extremely popular, with students learning a wide range of cooking skills and making dishes from all around the world such as Indian curries, French desserts and Mexican cuisine.



FOOD SCIENCE & NUTRITION

We also hope to re-open *The King's Feast*, which gives Sixth Form students the opportunity to run a food outlet under supervision and prepare hot takeaway items such as hot beef and pulled pork sandwiches to serve to all year groups; this provides experience in catering for large numbers and serving food hygienically.



UKMT Maths Challenge Success

During the Summer term, Year 7 and Year 8 pupils took part in the UKMT's Junior Maths Challenge, which is a 60-minute multiple choice challenge.

The challenge encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and fluency in applying fundamental mathematical techniques to non-routine problems. For many students it was their first time completing the challenge and we are very proud of all of their efforts.

Both Reece Dodds and Jay McPhee received Bronze certificates with Reece also securing the Best in School Award, and Year 7 student, Leah Proud, received a Best in Year certificate. All students received a certificate of participation for their efforts; well done to Tegan Kipling, Shannon Calvert, Tilly Wilson, Kate Moulton, Olivia Wilson, Toby Davison, Brooke Jardine, Nevan Lamb, Miley Dobinson, Danny Nelson and Jack Burdess. Year 8 participants are pictured above with their certificates; congratulations to Bradley Hughes, Sam Jordan, Leo Richardson, Jack Boughey, Alyssa Sample, Jack Lowis, Millie Ann McGowan, Harry Young, Emily Bell, Makenzie Peate, Hannah McConkey, Taylor Nicholson and Joe Washington.



SPIDER - BROWSER
TENNIS - MARTIAL
CIVIL - STATION
CUCKOO - WORK
CONSOLATION - MONEY
TOOTH - GODMOTHER

Year group fun on SPORTS DAY

This year, for safety reasons, our Sports Day took place over three days to allow for individual year group events, and although on a much smaller scale than usual, students still had a great day and competed with enthusiasm.

To maintain year group bubbles our PE department did an excellent job of organising separate events for Years 7, 8 and 9. Students still took part in all of the usual track and field events including 100m, 200m, 400m and relay races, alongside long jump, high jump, javelin and shot put. Individual winners for each event were presented with a medal and the winning year group collected a trophy to display in their classroom. The winning Year 7 group was Mrs Kelly's; she is pictured above with representatives from the group as they collected the trophy.



TASTER SESSIONS at Bishop Auckland College

A group of Year 10 students recently spent the day at Bishop Auckland College trying out a variety of specialist trade-based courses ranging from joinery and bricklaying to hair dressing and catering.

Students were able to opt in to two sessions each and take part in mini tasks to help them decide if they might like to discover more once they have completed their GCSEs. In Catering, students followed a recipe to make scones and cookies and learned about kitchen hygiene, and in Construction, students were challenged with building their own brick wall using a spirit level to see how straight they could make it.

Those on the Joinery taster session learned how to use a hand saw correctly and make a dovetail joint, which is commonly used in furniture making; whilst in Hair and Beauty, students developed skills in a variety of plaited hairstyles using the training heads. Some students also joined sessions in Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Art and Design; aspiring mechanics learned how to remove a wheel from a car and used specialist machinery to remove the tyre from the rim and reinstall it effectively, and artists designed and created a poster which depicted what had helped them to emotionally cope with lockdown. All participants said that they had really enjoyed the experience and would consider studying a trade at college in the future.



GETTING CRAFTY after school

A group of students, who are now in Year 8 have been getting creative in an after school Arts & Crafts Club run by Miss Thwaites and Mr Graham.



The club was launched last year as a way for students to socialise and enjoy expressing themselves through art. Kiera Illingworth, Tia Gibson, Tilly Wilson, Brooke Bell and Mia Jardine, pictured above, started by painting stones with positive messages and images to display around our Academy grounds.

They then went on to produce bespoke resin key rings, coasters and dog tags,

all made to order and sold to staff and students, with money raised from sales being donated to *Stray Aid*. This local charity, which is based in Coxhoe, helps to nurture, retrain and rehome unwanted dogs and cats. *Stray Aid* was suggested by Miss Thwaites who is passionate about both animal welfare and fundraising to support charitable organisations.

