Dear Parents

Once and Future Kings
Let me start this letter straight away with a massive thank you to all the boys and girls for everything they have done for the school this term. It has been a term full of activity, events and successes – and at the heart of each of these have been your sons and daughters. Quite how they manage to fit in everything from IB coursework, to university preparation, to main roles in orchestras or plays or both, at the same time as playing in a leading sport for their school, I will never know. At every level in the school, pupils are making what they will one day realise have been giant academic strides, as well as being involved in a multiplicity of activities. I would also like to thank them for the help they always offer, with great good humour and loyalty, whenever we hold open days, forums, or other events for prospective parents and the public. When visitors write to me to thank us for running one event or another, they invariably praise the boys and girls who chatted to them or provided a tour.

If I could thank my colleagues in the very same breath, I would like to do that, too. King’s students always seem to appreciate what the staff are doing for them – whether in lessons, on the playing fields, taking trips around the world, or offering help and advice for universities or with pastoral issues – and this makes our jobs much more fulfilling. This has been as busy a term for my colleagues as it has been for the boys and girls. They have also devoted weekends and evenings not just to lead pupils in their own areas of interest, but also for countless school events, not least the setting and marking of entrance exams, and interviewing candidates in ever-increasing numbers.

I know how much time my colleagues have given up to ensure King’s achieves the good name, and the important successes, that will help your boys and girls leave, when the day comes, with great results, golden prospects, and fond memories: like Arthur – once and future kings, every one of them. (I hope it is acceptable if in this parallel, to use an old legal formulation, “the male embraces the female.”)

A One Million Pound Gift to King’s
All of us at the school know how important it is that we make King’s robust for the future. The ten year master plan addresses the needs we foresee for our pupils, but to see it through we need the support of all parts of the King’s community. For this reason, Dr Silverlock, Mr Edge and I were overwhelmed and delighted when a King’s family stepped up to the mark and told us they were going to pledge £1m to set the school on its way. Naturally, they hope to see others rise to the challenge, and indeed others are already promising to show their support so that the school can realise its ambitions. On behalf of everyone in our community, I would like to thank these extraordinary King’s supporters.

IB School of the Year 2012/13
Thanks to staff, boys and girls, and all their successes, especially the summer’s outstanding IB results, The Sunday Times made us their IB School of the Year – our third national award in four years. I hope that the receipt of this award will help those making choices for the sixth form now and in the future feel great confidence in the exceptional education offered to them by the IB diploma. It may seem hard work at times,
not least in the autumn term of the Upper Sixth, but the experience of our leavers is that it pays off richly, and sets them up extremely well both for university and the world beyond study.

**Public Examination Results**

In the IB this summer, 51% of all King’s Higher Level IB results were graded as 7s: one of several school records achieved this summer. The 7 equates to the new A* at A level and this result places King’s College School amongst the very highest performing schools in the UK. Over 89% of all HL grades were at 7 and 6. This placed King’s 2nd among all schools in the UK. The effect of these astonishing results, where the school average broke through the 40 points barrier for the first time ever, was that 95% of leavers starting at university in 2012 took up places at their first-choice university. This was from an upper sixth group of over 170 pupils, including our “trailblazer” girls who did superbly. The boys performed exceptionally well, too, breaking their predecessors’ records.

All forty-two boys and girls offered Oxford and Cambridge places met their offers, although two chose to take up places at Stanford in the US. In fact, ten pupils won places to leading American universities, including Harvard and Yale. Ten pupils achieved the maximum score of 45 points, a score that is achieved by under one percent of students worldwide. Last year’s Upper Fifth did very well, too, gaining over 90% of all GCSE grades at A* and A with over 63% of all grades at A*. The future looks bright for this year’s Upper Fifth who scored splendid results in their early-take French and RS GCSEs.

