

King's Courier

[ISSUE 166 - WINTER 2026]

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Credits

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From the HEADMASTER

Our first half of the year has been a period of great depth, one that has asked much of our students, our staff and our community. It has seen the College rise to each occasion with the character that defines King's. From solemn remembrance to sporting competition, and from the daily discipline of the classroom to the broad horizon of educational renewal, there is much to reflect upon with pride and with purpose.

Term 2 opened with one of the most important moments in our College calendar: our Anzac Day Observance Service. As we gathered in the Memorial Chapel, we were reminded that 218 Old Collegians and Masters from this place gave their lives during the South African War and the two World Wars. Their names are inscribed on the walls of our Chapel, and they are read aloud each Anzac Day as an act of living memory. This year marked the 101st anniversary of our Chapel Anzac Service - a milestone that speaks to the depth of tradition we carry. We were privileged to welcome back Old Collegian **Captain James Burt** (Averill, 1991-95) of the Royal New Zealand Navy Reserve, who spoke with great conviction about the meaning of sacrifice and service.

Our student experience continues to be driven by the vision of our founding Headmaster, **Mr Graham Bruce**, to provide the best all-round education it is possible to obtain. Our social media channels are doing a fantastic job of capturing the full life of the College, with the varied successes a testament to the broad talents of our students and the range of

opportunities available to them at King's. Our feeds on Facebook and Instagram are a great way to keep up to date with College life, and I encourage you to follow these channels if you are yet to do so.

Beyond the events that fill our terms, I have been thinking carefully this year about what it means to run a truly excellent school, not merely a school with excellent students, but one in which the quality of every student's education is guaranteed, regardless of which classroom they find themselves in.

Our teaching and learning programmes must have clear purpose, structure and consistency. A King's education should not be left to chance. Parents and students should be able to trust that every teacher in this College performs at a level of which we are collectively proud. This does not mean complete uniformity, great teachers bring their own gifts, but it is a commitment to standard which is upheld for all students and their experience. Achieving this requires ongoing, data-driven professional growth. We do not arrive at excellence and stay there; we work toward it continuously,



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Term 2 has been a rich and full one. Our students have served, competed, learned and grown. The King's community, staff, families and Old Collegians alike have shown again why this place endures and why it matters.

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measuring our practice against clear principles of effective teaching and learning. This is the standard I hold myself to, and it is the standard I am committed to building across our staff.

New Zealand is in the early stages of a significant curriculum renewal. For the first time since 2007, we are moving away from a loose framework towards something considerably more substantive: a knowledge-rich, carefully sequenced curriculum that began in 2026 with Year 9 and 10 Mathematics and English. This is a development I genuinely welcome - a well-designed curriculum is an extraordinary gift to students. When teachers work from clear, structured plans, knowing what knowledge is to be built, in what sequence, and to what standard, all students benefit. It removes the inequity that comes when a student's learning depends on the particular strengths or gaps of whichever teacher they happen to have been assigned. The new curriculum is, at its heart, a commitment to every student.

But a curriculum is only as good as its enactment. New Zealand has, frankly, fallen behind in developing a shared, clear

understanding of what highly effective teaching looks like in the classroom. A well-designed curriculum left in the hands of teachers who lack the training or support to deliver it will remain only a document. We must do better.

To that end, King's is piloting an innovative approach to teacher professional development that has shown considerable promise in other countries. The programme evaluates classroom lessons and uses artificial intelligence as a personalised coach for teachers, allowing them to review their own practice and measure it against the principles of effective teaching in a specific and actionable way.

The most reflective practitioners are those who can challenge themselves honestly against a clear standard. The data gathered across this pilot will also inform our whole-school professional development, identifying trends, addressing common gaps and ensuring that our investment in staff growth is targeted and purposeful rather than generic.

We are at a genuine inflection point. The curriculum renewal and the tools now available to us create the momentum needed to lift teaching standards across New Zealand and I am committed that King's becomes a beacon of excellence for teaching and learning.

Term 2 has been a rich and full one. Our students have served, competed, learned and grown. The King's community, staff, families and Old Collegians alike have shown again why this place endures and why it matters.

As we look to the second half of the year, I am energised by what we are building. The combination of a strong College tradition, a renewed national curriculum, and a commitment to honest, data-informed teaching practice gives me great confidence in the all-round King's education our students will receive, not just now, but in the years ahead.

Virtus Pollet.

Patrick Gale
Headmaster, King's College



From left: Right Reverend Ross Bay, Patrick Gale, Shan Wilson and Reverend Gareth Walters

At King's College one of our most important alliances is with the Independent Schools of New Zealand (ISNZ). ISNZ is an association of 48 independent schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, with ISNZ being our representative body, point of advocacy as well as bringing us together for professional development and collaborative thought sharing.

In New Zealand roughly 4.0% of school students attend an independent (private) school. This can be contrasted with 17.2% of students in Australia who are being educated in private schools. ISNZ plays an important role in leading advocacy for us. It also produces useful shared data from the education sector to help independent schools with strategic decision-making and planning. To ensure the challenges facing independent schools are heard – from policy changes to affordability and staffing – we need clear evidence to place before decision-makers. ISNZ's work in developing data, supporting year-on-year trend analysis and providing sector insights is therefore highly valuable. This is especially crucial in an election year, when policy positions are being formed and future funding and regulatory settings are being actively contested.

I want to use this column to outline the two priorities ISNZ is advancing with government this year on behalf of independent schools and their communities:

Firstly, that the current per-student funding allocation for independent schools does not stagnate but is increased over time in line with increases to operational funding for state schools. This is not an argument for preferential treatment, but for fairness and sustainability,

recognising the contribution independent schools make to the wider education system as well as the significant tax burden they remove for the Government by educating 35,000 students.

Secondly, ISNZ will continue to advocate for equitable access to professional learning and development (PLD) for teachers in independent schools. Teachers across all sectors are registered to the same standards and regularly move between state, state-integrated and independent schools. Supporting PLD across the entire teaching workforce strengthens the quality of teaching system-wide and avoids creating artificial divides between sectors. Access to high-quality PLD benefits teachers, students and the resilience of the education system as a whole.

As ISNZ explained to Chairs and Principals recently: "In a context where fee increases are increasingly constrained and affordability pressures are mounting, settings such as per-student funding and PLD access take on added significance for the sustainability and accessibility of independent schools."

So, we'll be watching with interest, as to whether political parties hear and respond to these well-thought-out priorities.

Shan Wilson
Board Chair, King's College

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HUMILITY

In our previous edition of the *King's Courier* magazine, we were privileged to hear from one of our senior students – **Samuel Zhou** (Year 13, Parnell) – who spoke about 'Respect and Integrity' during our whole-school Chapel Service in Term 1.

In our desire to provide leadership in the Chapel space and not simply confine faith to the domain of the Chaplaincy, we have been seeking to hear from students, as they reflect on what our new College values mean to them. On Tuesday 12 May we were again blessed (I use this phrase intentionally) to hear from one of our senior sacristans – **Max Caughey** (Year 13, St John's) – who spoke to the student-body about the value of hūmarie/humility.

Max is a Boarding student and a member of our First XV Rugby squad, as well as one of a few students formally studying the Scriptures as part of the Cambridge AS/A-Level course. As I offered some opening thoughts about how our characters are shaped by our beliefs, Max 'joined the dots' and offered his thoughts on how Christ calls us to a path of humility that sees Christ in those we often regard as being on the margins... Reflecting on Jesus' Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25), he provided a rich, deep and wise summary that I hope, as you read it, will be a source of some encouragement for yourself...

Reverend Gareth Walters



“Every sin comes from the love of self” St John of Kronstadt said this in the late 19th century, and it rings as true as ever today...

Now St John was not referring to a healthy recognition of one's worth... or a proper sense of self-respect. Rather, he was condemning a disordered love of self: one that elevates us above others, and above God; a self-love that manifests as pride and ego. And if we're honest, this spirit is very present in our world today.

It tells us to protect our image at all costs: to win every argument, to appear important, to be admired. To stand above your peers, rather than beside them. The world teaches us that greatness is measured by how many people serve you. But Christ teaches that greatness is measured by how willing you are to serve others.

And serving others isn't easy, but it's what humility is: the virtue of humbling oneself, seeing oneself as equal with his peers. And this is the battle at the heart of the Christian life. Because it's easy to love and serve Jesus – the Jesus we see pictured in the stained-glass windows in Chapel, the blameless Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

But... real Humility is tested when we must love Jesus when it's not so convenient. In fact, Christ himself poses a challenge to us in the reading we've just heard... *“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”* Now what does this mean?

It means that Christ deliberately identifies Himself with the marginalised, the overlooked and the forgotten. The measure of our humility, therefore, isn't how we love our best friends and favourite people in moments of comfort, but whether we are willing to love our enemies and adversaries in the same way.

Because anyone can honour Jesus. Anyone can admire holiness when it is 'obvious'; but Christ says find Me in “the least of these”.

Find Me: the beauty, the perfection: in the lonely, in the excluded, in the difficult, in the person nobody notices, in the person everybody avoids. And suddenly, Christianity becomes far more demanding.

Because pride and egoism conditions us to ask: *“Who deserves **my** attention? Who deserves **my** respect?”* But... humility asks a different question entirely: *“How can **I** serve?”*

The humble person understands that human dignity is not earned through status, popularity, intelligence or success. It is given by God to **everyone**. And if dignity is given by God, then no person is beneath our compassion.

This is why humility is not weakness, nor insecurity, nor pretending we have no worth. True humility is the refusal to place ourselves at the centre of everything. It is the ability to step outside our own ego long enough to genuinely see another person for who they are.

“
We must recognise that
no human being stands
so high above another
that they may look down
on them without mercy.
”

And this is precisely what Christ does throughout the Gospel. He touches lepers. He eats with outcasts. He speaks with those society rejects. He washes the feet of His disciples. Again and again, Christ moves towards those who the world moves away from.

And nowhere is the humility of Christ seen more clearly than at the Cross. The Creator allows Himself to be mocked by His creation. The King wears a crown of thorns. The sinless One suffers for the sinful. In a world obsessed with power, Christ reveals that true success is expressed not through domination over others, but through self-giving love.



Max Caughey

Perhaps this is why pride is so dangerous. Pride isolates us. It convinces us that our value comes from superiority – from being smarter, stronger, more successful, more admired than others. But the Gospel dismantles that illusion completely. At the foot of the Cross, every person stands equal: equally broken, equally loved, equally in need of grace.

And so, the call of the Christian life is not merely to admire the idealised Christ from a distance, but to love Him, when He’s present in those on the fringes of society. To lower ourselves in service.

To treat others with dignity – not because they can offer us something, but because we owe ourselves to them. *“Because in the end, humility is not thinking less of yourself. It is thinking of yourself less.”* – C.S. Lewis.

...so that, perhaps for the first time, you are finally able to truly see other people; people who are no different from you or me. People ask: *“Where is Jesus today?”* Christ already answered. He is in the hungry: the homeless, the rejected, the forgotten, the people everyone else overlooks. And humility is the ability to kneel low enough to recognise Jesus in them. Not because it looks good, but because they really are where Jesus is present.

That is why – and I continue to say – the Christian challenge is not loving Jesus when He is glorious and radiant in our imagination. The challenge is loving Him when He is hidden inside ordinary people, inside difficult people, inside Judas. Because Christ washed Judas’ feet too. Think about that.

The Son of God knelt before the man who would betray Him for silver. That is humility. That’s not weakness, nor insecurity. It’s love. Real love.

The world says, *“Protect your pride”*, while Christ says: *“Lay it down”*.

The world says, *“Make yourself first”*, while Christ says: *“The first shall be last”*. The world says, *“Crush your enemies”*, while Christ says *“Love them”*.

And humility is so hard, when history remembers loud men, powerful men, victorious men. But heaven remembers the merciful, the one who stayed, the one who forgave, the one who served when nobody was watching.

Humility is not glamorous. There is no applause for the person who quietly carries another person’s burden. No spotlight for the person who sits beside the lonely child. No fame in listening patiently, forgiving quickly or serving quietly. Yet it’s funny, because these are the things that look most like Christ. But unfortunately, somewhere along the way, many people began confusing Christianity with appearing righteous instead of becoming humble. However, you can know Scripture and still be proud. You can look religious and still worship yourself.

Because self-love can disguise itself as holiness. It can make us believe we are better Christians than others. More moral. More deserving of grace. But the humble person understands: everything they have is mercy. That is why the saints become gentler, not harsher.

St Moses once carried a leaking sack of sand on his shoulder to a meeting where another monk was being judged. When asked why, he said: *“My sins run out behind me, and I do not see them, and yet I come to judge my brother [or my sister]?”* This exemplifies humility beautifully. St Moses didn’t pretend he had no value... As none of us should.

