



# **KINGSMEAD LIFE MAGAZINE**

**ISSUE 12  
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**NEWS, INFORMATION AND A WHOLE LOT MORE**







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# FOREWORD

## Happy, Safe and Successful

“Happy, Safe and Successful” encompasses everything that we all want for our children, and it is what we try so hard to deliver at Kingsmead.

Reflecting on the last half-term, it is easy to forget the challenges and difficulties that we faced together during the Covid years. However, we have been reminded many times in the last 15 weeks that the whole Pandemic has left more in impact than just gaps in students’ learning.

Together I know that we were determined to get through 2020, 21 and 22 successfully, determined not to allow the children of Kingsmead to become the lost generations. In so many ways parents and staff worked together to achieve this; lessons went on in many ways as they did before, and we pulled together as a community.

What we did not know at the time was that the impact would be seen for many years to come after the face masks had disappeared.

We are seeing the impact now around some people’s resilience and wellbeing. Whilst as a school we can close gaps in learning, give children things that they love to do and look forward to, we need help in mending the after-effects of the Pandemic that go deeper and are beyond our power to fix.

Despite all that we do around wellbeing, we need parents and children to trust and work with us to build resilient families for the future.

I wish you all a peaceful and restful Christmas period when it comes!

Mrs Mincher  
Headteacher



# PARENT VOICE

Last half-term, we invited a group of parents representing all year groups to join our latest forum discussion. The focus of this session was everything to do with communication between school and home.

YOU SAID...	WE DID...
The balance of progress reviews and progress evenings for year groups is much better.	This is great to hear. We will continue with this approach.
Those who use the app MCAS say it is very user friendly. This was better than ParentPay letters or lots of texts throughout the day.	We will take this feedback forward and focus our communication through MCAS going forward. We will support parents who are not yet logged on or using it. We will look to solve any issues with activation codes for isolated cases.
Some parents still want to know more about the Blended Learning Platform and how to best use it.	We have started sharing more in parent partnership evening. We will continue to: share reminders and 'how to...' guides have specific staff available at parents evenings to demonstrate in person how to use the resource
The same kind of questions and queries come up on social media – for example at the start of terms.	We will look to share frequently asked questions We will direct parents to these and share in advance of key dates like starts of half terms. We liked the idea of year sections on the website.
It's helpful to have the who's who page on the website. We would like how to contact children's tutors.	We will put this in.
For new parents, some support around computing, information sharing, setting up for life at Kingsmead, equipment needed etc. during transition.	We will look at how early we start sharing information so that equipment can be brought from the start of the summer.
Could there be 'key dates' for specific year group activities or events so families can prepare for these?	We will look to set this, through MCAS.

# PARENT VOICE

YOU SAID...	WE DID...
Could there be more support around revision guides to buy and effective revision strategies?	We will act on this and provide partnership evenings and send out information about revision.
Parents wanted more information about the free breakfast in the morning. There was a strong support of this initiative.	We will send out how we are funding the free breakfast and readvertise this to students.
There was discussion around uniform including a summer uniform.	We have added shorts for boys. Other suggestions will be considered and discussed with parents
Support around uniform. It was shared that parents felt Kingsmead student were well dressed in the community compared to other schools.	We will indeed take the idea of sharing a video of how to tie a tie on social media. We will look to communicate any uniform needs like having football boots earlier. We will have another swap shop event around Christmas time or just after.



# DID YOU KNOW?

We try to reduce non-uniform days because of the impact on children when families are struggling financially, and they do not have the latest fashions. We noticed attendance was affected on these days.

We send all of our communications with parents through an app called My Child At School (MCAS). This allows parents to see that their children are in school and have been registered for each lesson live, as well as providing data on their progress and all the letters we send home. There's much more too! If you don't have it, please visit [kingsmeadschool.net/mcas](https://kingsmeadschool.net/mcas)

Kingsmead is regularly visited by leaders from other schools who want to see best practise. Areas that have created the most interest are Behaviour, Outcomes in Maths, English and Science, and our Progress Hub.

Kingsmead School is overstaffed with specialist teachers so that lessons are always delivered by a subject expert, even when cover is required.

# DID YOU KNOW?

More than 200 children a day take advantage of a free breakfast, setting them up for learning.

Shrek The Musical was almost sold out within 2 hours of going live despite putting an extra 2 nights on. Our hard-working students and staff have raised over £4000 to pay for their set and costumes.