SECRET STUDENT

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 were delighted to see *Gallone's* Ice Cream van pull into the King James quad, especially when they discovered it was there to deliver free ice cream cones as a reward to the winning classes in our 'Secret Student' challenge.

The initiative involved a different student chosen at random each day in every Key Stage 3 class; this student was then awarded points by their teachers throughout the day based on our seven standards which promote being prepared, good attendance, respect, positivity, engagement, looking after our environment and community.

Students had no idea who the Secret Student might be for the day so everyone had to work hard for their class. At the end of each week, the class in each year group with the highest number of points received a reward, from chocolate treats to extended break times. As you'd expect, ice cream was a much-appreciated surprise in the recent hot weather and students really enjoyed eating outside.

Laura Newton, Key Stage 3 Mentor who organised Secret Student said, "The initiative is designed to promote team working and community spirit as students must work together to earn points for their class. Students have really engaged with the idea and have enjoyed the friendly rivalry. It was so rewarding to see their faces when the ice cream van arrived."

MEET NUSHKA... adopted from Romania!

At the beginning of the summer holidays, Miss Thwaites adopted the beautiful Nushka from *Muts Rescue*, a charity in Romania.



Nushka is a one year old Hungarian Visla/Labrador cross who was found abandoned and starving in the mountains. She was taken to the rescue centre for medical treatment before being put on the *Muts* website for adoption; this is where Miss Thwaites saw her photo and instantly fell in love. Following a long journey in a transporter, Nushka arrived in the UK and her new forever home where she settled immediately. Miss Thwaites is impressed by her calm and gentle nature and aspires to Nushka having a future as a therapy dog at King James.

Alexi gets hair cut for LITTLE PRINCESS TRUST

15 year old Alexi Lyons has raised £530 for the *Little Princess Trust* by being sponsored to cut her waist length hair, which she also donated. This charity makes custom wigs from real hair for children and young people who have lost their hair to cancer.



long-term plan. She said, "I remember as my hair grew longer and longer, my Nanna used to comment on how beautiful it was so I promised I would not cut it until she gave me her blessing. She did that just before she passed away in February this year so this donation is from us both."

Losing hair is an extremely traumatic experience for those who are already coping with difficult circumstances, and it can be a real challenge to find a wig that fits correctly at an affordable price; the Little Princess Trust was established in 2006 for this reason.

Alexi first learned about the charity in a TV programme when she was just six years old and was greatly affected by the stories she heard. At that time her hair was cut into a short bob but on that day she determined to grow it long enough to make a donation in the future and informed her family of her

'All Together' GOLD AWARD

King James I Academy has been awarded the highest gold award from the *Anti-Bullying Alliance*. The 'All Together' programme is the Alliance's whole-school anti-bullying initiative for schools in England. The aim is to reduce bullying of all children and young people.



To receive an award, schools must evidence the work they do and the improvements they have made to reduce bullying; only those with the highest standards receive the gold award. King James has a wide variety of initiatives which focus on creating a safe, respectful and friendly learning environment, from dedicated Student Support and Welfare staff, who are skilled in mediation, to Academy Council members and Peer Mentors in all year groups who are there to offer friendship

and support to vulnerable students. Any school in England can join the programme and access the resources available including the pupil wellbeing questionnaire, the audit and action planning tool, online training, and anti-bullying resources. Applicants must first conduct a student survey about bullying within their school environment and analyse the data, before showing how they will act on their findings. To achieve Gold standard, schools must provide evidence

to show that they can meet at least 90% of the judging criteria to amber or green status, with case studies to back up their application. At King James, our survey showed that students in all year groups reported feeling safe, secure and supported whilst at school. Our ethos of mutual respect and community, which feature in our seven standards, has helped us to achieve a positive learning environment for all and yet another excellent award for our school.

ECO AGENTS get to work

The King James Eco-Agents are a group of students who are passionate about environmental issues and dedicated to making a difference in both their local community and their school environment.

Led by Director of Learning for Modern Foreign Languages, Miss Stephenson, who is well known for her dedication to eco-friendly projects, the group is currently taking on a range of projects which will benefit our environment. The initiative is also supported by Geography Teacher, Miss Burton and Student Support Worker, Mrs Bainbridge who will both help King James succeed as we work towards achieving the Eco Schools Silver Award from *Keep Britain Tidy*.