**Staff**

Dr Jane Blythe has been promoted to the position of Head of Biology at Ardingly, and will leave us at Easter. She has been an outstanding teacher at King’s, dedicated to her pupils, and a great supporter of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. We shall miss her bright smile and positive approach to all that she does. I have appointed Dr Arabella Stewart to replace Dr Blythe. Dr Stewart gained a degree in medicine from Bristol and is a practising doctor. She will join us in the summer term. Mr Ronny Krippner has gained promotion to the post of Organist and Director of Choral Music at Croydon Minster and Whitgift School from Easter. We shall all miss his fine contribution to King’s music.

Mr Stephen Marshall Taylor has been promoted to the position of Deputy Head at Brighton College from September. Mr Gordon McGinn, Teacher of Maths and Head of the Common Room, and Mr Robin Hughes, Head of Physics, are both retiring at the end of this academic year after 33 and 32 years of exceptional service at King’s respectively. I shall write at more length about these three very different but equally exceptional schoolmasters at the end of the summer term. I have appointed two mathematics masters: Mr Iain Wilson, a teacher from Malvern College, and an engineering graduate of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge; and Mr Ryan Glass, a mathematics graduate with a first from Queen’s, Belfast, currently taking his PGCE. Finally, Mr Thomas Banyard will join us as Head of Physics. He took a first in Physics from Queen’s College, Oxford and is currently teaching at Tonbridge School.

Miss Anna Vibeke Eilert will take leave of absence until the end of the academic year to return to Sweden to spend time with her family. Miss Lucy Blackburn and Mr Michael Hughes have already begun to cover her Chinese and English lessons respectively.

Mrs Suzy Doherty, my PA, went on maternity leave this month, and her replacement, Ms Nicola Adams, has already settled in extremely quickly and proved a pleasure to work with. My very best wishes to Suzy and her husband in the coming months. Best wishes also to Alex Bransome after 4 years of friendly and expert work in IT support.

Mr Mark Jacob has joined King’s as a Science Technician, replacing Mr Lukasz Bukowski who left in the summer. Mrs Michelle Brennan has joined HR as Senior HR Administrator. Mr Ben Jones left his temporary role providing maternity cover in the Exams Office during the summer holidays and Mr Alexander Karski has joined the department as Examinations Administrator for the remainder of Mrs Fernanda Viana’s maternity leave. Mrs Gwendy Wilkins retired at half term. Gwendy had worked in Reception for over 25 years and made a wonderful contribution to the school. I doubt that anyone ever saw
her looking anything other than sunny and radiant, such was her positive demeanour. Her hard work, gentle patience and constant good humour will be greatly missed. Ms Denise Shea has replaced her until the end of the summer term, pending forthcoming changes to the Senior School reception.

In the Catering Department, Mr Michael Barker joins as the new Head Chef, following the departure of Mr Vijay Rammuri. Mr Hamdane Bouzid, Catering Assistant, started after the half term break, replacing Miss Jessica Bolivar Bernabe.

Mr Miguel Pimenta was promoted to Head Groundsman in the summer, following the retirement through ill health of our previous Head Groundsman, Mr Steve Wells. Steve was a loyal and committed member of the King's community and a fine head groundsman. He and his wife have been extremely brave through Steve's long illness and we wish them well. Miguel has already been doing a first-class job at Kingsway, and we are very pleased he is now working on improvements to all the school fields.

**Sport**

On Saturday, the 1st XV won their ninth match in a row – completing our best season for some years. I would like to congratulate Mr Roberts for all he has done with the team, and Nicky Rawlinson for his inspirational leadership as a great captain, leading by example in every match. The term started less securely with a narrow loss against Abingdon, a draw against a very strong St Paul's and a loss to Dulwich, but the team quickly gelled and have enjoyed wins against Richmond College, Wimbledon College, the previously unbeaten Berkhamsted (where King’s teams won 11 of the 14 matches), Campion School, RGS Guildford, St John’s, and Daily Mail cup wins against St Benedict’s, Tiffin and Skinners. Now we wish them all the best for a tough draw against Dulwich in the next round of the Cup. Two King’s leavers played for Cambridge in the Varsity match: congratulations to Hugo Kelly and Max Mather, and to Doug Sexton who played for the U21s.