We must recognise that no human being stands so high above another that they may look down on them without mercy.

And that is Christ’s challenge to you today.

Max Caughey (Year 13, St John’s House)



The Friends' warmly invite parents and caregivers to attend and enjoy a range of events which celebrate our community and create new connections.

On Thursday 6 August we hosted Dads’ Beers ‘n Bites at the incredible Giltrap Group Showroom in Grey Lynn. This was a wonderful evening and attendees were treated to some fantastic stories from Grant Fox, who, along with the rest of us, has been celebrating his son **Ryan Fox’s** (Peart 2003–04) incredible British Open win. Our thanks to Rev Onosai, Paul Sissons, Giltrap Group, McLaren, the Longroom, Lion Nathan, Alpha Domus, Jules Taylor, Swiftsure, Nick Randell and Shelly Cunningham for their support.

On Thursday 27 August we will be hosting the Ladies’ Spring Dinner - proudly supported by Orsini Fine Jewellery and Maman Boutique – at Bivacco, which we hope will be another amazing occasion.

We have been working closely with the College recently to identify where our efforts can create the most impact. Gaining a deeper understanding of the College departmental, club and House budgeting process, along with visibility of existing resources has helped us redefine our funding criteria and

application process. This newly adjusted approach means that our collective efforts align with The Friends’ purpose of contributing to and fostering a positive spirit at the College whilst supporting students in their day-to-day activities.

The Friends’ pre-loved uniform online shop has a range of great value uniform items to buy at good prices. We are seeking donations of clean uniform items in good condition. Donations can be deposited in our drop boxes – one is situated inside the foyer at Sotheby’s Real Estate – located on the corner of Remuera and Victoria Avenues, available during office hours, and the other is at the security guard station at the Golf Road entrance gate. Thank you in advance for your donations.

Our new Friends of Friends database is proving to be a great source of additional help for us and gives volunteers the option to sign up to the database to support the College ad hoc. You don’t need to make a big commitment, just indicate that you may be available to help when needed as opportunities come up. If you are interested in volunteering at the College for events, reader writer assistance or the Tuck Shop when time (or your schedule) permits please email us at friends@kingscollege.school.nz.

Our events rely heavily on the generous support of businesses and brands that are keen to align with us to grow awareness and gain exposure across our wider community. If you are interested in finding out about upcoming opportunities for sponsorship - please get in touch by emailing friends@kingscollege.school.nz

As outlined in our 2025 Friends Annual Report prepared for the recent Annual General Meeting, we have been honoured to help support a huge number of College projects over the years – including but not exclusively to the following projects: the Classroom Upgrade Project; Arts & Technology programmes - including Literacy Week and the FUSE event; the High Performance Gymnasium; the addition of additional girls bathrooms and change facilities; Toi Manawa and supporting House Music; upgrading House facilities; plus a variety of equipment and resources for sports, cultural and music groups.

As one of three major affiliate groups supporting the College, the Executive Committee thank you very much for your ongoing support of The Friends of King’s College.

Mel Hargrave
President

WINNING SMALL HOUSE MUSIC



Jack Harper and
Will Thompson of
Marsden House

“

For everything to work so well on stage and then for our fellow students to be cheering for us brought so much joy and satisfaction to the band. It shows how music really does bring everyone together.

”



This year’s Small House Music competition was hotly contested as always with Marsden House being awarded first place for the second year in a row. Year 13 students **Jack Harper** and **Will Thompson** write about their final Small House Music experience and all the planning and preparation that went into their House’s winning performance.

The Marsden Small House Band for 2026 stood off to the side, watching St John’s House as we prepared to take the stage and perform *Livin’ La Vida Loca*, by Ricky Martin. The entire band had been thinking about this moment non-stop for the past few months.

For the two of us, this was our fourth Small House Music event for Marsden House. Marsden has a great record in Small House with our most recent performances being: *Sway* by Michael Bublé in 2023 where we came 2nd,

Copacabana by Barry Manilow in 2024 when we came 3rd and *Feeling Good* by Michael Bublé last year when we won.

We started thinking about Small House 2026 the day after we won in 2025: car rides listening to playlists with hundreds of songs on them and much time spent combing through the ‘King’s College House Music’ YouTube looking out for what worked well vs what didn’t.

For a long time, we thought we would choose *Hotel California*, a song everyone knows and loves, and one that would be super fun to perform. But as we began auditions and realised how strong our horn section would be, we knew that *Hotel California*, a song that focuses deeply on guitars, wasn’t going to give them a great chance to showcase their talent. We wanted a song that would be able to translate our energy and enthusiasm, as well as being a song that the audience would love to hear — we knew how important it was that everyone enjoyed it. And so, we landed on *Livin’ La Vida Loca*, a song that would showcase

the powerful horn section Marsden had, the amazing singers, and our tight rhythm section — all while bringing a ‘crazy life’ energy to the audience.

Practices began with a couple of weeks left in Term 1. We decided to practice in ‘sections’ rather than all together as that would give us the best chance to learn how to play together. We practised throughout the Term 1 holiday break, continuously coming up with new ideas and critiques to improve the song and our performance. As Term 2 started we decided that we would practise Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday from 4.30pm to 8.30pm. So our evenings were spent in the Marsden Common Room, practising the intro, the key change, working on our weaknesses and exploiting our strengths.

These late-evening practises created an incredibly valuable bond throughout the band. I still remember driving to pick up the pizza only to come back to *Billie Jean* blasting through a speaker and a line of 10 boys trying to moonwalk from one side of the room to the other.

And we had a constant problem of whenever we took a break having to get everyone to go back to the instrument they played for the run-throughs, as everyone was so talented they could just about play any part of the song on any instrument.

In the last few days leading up to the performance we suddenly realised we were playing way too fast. Panic set in, so we did the only logical thing we could think of: sit in a circle and meditate to a metronome playing the correct BPM at full volume. Suddenly it was Friday, months of practice and tough decisions behind us and an amazing opportunity lying ahead. Nerves were extremely high, but it was that special bond we had created throughout the practices that would keep us calm as we waited for our moment.

“

We wanted a song that would be able to translate our energy and enthusiasm, as well as being a song that the audience would love to hear.

”

Playing and singing a song in front of your entire school is daunting but such a rewarding experience. For everything to work so well on stage and then for our fellow students to be cheering for us brought so much joy and satisfaction to the band. It shows how music really does bring everyone together.

A special thank you must go to **Ms Featherstone, Mr Burton, Mr Howell** and the judges for another amazing show. House Music has been one of our highlights of each year at King's. Another special thank you must go to our Housemaster, **Mr Jeffery** – a pretty good guitarist himself – who has given us relentless support and guidance, continuously backing us through whatever decisions were made.

As the judges announced all the places of the Houses, the whole Marsden Small House band was huddled up with the rest of the Houses, hands on our backs as we hoped for the judges to save our names until last. Receiving the trophy from the judges on stage was unreal. The moment we dreamed of was happening and the countless hours of practice were worth it. Back at Marsden, the whole House gathered into the Year 12 Common Room as we chanted and spoke of how proud we were.

By **Jack Harper** (Year 13, Marsden) and **Will Thompson** (Year 13, Marsden)



Te Pūtaka Lodge, the Year 9 boys' Boarding House created as a dedicated stepping stone into Boarding and academic life at King's College, celebrated its 10th birthday in early 2026. The Lodge has spent the past decade helping young students settle confidently into the College community and thrive. Writer **Ben Whittaker-Cook** explored how the Lodge has changed and evolved over the last decade.

Set on the peaceful western edge of the College grounds, the Lodge offers boys a safe, supportive and energising environment in which to begin their school journey. The name *Te Pūtaka*, meaning “origin” or “root” in Māori, reflects the Lodge's role as a place where strong foundations are formed.

Daniel Rattray is the Head of Boarding and has been Housemaster at the Lodge since 2021. Along with his support team, he ensures that academic expectations and College values are encouraged from day one, while also establishing a place where long-lasting friendships, independence and confidence are forged.

“I'd always held an interest in Boarding and the Boarding offering – that sense of home and connection. When the role became available, I saw it as an opportunity to lead in that space.

“Aside from my regular teaching responsibilities and Head of Boarding role, being the Te Pūtaka Lodge Housemaster is focused more on the Boarders' pastoral care – ensuring their safety and security, that they're aided in every aspect of their Boarding experience and flourishing during their time here. We have an excellent pastoral and disciplinary framework here to set up the boys for success.”

Typical days involve overseeing students' morning routines, transferring students in and out of the Lodge to their next destinations (including after-school activities), creating opportunities for students to connect with each other, supervising evening study and bedtimes, and managing their wellbeing and behavioural needs.

“There are naturally concerns from parents about Boarding and what that means, especially when the boys are at a younger age. So, it's important to recognise that 12- and 13-year-olds are vastly different from 17- and 18-year-olds,” says Mr Rattray.

“Day students new to a school face all the challenges that come with that, but they still get to go home, to a place of comfort and security. Our Boarders face the same challenges – and more; so, ensuring the same levels of security and comfort in a Boarding environment is incredibly important.”

Offering 46 beds, the Lodge is full for the current academic year – a testimony to Mr Rattray and his team's dedication. The majority of Lodge bedrooms accommodate two boys per room across three different wings. Rooms are rotated each term, and students are often matched with people they don't know, to help build new friendships.

“We have a real focus on kindness and compassion, and the trade-off is that we have high expectations of how every boy should behave and act in a communal environment, and how their actions can impact others.”

All Boarders, regardless of age, dine in the Student Dining Hall together – again, to help cement those networks. “It’s a great way for our Boarders to connect, like you would as a family around the table. To see different Houses mixing and mingling and friend groups developing in such a lovely communal setting is extremely rewarding to see.”

Boarders in Te Pūtaka are encouraged to engage in the full range of after-school activities that the College has to offer. Students also have access to a basketball court, table tennis tables, sports equipment, a comfortable common room and televisions, and enjoy streaming sites such as Netflix and Disney+. Friday evening is home to the legendary pizza night!

Boarders can also swim in the summer, enjoy all the shows and cultural performances held at the College and experience Auckland’s culture through structured co-curriculars and weekend excursions.

“In the evenings you’ll often see Boarders from different Houses coming over to play touch rugby on the turf after dinner, which is highly gratifying. The House system is powerful here, and it

becomes their identity in terms of their allegiance to their Houses. Beginning their Boarding journey in Te Pūtaka breaks down those barriers for students in a positive way. So, while they have their allegiances to their ‘big Houses’, they still reside in the same space, so it enables friendships to form across the board.”

It’s another example of the College’s real points of difference in Boarding compared with other schools. “There’s a genuine link between Boarding and the school. That strong relationship enables us to support students across every part of their journey – academically, socially and co-curricular – creating a seamless, closely connected and genuinely holistic Boarding experience.

Year 9 Boarding is built on purpose – to develop good self-management techniques, emotional intelligence, self-esteem and self-awareness, and a sense of place.

Its original purpose conjoined those ambitions with practical needs and to meet the evolving expectations of Boarding at the College. As Averill House transitioned into a Day House and moved to a new location, an opportunity emerged to create a bespoke experience for new entrants. The existing Averill House building was renamed Te Pūtaka Lodge – an age- and stage-appropriate Boarding environment for solely Year 9 students.

“The philosophy for me for the young men in the Lodge was that they were

there in a preparation year,” says **Daniel Mitchell** (Te Pūtaka Lodge Housemaster and Boarding Co-ordinator 2016–17 and Deputy Headmaster, 2019–22).

“This meant the boys could make some ‘mistakes’, but in a setting that allowed me and my Boarding Tutors to have conversations about what they were seeing and experiencing. We were able to discuss in great detail the things that make King’s, King’s – to ensure the boys felt connected to and had a sense of belonging at the College.

“We also grounded it in Positive Education (PE) as much as we could. **Grant McKibbin** (Associate Housemaster of Te Pūtaka Lodge) is the font of all knowledge in this area, and late-evening conversations with him helped lay the foundation for the processes we put in place.

“For example, we developed a gratitude journal that the boys wrote in every night. A mentor programme was developed around PE – we focused on sleep hygiene long before other schools adopted it, made sure tech was put away well before bedtime, and ran in the mornings three times a week to start the day well!”

The Te Pūtaka Lodge name was born out of discussions between Mr Mitchell, **Lincoln Savage**, the first Housemaster and Teacher-in-Charge of Māori at the time, and **Michael Leach**, the Headmaster (2014–15).