The group, which is open to all year groups, launched with a litter picking session around the school site as part of the *Great Big School Clean 2021*. Student teams from Year 9 and Sixth Form collected litter which was then sorted for recycling, although we

are delighted to say that only a small amount of rubbish was found.

The group has explored a number of initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint, some of which are already underway; these include recycling schemes for paper, plastic, fizzy drink cans, postage stamps and even crisp packets! Many other ideas are planned for the year ahead as restrictions are hopefully eased, such as a drive against single use plastics, especially water bottles and cups which are extremely harmful to the environment.



Environmental initiatives have always been important to our school community and we have lots of ideas for the year ahead.

Miss Stephenson, Director of Learning for MFL



Photo by Maycon Marmo from Pexels

Reflecting on DRAMATIC ARTS

It's been a tremendously difficult year for subjects which would normally be very hands on such as Drama and Performing Arts. Here, Miss Howard, our Director of Learning for Dramatic Arts, talks about how students rose to the challenges of social distancing.

"In Drama, two Year 13 students, Georgia Andrews and Chloe Box, created an extremely hard hitting, socially distanced performance and both were outstanding, both in their performance skills and in their attitude."

"They created a visual piece based on the stimulus of One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey and incorporated themes such as women's roles, power, judgement, mental health and sanity. The department will really miss them but we would like to take the opportunity to wish them both the best of luck for their next adventures."

"In Performing Arts, we created a stunning interpretation of the film Labyrinth and students created their own piece using the themes of choices, speaking up and transition from girlhood to womanhood, combining the art forms of Drama, Physical Theatre, Dance, Song and Guitar."

"Charlotte Robison created a legacy that will last a lifetime; she performed Solo last year and created an epic piece based on fear. Freya Dhiman, Louise Strike and Jasmine Sproat, all started their performing arts journey last year with style and I can't wait to see what they come up with this year."



Return to ROCK SCHOOL

This month will hopefully see the re-launch of our hugely successful Rock School, which brings together young musicians from different schools and colleges in the area.

Rock School gives young people the opportunity to meet likeminded teenagers and develop and improve their skills in writing music, playing a variety of instruments and performing. We also have a new after-school Guitar Club for Key Stage 3 students, which is run by Year 13 Music student, Adam Hughes.

The Music Department is also looking at running a new Music Technology course to offer Key Stage 4 students a different pathway within the subject; this will be ideal for those who are interested in a career in music production.

UNIFORM Recycling

Our Student Support Team operates a Uniform Recycling scheme to support our families in need. Donations of blazers, ties, shirts, trousers, skirts, jumpers, shoes and PE kit can be delivered to Main Reception and will be gratefully received by those who need it most. If you need to access the service for your child, it is completely confidential and we have all items of uniform available in different sizes. Please contact 01388 603388 and ask for Student Support.



RELIGIOUS STUDIES... the study of life

In Religious Studies, students discover and debate a wide range of topics from crime and punishment to human life and medical intervention, alongside exploring the different faiths in modern Britain. The department has a number of exciting learning activities and experiences planned for the coming year.

Crime, from DNA sequencing to finger printing and gathering evidence; and discover the accuracy and reliance of these techniques in solving crimes worldwide. The visit will conclude with some festive ice skating!



Our Year 7 students will spend a day visiting three different denominational churches to explore a variety of beliefs in modern Britain. This will allow them to consider if all Christians share the same beliefs and what reasons there could be for different views. They will also discuss whose beliefs are more valid and why places of worship reflect faith differently. The experience will help to embed learning which has taken place throughout Autumn term 1 and students will have the opportunity to ask questions and critically challenge the responses from our Clergy.

In December, Year 10 students will take part in the annual visit to the Centre for Life to participate in workshops exploring human life and development in the womb; we will consider when during gestation we become 'alive' and the ethical issues affecting development before birth. We then explore the advances of scientific techniques to solve



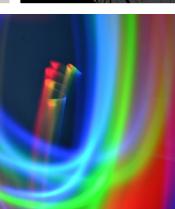
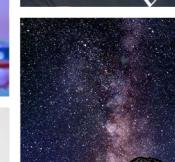
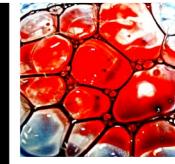
ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

Year after year we celebrate the outstanding creativity of our Art and Photography students and their consistent achievement at both GCSE and A'Level. This year is no exception and the department continues to grow, with more students than ever choosing the subject as an option.