Two U16A players have been selected for county teams: Ollie Adams (Middlesex) and Will Lockhart Smith (Surrey). There will be a tour to South Africa in 2013 with 26 boys and 3 staff embarking on a 2 week visit that will include 5 fixtures, township visits and cultural experiences. The staff on the tour will be Mr Neil Roberts, Mr James Clark and Mr James Gibson.

In football, Maclear won an exciting House league competition in the first half of the autumn term. Seven teams took on Alleyn’s, Sutton Grammar, Latymer Upper and Wilson’s School.

In rowing, Ollie Hines, Charles Fisher, Charlie Middleton and Mathis Clement competed for places for GB selection at the beginning of July. Ollie Hines and Charles Fisher were selected to represent GB at the Coupe de La Jeunesse in Spain at the beginning of August. With Ollie Hines just 3 seconds off the World Championship team, he was selected to race the coxless 4, the top event at the Coupe. Charles Fisher was selected to race with the 8. Their boats won bronze and gold respectively for team GB. With a win in the J16 at the Reading Head and some strong results at the pairs Head it is a good start to the new rowing season. We currently have 14 girls rowing, with some club rowers and the majority beginners.

In netball, the 1st team had a good early season tournament at Ibstock Place winning the Plate Competition and beating Claremont in a friendly fixture. The 2nd VII also had a good start to the year with excellent wins against Claremont and a respectable draw against Reigate College. In hockey, the girls have been focussed in training and their improvement on the field has been impressive. The 1st XI have had some good wins including their last match of the term against Reeds. They came 3rd in our invitation tournament, where they displayed some excellent skills and drew against some tough opposition. They have achieved over 70% wins and draws. The 2nd XI have also produced some good results.

King’s successfully hosted the 34th King’s cross country trophy in October. Bruno Van der Stichele was our highest-placed runner, finishing in 10th place. In the team competition, King’s finished in 3rd place overall – our best result in six years. There were several fine individual performances in the Merton Borough Championships, with Matthew Lloyd, Tom Willers, Nathan Inkester, Conner Wakeman, Matthew Gibbons and Sam Oswald all gaining selection for the Surrey Schools Championships.
Drama

This term’s major production was *The Producers*, the Mel Brooks musical. Working with a very talented cast, Mr Cross continued his tradition of presenting West End quality drama to the King’s audience. It was a phenomenal production, brilliantly choreographed, acted, sung and (of course) directed. Every boy and girl seemed completely at home upon the stage, set changes were miraculously smooth and swift, and the comedy was brilliantly sustained by all the cast. Special mention must go to the two wonderful and outstanding “producers” of the title – Jasper Millard and Greg Coates. Their comic theatre was verbal, physical and musical, requiring a range of talents in each of them that was astonishing to see in two boys aged only 16 or 17. The same was true of Natasha Taylor, their louche Swedish assistant, Michael Tsoukkas, a demented, Hitler-worshipping Nazi, and Freddie Wickham as the hopelessly vain director. However, even as I write these words, the names of others crowd into my mind – all deserving of praise. I wish I had space to say much more about this unforgettable school play. However, I do want to add my thanks to Mr Leach, whose set and lighting designs are always superb, and were so once again. Above the actors, barely visible, was situated the small orchestra for the piece. Consisting of over 20 players, and ably directed by Mr Hatch, they performed a brilliant accompaniment.

Drama scholarships and exhibitions, at fourth form and sixth form level, were given for the first time this year, and the eight elected pupils took up their awards from the beginning of this term. In the last week of term, Upper Fifth drama students presented Harold Pinter’s *One for the Road*. The Cambridge Footlights revisited the Collyer Hall Theatre in September with their latest touring show, also running workshops with sixth formers.

