



Issue 41 : February 2002

The Kings' Messenger

THE KINGS OF WESSEX COMMUNITY SCHOOL *A Specialist Technology College*

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Dear Parents and Friends

Although the half term has been a short one, it has also been extremely busy. We have had a great deal happening around the school. The high point of half term was the school production 'A Little Shop of Horrors'. Directed by Miss Melanie Bryan, students from years 9-13 demonstrated their acting, musical, stage handling and technical skills in what proved to be a very witty and 'tongue-in-cheek' production. Congratulations to all of those students for such a splendid performance.

During the course of the half term, we also held our Year 11 Sixth Form Subject Fair and Open Evening. This was an opportunity for Y11 students and their parents to find out all about the courses on offer next year in our Sixth Form. Following half term, we will be holding interviews for students who have applied for Sixth Form.

Y11 students are also busy at the moment completing course work. Course work forms an important component of all GCSE examinations and in many cases accounts for 40% of all examination marks. For those of you with sons and daughters in Y11, please give them every support and encouragement to ensure that they make the published deadlines. To help students in Y11 in preparing for the examinations, we will be publishing next half term, details of all revision sessions on offer for Y11.

We have recently finalised plans for a number of changes to our Key Stage 4 courses that will come into effect from next September. Students commencing their GCSE's in September will all be required to study a half GCSE course in

Information Technology. We believe this will give them valuable understanding and skills in Information Technology that will support them in their learning, and assist them in the work place. We will also be offering one of the new vocational GCSE's, the equivalent of two GCSE's, but which have a more practical basis than the traditional GCSE. More details about courses will be given to students and parents next term.

Work has been ongoing since Christmas on our new Modern Languages IT suite that is set to open after half term. The room is equipped with thirty PCs and will enable students to take full advantage of IT to support them in their languages learning. Work is set to begin very shortly on our new Design and Manufacturing Technology Centre. The project has received planning approval and a contractor has been engaged.

Despite warnings, a number of students continue to attend school wearing items of incorrect uniform. Please could parents make a special effort to ensure that their children are correctly dressed for school. A particular problem lately has been the wearing of sweat tops which of course we do not allow. Thank you for your support on this matter.

Finally, a reminder that our PTA are holding a Quiz night on Friday, 22nd February at 7.30 for 8.00 pm. Tickets are available from the school office. I do hope you will be able to attend.

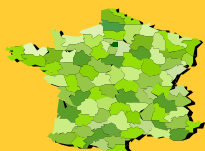
Yours sincerely

Chris Richardson
Headteacher

Modern Foreign Languages

What's New in 2002?

PGCE French Teacher



At the beginning of the term Véronique Blanc joined us from the Bristol University Department of Education to carry out a 9 week teaching placement. We are very fortunate to have a “real” French person in the Faculty; not only is she teaching French to our Year 9, 10 and 11 students, but she is also acting as “Assistante” to our Year 12 and 13 students.

Over now to Véronique to have her initial impressions of teaching French at The Kings of Wessex:

“As a student teacher I have to do two teaching practices and The Kings of Wessex is my second one. When I arrived for my first visit to the school I was quite apprehensive. As a French citizen, it would be the first time that I’d set foot in an English Comprehensive. I had previously been a language assistant for many years in a small, independent school for girls in Bristol and my teaching placement prior to Kings had been at Sidcot. In both schools I never had more than 15 pupils per class. My first thought on arriving at Kings was:

“How am I going to remember all their names?” Fighting against the flow of pupils in the corridor at break time and being an average sized southern French person, I thought: “Dear me, isn’t everyone tall in Somerset?”

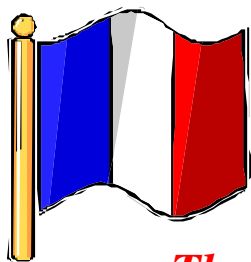
Teaching here so far has been a great experience. I had been told, both by my university tutors and the previous student teacher, that I was very lucky to have been sent to The Kings of Wessex. I do not want to say that there aren’t bad days, especially when it’s the last period of the day and some of my Year 10 (you know who you are!) are already thinking about the weekend ahead (and it’s only Monday!). It does not matter how cross I am with them, I still find it hard sometimes to keep a straight face when I hear some of their remarks. (Dear parents, how can you ever outwit your children?)

I am certainly learning a lot, particularly with very professional colleagues, always supportive and encouraging. I hope that I will be able to bring a little breath of “French” air, but what I hope for mostly is that my next job will be in a school as good as The Kings of Wessex.”