Last term, before the summer, Year 10 Photography students focused on experimental photography looking at things such as light trails, stop motion, levitation photography and using interesting and unusual materials including ferrofluid to produce content for their coursework. They also used Adobe Photoshop to develop their skills in editing and photo manipulation, and produced a wide range of high quality examples.

Sixth Form students are all working on individually-selected themed projects, including Scarlett Keho who has completed a female body positivity study designed to celebrate the human body in all its forms and to promote body confidence and diversity. Scarlett chose this subject in response to the increasing incidents of body and face manipulation seen on social media which can have such a negative impact upon the way young people see themselves.

In Art, Key Stage 3 students have been working on cultural pieces using a variety of media including cold wax batik, chalk, pen and ink and watercolour; they have also been building up their creative sketch books which are designed to show their personal journey with Art. Year 8 artists have been studying Cubism and have completed a number of themed projects including 3D and pattern work.



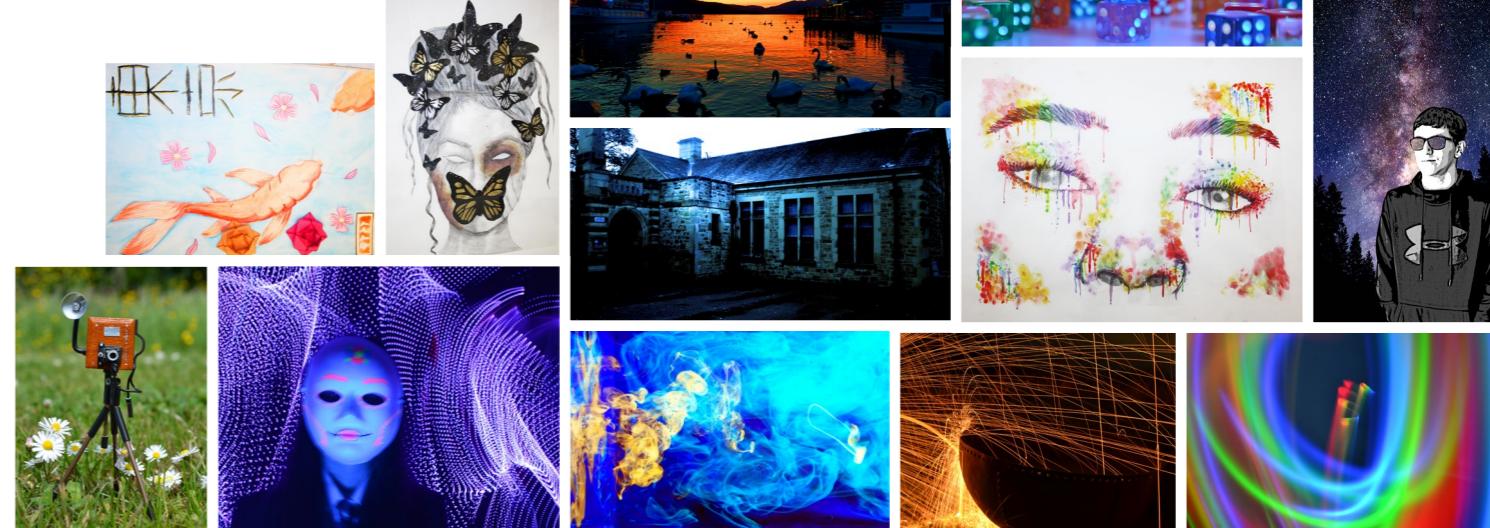
Saying FAREWELL

Despite facing the biggest challenge to education that we have ever seen, our young people maintained a positive attitude until the very last day at King James.



With cancelled exams, cancelled events, cancelled trips and even a cancelled Prom, our students in Years 11 and 13 had an extremely difficult year, and this made the final day even more poignant. Staff were keen to share the pride they felt in their students, many of whom they have watched grow from nervous Year 7s to mature and confident leavers.