Music

The Chamber Choir performed at St Matthew’s Church before singing in St Paul’s Cathedral. Just five days later, the choir also sang evensong in The Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace. Some of our finest musicians from both Junior and Senior Schools performed magnificently to a small gathering of parents at Kew Palace in October. We welcomed 60 musicians from Prep Schools before half term to take part in a workshop and concert. Seven pupils from King’s joined to play with the massed orchestral forces and three performed solos at the event, which aimed to increase awareness of the strength of, and opportunities for, music at King’s amongst our feeder schools.

The outstanding Orchestral Concert in November featured all of our main ensembles in a stirring programme featuring Dvorak’s New World Symphony, Saint-Saëns’s Danse Bacchanale and Barber’s Adagio for Strings. Along with superb support for *The Producers*, musicians performed in a Christmas Concert in St James’s, Piccadilly, and the Community Carol Service.

Congratulations to Freddie Freeman on gaining the Gold Award from the Royal School of Church Music for his recent singing examination and to Jonathan Allsopp for gaining both an organ scholarship to Oxford, and the organ scholarship to Hereford Cathedral for his gap year.

Congratulations also to Itamar Rashkovsky who has won 1st Prize at the Peter Morrison Concerto Competition at the Royal College of Music Junior Department. His prize will be performing Szymanowski’s Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Royal College of Music Junior Department Symphony Orchestra in March 2013.

The Ten Year Master Plan

In the summer, we intend to begin work on a new reception area, reviving Bannister Fletcher’s original 19th century entrance beneath the Great Hall. The aim is to complete this by mid-October. We hope to begin work on a new classroom building the following summer (2014). This will be an ambitious construction that will address some of the remaining problems with the labs, including access, provide six handsome new classrooms, and create a new reception hall that can seat around 150 people in the heart of the campus. As time goes on, we plan to build a new music school, replace the swimming pool, add a second sports hall, construct a new Junior School library, and improve the landscaping and play areas on the main site. As I said near the start of this letter, we will need the support of all parts of the King’s community if we are to see...
these plans through, and, by the creation of long-term funds, to see King’s establish itself as secure for all time. I am absolutely sure that, together, we can do this.

**Summer Works**

Over fifty refurbishment projects, covering all four schools, were undertaken. These included the refurbishment of the front of South Hayes, which included a new roof, new windows, render repairs and repainting. There was also a complete refurbishment of laboratory 25, and improvements to the Colman Field changing rooms, the Learning Enrichment classroom, and the Q-block roof, among much else. I am grateful to Mr Armitage, Director of Operations, for the great care, attention and remarkable efficiency he brings to all of these projects – with the support of an excellent team.

**King’s Partnerships and Community Service**

King’s hosted its first university applications day for pupils at the schools in the Wimbledon Partnership on our Aspirations Project in July. The day was attended by over 60 students in Year 12. The Aspirations Project gained King’s a place on the shortlist for an award for the Best Independent-Maintained School Collaboration in the Independent School Awards 2012.

Community Projects continue to be the most popular activity on Friday afternoons, with numbers this year rising to a record level of 354. New ventures include a science project with Imperial College, in which members of our sixth form have been trained by postgraduates from Imperial to deliver inspirational science lessons to 45 Gifted and Talented ‘pupils premium’ students in Year 8 at three of the schools in the Wimbledon Partnership.

**Other School News**

We had an unexpected fire practice last week when an electrical fault meant we had to evacuate everyone in the middle of a Christmas lunch that our caterers had carefully prepared for every pupil in the school. We had to cordon off Q block, even when most pupils had been allowed to return to their form rooms, meaning over 300 senior pupils had to wait in the Great Hall. The boys and girls were excellent throughout. Happily, Mr Hull and his dedicated team made sure everyone received their Christmas lunch. I would particularly like to thank the Sixth Form for the good example they set and the help they offered sorting out the canteen and supervising an extended lunch break.