Véronique Blanc



Opportunities to visit France & Germany



The Loire Atlantique Mini-Assistant Scheme

This year some of our Year 12 AS Level French students will be participating in the "Mini-Assistant Scheme." They will be spending ten days in primary schools in the Loire Atlantique area where they will be teaching English as a foreign language. The students will stay with teachers and other members of the community, thus giving them the ideal

opportunity to practise their spoken French. It is anticipated that this event will take place before Easter. French students of English will take part in similar placements later in the year. This will mark our third year of involvement in the scheme, which has proved popular with our students and beneficial in terms of linguistic confidence to both French and English students.



The Felsberg Exchange



On March 16th 22 students from Years 9 and 10 will be setting off on the annual exchange visit to Felsberg. They will be joined by Sam Dibb from Year 12, who will be undertaking a work placement in a bank in Felsberg. The group will be accompanied by Miss Rebello and Miss Guest. We are delighted that the exchange is taking place this year, since, unfortunately, last year it had to be cancelled through insufficient numbers. The Felsberg party will be visiting Cheddar in June. We are looking forward to successful visits that will pave the way for many years to come.





Psychology. What has AS Psychology been up to lately?

Well, 59 AS Psychology students have been kept extra busy these last few months with a trip to London and a talk from a visiting speaker. The trip to London on 26th November was not for Christmas shopping sadly, but was to attend a course on Study Skills for AS students taking OCR Psychology. “Just what we need!” Mrs Edwards and I chorused so we proceeded to book a double-decker coach and entice Mr Aung to come along and ‘be the mom’ for us! The students enthusiastically paid their dues and all but two turned up on a dark, cold morning at the front of the school to set out on what was to be a highly successful day.

The speakers were on the whole very informative and interesting, especially the first gentleman who told the students that they needed to move

from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence – before they started revision! The students managed to behave impeccably as well as enjoy the day, and special mention must be made of Mrs Edwards’ kind provision of muffins for everyone. Nobody went hungry at least!

On the 23rd January, we were very pleased to welcome Mr Jon Jones – yes, our very own Mrs Val Jones’s younger son – who came to give our students some valuable insights into autism. Jon has spent some time working at a local F.E. College with young adults with severe autism. Jon’s enthusiastic portrayal of his very practical, day-to-day experiences certainly brought to life the difficulties and the joys of working with people with autism. He made a difficult area of study a lot more intelligible, and I know the teacher and students will wish to thank him for his generosity in coming along to share his experiences with them.



Reporting Illness

We would be grateful if parents would telephone the school on the morning of any known absence. If your child is unwell, please ring and leave the following information.

The telephone number is: 01934 742608. Please state:

- your name
- the child's name and tutor group
- reason for absence

Please send a note of confirmation on your child's return to school.

Mobile Phones

Thank you for your co-operation with our mobile phone contract. This has really helped to reduce the number of problems whilst supporting those students who use their phones responsibly.

May I remind you that if your child is in Years 9, 10 or 11, they must have a completed and signed contract in order to bring a mobile phone to school. Failure to do so, as will the misuse of mobiles, lead to a permanent ban for that student.

FREE BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS

The LRC is again collecting tokens from Walkers products, The Sun and The News of The World towards free books.

Last time we collected almost 16,000 tokens, enough for 59 new books!

Please help us to do even better this year by collecting tokens and sending them in to your child's tutor group.



THERE WILL BE A PRIZE
FOR THE TUTOR GROUP
COLLECTING THE MOST TOKENS



Sainsbury's & Tesco's Schemes

Please return the Sainsbury's Equipment for Schools' slips if you want to register your support. Their scheme runs from January 30th to April 24th. Our school will receive one school point for every £10 spent. You can also register online at:

www.sainsburys.co.uk/equipmentforschools

The Tesco scheme runs from January 28th until 7th April. One voucher will be given for every £10 spent as usual. We thank all of you who support these schemes, as the school is able to buy extra equipment, which can be used by all students.



Somerset Cup Round 3

King Alfreds 0 - 2 The Kings of Wessex

This was the second round of the Somerset Cup for Kings U14 football team. We arrived in high spirits, although knowing that this would be a tough game. The first few minutes of the game showed that both teams were very evenly matched. Chances were hard to come by but it was Kings who had the first real chance, the ball falling to Jaz Butler who had a well struck shot which went just over the bar.