Lodge students playing music together in the common area in 2016



A senior student mentoring a Te Pūtaka Lodge student in 2026



Daniel Mitchell with Te Pūtaka Students, 2016



Basketball practice outside the Lodge in 2024



“
Having all our Year 9 Boarding students in the same space, in the same waka, learning, maturing and adjusting to Boarding together, with support structures that are designed to meet those needs, helps them to get the most out of their experience.
”

“I wanted something unique that spoke to the foundation of the Lodge. We found a whakataukī that reflected the Lodge’s direction: *Ki te kore ngā pūtaka e mākūkūngia, e kore te rākau e tupu*; If the roots of a tree are not watered, the tree will never grow.”

Lasting memories for Mr Mitchell include seeing the boys’ excitement as they returned to the Lodge from their respective Houses after music, haka and sports practices, and witnessing the joy they experienced in sharing their stories.

“I also remember a staff member who had a son at the Lodge mentioning that his son didn’t want to come home because he was enjoying Boarding life so much!”

Mr Mitchell notes the many staff members who worked behind the scenes who helped the College and the Lodge go from strength to strength, including **Paul Watts**, former Te Pūtaka Housemaster (2017–21).

“The calibre of Lodge Housemasters has been a real positive, and the Lodge is in very capable hands with Mr Rattray. Both Mr Watts and Mr Rattray are experienced and capable men who understand what it means to support young people to find their sense of identity and belonging.”

History happens quickly at the College, and the Lodge is carving out its own stories just a decade on.

“Now and then, an Old Collegian will drop off or pick up their son from the Lodge, explain they were in Averill House,

share a few memories or even point out a familiar building fixture that reminds them of their time here,” says Mr Rattray.

“Having all our Year 9 Boarding students in the same space, in the same waka, learning, maturing and adjusting to Boarding together, with support structures that are designed to meet those needs, helps them to get the most out of their experience.

“Some people still hold assumptions about Boarding, but anyone who visits Te Pūtaka Lodge will see how it has been adapted and enhanced. It is essentially a sleepover with a lot of great mates, an opportunity to build connections and form a family environment, and we’re proud of the difference we’re making.”

“

What you catch on film is captured forever... It remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything.

— Annie Leibovitz

”

Capturing Life AT King's

As we work to capture a detailed and nuanced history of King's College one of the most important resources are your personal photographs, taken during your time on campus. Every photograph captures a moment – whether it's a candid shot of a student gathering, a milestone celebration, a school trip or an ordinary day at your House. These images encapsulate unscripted, unique moments and trigger memories that might otherwise slip away.

Having photos that we can share helps others recall stories of their school days and are a big help to us for identifying people, events and activities from across the years. And personal photos always capture more history than intended. There are background elements like architecture, automobiles, and even landscape features that provide valuable context about an era and help plot a timeline of our history.

Archiving analogue photographs has become easier with technological advances that enable photos, slides and negatives to be scanned directly into digital files. Getting slides reprinted as photos and having negatives developed can be costly and it's now difficult to even find a place that still does this mahi. Being able to scan instead of developing saves time, cost and enables editing like removing blurring shots and duplicates that could not have been done with the original film cameras. Physical prints, slides and negatives are vulnerable to deterioration, fading and damage from environmental factors, and they are susceptible to loss in sudden, unforeseen events such as flooding and fires. Digitisation of photos ensures images are preserved and can easily be shared across online platforms (and around the globe!), helping to foster a sense of connection and shared history. The advancement of digital cameras and particularly phone cameras presents a different sort of archiving process. Because there are now very rarely physical photos being printed and we

don't want to miss a thing, a digital archive has been created within the King's College Archive that holds digital-only images. We would like to receive your digital photos – any photos and their story can easily be sent to us via email.

We would love your help!

Do you have any photos you could gift or share with the archive? We are always looking to add to the collection and would happily accept photos from across any era – not just the 'old stuff' but anything you may have, even if it's from the last few years. Please also note that if you have printed photos or albums but are not quite ready to hand them over, we can scan and then return them to you.

The King's College Archive is a living, growing space and we are accepting anything King's related, regardless of how old or how 'new' it may be. Please contact us via email: archives@kingscollege.school.nz



1927 Incident during a rugby game against Whanganui Collegiate.



1955 Senior Drama Production cast of Henry V.



1950s St John's students with their matron.



1950s Students dressed up for a barn dance with St Cuthbert's.



1959 Students removing a peach tree.



Slides donated to the King's College Archives.



The 'fun find' in the archive this term (maybe even for the year!) is a map of Central Auckland found inside the Red Cross Disaster Unit folders.

The map, circa 1978 shows Auckland City landmarks and layout from before the significant redevelopment of the city that took place during the 1980s. But best of all the map shows all the pubs around town at that time – a reminder of a few good nights!



Anzac Day 2026



On Anzac Day 2026 we hosted our annual morning Chapel Service for our wider community, including Old Collegians, students, their families and staff members. The service was followed by morning tea in the Student Dining Hall.

The guest speaker this year was Emeritus Professor **Ian Civil**, who gave the Anzac address with strong themes of the changing times – reflecting on changes in society, as well highlighting the impacts of service and sacrifice.

“We have much to be grateful for that our servicepeople over the years made the sacrifices and provided the service that they did, none numerically greater than in the First World War.

On days like Anzac Day, however, it’s not all about 1915 but a time for reflection on the wider concept of service and sacrifice in society.

This is traditionally considered in a military context but much more prevalently seen and required in day-to-day life and, where present, reflects a healthy and benevolent society.”

Emeritus Professor Ian Civil, CNZM, MBE (Mil), KStJ, ED (Parnell, 1966–70)



Senior student **Elizabeth Walker** (Year 13, Marion Bruce) was selected as a finalist in the 2026 Lest We Forget Poetry competition run by Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Participants were asked to create a response to the annual theme of He Ara Whakamua: Pathways Forward.



*Remembrance
feels like a quiet thing.
Not loud, not sharp,
just empty...
like something's missing.
Like a chair
that no one sits in anymore.
Like the drop of your
stomach when you realise
it's actually gone.
And I stand here
consumed in my normal life
trying to understand
how something so far away
can feel this close.
They were young. I don't
know their faces,
but I know their almos.*

*corrupts my body
and damages my soul
Remembrance isn't just a
memory, it's absence.
It's the life they didn't
get to live.
Lives built for bravery,
a life that was taken out of
the palms of their hands and
placed into the palms of mine.
The life I think I could
never live up to,
but the life I'm going to try to.
I don't know how to carry it
so I let it change me.
Not with medals,
not with their kind of bravery,
but with a life that
means something.
Because remembrance isn't
just looking back, it's living;
living with peace and with
love. Living with ambition
and grace. Living with God.
And living
like their ending
wasn't the end.*

Elizabeth Walker

OUR GAPPIES

Hosting GAP Year Students at King's



Toby Clarke and Emily Kovach

For over 30 years, King's College has hosted two GAP year students each year, affectionately known as 'gappies', who live and work on the College campus. A GAP year is a planned period of time – usually 6 to 12 months, taken outside of formal education where students choose to travel, work or volunteer before they start their next life chapter.

The idea of a GAP year first emerged in the United Kingdom during the 1960s and '70s, when young people began taking time out to travel or volunteer their time overseas after they finished secondary school. As the concept grew, specialist organisations developed formal programmes to place students into roles in schools overseas, supporting and guiding them through the experience. Originally the King's GAP year programme was run by past staff member **Robin Finney**, who later set up a company called Tutors Worldwide which specialised in placing students in GAP year roles. Many of our students were placed at King's via his company and King's students were placed in positions overseas too.

It was through another of these organisations that one of our current GAP students found out about the King's Gappie Programme – **Toby Clarke** applied for the opportunity via Let's Live after he realised he wasn't sure what he wanted to study at university. His mum had done a GAP year and was supportive of him exploring options before he decided what direction to take

after school. Let's Live interviewed him and determined that he would be a good fit in terms of interests and values with King's, so he was recommended for a direct interview. Our second gap student, **Emily Kovach**, found out about the role via her aunt **Jasmine Kovach** – Averill Housemaster, who mentioned it to Emily and encouraged her to apply for the opportunity. Having family here already and a familiar face around the College in Jasmine helped with a soft landing here in New Zealand. A year on, she is still amazed at how friendly people are everywhere she goes, and is blown away with King's – particularly the facilities and all the options for learning available here.

Both students landed on a GAP year as the best option for them while still attending high school, thinking that a year to explore their options while learning new things in a different environment would be beneficial – giving them a break before starting further study. When talking about their experiences so far, their time at the College has also been a huge learning experience as they developed new skills through all the activities they have been involved in and responsibilities they have been given, while learning more about themselves too. Although they have mainly been based at King's, they have both spent time in Ahuroa, where they have helped with the Year 10 Adventure Challenge and Leadership Camps – providing support to the staff there and helping students as they tackle these outdoor experiences.

"It will be exciting for me to watch some of these students become really successful in their lives. I know they will do amazing things, and I can feel proud knowing that I was a small part of their King's journey."

Riccardo Massari, Head of Operations, is the staff member who, along with People and Culture, oversees the GAP students and co-ordinates their day-to-day activities and responsibilities while they are here. He says that there are huge benefits to the College as the gappies are available to all staff when needed, filling important roles and being able to step into many situations to help the school day run smoothly. Importantly, being young and recent school leavers, they also act as a conduit between staff and students in many areas. In their role they are relatable to students but, as Emily points out, it gives our gappies the opportunity to "be the adult" and work on their leadership skills as well.

There are lots of learning opportunities for the gappies each day. During their time at the College they will see major events hosted, attend sporting matches, help in classrooms, visit the Ahuroa Adventure Camp and support the Print and Design Centre outputs. **Tammy Marais**, Print and Design Centre Operator, is extremely appreciative of the help that the gappies provide her and notes that many of the skills that they learn in her office – interacting with a wide range of staff members, printing, binding, document collating, changing printer toners and troubleshooting printer issues – will be valuable in their future roles, especially if they are office based. This year, Emily and Toby helped with the set-up and pack-down of Big House Music – the biggest event on the King's calendar, involving all students and hosted at Spark Arena. Being involved in the logistics and excitement of this event has been a highlight of their year so far.

Originally from South Africa, Riccardo knows how valuable the GAP year experience is – for the gappies themselves, for the College and the students. GAP years are also common in his home country, and he has experienced similar programmes in several schools he has worked at over the years. He also understands how the GAP year exchanges can sometimes create long-lasting connections. Not only does King's College accept students from other countries but also helps King's students to apply for these opportunities overseas when they finish high school in New Zealand too. When visiting a school in the UK during his Myers Scholarship Sabbatical, he remembers being told about a King's student who had spent his GAP year, who was still remembered very fondly years later.

Emily and Toby will both take fond memories with them when they leave King's. With Emily heading back to the UK soon, she will miss all the students who she has got to know over her year at King's. Understanding all their unique backgrounds, especially the international students, has opened her eyes to new perspectives, and it may have even shaped what's next for her as she plans to study International Relations at the University of Birmingham. Toby especially enjoys the walk to school in the morning along the drive when he can wander alongside the athletics track and sports fields, seeing all the staff and students arrive at school for the day. The convenience of being able to eat in the Dining Hall, having the grounds and gym to exercise in and the opportunity to explore a new country have been huge benefits for him. He also loved seeing the hugely positive attitude that King's students have towards their learning, with their enthusiasm for all aspects of school life, something that he has been inspired by. At Big House Music he saw another example of that with all Houses cheering for the others and ensuring that everyone felt supported when they took the stage.

In terms of recommending a GAP year to others, both gappies absolutely agree that they would. Toby feels that the experience has really helped him to mature and adapt to new social and professional environments – in his time here he has found himself being the youngest in the room and then sometimes the oldest person. Living independently, managing work and any travelling opportunities has been a big learning curve too, but most of all, they have loved meeting and learning from all the staff and students. As Emily says, *"It will be exciting for me to watch some of these students become really successful in their lives. I know they will do amazing things, and I can feel proud knowing that I was a small part of their King's journey."*

“



Luisa Santus
Gappie, 2024–25

"My year as a gappie at King's was one of the most rewarding and formative experiences of my life."

One of the highlights was the Year 10 Adventure Camp, which really pushed me out of my comfort zone and challenged me in new ways. Through experiences like this, I developed greater confidence, resilience, adaptability and my leadership skills. I loved being part of the wider school community too, building relationships with students and staff, and getting involved in a variety of activities. Looking back, it was a year of tremendous personal growth and unforgettable memories. I also made friendships during that time that I still value today."



Liam Cook
Gappie, 2016–17

"My year at King's as a gappie from 2016 to 2017 was one of the best decisions I've made."

Moving from Scotland to New Zealand at 18 years old was a leap into the unknown, but King's quickly became a home away from home. I thrived on the variety that came with the role. I'd be coaching sport, helping out in classrooms and even halfway up a volcano or sailing the Coromandel Peninsula, all in the space of the same week.