This cohort of leavers has demonstrated such resilience in coping with Covid-19. We hope the year ahead brings greater freedom and sincerely wish them the very best of luck in the next stage of their lives.



KJ ALUMNI

Laura Newton

"I was a student at King James from 2009 until 2016 and after leaving Sixth Form I went to Liverpool John Lewis University to study a Degree in Events Management; this was a degree in business management but with a specialism in events."

"During the summer following my first year, I travelled to Orlando, USA to work at the Hard Rock Hotel in Universal Studios as an Activities Coordinator. My role involved a 'meet & greet' service for guests, organising family activities to keep everyone entertained and coordinating events such as photoshoots taking place at the hotel. The whole experience was so much fun; I met many wonderful people and loved living in the sunshine so it fuelled my passion for travelling and my desire to live and work abroad."

"My degree course structure included an integrated work placement year, which I spent living in St. Julien on the island of Malta working for a company called Sarah Young Events. The company specialised in arranging luxury weddings across the island for both UK visitors and local couples. I found it so rewarding to help plan and coordinate the perfect wedding day for our clients; I really enjoyed seeing people so happy and knowing that I had played a part in making their dreams come true. The experience was invaluable for building both my confidence and my portfolio too, especially as many of the traditional Maltese weddings catered for up to 2,000 guests! It also allowed me to network and build links with other industry professionals including a photographer from Australia and a wedding planner from Dubai."

"Following my 12 month placement in Malta I returned to the UK but decided to complete my degree at Manchester Metropolitan University as the course on offer there gave me more opportunities to broaden my experience. I graduated amidst the first national lockdown in 2020 with a full programme of work lined up for the summer and beyond. I had been successful in securing a position to do stage production, project management and artist liaison at 18 music festivals, but sadly these were all cancelled due to Covid-19. I had also secured a three-month placement to work in Shanghai, China which was to be fully funded by the British Council, however it was also cancelled due to the pandemic. At this point, I applied for a temporary position at King James as Key Stage 3 Covid Catch-up Mentor and was delighted to start work in September 2020."

"I've learned so much in my role at King James; I have had the opportunity to build upon my organisational and teamworking skills, and used my events planning knowledge to help organise the Academy's first virtual 'Prize Evening' and 'Lockdown Legends'. Although I have loved being back at King James, the contract was for 12 months only so I will be leaving in October for pastures new and a return to events management in America"

"I am so excited to have secured my dream job in Florida, where I will be working as an Events Coordinator in a large luxury hotel resort in Delray Beach. The hotel plays host to luxury weddings, special events and conferences all year round so I will get to put all of my knowledge and experience to good use. Florida is my favourite place in the world so I can't wait to live and work there; I also can't wait to get back to the career that I love and have missed so much. My previous experience really gave me the edge when it came to getting this job so my advice to any young person is to be as pro-active as possible about building your cv. Make sure you take every opportunity to try new things, challenge yourself and gain life experience and independence."



Tiegan Genner

"I really enjoyed my time in Sixth Form and studied Business Studies, Creative Media Production and History. I found Business really interesting so decided to apply for apprenticeship schemes in that field and I now work for Mapp's Mortgages and Insurance Ltd in Crook."



Rebecca Collier Jacob

"I've always wanted to be a primary school teacher and thanks to King James I Sixth Form I achieved the grades I needed to be offered a place at York St. John University, which was my first choice. I'm now living in this beautiful city and studying a Degree in Early Years Education."



Amelia Coser

"I enjoy helping people and being part of a team, and entering the police force has been a personal dream for many years. Thanks to King James I achieved the results I needed to study at university and am now beginning a Degree in Professional Policing at Teesside University."



Logan Ladd

"I studied Computer Technology and Creative Media at King James and chose to stay for an extra year to gain a higher qualification in Media as my ambition is to be a Director. I am now on the path to fulfilling my dream at the University of York where I am studying a Degree in Film and TV Production."



Jess Baronowski

"I was given lots of opportunities at King James to build skills, confidence and life experience alongside my studies. I really enjoy working with children and want to be a primary school teacher so I'm delighted to be studying a Degree in Primary Education at Edge Hill University in Lancashire."



SIXTH FORM NEWS

NEW SUBJECTS!