During the remainder of the first half, both teams squandered good goal scoring opportunities, Joe Dixon and Dave Phillips both coming close. The first half ended 0-0. During the first 10

minutes of the second half, Kings produced their best football of the game. A great passing move from Kings including Craig Herrod and Joe Dixon set up Jaz Butler for a goal, which he slotted calmly under the keeper.

A few minutes later, Henry Eriksson had a shot, which rebounded off a defender and fell to Dave Phillips, who beat 2 defenders and then placed the ball in the far corner of the net. This woke up King Alfreds and they piled on the pressure on centre backs Andy Edmonds and Rob Cottis. Fortunately they are up to the challenge. Ben Baptie produced 2 excellent one-on-one saves, which were vital to Kings, keeping us in the game. When the final whistle eventually blew, Kings were happy, as the whole team had contributed 100% effort to a well-deserved away win.

Captain Henry Eriksson

House Activities

Despite the fact that this term is a short one, there is still much on offer to all students in the form of House Competition. Most of these events will take place after half-term and will include the following:

Senior and Junior Football
Senior and Junior Netball
Senior Boys Basketball
Mixed Badminton for both
Junior and Senior students



House meetings have already taken place and captains and their vice-captains have been elected. It's now very much up to these captains to attempt to pick a winning formula of players in readiness for each competition.



1st XI Football

English School's Football Association – National Cup

Despite losing narrowly to Millfield before Christmas in the County Cup Final, we were invited to represent the County at the National knockout stages. A great honour for the school and a first ever appearance at this level.

Our 1st team were drawn against the champions from Gwent who were Hartridge School from Newport.

It proved to be an excellent match with The Kings of Wessex giving 100% in front of a large and vocal band of supporters. The Newport side were easily the best team we have faced in a long while, but were unable to dominate due to some tenacious tackling

and an amazing work rate from the home side.

After going a goal down, Kings were awarded a penalty and Robin Scanlon calmly stepped up to slot home the equaliser. Both sides missed chances to seal a win in normal time, but the score remained at 1-1.

Extra time was played and sadly for Kings a mistimed tackle on the edge of the area gave Newport a penalty which they gratefully received and converted with just minutes left. Final score Kings 1 v 2 Newport A. E. T.

Well done to all the players for representing their school with such passion and commitment, and bad luck!



Netball

against

Only a couple of fixtures have been played at the time of writing. The 1st VII played their first fixture against Sidcot and won 22-9. The U15 VII lost against Rossholme 32-17.

Senior practices have been well attended so far this term.

Reminder: School clubs running this term

Swimming Club	Mondays	1.00pm – 2.00pm	
Trampoline	Tuesdays	4.00pm – 5.00pm	School Gym
Badminton Club	Wednesdays	1.00pm – 2.00pm	Leisure Centre
Girls Rugby	Thursdays	1.00pm – 2.00pm	
Girls Football	Fridays	1.00pm – 2.00pm	

These are in addition to Junior/Senior Football and Netball practices.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

<i>February</i>	
Sat 9th/Sun 17th inclusive: HALF TERM HOLIDAYS	
Mon 18 th	6 th Form Interviews commence
Tue 19 th	PTA Meeting at 7.30 pm
Wed 27 th	Yr 9 History Trip
Thur 28 th	Yr 9 History Trip
<i>March</i>	
Fri 1 st	Yr 9 Reports/KS4 Book issued
	6 th Form Interviews completed
Tue 5 th	Yr 9 Key Stage 4 Subject Fayre
Wed 6 th	Yr 9 Key Stage 4 Parents' Evening 7pm
Mon 11 th	AS/A2 Drama & Theatre Studies practical week
	Yr 12 Geography fieldwork programme commences
Wed 13 th	Yr 9 Parents' Evening 5-8 pm
Fri 15 th	Yr 12 Reports issued
Mon 18 th	French Study trip departs
Tues 19 th	Artist in residence
Wed 20 th	Yr 12 Parents' Evening 5-8 pm
Thur 21 st	Yr 12 Exeter Higher Education Fayre
Fri 22 nd	Yr 13 Reports issued
Sat 23 rd	French Study trip returns
Sat 23rd March/Sun 7th April inclusive: EASTER HOLIDAYS	

YEAR CO-ORDINATORS

Year 9: Mr A Hitt
Year 10: Mrs M Sammonds
Year 11: Mr T Clark
Sixth Form: Mr M Hayward

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's Year Co-ordinator if you have any concerns or wish to discuss their progress.