Beyond the adventure, the experience taught me a huge amount about responsibility, leadership and working with people from different cultures and backgrounds. It challenged me to be adaptable, take initiative and grow my confidence. Looking back, many of the skills and values I developed during my year there still influence me today, and I remain incredibly grateful for the experience. Most of all, the people at King's are what made the experience really special. The students, staff and wider King's community all played a part in making a short period in my life one that I continue to look back very fondly on."

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BUILD FOR BELONGING



HOW WE ARE ENSURING OUR CAMPUS IS OPTIMISED FOR THE FUTURE

In our autumn edition of the *King's Courier* we showcased the classroom upgrades which took place over the 2025/26 summer break. In this edition, we introduce some of the changes that are happening around the campus as we look to optimise it for the future enjoyment of students and staff.

Work is continuous around our campus – recent projects to provide new ablutions for Marion Bruce House have been completed, along with the installation of ramps and decking for this area. Our dedicated Property and Services team is always investigating new ways to enhance College facilities and ensure that while maintaining the heritage of

our beautiful buildings – including the Chapel – we are focused on the future and continuing to look ahead to make sure our environment is fit for purpose for our students, staff, families, Old Collegians and other community members. The King's campus is a place of belonging for many, so any changes to it are carefully planned and introduced while being very mindful of this responsibility to our immediate and wider community.

Together with the Board, the long-term planning for the College by our Senior Management team has been made with care, while also being ambitious in its intent. The next stage of the plan to transform the campus has two main points of focus: initially it was the preparatory work for the new classroom block situated in the Clubhouse carpark area which started in the July holidays, paving the way for the introduction of

those new classrooms to the site; and secondly, the removal of the South Block building which is scheduled to take place over the summer months.

The classroom block will be added to the campus footprint over Terms 3 and 4 this year. It will be open and available for teaching before any removal work on the South Block starts. The carpark area has been prepared for its arrival with earthworks underway and trees removed to clear the space. The block will be two-storeyed and built in a location which has been strategically considered in light of the bigger-picture, long-term planning for academic spaces.

The South Block was originally designed and built in two parts. The first part was built as the College Gymnasium but, over time, its central location within the campus meant that it was converted to



Huri poki I te whenua ceremony as the ground was broken on the new classroom block - July 2026.



The removal of the South Block will allow more flow around campus spaces.

student classrooms. The second part was built as classrooms during 1954 when the Memorial Library building was being built and was opened in 1955.

These classroom learning spaces worked very well for decades. However, with the introduction of new buildings around the campus it has become clear that the building is becoming dated and towards the end of its life. The Board carefully assessed the merits of either retaining and restoring the building or taking the opportunity to ‘open up’ the campus and provide more modern classroom facilities in another area of the College.

Ultimately, the decision to demolish the South Block was made with staff and students at the heart of it. Introducing a shared courtyard for students and creating more space around the Quad will provide huge benefits, as well as providing a newly updated learning environment for the classes currently based in the South

Block. In time the South Block area of the Quad will be built on again, but in the meantime, the shared courtyard allows us time to consider what King’s future needs are for teaching and learning. We also want to reflect on how we could develop an enhanced space for academic research and collaborative learning.

The removal of the building is being managed extremely carefully, especially around the connection to the Student Dining Hall, as the two buildings are joined in the corner of the Quad. The Dining Hall building – a place which holds special memories for our community – is protected and will remain unchanged, apart from becoming a stand-alone building. Once the demolition of the South Wing has been completed in early 2027, this will create some exciting opportunities for visual and physical connections between the Quad, the student Tuck Shop area and the Day Houses, allowing

a more open flow around these spaces. At the time of writing, a landscaping solution is being developed which will ensure that the new courtyard space will contribute to and benefit students’ daily life at the College, providing them with a communal area offering shade and a place to eat at break times. It is hoped that this new precinct will be available for students to enjoy during Term 1 next year.

For 2027 and beyond, there is anticipated enhancement of our student residential experience as well as investing in the ‘academic heart of the College’. We will continue to develop modern facilities to sit harmoniously alongside our traditional, beloved ones. As always, these future improvements will be carefully considered and thoughtfully designed as the campus adapts to meet student needs.

Behind the scenes of BIG HOUSE MUSIC



A pinnacle event of the King’s College year is Big House Music, a spectacular showcase of our students’ talent, energy, creativity as well as the support they show their Houses and each other.

Parents and other family members pack into Spark Arena to watch each House take the stage to sing and dance to a carefully chosen song that they have been rehearsing since the end of Term 1. As students perform their chosen piece, the crowd supports them and encourages them – the atmosphere is always competitive but supportive – while the judges carefully benchmark each performance, taking notes and determining which Houses will rise above the others. The Small House Music bands who come 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Small House competition also perform for the audience, which is part of the reward for their success. Students, teachers and family members look forward to Big House – it is the result of hours of planning, rehearsing and teamwork, as well as a great night out in the city, but there is also lots of work that goes on behind the scenes. We talk to

some of the key people about their role in ensuring that Big House Music is a night to remember for all the right reasons.

The preparation for the big night starts the year before, in December when Spark Arena is booked for the next year. As a central Auckland venue it is popular for shows and concerts. Shows can sometimes have long runs where block bookings are required, so we need to work around availability.

Alex Biggs, our Events Manager, oversees this, working with the College to align the calendar as harmoniously as possible against the dates which are available. Once a date has been set it is shared with students, staff, Housemasters and our parent community. The ticketing then needs to be set up to take into account all the variations and our Communications Team ensures that the information and ticketing link is widely publicised so that no one misses out. On the night, a member of the team also captures snippets of each performance for our social media channels and the entire show is recorded and added to YouTube a few weeks after the event. Our student photographers are asked to photograph the night as well, to

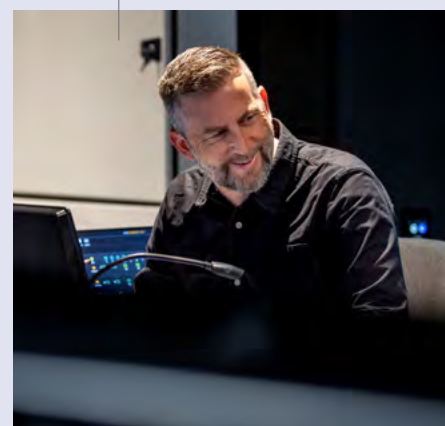


Music crowd

Greenbank House



Glenn Howell



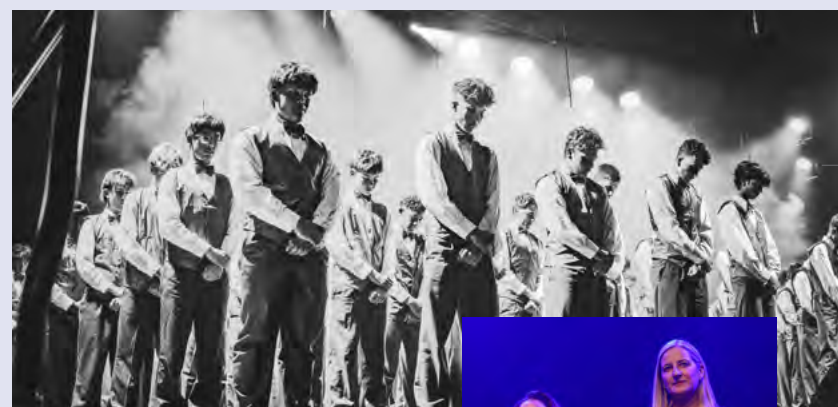
MCs Reverend Walters and Reverend Auva'a



Middlemore House



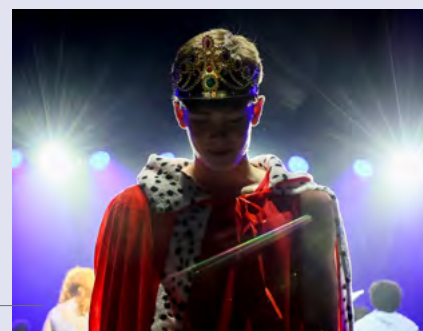
School House



Peart House
Photo by
Leighton Chen
(Year 12, Averill)



House Music Judges –
Kirsten Scouller - Director
of Music, King's School
and Singer Ella Monnery



ensure that all the moments are captured and our professional photographer, **Simon Watts** spends hours ensuring that the spirit of the event is evident in his images. This involves lots of manoeuvring around the stage, getting the right angle which can be challenging with the stage lighting.

Emma Featherstone – Director of Music and Head of Performing Arts – serves as the lead producer and Director of House Music, overseeing both the Small House and Big House components of the event. Planning begins in Term 1 with meetings involving all Student Cultural Leaders to ensure they understand and are aligned with the expectations, rules and responsibilities associated with House Music. As Producer, Ms Featherstone co-ordinates all key stakeholders to develop and manage the various phases of House Music, working closely with the Events and Technical teams to ensure clear role allocation and effective collaboration. She also provides ongoing support to Student Cultural Leaders throughout the rehearsal process, rehearsing with each House for both Big and Small House Music to ensure that they are sounding great and giving them advice alongside Stage Manager **Gary Burton** who also provides expertise and guidance to House leaders.

In preparation for the event, Ms Featherstone liaises with Spark Arena to co-ordinate health and safety requirements, transport, logistics, seating plans, backstage operations, front-of-house screens and camera coverage. During the performance, she manages the overall production from the judging panel area, facilitating discussions among judges when decisions need to be reached efficiently and making sure that the adjudication process runs smoothly.

She also oversees all personnel and operational aspects of House Music, ensuring the event is delivered to a high standard and runs seamlessly on the night. As with many large-scale productions, one of the most significant challenges following the performances is co-ordinating the extensive clean-up process.

Glenn Howell is also highly involved in the preparations. As the College's Multimedia Technician, he takes the lead in the technical side of the event, ensuring that from as early as February all suppliers for technical services are booked. When a large venue like Spark Arena is booked for an event, no sound system, stage lighting or video systems are provided, which means that Mr Howell needs to organise everything we require to be trucked in on the day of the event. Technical crews are at Spark Arena on site working on our show from 7.30am right

45

estimated hours that Marion Bruce House spent in rehearsals

2

MCs to host the evening

4

types of wrist passes: Boarder, Day Student, Staff, Guest

6

photographers to capture the evening: one professional and four students, plus a staff member

2.5K+

family members, Old Collegians and audience members attending the show

through until very late in the evening. As the show gets closer, Mr Howell and Mr Biggs will start to liaise with Spark Arena Production staff to make sure all the finer details are covered, to avoid any logistical or technical issues in the evening.

Mr Howell finds it a hugely rewarding experience as he witnesses all the separate elements come together after months of planning: the lights, the sound, the big screens and, most importantly seeing the student performers take to the stage. As he says, *“That very first musical note is the culmination of a lot of careful preparation and hard work. When the crowd hears the first strains of The Final Countdown playing over the huge PA system, a wave of excitement rushes through the arena and we all know we’re going to be in for a great night’s entertainment.”*

William Johnson – Head of Culture, found that being a Year 13 student meant that he was one of the leaders when it came to Big House Music preparations. After Marsden House won the competition when he was a Year 9 student, he recognised that it is quite overwhelming for the new arrivals to the College and helped to ensure that the students were supported during the process. As Head of Culture, his role is one of overall support of the Arts at the College. As the Big House competition is fiercely competitive, it meant that he didn’t have too much exposure to other Houses’ plans but loved seeing all the performances on the night, showcasing the school’s spirit and talent. Supporting other Houses, he says, is just as important as supporting your own. He believes that, ultimately, Big House Music is *“about being part of one of the biggest, craziest things that school students in New Zealand have the opportunity to participate in.”*

As one of the evening’s MCs, **Reverend Gareth Walters** has the job of keeping the arena crowd entertained and the pace of the evening moving – with 15 performances and a prize-giving to get through, there are many announcements and introductions to be made during the evening. For him the prep commences several weeks beforehand when he starts meeting with **Reverend Onosai Auva’a** - Old Collegian and King’s parent. They are very mindful that there are a lot of expectations around House Music as it is one of the College’s signature events and that there is a huge excitement around it. They want to make sure that the show is both entertaining and well-managed from an MC’s perspective. As Rev. Walters says, it certainly helps him being an experienced teacher, a seasoned Reverend who is used to speaking to a congregation, as well as stage actor! Their usual preparation begins with some brainstorming about their introduction and a theme that might provide the spark for the start of each show. They then divide up the Houses, usually Rev. Walters kicks off as the host Chaplain, and then the responsibilities are shared for the rest of the night, alternating the introductions to each of the Houses. The fun bit, he says, is researching the song they are about to introduce – investigating who wrote the song, what it’s about and anything interesting about the item, while also trying to find ways to gently ‘tease’ the artist, band or College staff. This is all done in good humour so that it is fun and relevant, both for students and families, and keeps the night running smoothly.