As we continue to expand our subject choices, we have launched two new qualifications for Sixth Form students.

Those interested in following a legal career can study the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Applied Law and we have also launched the BTEC Level 2 Extended Award in Work Skills, which is a Level 2 pathway course.

Relax in the GARDEN

Gardening is a great way to relax between lessons and students are welcome to join our Sixth Form Mentor, Linda Dixon, pictured here with Brooke Moore, in the Common Room garden.



There's always something to do from watering, pruning and weeding to planting seeds and bulbs, and participants all reap the benefits of getting outside in the fresh air and improving their mental wellbeing.

Get qualified with SHILDON AFC

If you're looking for a full-time sports education route with an A' Level standard of teaching and high quality coaching then this is for you!

Shildon AFC Sports Academy at King James offers the most realistic football progression route in the North East with the most progressive club in the area. We provide playing opportunities with our first team, Shildon AFC Reserves official, U18 and 17s with Bishop Juniors FC at King James I Academy and at Shildon AFC Community Football Centre. The Sports Academy also offers work experience opportunities with sports coaching business, AJ Sports, providing high quality coaching experiences with children around the North East. You can still play for your own club on a weekend too as our matches take place on Wednesdays during the day. For more information please call Andrew Jinks on 07816 231644.

Each year we celebrate the successes of our Sixth Form students as they achieve excellent results in their chosen subjects and progress onto university, apprenticeship programmes or into the workforce. Despite the many challenges of 2020-21, this year is no exception.

37 of our Year 13 students applied and accepted an offer to study a degree course at university, and four of those students were accepted to prestigious *Russell Group* universities.

This year we saw applications for a wide variety of degree courses; Lee Dodgson will soon be embarking upon a Degree in Cybersecurity and Networks at *Teesside University*, whilst Chloe Box and Holly Kipling will both be fulfilling their creative passion by studying a Degree in Interior Design at *York St John University*. Rebecca Howarth and Logan Ladd will also be living and studying in the beautiful city of York as both have secured places at the *Russell Group University of York* to study degrees in Chemistry and Film and Television Production respectively. Beth Hannar will be attending *Northumbria University* to study a Degree in Guidance and Counselling.

Year 12 work experience

Despite the challenges of sourcing a work experience opportunity due to Covid-19 restrictions in the workplace, some of our Year 12 students were successful in their search and took part in a week-long work placement in July.

Head Boy, Adam Hughes was delighted to spend the week at *Victoria Lane Primary School* to gain experience working with children as he aspires to a career as a primary teacher, and Freya Dhiman and Louise Strike both worked at *Jack Drum Arts*, which organises creative and performance-based community activities for children and young people in and around Crook.

Lucy Forster went to *Park House Rest Home* where she organised a range of activities to entertain the elderly residents.

Other students took part in a wide range of virtual work experience sessions which are now on offer to compensate for the lack of live placements. Amelia Philpott took part in the excellent *Young Vet Programme*, which gives students aged 15-18 years old an immersive experience of Veterinary Science through a series of role-play situations, seminars, simulations and Q&A sessions led by a group of experienced veterinary professionals over two days. Bethany Ingram took part in a new virtual workshop in partnership with the NHS called *NextGen Nurse*, which is aimed at encouraging more students to consider a career in nursing. The workshop gives students the opportunity to find out about a wide range of different career routes into nursing supported by NHS nursing ambassadors. Camron Williams took part in a virtual placement ran by *The High Tide Foundation* called *Introducing the Essential World of Law*.



Pictured here, Holly Kipling will be studying Interior Design at York St. John University



PLEA TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

We are in the process of building up a network of local businesses that could offer a work placement for Sixth Form students, or who could visit King James for Q&A sessions.

We deliver courses in all sectors and would be delighted to hear from any business that could help our young people to develop real-world knowledge from industry practitioners. Please email Katie Lobb, Assistant Head of Sixth Form at k.lobb@kj1a.com

CATCH UP SESSIONS

We will be offering an extensive programme of catch up sessions throughout this academic year for students in all year groups.

There will be a major focus on students in Years 11 and 13 who are working towards their GCSE and A'Level examinations in 2022, but we also have a wide range of initiatives to ensure all of our students have the opportunity to catch up on lost learning due to Covid-19.