The wellbeing team meet with more than 100 children every week to offer support and mentoring. This much needed support goes above and beyond the expectations on schools, but we feel that it was never more important.

Student performance is tracked every half-term to make sure that we identify gaps in knowledge and help students to fill them.

# COMMUNICATION

**Making things easier: “For anything I need school wise, all I have to do is tap the App.”**

My Child At School (MCAS) app is changing things for the better. Kingsmead has listened to parents and streamlined our methods of communication into one source. The little red app allows you to:

- See your child’s progress in real time – their grades, their lessons, their attendance, their rewards (and behaviour) points.
- Look at the latest school reports which include what your child is studying – what they can do and what they can’t.
- See your child’s examination course information, dates and details are available.
- Refer to the school calendar, key term dates for this and next year.
- Links to useful parent resources such as the home learning sites, how to help your child revise in lower years, GCSE and Sixth Form as well as articles on supporting wellbeing and the healthy use of mobile phones.

Just this week 75% of all parents in the school have opened and used the app at some point.

We know that getting used to new tools does take time, however we are encouraged by the positive response parents of children across the year groups are sharing.

**“THE APP IS VERY USER FRIENDLY. I FIND IT SO QUICK – JUST ONE CLICK. I USE IT MOST DAYS TO MONITOR THE ATTENDANCE, BEHAVIOUR AND CHECK ON GENERAL INFORMATION. I GET INSTANT NOTIFICATIONS AND IT PROVIDES ME PEACE OF MIND.” - MRS. O (PARENT)**

**“MCAS IS A SUPERB APP AND VERY EASY TO ACCESS. IT HAS A SUPERB ABILITY TO MONITOR REPORT AND RELAY INFORMATION TO PARENTS. IT HAS A GOOD WAY OF ALLOWING GAPS TO BE IDENTIFIED IN THEIR LEARNING SO YOU CAN DISCUSS THIS WITH YOUR CHILD. IT’S UP TO DATE AND GIVES ALL THE INFORMATION PARENTS NEED IN ONE TIDY APP.” - MRS. K (PARENT)**

If you would like any more information about the MCAS app, assistance in downloading or using it – we can help. Contact [blquery@kingsmeadschool.net](mailto:blquery@kingsmeadschool.net) and we will be in touch. We can guide over the phone, through video ‘how tos...’ or even in person.



# HOW WE SUPPORT YOUR CHILD TO BE HAPPY AT SCHOOL

We all know that a child will learn better if they are happy, but in a modern 21st century comprehensive school, what does 'happy' actually look like? It could mean a myriad of things. Do they have friends, or someone to talk to? Have they got the latest phone in their bag? Did they have breakfast this morning, or are they hungry? Or even something as simple as they were in a rush this morning and have forgotten their pencil case. This can present in many ways throughout a school day, so we really are committed to knowing our children at Kingsmead, and strive to do everything

To be happy at school. we can to make their days balanced, happy, safe, and successful.

There is always someone to talk to and there will always be someone who will listen. A child's form tutor is the person who knows them best and is there for them. We have the Progress Hub, which is always manned and available at any time throughout the day. We have the Wellness Hub with two full time wellbeing mentors who do a terrific job listening to and guiding our young people. There are free breakfasts available for every child, every morning, so no one needs to be hungry during the morning session.





# HOW WE SUPPORT YOUR CHILD TO BE HAPPY AT SCHOOL

There are lots and lots of opportunities for our pupils to enjoy their learning in an exciting and challenging environment, whilst helping to support their wellbeing. We have the Room of Curiosities, the Farm, and the zip-wire. There are 2 outdoor classrooms and lots of fun activities available during lunch times such as football, table tennis and basketball. We are improving our young people's social areas with outdoor tables and benches for them to enjoy unstructured times. There is a wonderful enrichment programme for every child, where they can choose to do a wide range of activities. They can choose to learn Mandarin or attend the Warhammer Club. They can be in the school production or learn Egyptology and even rock climbing.

Children are well behaved at Kingsmead, there are kind corridors, we have 'shield and shelter' which supports our young people to be tolerant. There is 'Diversity inc.' representing our LGBTQ+ community and we have a very successful student grievance programme. Every student has a voice, and we want to listen to it.

We are keen to keep learning and supporting our children even more. We are currently developing a pupil wellbeing room, which will become be an available space for them to be able to talk in a calm and stress-free environment. Watch this space!