Our Open Day in September attracted over 1700 people – breaking all previous records. We also had record attendance at our Sixth Form open evenings. In September, we also held a prep school heads’ dinner. Over 30 head teachers came for the occasion, and had the new experience of “a tour of all the talents” in which pupils from their old schools demonstrated their achievements in music, sport, drama and science. Both Junior and Senior school applications are running at their highest ever level at every point of entry.

Our Remembrance Day service was attended by the whole school, and the choir and trumpeter, Jonathan Bell, were impeccable. The CCF were exemplary, as always. The Community Christmas Tea was a great success last Sunday: thank you to the many staff, parents and pupil volunteers.

Louise Bernander was awarded the Harvard Book Prize 2012, an award that recognises outstanding students who make significant contributions to their school or community. Alex Nelson was awarded second prize in the national Gladstone Memorial Classics Essay competition for his essay, ‘What makes Thucydides’ account of the Sicilian expedition so tragic?’ Alex wins £100 and an antique book plate. Anna-Sofia Monck won a prestigious Ernst and Young Scholarship, competing against a huge field of hopefuls for one of just eight places in the UK. Nick D’Aloisio-Montilla continues to experience enormous success with his “Summly” app. It was launched to great acclaim in November.

Three successful and very well attended Future of King’s receptions took place this term at the school. The purpose of these events is to bring news to parents of the progress the school is making, highlighting the renewal plans for King’s. A great deal of warmth towards the school and its future plans was clearly in evidence. The sixth of our popular City and Business receptions took place at Linklaters in the city in
October. The guest speaker was King’s parent, Marco Capello, Executive Chairman of the retailer, Liberty. A King’s Law Society Dinner at Lincoln’s Inn took place during half term. The guest speaker was Robert Jay, QC and OK. Alumni, parents, staff and sixth formers filled the beautiful hall. A well-attended OKC dinner, a donors’ reception in the Great Hall and a legators’ lunch completed this term’s alumni and networking events.

The Arthur Wellesley Society provided another enjoyable evening this week, attended by over 140 pupils, parents and former parents. Renowned Dickens’ scholar and biographer, Professor Michael Slater, spoke with warmth and humour about Dickens’s Comic Genius accompanied by lively and entertaining readings by current and former pupils. The first AWS event of next term, a visit to the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, has now sold out.

King’s is one of the founders of the Wimbledon Branch of the Geographical Association. Lectures tackling everything from Water Management to the Japanese Tsunami attract large audiences and have been cited by the eighteen members of the current Upper Sixth applying to read Geography at university as a key reason for their doing so. The “American Dream” conference attracted one hundred delegates and over 250 pupils from around the UK attended the fair.

A record 99 King’s students entered this year’s Senior Maths Challenge and won between them 33 Gold, 38 Silver and 21 Bronze awards – easily our best performance in this demanding national competition. Eleven King’s pupils qualified for the Senior Kangaroo competition, and nine of our sixth formers qualified for Round 1 of the British Mathematics Olympiad.

Make a Difference Day was held in October. The whole school came off timetable and devoted itself to raising money for good causes, learning about the work of charities and exploring matters of social concern such as poverty, climate change and the impact of war. The theme this year was “How can I make a difference?” Baroness Cox from HART was a keynote speaker. TILT, the annual charity rock concert featuring school bands, took place in the evening. For Rossetti Day, we welcomed Professor James Moore, of Cambridge University and the Open University, to speak on Darwin’s Dangerous Idea, and the Independent’s art critic Zoe Pilger, to speak on Challenging Art. These seminars were supplemented by a wide range of seminars delivered by teachers, all relating in some way to the overarching theme of Heresy and Orthodoxy.