Rev. Walters says: *“One of my favourite quotes is from St Irenaeus who said that the ‘glory of God is a man or woman fully alive’. That’s why I love House Music as it allows our musically talented students to be fully alive as they play and sing their hearts out! Another reason is getting to work with Rev. O – he is a legend and to share the stage with him is an honour... It’s like being on stage with my brother. We have a lot of fun beforehand but also on the night – I count it a privilege to be a co-MC for this fabulous event.”*

2026 BIG HOUSE CHAMPIONS

MARION BRUCE



Head of Marion Bruce House – **Lauren Taylor** (Year 13, Marion Bruce) – writes about her experience of preparing for and eventually winning Big House Music 2026.

The process for choosing the song was much harder than anticipated. We had some experience from earlier in the year when we had to choose the Small House song. What we learnt from that process was the feeling you got when you found ‘your song’. When choosing the Big House song, we knew a criteria was key – we needed a clear outline of what we wanted and what wasn’t possible; what were our limits. We had a small group of girls who each focused on the vocals, the band and the dance, so I asked each of them to go away and decide their top five songs. When everyone had decided, we spent a while filtering through them; in the end not one of those songs was our final pick but it gave us a very clear idea of what we wanted. We reflected on Marion’s past Big House performances – they were always slightly edgy; so when we finally came across *Sunny* we realised this really ticked all our boxes – we had a clear vision of the performance, what the costumes would be, what the harmonies would sound like and how the dance would look. It seemed too good to be true.

We had our first rehearsal in the last week of Term 1. Due to wet weather we couldn’t practice outside, so we practiced our singing inside the House. This ended up being very helpful when it came to learning the dance because the girls were already familiar with the lyrics and it allowed them to connect the movements to the song with great ease.

When planning, there were some key people who had a major involvement in decision-making. We had two Year 13 students, **Lydia Zhu** and **Phoebe Wood**, who oversaw all things to do with the band. Both of these girls are so unbelievably talented and made the process extremely easy. Our choreographers – Year 13 **Arabella Morgan** and Year 12 **Hayley Gartshore** – worked tirelessly to oversee the creation of the lines and the teaching of the dance with such patience and kindness. Without these girls we wouldn’t have achieved such success.

During the process, planning and organisation took up probably the most time; I underestimated that the most. We sent out a poll to see what days students were available, made a schedule and cross referenced it with the school calendar, asked our Housemaster to check it, booked the venues for rehearsal and sent it out to everyone. The organisation was also about noting attendance, emails, the costumes and making a schedule for each rehearsal to run smoothly. On top of the behind-the-scenes planning the actual rehearsals were lengthy too; from our schedule, I counted about 45 hours of rehearsal time!

The costumes turned out to be easy in hindsight – we had a very clear vision of what we wanted – but the real question was how we were going to execute it. We knew we really wanted to embody the “Sunny” aspect, so we wanted gold, sparkly and ‘70s! This made us think of jumpsuits, but when we looked for them, they were a bit pricier than expected. We decided we would need an alternative low-cost costume for the Year 11s and 12s, who wore gold shirts.

On the night, I was overwhelmed with nerves, but also excitement. I was so proud of the performance that we were about to put on. My goal had been to create something that the whole House could be proud of and an experience that would be fun and enjoyable. I wasn’t sure how it would actually go once we were on stage, but I was just so proud to be in Marion, surrounded by girls I consider family. Watching the other performances I really tried not to be too nervous but considering the standard of all the performances, that was difficult!

Utter disbelief is the only way I can describe the feeling when we found out we had won the competition. As Greenbank and Major were being called as 2nd and 3rd, I didn’t know what to think. I genuinely believed that this meant we hadn’t even placed Top 6 because it seemed so unfathomable that we could have come 1st. When Marion was called out, I was overwhelmed with shock and gratitude, not only for winning but for being able to experience this with such an amazing group of girls. I didn’t think I could be any happier until I realised that this meant we would be the overall House Music winners as well. This was an experience I will forever be grateful for and one I will never be able to forget.

PEGASUS CUP PRIZEWINNERS



Monty
Alderton

HEAD TO MELBOURNE

Olivia Tongue



Coco Fougere



Yun Fan Ling

After winning the 2025 Pegasus Cup competition, the King's College Equestrian Team - consisting of **Monty Alderton** (Year 11, Averill), **Coco Fougere** (Year 12, Marion Bruce), **Yun Fan Ling** (Year 12, Parnell) and **Olivia Tongue** (Year 13, Middlesmore) - was rewarded with the incredible opportunity of a trip to Melbourne, Australia. This trip gave them the opportunity to compete internationally and further develop their skills and experience. Olivia writes about their trip which gave them the opportunity to compete internationally and further develop their skills and experience.

During the week, we trained on borrowed horses under the guidance of **Phil Lever**, a renowned 5-star show jumper with an impressive international career. In 2004, Phil moved from Australia to Europe, where he spent 15 years competing at some of the world's most prestigious showjumping events, including Nations Cup competitions and Grand Prix events across Europe. In addition to his success as a rider, Phil has also coached riders who have gone on to compete at both World Championships and the Youth Olympic Games.

Training with Phil was a highlight of the trip. His knowledge and experience is invaluable and helped us to incorporate new aspects and skills to further improve. The skills and techniques we learned during the week are things we have been able to bring home to New Zealand and apply to our own horses and competitions.

We also had the opportunity to explore Melbourne, experience Australian culture, and meet other people from different backgrounds. These experiences helped broaden our understanding of

the sport and create new relationships with international equestrians.

The competition portion of the trip took place at the Peninsula Monthly Jumping Competition held at Boneo Park, one of Victoria's premier equestrian venues. Our King's College riders performed well, achieving several impressive results. Monty Alderton riding horse Tulara For Chico secured first place in the 1.00m class, fifth place in the 1.10m class, and another first place in the 1.15m class. While I was able to achieve first place in the 1.04 class riding horse Tarburra Gold Nugget.

For all of us, the opportunity to compete internationally while still at secondary school was a truly memorable experience. Experiencing a different competition atmosphere, learning to ride new and unfamiliar horses, and learning from world-class professionals made the trip both challenging and rewarding. The Melbourne experience not only celebrated our team's Pegasus Cup success but also provided all of us with valuable lessons, new skills, and unforgettable memories that will benefit us in our future equestrian careers.

2026 Senior Ball



The Emberglow Grove

On Saturday 9 May students gathered at Auckland's Cordis Great Room to enjoy the Senior Ball. This year's theme was The Emberglow Grove – the vision of dappled golden light shining through the trees at dusk – which set the scene for an elegant night of delicious food, music – a highlight of the night was a fantastic set from student band The Burtones – and of course lots of dancing.

Where ARE They Now...

THE FIRST STUDENTS TO LIVE AT TE PŪTAKE LODGE



Max Hennessy-Webb
(St John's, 2016-20)

Max Hennessy-Webb (St John's, 2016-20)

Coming from a small rural town, getting to meet 50 new people all at once was such an awesome experience. Making friendships that have lasted for the rest of my life is something that I will cherish from my first year in the Lodge.

Boarding gives you independence and teaches you important values, from something as basic as keeping your room tidy to the interpersonal skills associated with navigating life among 50 other peers. It especially teaches you how to be a team player – something I feel is so valuable and can only be achieved in that type of environment.

Being part of the foundation cohort was exciting. We were incredibly lucky to have such an amazing leader and Housemaster (Daniel Mitchell), who paved the way for what it meant to be a Te Pūtāke Lodge (TPL) member.

The friendships I gained from my year in the Lodge mean everything to me. It was such a great opportunity to meet the entire Year 9 cohort before we all went our separate ways into our respective Houses, something that may have been harder to achieve had we been separated straight away.

Looking back now, I think TPL was the introduction to the most incredible five years of school I could've hoped for. It set the tone for what it meant to be a King's student and evoked a sense of loyalty to the school that lasted throughout my time there.

I would advise new Year 9 Boarders to get involved. Try something new. Make an effort with the new students that you meet, who will eventually become some of your best friends in life.

I am currently in my sixth and final year studying Medicine at the University of Otago in Dunedin. I cannot be more grateful to the entire King's community and staff in helping me get to this point. King's teaches young people such important life lessons and qualities outside of strictly academia – something I feel makes it more special than any other high-achieving school.

Cody Heron (School, 2016-20)

When I think back to my first year at Te Pūtāke Lodge, I remember how excited I was to be there and how quickly I made friends. One of the best parts was meeting people from all over New Zealand and the world. Some of my favourite memories are shooting hoops on the basketball court,

the morning runs with Housemaster Mr Mitchell, and some of the weekends when a lot of us stayed behind and got involved in the activities that were organised. Looking back, it was a pretty special year.

It was my first time living away from home, so the transition into Boarding life helped me become more independent. It also gave me much more confidence. Being away from home and learning to look after yourself at that age teaches you a lot.

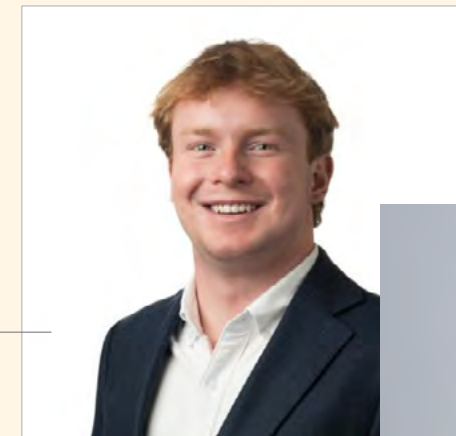
I remember us talking about it quite a bit at the time – how cool it was to be the first group through TPL and how we'd probably look back on it one day. Now it's been 10 years and we're actually doing exactly that, which is quite surreal. There was a real sense of camaraderie because we were all in it together, and I'm proud to have been part of that first group.

The friendships from that time have stayed with me. I'm still close with many of the boys from those years. Even the ones I don't see very often, when we do catch up there's still that connection. Going through that first Boarding year together created friendships that have lasted well beyond school.

TPL made the transition into King's much easier, by the time I moved into the main Boarding House in Year 10, I already felt comfortable and confident



Lachie Marshall
(St John's, 2016-20)



Cody Heron
(School, 2016-20)



in the Boarding environment. One of the unique things about being in the first cohort was that everyone was figuring it out together. There weren't older boys who already knew how everything worked, so we were able to gain the basic skills early on, which helped me throughout my time at King's and beyond.

I would advise Boarding students to get involved in as much as you can and be open to meeting everyone. The friendships you make and the experiences you have will stay with you for life. It might not feel like it now, but these are the years you'll look back on and realise they were the good old days.

After King's, I headed down to the University of Otago and studied Finance and Accounting. During my time studying at university I came back and worked at the College over a few summers, which was great and kept me connected with the school. These days I'm back in Auckland and working at KPMG as a Private Enterprise Advisor.

Lachie Marshall (St John's, 2016-20)

In my first year at King's, the biggest adjustment was transitioning into Boarding life and leaving home for the first time. I remember the early-morning runs, staying

active, making new friends and settling into a new routine. Living away from home taught me independence, and some of my favourite memories were getting to know everyone and playing basketball in the Quad, even if I wasn't very good at it.

Transitioning into Boarding pushed me outside my comfort zone and helped me grow in confidence. It taught me to be independent, take responsibility for my own routines and decisions, and build friendships with people from different backgrounds. Those skills have stayed with me ever since.

At the time, being part of the foundation cohort probably didn't mean a great deal. Looking back, though, I appreciate what a unique opportunity it was. As the first group through TPL, we helped shape the culture and traditions that future Boarders would experience. I also valued getting to know everyone in my year group and building friendships across the different Houses.

Mr Mitchell's morning runs are something that have stayed with me, as I still enjoy starting the day with exercise. The friendships I made in Year 9 have also lasted well beyond school. I still catch up with many of the people I first met in my first year at King's, both professionally and socially.

TPL gave me a strong foundation in independence and responsibility. It also gave me the confidence to meet new people and adapt to different environments. Having friendships across the entire Boarding cohort made my time at King's even more rewarding; seeing a familiar face in the classroom, on the sports field or around the school always made me feel at ease.

I would advise new Boarders to build good routines from the beginning and make the most of everything living at school has to offer. You have incredible opportunities right on your doorstep, from rolling out of bed to go to an early sports training, or the gym, pool, library, cultural facilities, and teachers who are there to support you. Get involved, try something new, and take advantage of it all.

