

The House Logos

Our students are at the heart of Crossley Heath. When it came to creating a set of logos for the house system, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) knew that the students would be able to originate the best ideas.

A competition was set across the school; it invited all the students to design an emblem that they felt best represented the ethos and spirit of their house, with only a few guidelines to ensure a consistent look for the final image. Historically, the only house known to have a mascot was Porter – the much treasured Porter duck, who survives to this day.

Today each house has its own animal mascot and a specific representational colour: Kings (a lion with gold), Queens (a bee with red), Savile (a shark with blue) and Porter (a duck with green).

In the end, ideas from six winning students were chosen by the SLT – Kier Taylor, Hafsa Khalil and Amna Khan from Kings, Arissa Ali from Queens, Rimsha Akhtar from Savile and Isaac Towers from Porter. It was then up to me to create the four house logos, using elements from each student's original concepts. I worked with the SLT throughout the process to agree the final design.

We felt that it was important to celebrate the legacy of the school. A heraldic motif was prevalent through the students' designs and I ensured that it was used within the final designs as a unifying aesthetic to show that the four houses shared a common link. Each design was limited to the school's branded colours (gold, grey, black and white) but also included the individual house colour. The finishing touch was to include 'Fortuna Persequi' onto each design. The Latin phrase was submitted by Amnah Khan of Kings House in Year 8 and translates as 'Strive for Success'.

Once the final designs had been approved it was up to me to turn them into professional, contemporary, versatile emblems that could be utilised on several different mediums, including posters, clothing and other merchandise. I used a mixture of Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to translate the designs into a digital format, sometimes taking direct elements from the students' original designs and at other times embellishing their original ideas.

I am proud that I have been able to take the students' designs and turn them into something that will last long beyond their time in the school.



School Houses

Most of us will have been involved in house activities during our time at school. For some it will just have been the collecting of house marks for high standards of work while others will have thrown themselves into numerous sporting events, shown off their musical or dramatic talents or taken part in public speaking and debating competitions. I think the few years when Miss Thomson introduced the inter-house flower arranging competition are best forgotten about!

I was considering the possibility of putting this feature together at the same time as singing a burst of St Patrick's Breastplate on March 17th. Certainly in the 1960s we girls used to celebrate the appropriate saint's day with special house assemblies.

At that time our houses were St Andrew's, St David's, St George's and St Patrick's, house colours being blue, yellow, red and green respectively. The boys were either Paladins, Spartans, Trojans or Vikings, which were denoted in PE activities by different combinations of shorts and vests, e.g. navy shorts and yellow vest or white of each. Girls could have an enamel house badge on their tie, in the shape of a star, and were expected to embroider their name in the correct house colour onto the front of their Aertex PE shirt and add a ribbon of house colour down the sides of their gym knickers.

When the schools came together in 1968 the houses combined as follows and took on the colours of the girls' houses. St Andrew's + Spartans became Savile House, St David's + Trojans became Crossley, St George's + Paladins became Standeven and St Patrick's + Vikings became Porter.

Today's houses were formed during the amalgamation in 1985 between Crossley and Porter and Heath Grammar Schools. At Heath the houses were Kings, Queens, School and Heath. Two house names were kept from each school.

Today each house allegiance is in greater evidence as school ties now have a stripe of house colour alongside the gold stripe – see Porter House Duck on the left.

Despite the many changes, the house system is obviously thriving. Each house now raises money for a specified charity each year as well as competing in the many competitions – long may it be so.