The Friends
The Friends surpassed themselves with a number of very successful events this term. These included the Great Hall Run, an amazing Fireworks night, and an extremely successful Christmas Fair. In 2011/12, the Friends raised an astonishing £91,000 for the school. Their donations have enabled the Boat Club to purchase a new 1st VIII boat, and to add new sound and lighting in the Great Hall, amongst much else. Thank you to all involved in making each of these such popular, impeccably organised and fun occasions, and to the many families who supported them.

School Trips
Six residential visits took place during the summer holidays. Thirty-one boys and four staff travelled to Sri Lanka for a successful cricket tour with the 1st team squad winning three out of six games. A day was spent at a school in Bentota – one of the worst hit areas during the tsunami. Fifteen students participated in our fourth annual visit to our partner school in Fiwila. The two weeks spent in Fiwila were followed by a three day trek along the Batoka gorge, a rhino walk in Mosi Tunya Park and a visit to Victoria Falls. Thirty-nine Lower Fifth boys completed their bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition, and ten boys from the CCF headed north to the Lake District for their Gold expedition. The annual CCF camp in Cumbria and the pre-season rugby training both went well. During the term there have been additional CCF adventure weekends and Duke of Edinburgh expeditions. Six educational visits also took place at half term, taking pupils to Wales, Sicily, Japan, Ireland, Munich and the South Downs. We will be sending the next Russian Exchange party from King’s to Moscow during Activities Week next June. If you would like your son or daughter to be involved, please contact Mr Lawrence at jgl@kcs.org.uk.
Catering
Over the summer holidays recommendations from the recent external review were implemented. This included a rearrangement of the servery area, and improved menus. The Director of Operations would welcome any comments on the catering provision at D.Armitage@kcs.org.uk.

Parent Terms and Conditions
The Parent Terms and Conditions have recently been updated to comply with regulations and laws applicable to the School. You should soon receive an email with the new Terms and Conditions – applicable from the start of the Summer Term 2013. They will also be available on the website. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact the Director of Operations.

January Mocks
Please note that the mocks for both IB and GCSE pupils begin on the first day of next term: Monday 7th January. The Christmas holidays are designed to be long enough to enable boys and girls in the Upper Sixth and Upper Fifth not only to enjoy a good break, but also to revise thoroughly for their crucial January mock examinations. As I always point out: the mocks present the most important opportunity we are able to provide as preparation for the real thing in the summer. What is well learnt for January will be vastly easier to revise when it comes to the following term, and the opportunity for timed practice is invaluable – so long as the learning has been sufficient to make the mocks worthwhile. This will help enormously to reduce the pressure on all public examination classes in the summer term.

I hope that you and your families have a lovely holiday, a very happy Christmas, and a healthy 2013.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Halls
Head Master
You will be issued with a school calendar via your son or daughter at the beginning of next term. However, some key dates you may wish to note are listed below:

**Important dates for Spring 2013**

Term begins: Monday 7\(^{th}\) January. **Please note that pupils are due in school at 12 noon.**
Half Term: Monday 18\(^{th}\) February to Friday 22\(^{nd}\) February
End of Term: Friday 22\(^{nd}\) March

Good Friday: 29\(^{th}\) March

(Summer Term 2013 begins on Wednesday 17\(^{th}\) April)

**Some other dates for Spring 2013**

Tuesday 22\(^{nd}\) January: Upper Sixth Parents’ Evening
Tuesday 29\(^{th}\) January: Upper Fifth Parents’ Evening
Thursday 7\(^{th}\) March: Lower Fifth Parents’ Evening
Wednesday 13\(^{th}\) March: Fourth Form Parents’ Evening
Monday 18\(^{th}\) March: UCAS Evening for Parents and Pupils
Tuesday 19\(^{th}\) March: Orchestral Concert

I would like to draw your attention to the information that is available to you on our website, [www.kcs.org.uk](http://www.kcs.org.uk). This includes a list of all school policies.

ADH
December 2012