After King's, I studied at Lincoln University before moving back to Auckland to join the Mergers and Acquisitions team at PwC. I really enjoyed university and am enjoying my career so far. Looking back, I can see how the skills I developed at TPL – becoming independent, building confidence and learning to connect with people from different backgrounds – were the foundations in getting me to where I am today.

STUDENT

King's vs Auckland Grammar Rugby Match

This is always a highly anticipated clash between the two teams and schools, and hosting the game at King's this year on Saturday 13 June meant that the College was packed with supporters ready to cheer on both sides. Unfortunately, this was not our year with Auckland Grammar School winning the match 52 – 27 but our spectators didn't waver in their support with the match report noting that the final moments of the match saw King's playing their best rugby of the afternoon.



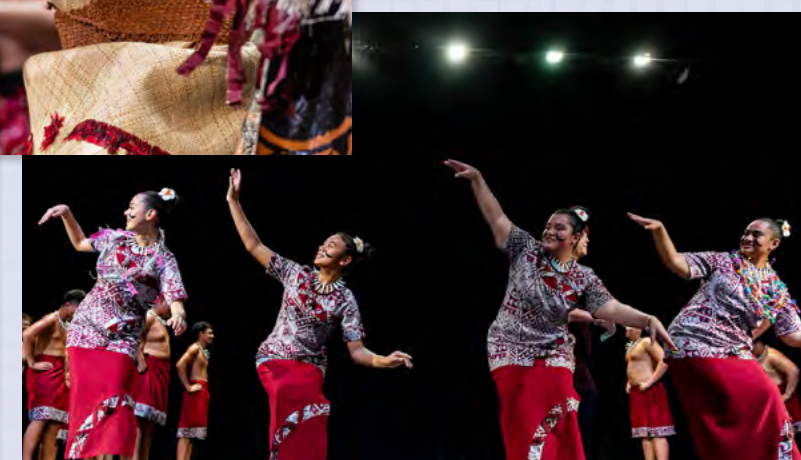
Pink Shirt Day

A global movement which encourages people around the world to wear pink to stand up to bullying, celebrate diversity and promote kindness to others, Pink Shirt Day at the College was a vibrant spectacle. Staff members and students wore pink to remind everyone to "Speak Up, Stand Together, Stop Bullying" and these messages were shared with the student body with a video played during assembly.



Fiafia Night

This year our Fiafia Night was held in our Great Hall, which was beautifully decorated for the occasion. Held on the Thursday evening of Samoan Language Week, the celebration included delicious Pasifika cuisine, songs and performances from our talented student groups while their friends and family cheered them on.



HIGHLIGHTS

STUDENT



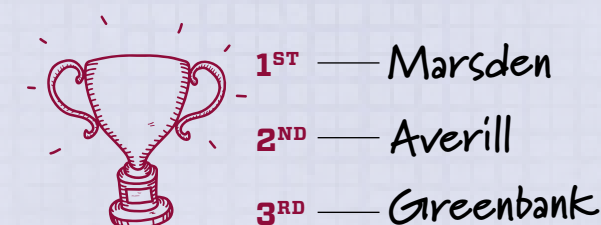
Senior Production of 'CLUE'

Based on the cult classic film and the popular board game, *CLUE* is a madcap comedy which showcased some of the incredible student talent that we have in the performing arts. The cast put on two fantastic performances to very impressed audiences in our Toi Manawa Flanagan Theatre, providing laughs, gasps and entertainment.



Small House Music 2026

The Great Hall came alive with music, dancing and House spirit on Friday 1 May as our students performed in our annual Small House Music competition, bringing to life modern tunes as well as more retro classics. Once again, Marsden House was victorious, winning the Small House Music title for the second year in a row!



HIGHLIGHTS

PRACTISING PRACTITIONER

JORDAN ESKRA
HEAD OF MATHEMATICS

Jordan Eskra is our Head of Mathematics. He teaches Year 10 Mathematics, AS Level and A Level Mathematics, and preparation courses for students progressing to AS Level. In this role he is responsible for leading and mentoring, introducing continuous improvement initiatives, managing departmental operations and ensuring and supporting high levels of student achievement. He has been a teacher for almost twenty years teaching the Cambridge, International Baccalaureate and NCEA curriculums during his time in education. He creates a warm and welcoming environment for learners, realising that once a student feels comfortable, they will find learning easier as they will be able to openly ask questions and make the most of their time in the classroom. He is the Teacher-in-Charge of our Queer-Straight Alliance overseeing our recent Pride Assembly and Outside of the College, he is a successful DJ and Events Producer, recognising the power of events and communication to bring people together.

During my career, I've worked across Cambridge, International Baccalaureate and NCEA pathways, spending most of that time teaching in independent schools. Along the way, I've been a Head of Mathematics, Deputy Principal, Timetabler, Cambridge Examinations Officer, event producer and, most importantly, a classroom teacher. I've taught in very different environments – from the traditions of Auckland Grammar School to the innovation of ACG Senior College – and those experiences have given me a broad perspective on education and on young people.

Outside of school, I've been fortunate to travel extensively, and one thing travel teaches you very quickly is that people are fascinating. That's probably why I've always loved teaching. I enjoy hearing how young people think, what they care about, the music they listen to, the issues they're passionate about, and the way they make sense of the world around them.

If I could ask every student one question, it would probably be: What's something you believe now that you think your future self might completely disagree with? I think the best learning often starts with curiosity and a willingness to challenge our own assumptions.

Despite the different schools, curricula and roles, one lesson has remained constant for me: students learn best when they feel known, supported and challenged. Relationships matter. Before students care what you know, they need to know that you care. Every role I've held has reinforced my belief that one of the most powerful things a teacher can do is help a young person believe in their own potential.



“

Some of the most meaningful growth comes from listening to different perspectives, staying curious and being willing to change your mind when new evidence or ideas emerge.

”

As Head of Mathematics, my focus is helping more students enjoy and succeed in Mathematics. That means creating clear pathways for acceleration, building on students' enthusiasm for the subject, and making sure every learner has opportunities to be challenged and grow.

One of the highlights of my week is our peer tutoring programme, where students generously give their own time to help others. It's a reminder that some of the best learning happens outside the classroom and that teaching someone else is often one of the best ways to deepen your own understanding. King's brings together students from many different schools and backgrounds, particularly in Years 9 and 11. A big part of our job is ensuring that, wherever students start, they leave with the confidence, resilience and the skills that they need to succeed. I believe that most students are capable of achieving far more in Mathematics than they think they can. Often, success comes down to finding the explanation that finally makes it click for them.

For me, Mathematics is one of the two truly universal languages, alongside Music. Together with Sociology, they have been lifelong passions of mine, and all three continue to shape how I see the world. What I love about Mathematics is that, at its purest, there's a refreshing simplicity to it. There is a right answer, but there are often many different ways to get there. Mathematics is really about reasoning, creativity and problem-solving, and I enjoy helping students discover the approach that makes the most sense to them. Watching something suddenly fall into place for a student is one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

At the same time, teaching Mathematics is never just about Mathematics. Some of the best conversations in class are about music, politics, current events, social issues and the perspectives young people bring into the room. Building a classroom where students enjoy learning together and feel comfortable asking questions is just as important to me as the Mathematics itself.

My wish for students is that they leave King's equipped with the ability to learn. One of the questions Mathematics teachers hear most often is, *“When am I ever going to use this in real life?”* My answer is usually, *“Quite possibly never.”*

But that's not really the point. The real value of education isn't memorising content; it's learning how to think. It's developing the ability to solve problems, adapt to new situations, question your own assumptions and approach the unfamiliar with confidence rather than fear.

I hope students leave the College understanding that the world is bigger and more complicated than their own experience. Some of the most meaningful growth comes from listening to different perspectives, staying curious and being willing to change your mind when new evidence or ideas emerge.

In a world changing faster than ever, I think the ability to keep learning may be the most valuable skill of all. If students leave King's knowing how to learn, how to think and how to remain curious about the world around them, they'll be well prepared for whatever comes next.

My favourite thing about working at King's College is the Mathematics Department. Having worked in education for nearly two decades across a range of schools and leadership roles, I can honestly say I've never worked in a more supportive, collegial and student-focused team. What stands out is the complete absence of ego. People willingly share ideas, resources, time and expertise whenever it helps a student or colleague. It's completely normal to see teachers tutoring students before school, after school or during breaks, or giving up their own time to run extension sessions – often for students who aren't in their own classes.

There's a genuine sense that student success is everyone's responsibility. When a student achieves something, the whole department celebrates. When a student is struggling, everyone looks for ways to help. That culture isn't something you can manufacture; it comes from having great people who genuinely care about what they do.

I also value the professional trust we're given at King's. We're trusted to teach in ways that best suit our students, allowing us to be creative, responsive and to continually refine our practice. That combination of talented colleagues, engaged students, a shared purpose and professional freedom makes King's an incredibly rewarding place to work.

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Leah Salt



Leah Salt is our Head of Netball at King's College and she is very passionate about the game, her role and her students. Renowned for her unwavering support of our netball players development, she oversees 23 netball teams – including a Senior Boys' Netball team which was introduced for the first time in 2025. Under Ms Salt's guidance, our Senior Girls' team heads to Australia during their pre-season each year for a netball tour which gives the players the opportunity to experience new styles of play and learn from international stars. Ms Salt is highly respected in the netball community and has a long history of extensive volunteering to bring people together in positive ways via the game she loves.



MUSIC

I really enjoy Korean music and songs which are more laidback, as well as dance tunes. A couple of my favourite songs at the moment are Blood on Bourbon Street by Vontak, which is almost poetry and electronic music combined, and Jump Singers' cover of Blinding Lights.

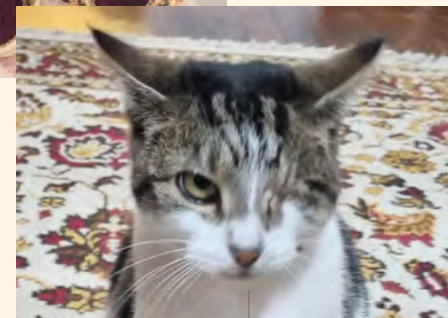
HOBBY/ACTIVITY/SPORT

Netball is my favourite sport of course! In terms of hobbies, I enjoy shopping, travelling – my trip to Japan was a highlight – and spa days.



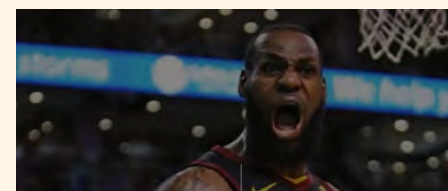
MEAL

I love Japchae, a Korean noodle dish, and generally I am a fan of Korean food, especially Korean BBQ.



ANIMALS/PETS

I love animals and my pets: Frankie (The Princess), my one-eyed cat Popeye Puspup and Kiki (King's Netball Mascot).



SAYING/LIFE PHILOSOPHY

"Nothing is given. Everything is earned."
– LeBron James



FILM OR TV SHOW

The Alchemy of Souls
drama series on Netflix



FAVOURITE THING ABOUT WORKING AT KING'S

At King's, our students make every day a new experience. We laugh, cry, share and love creating a school environment like no other.

Out & About

Rowing Awards
2, 3, 7, 6, 8



Women's
Appreciation Day
9, 10, 13



Fiafia
Night
1, 4, 5



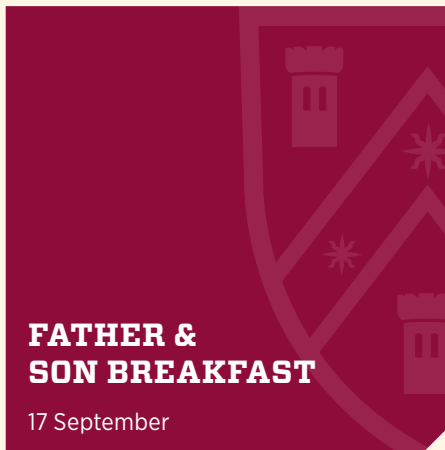
Vs Grammar
Game
11, 12, 14, 15

King's Upcoming Events



THE FRIENDS' LADIES SPRING DINNER

27 August



FATHER & SON BREAKFAST

17 September



PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE & PRIZEGIVING

17 September



JUNIOR PRODUCTION: THE GREAT GATSBY

22 & 23 September



SENIOR PRIZEGIVING

19 November



YEAR 13 LEAVERS' WALK

27 November



SENIOR GRADUATION DINNER

27 November



QUARTERLY CHAPEL SERVICE

29 November



FUSE

30 October

Staff Welcome AND Goodbye

Salvete

Anita Anderson
Teacher of Spanish & French

Charlotte Baxter
Nurse

Tom Brady
Director of Development &
Community Engagement

Lexi Gallagher-Parkinson
Head of Department - Counselling

Swarna Maharaj
Receptionist

Kimberley Marsden-Lewis
Brand & Design Specialist

Maria Mekala
Teacher of Business Studies

Amelie Mortimer
Gap Tutor

Michelle Noma
Community Relations Manager

Angel Swasbrook
Teacher of Mathematics

George Woodward
Chief Operating Officer

Valete

Nicholas Davies
Chief Operating Officer

Emily Kovach
Gap Tutor

Sandra Lopez
Teacher of Mathematics

Ben Simperingham
Teacher of Spanish & French

Vicki Smith
Receptionist

Andrew Walton
Teacher of Business Studies

Tessa Yeoman
Director of Community
& Donor Engagement

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 **Kate McLean
Homecare**

Floreat Semper
Spring Luncheon,
August 2026



From the President



Sam Dixon
(Marsden,
1984-86)

It is with pleasure that we present the winter edition of the *King's Courier*.