PARENTS HELP US SHAPE THE FUTURE

Does your child attend King James? Would you like to get involved in shaping the future of our Academy?



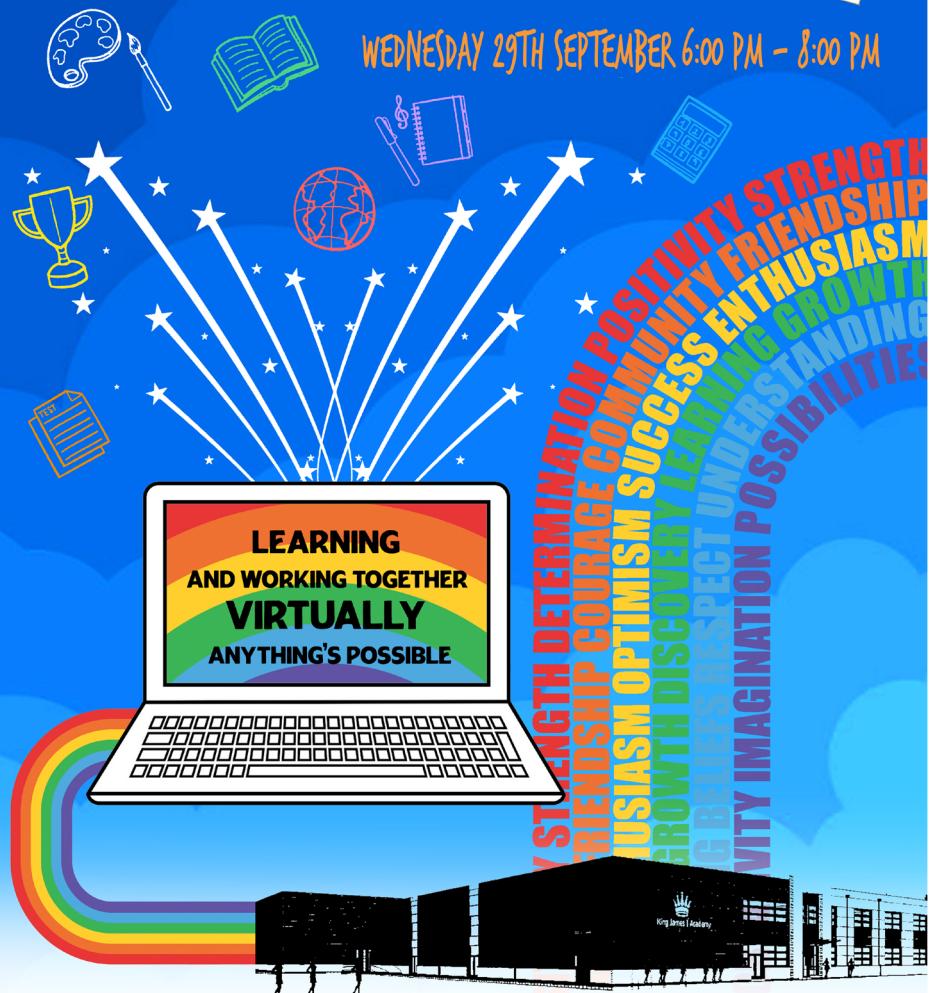
We are always looking for enthusiastic parents to join our Parents' Forum group that meets to discuss ideas to improve the learning experience we offer and raise the profile of King James in our community. You can also register your interest in becoming a Parent Governor when the next vacancy arises. Please pick up a leaflet at Main Reception or call 01388 603388.

KING JAMES I ACADEMY

Y6 OPEN EVENING



WEDNESDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM



COME ALONG TO OUR Y6 OPEN EVENING AND FOLLOW THE RAINBOW AS YOU EXPLORE AND DISCOVER ALL THAT KING JAMES HAS TO OFFER. TAKE PART IN SOME MAGICAL CHALLENGES AS YOU TOUR THE SCHOOL WITH A CHANCE TO WIN A CHROMEBOOK OF YOUR OWN.

MAKING AN APPLICATION

You can submit an application form for a secondary school place to Durham County Council now. The final date for applications is Sunday 31st October and offers will be made on 1st March 2022 for September 2022 starts.



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