The past few months have provided many opportunities to reconnect with Old Collegians, both here in New Zealand and abroad, highlighting the strength and reach of the King's community.

In April, Headmaster **Patrick Gale** travelled to New York for the G30 conference, where he also met with US-based Old Collegians at a shared alumni event hosted by Choate Rosemary Hall - an independent boarding and day school in Connecticut. It was a valuable opportunity to strengthen connections and celebrate our global King's network.

Back home, in May, the KCOCA hosted a Business Breakfast focused on orthopaedics, featuring Old Collegians **Richard Cowley** (Selwyn, 2003-04), **Duncan Ferguson** (Averill, 1988-92), **Daniel Lemanu** (Greenbank, 1999-2003) and **Ben Willis** (Averill, 1990-94).

The winter sports season has also brought Old Collegians together in support of the College. Ahead of the annual Auckland Grammar School rugby fixture, we welcomed many Old Collegians back to King's for our pre-match gathering. This was a wonderful chance to reconnect and celebrate this long-standing rivalry. Across the globe in London, Old Collegians took to the field too, pictured above after a touch rugby match against the Grammar Old Boys - continuing this tradition of connection and camaraderie overseas.

In June, we held our Annual General Meeting and I thank all those who attended and contributed to another successful year for the Association. We are also pleased to welcome **Amy Auva'a** (Middlemore, 2001-02) to our KCOCA Executive Committee and look forward to the contribution she will make in the years ahead. She has a strong and enduring connection to the College, and brings extensive experience to the KCOCA Executive Committee across both the corporate and not-for-profit sectors. At the

AGM the KCOCA honoured the following staff members who have given service of 15 years or more to the College and are recognised as Honorary Old Collegians:

Gina Adams	Julie Keats
Christopher Artley	Daniel Simunic
Gary Burton	Grace Switzer
Udi-Ann Delpont	Joel Tucker
Brett Fischer	

Peter Masfen CNZM (Marsden/Major, 1955-59) was named as the next Distinguished Member of the KCOCA and this will be awarded at the 2027 Presidents' Dinner.

As we move into the second half of the year, there will be more events and reunions around the College and involving our wider alumni community. I encourage all Old Collegians to stay connected, attend our upcoming events, and continue to strengthen the lifelong bonds that make our community so special.

Sam Dixon (Marsden, 1984-86)
President, KCOCA

FUN FACT:

A Blast from the Past



Hamish and Rob at King's College in 1994

In a moment that's equal parts nostalgic and mildly unbelievable, **Hamish Denize** (School, 1990–94) and **Rob Holland** (Major, 1991–95), currently President and Vice-President of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) NZ Chapter respectively, have discovered they go back much further than they realised! SFPE is a global organisation based in the USA which began in 1950. It has more than 5,500 members across 107 chapters internationally, with the mission statement of "Engineering a fire-safe world". Despite working closely together in the SFPE executive circles for several years, it only recently emerged that they were King's College team-mates more than three decades ago.

The revelation came when Rob uncovered a photo from 1994, showing the pair as part of the King's Senior Orienteering

team when they claimed a clean sweep with the Auckland Championships and National Best Boys' School Trophy. It has raised a few laughs that, after years of meetings and collaboration, neither had twigged that they'd already spent time navigating through tough terrain together as teenagers.

Despite the years that have passed since they first teamed up, not much has changed. While the terrain is now fire engineering rather than farm and forest, Hamish and Rob are now navigating their engineering society members and clients through complex design challenges. And every now and then, as they take a bearing on a project, there's the quiet question: are we heading north towards a solid solution, or drifting south, off course?!

Hamish and Rob today



KCOCA Business Breakfast

In May, the KCOCA hosted a Business Breakfast focused on orthopaedics, featuring Old Collegians **Richard Cowley** (Selwyn, 2003–04), **Duncan Ferguson** (Averill, 1988–92), **Daniel Lemanu** (Greenbank, 1999–2003) and **Ben Willis** (Averill, 1990–94).

The speakers shared insights from their professional experience in orthopaedics, providing an engaging discussion for attendees which included Old Collegians and King's students.



Alvin pictured in 2020 at King's College.

Alvin Zhu Receives University of Sydney Scholarship

Congratulations to Old Collegian **Alvin Zhu** (Averill, 2017–21), who has been awarded a Vice-Chancellor's International Scholarship from the University of Sydney.

The scholarship recognises high-achieving international students commencing study at the university and is awarded to a select group of outstanding recipients each year.

Alvin received the scholarship upon completion of his Bachelor of Engineering with Honours (Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering), a significant accomplishment and testament to his academic excellence.

We celebrate Alvin's success and look forward to following his future achievements.



New York Reunion

In April, Headmaster **Patrick Gale** met with New York-based Old Collegians at a G30 Alumni event hosted by Choate Rosemary Hall school, strengthening connections within the King's global alumni network.

Old Collegians Recognised in the 2026 National Honours



Sir David Ellis KNZM



The Honourable Paul Davison KC



Dr James Farmer



Dr Bruce Hayward



Dr Miles Lattimer-Gregory MNZM

The King’s College community proudly celebrates five distinguished Old Collegians who were recognised in New Zealand’s 2026 national honours acknowledging their exceptional contributions across philanthropy, racing, law, public service, science, conservation and the arts.

Spanning both the New Year and King’s Birthday Honours lists, these recognitions reflect lives shaped by leadership, service and excellence.

Together, these alumni represent the extraordinary breadth of impact made by our Old Collegians, both here in New Zealand and around the world.

Sir David Ellis KNZM (Averill, 1967–71)

Sir David Ellis was appointed a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (KNZM) for services to thoroughbred racing and philanthropy.

Widely regarded as one of New Zealand’s most influential figures in racing, Sir David has built an extraordinary legacy through his leadership of Te Akau Racing, helping shape New Zealand thoroughbred racing over several decades.

Beyond the racing industry, Sir David’s philanthropic support of charitable causes has had a meaningful impact on communities across New Zealand.

His knighthood recognises not only an exceptional professional legacy, but also a lifelong commitment to service and giving back.

The Honourable Paul Davison KC (Marsden, 1965–69)

The Honourable Paul Davison was appointed a Companion of the King’s Service Order (KSO) for services to public service and the law.

A highly respected figure in New Zealand’s legal profession, Mr Davison served as a Judge of the High Court from 2015 to 2023 and has contributed to many of the country’s most significant legal inquiries and proceedings.

His distinguished career includes representing the estate of the Air New Zealand pilot before the Royal Commission into the Mount Erebus disaster and serving as Counsel Assisting the Commission of Inquiry into a patient death at Oakley Hospital. He has appeared before the Privy Council in the United Kingdom and in courts in the United States on behalf of New Zealand Vietnam Veterans in the Agent Orange class action.

In 2025, Mr Davison was appointed Independent Arbiter for the Lake Alice Torture Redress Scheme, developing a framework to support the fair allocation of funding and working directly with survivors to help ensure prompt outcomes.

His contribution to public service extends beyond the courtroom through work on boards, tribunals and law reform committees, alongside his extensive pro bono work.

Dr James Farmer KC (Peart, 1955–59)

Dr Farmer was appointed a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM) for services to law.

As a commercial barrister, he has argued complex and precedent-setting cases for more than four decades. He led New Zealand’s largest-ever civil case, representing the Statutory Managers of Equiticorp during a landmark 13-month trial.

Dr Farmer was instrumental in establishing the New Zealand Bar Association, serving twice as President, and has contributed extensively to legal education and professional organisations, including appointments at both the University of Auckland and the University of Cambridge.

Alongside his legal career, he has also held roles with Team New Zealand’s America’s Cup campaigns and the New Zealand Sports Tribunal, while mentoring Pacific Island lawyers and providing pro bono legal work as well.

Dr Bruce Hayward ONZM (Marsden, 1965–67)

Dr Hayward was appointed an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) in the 2026 New Year Honours for services to geology and conservation.

An internationally respected geologist, palaeontologist and conservation advocate, he has dedicated decades to advancing understanding of New Zealand’s geological history and natural environment.

The author of numerous scientific publications and books, Dr Hayward has been a leading voice in conservation, particularly in relation to volcanic landscapes, coastal systems and the preservation of New Zealand’s natural heritage.

Dr Miles Lattimer-Gregory MNZM (Peart, 1990–94)

Dr Lattimer-Gregory was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to theatre.

He attended King’s College from 1990 to 1994, where he was the recipient of

the Lloyd Seabrook Memorial Prize for Leadership in the Arts in his final year.

Dr Lattimer-Gregory was a co-founder and Artistic Director of Pop-up Globe, producing unabridged productions of Shakespeare’s works. Its education programme offered discounted tickets to schoolchildren and brought Shakespeare to around 60,000 New Zealand students. He directed multiple productions at the theatre, including a bilingual production of A Midsummer Night’s Dream, incorporating te reo Māori and Māori performance traditions, which received eight BroadwayWorld Sydney Awards.

In 2023, he co-founded HyperCinema, an immersive experience combining artificial intelligence, film and live performance. In 2025, Dr Lattimer-Gregory published Bloody Good Shakespeare, a guide to Shakespeare in performance drawn from his experience directing more than 50 professional productions worldwide.

We warmly congratulate these Old Collegians on their richly deserved honours and thank them for the meaningful contributions they continue to make in their chosen fields.

60-Years-On Reunion



In April, over Anzac weekend, we hosted our 60-Years-On reunion for the class of 1966. The celebrations spanned several events. On Friday there was a round of golf played at the Royal Auckland and Grange Golf Club followed by evening drinks at Akarana Eatery in Ōrākei. On Saturday the Anzac Service was attended at the King’s Memorial Chapel with the Anzac Address given by Emeritus Professor **Ian Civil** CNZM, MBE (Mil), KStJ, ED (Parnell, 1966–70).

After the service our Old Collegians were given a tour of the College campus before enjoying a catch-up with old friends at the golf clubhouse. A huge thank you to organisers **Tony Caughey** (St John’s, 1966–70), **Sir Scott Macfarlane** (Peart, 1966–70) and **David Rutherford** (Marsden, 1967–70), who ensured that it was such an enjoyable and memorable weekend for our class of 1966.

Obituaries

The *King’s Courier* has been advised of the deaths of the following Old Collegians. Our thoughts are with these families.

John Munro Abbott (St John’s, 1955–59)	Neville George Gladding (Averill, 1958–62)	John Patrick Ben Levien (School, 1954–58)	Walter Lyndon Craig Smith (Peart, 1952–56)
George Dennis Calvert (Dennis) (Selwyn, 1955–59)	Bruce Arrol Gordon (St John’s, 1955–59)	Ranald Kingsburgh Macdonald (Town (Historical), 1947–50)	Russell John Stroude Withers (Marsden, 1955–59)
Peter Christopher Douglas Caswel (Peart, 1957–61)	David HP Haddrell (Peart, 1953–57)	Geoffrey Charles Naismith (Peart, 1967–69)	
	Robert Dudley Jolly MNZM (Parnell Boarding, 1954–48)	Graham Robert Noakes (Parnell, 1951–1954)	

OLD COLLEGIAN OF THE MOMENT:

Lord Fatafehi Fakafanua

We were privileged to interview Old Collegian and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, **Lord Kinikinilau Fakafanua** (St John’s, 1999–2003), as our OC of the Moment for this issue. “Kini”, as he is affectionately known to his former King’s College teachers, classmates and friends, is the second prime minister we have produced, following the late **Sir Tom Davis** KBE (St John’s, 1930–34), the ex-prime minister of the Cook Islands.

Lord Fakafanua has experienced a meteoric rise up the political ranks and was appointed prime minister in December 2025. Amid these remarkable achievements, he recalls his ‘life-changing’ time at King’s with great affection, and told us how jumping into as many sporting, creative and leadership opportunities as possible helped shape the person he is today.





SCHOOL PREFECTS, 1980

Tell us what you have been doing since you graduated from King’s College and about your recent appointment as Prime Minister of Tonga.

After short stints studying in New Zealand, my family circumstances changed, and I returned to Tonga to take on board my familial and cultural obligations. I became a noble of the realm, receiving the hereditary titles of Lord and Fakafanua in 2006.

From there, in 2008, at the age of 24, I was elected into Parliament, was re-elected in 2010 after the democratic reforms in Tonga and, at 27, got the position of Speaker of Parliament.

Following the November 2025 elections, I was successfully appointed prime minister by **His Majesty Tupou VI**, the King of Tonga, at the end of the year. It’s been a big learning curve and definitely a lifetime achievement for me personally.

When you were at King’s College, what did you want to do for a career after you graduated?

I always thought that politics would follow me everywhere I went, given we have a very political family. My father, **Kinikinilau Tūtoatasi Fakafanua** (Averill, 1976–80), was a former minister of the Crown, and

my maternal grandfather, **Prince Fatafehi Tu’ipelehake** OBE, was prime minister when he was 43 years old, 60 years ago, in 1965. So, it’s sort of a personal best for me that, 60 years later, his grandson became prime minister at 40!

What has been your inspiration in choosing your path in politics?

Politics was not really something that I wanted to do early on in my life. Like everyone who leaves school, I had aspirations to travel the world and experience new things. I initially wanted to be an architect or a pilot! Life leads you in different directions, and for me, there are no regrets. I firmly believe what I’m doing will make a positive impact, and it’s a privilege for me to be able to serve my country.

What is your biggest achievement to date?

In terms of life achievements, I’m on an elite list. I won’t believe the fact that that is an achievement in itself but, outside of government and politics, it was an honour to be inducted as an Ocean Elder in 2025 [Ocean Elders is a group of global leaders who work to protect the ocean and marine life]. I’m in the company of great explorers, scientists and people who

endeavour to create a better world and environment for everyone to live in. It was a great surprise and very unexpected.

Can you describe your time at King’s College?

I was in St John’s – my father too, and blue is my favourite colour, so it was a natural fit! Living in Ōtāhuhu was a far cry from the islands of Tonga, and you soon realise it’s a real privilege to go to a school like King’s. There are so many opportunities and pathways that you can pursue during your time there, and I was very fortunate to have a very close cohort of both New Zealand and international students in our dormitory, which gave my experience real depth.

King’s has produced two prime ministers – you and the late Sir Tom Davis KBE, the former Prime Minister of the Cook Islands. Both of you boarded at St John’s House – do you think you learnt leadership skills during your time in Boarding?

One of the great things about going to King’s is that leadership is ingrained in all students, and you learn to lead by example. We were fortunate to participate in a number of community outreach programmes, with Ōtāhuhu

College next door and the Māngere Refugee Resettlement Centre over the bridge, and I enjoyed those immensely. I also remember the school camps with their particular focus on leadership, and opportunities to lead in the Chapel, as a Sacristan, under the Chaplaincy of **Reverend Warner Wilder**.

What other skills did you learn as a Boarder?

My advice to other Boarders is to try everything. I used to do a lot of filming with the Media Studies department, which was new when I was going through college, and I remember following the Debating team.

I tried tennis, hockey and orienteering, which I found fascinating, because you’re just running around a forest with a map – skills for when the world decides to end! Because of that, I can safely say that I know how to operate a compass. One of the most nostalgic experiences I had was learning to sail an Optimist. I was told I was a natural because I was a Polynesian, so that was something that stuck with me.

What is your best memory of your time at King’s College?

I can’t particularly pinpoint one memory, but the overall experience for me was life changing.

Which staff members do you remember most favourably from King’s College and why?

I was too shy to join the Glee Club, but I did extra lessons in Speech and Drama. I remember when a teacher taught us about diaphragmatic intercostal breathing. It sounded like something out of *Mary Poppins*, but those really long words impressed me at the time!

I also remember **Mr John Bean** fondly. He was Archivist at the time I left. He was a funny guy, and obviously our Housemasters **Mr van Wyk** and **Mr Williams** and our Matron **Mrs Sturrock** – so many lovely people who helped make our time in Boarding that much easier.

Are you still in touch with the friends that you made during your time at King’s?

As I mentioned, as Boarders, you develop a special lifetime bond with your dorm. We all still keep in touch, even though we’re at different stages of our lives; some have young children, others are abroad – living in Thailand, the Pacific Islands and Europe. It’s difficult to find the time to all

meet somewhere but we have an active chat group, and for the last 20 years we’ve been trying to figure out where in the world we’re going to meet next.

Looking back now, what advice would you give to your school-aged-self?

I would tell myself to take my time. It’s important to put things into perspective because you have the rest of your life to do what you want to do. Sometimes you might be pressured into doing things when you’re not ready. For example, I went straight to university without taking a GAP year, which isn’t such a bad thing to do. You don’t need to rush into things.

What does a usual day involve for you now?

My typical day often involves doing interviews like this, but essentially I’m busy running the country. It’s certainly not 9 to 5. I’ve taken on board more portfolios than I thought I would, because of judicial reviews and petitions and other things, but that’s just part and parcel of being in government. We don’t want to be busy being busy. I’m trying to measure our business and ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved within a short time, which is a big challenge in itself.

What are your hopes for the next 12 months and beyond?

I would like to develop a more balanced work/home calendar. Even at home, there’s always something in the back of my mind – a speech for the next day, resolving an outstanding issue. That’s the responsibility that the leader of a country bears. The buck stops with you. In terms of longevity, you don’t want to burn out too early; so, taking time out is important. You want to ensure that you’re still around to do your best for the country.

What are the three objects you would take with you to a desert island?

If I can’t take a seaplane to fly away from the island, it would be a bush knife, so I can access coconuts and have unlimited drinking water; a satellite phone, so I can call for help; and because my caveman skills are a bit rusty, a fire starter.

What would you like your legacy to be?

Within Tonga, there were some brilliant reforms under previous governments – His Majesty King Tupou IV’s focus on Tongan education in the late 1940s, which led to the foundation for a more learned society,

and my grandfather liberalising Tonga’s economy when he was prime minister.

There is a long laundry list of important things that I want to achieve. I don’t want to be known as the prime minister who messed everything up. Undoubtedly, a desired outcome at the end of my tenure is to double Tonga’s GDP.

I want to be remembered as someone who brought positive reform, who freed up people’s discretionary income, lowered the cost of living, and created more pathways and opportunities.

“ Living in Ōtāhuhu was a far cry from the islands of Tonga, and you soon realise it’s a real privilege to go to a school like King’s. There are so many opportunities and pathways that you can pursue during your time there, and I was very fortunate to have a very close cohort of both New Zealand and international students in our dormitory, which gave my experience real depth.

Is there a saying/verse or quote that you live by?

I source inspiration from many places, including biblical teachings, and I also look up to various political leaders. The economic reforms that Lee Kuan Yew introduced in the 1960s, as the first prime minister of Singapore, and China’s under Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, for example, turned both countries into financial powerhouses.

In terms of literature, one of my favourite poems is If by Rudyard Kipling. He wrote that poem for his son, and there are some very relevant lessons there that apply to all of us.



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: New Zealand Custom Mouthguards

On a mission to normalise a higher standard of safety in contact and high-impact sports, NZCM (New Zealand Custom Mouthguards) combines dental expertise with professional sporting experience to make clinically certified custom mouthguards more affordable. The business is also raising awareness on how this type of protection can reduce the risk of dental trauma and concussion, and support overall player safety.

The company was founded by Auckland-based dentist **Dr Reuben Katene**, dental technician **Agil Samarasan**, and **Dallin Watene-Zelezniak**, professional rugby league player for the New Zealand Warriors. In June 2026, we equipped our First XI Hockey girls and First XV Rugby boys with their custom mouthguards and were thrilled to welcome Dr Reuben Katene to King's College to tell us more.

Please tell us a little about your business and the drive you had to create it.

I initially had the idea after seeing a lot of children coming through the clinic and making ACC claims after experiencing traumatic accidents playing contact sport.

Injuries from playing sports like rugby, rugby league and hockey can put young people in the difficult position of navigating some dental trauma early in life. This is especially sad if these injuries could have been prevented by having a better mouthguard.

Custom mouthguards are usually very expensive, at around \$500, and the process is extremely time-consuming. You have a dentist appointment to get an impression, which is then sent to a lab, who make the mouthguard, which goes back to the dentist, and then goes to the patient.

The reality is that lots of the children who play contact sport can't afford them. Even at a professional level, it's still hard to get a custom mouthguard provided.

Why is your service different?

When we started the business, our goal was to normalise a higher standard of safety for every athlete participating in contact sport and normalise the concept of custom mouthguards.

We are providing a lower-cost product without decreasing the quality. Our mouthguards have the same level of care and detail that you would get if you went to any dentist. So, when you start the season, you have your training

jersey, new uniform, a new pair of boots and a gym bag, and you also have a mouthguard to protect yourself.

The concept of these mouthguards isn't a new one, but we are completely changing the way these products can be accessed. We have reduced the cost by going into schools, to sports clubs and gyms, and meeting the athletes where they are. There will be communities of sports teams who will be able to take advantage of our process.

What foundational values does your business have?

One of our key values as a company is commitment, and our commitment to every athlete is central to both our business and our community. When we provide a player with a mouthguard, we're committed to that athlete's experience with it. That player is more than a customer; they're also a patient, and I feel that I have a professional commitment to ensure the mouthguard does exactly what it's designed to do.

We've worked hard to keep our growth manageable because we never want our capacity to compromise quality. In terms of the future, there's a lot for us to try and navigate and work through, such as trying to source materials from different places, to potentially make products even more affordable for players.

What have been the highlights for you?

In terms of highlights, creating a partnership with the New Zealand



Warriors this year was a real landmark in our first year in business. It showed the Club is keen to prioritise player welfare and player safety – to make it normal to have that level of protection. They are a flagship team in the sense that they have ensured that all their players are protected, and it was exciting to be able to serve that purpose for both the men's and women's teams.

Why did NZCM want to partner with King's College?

We want to work with the best schools and teams, so we can have the best influence. King's College has a reputation for having very high standards, and given that our vision is to normalise a higher safety standard, it's a great fit for us.

The College responded positively to working with us to improve the education and awareness around the risks and dangers of not wearing a custom mouthguard, and how wearing them can improve player safety.

When a school like King's College shares with its community that it wants to work with us to establish those standards for athletes participating in contact sport, it's an amazing message. It's also one parents want to hear – that their school is prioritising student safety on the sports field.

What is your four-step process when engaging with teams; how does that work?

Our process is that we mould the players teeth, make the mouthguards in our Auckland-based lab, deliver them on site and fit them a few weeks later. We ensure that they fit correctly and comfortably – coming back to that commitment to our players and patients that they have a perfect fit.

When we hand over the mouthguards, it's a special moment. The mouthguard has its own container, which goes into a bag and can be attached to their kit bag. That way it's easy to access, never gets mixed up with other gear and can't get lost easily.

What aspects of the business do you find most rewarding or meaningful?

We want to educate athletes about protecting themselves – protecting their teeth, reducing their chances of concussion and prioritising safety. Off-the-shelf mouthguards have limitations – they can be loose, they are uncomfortable or fall out, or players find they can't talk as well or breathe easily.

A custom mouthguard is going to reduce all those limitations. While it's going to fit better and be snug, it's also going to help players have a better relationship with the whole concept of wearing a mouthguard. They will respect it more, take care of it and appreciate its role in keeping them safe.

Tell us how your mouthguards can help with concussion prevention.

There are lots of ways a concussion can occur. A common one, and one that we

want to help prevent, is the way that your jaw can move to create an impact when your teeth touch. The mouthguard is a barrier to that, but it also provides some cushioning to absorb pressure, activating certain muscles to support your jaw a bit more. It obviously can't protect the back of your head but there will be moments where it will protect you from more serious consequences if you are in a head-knock situation.

NZCM gives back to other community organisations including King's College. What does community mean to you as a business?

The New Zealand Warriors partnership, and our partnership with King's College, has shown us that we have created something special. Despite this being our business, it is not ultimately about making money; it's so much more than that – it's about safety and commitment to players of contact sports.

What is the ultimate vision for NZCM in the future?

We are focused on a vision where eventually it will be a requirement for anyone that participates in a contact sport to have a custom mouthguard to protect themselves when they play. We genuinely want to normalise a higher standard of safety and that's the goal we are working towards every single day.

For more information and to make an enquiry, please visit www.nzcm.co.nz





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