# WELLBEING

## ANTI BULLYING WEEK 2023

MAKE A  
**NOISE**  
ABOUT  
**BULLYING**

#ANTIBULLYINGWEEK

This November saw us marking Anti-Bullying Week in school and in our local community. At Kingsmead, students engaged in tutor activities and discussions based around understanding the difference between 'bullying' and 'banter'. We highlighted the importance of recognising the difference, how banter can lead to bullying and how we must 'make a noise' and stand up to adversity.

Year 7 Drama students have engaged in a Harry Potter scheme of learning which has focussed on what it feels like being a Muddblood discriminated against. Miss Ghent, Drama teacher, said *"The students fully emersed themselves into the lesson and were open to exploring ways in which they can help someone in need, whilst also examining why bullying and discrimination can still exist now. The enthusiasm and mindfulness the students demonstrated resulted in sophisticated and mature performances that beautifully showcased what someone can do to help combat bullying and reach out for their peers"*.

*A Year 7 student said "I really enjoyed this lesson; it was fun being able to use Harry Potter as inspiration to think about a serious message". Another Year 7 student said "It made me think about how actions have consequences and how someone can really feel"*.

On Monday, 13th November our Year 12 Performing Arts students visited one of our primary partner schools to deliver a devised a piece of theatre. The students delivered the piece to a whole school assembly and then completed a focussed workshop with the Year 5 cohort. They presented a clear message of the importance of standing up to bullying and understanding the difference between a friendship fall out and persistent bullying. One Year 12 student said the following *"I had the most amazing time, delivering such an important message"*.





Whilst Anti-Bullying Week is vital to help spread awareness, we know we must make a noise and stand up to bullying each and every day. At Kingsmead we have a robust support system in place to manage student grievances and conflict. Initially pupils are encouraged to complete our student grievance form, in collaboration with parents and carers at home. We believe it is essential to involve the key people in a student's life in order to work together to come to a suitable resolution. In many cases, we find that the grievance is managed and dealt with very effectively at this stage. Occasionally there is a need to escalate the intervention and support, and this is where our Shield and Shelter team will become involved.

The Shield and Shelter (SAS) programme is an add on to our anti-bullying policy and has been commissioned at Kingsmead to confront all intolerance in order to promote equality. The 'SAS' team comprises of pupils from Key Stage 3 and 4 and key supporting staff from the progress and wellness hubs. We work to manage restorative sessions between pupils, who are both victims and perpetrators, in order to help to police the school community, highlight and combat bullying wherever it is experienced, educate on diversity and reduce discrimination and to help protect all from threat or harm.

We have a dedicated anonymous email address and telephone number that our students can use should they wish to report any concerns ([sas@kingsmeadschool.net](mailto:sas@kingsmeadschool.net) / 07508903765).

We are proud to say in our latest survey 96% of our students reported they feel safe in school, and 90% feel that bullying is dealt with effectively at Kingsmead. Student feedback is consistently positive term on term.

**"Yes I am happy at Kingsmead, experience is great, everybody here is nice" - Year 8 student.**

**"Everything you offer is helping, anything we have got problems with we can come to you" - Year 9 student.**

**"Yes I feel safe, the teachers make me feel safe" - Year 10 student.**

**"Things are really good thank you, there have been no more issues" - Year 8 SAS case (3 month follow up)**

**"I can't think of anything bad; everything was sorted. If anything happens it is sorted within not even a day or two" - Year 9 grievance (3 month follow up)**

**WELLBEING  
ANTI BULLYING WEEK 2023**

# SUCCESS ISN'T EASY: LIFE POST - PANDEMIC

Christmas and New Year are times for considerable reflection. As we approach the four-year mark of the initial wave of pandemic-induced school shutdowns, it is apt that we consider our journey of recovery at Kingsmead. Whilst other schools have faced severe staff shortages, high rates of absenteeism, misbehaviour and mental health challenges, Kingsmead has proven, once again, that nothing holds us back. Instead of the progress of our students falling, academic progress at Kingsmead has been rising year on year, bucking the trend of the national picture. Indeed, in the Summer of 2023 we were well within the top 10% of schools nationally.

But how have we done this? By ensuring that no child is left behind and no child is allowed to fail. Our above national average attendance figures show that our children love to come to school and love to learn. In lessons, our dedicated team of professionals nurture your child and teach them how to independently reflect on their learning, how to close any gaps that may occur and encourage them to challenge themselves to go beyond the learning that takes place in the classroom. During Lockdown the Blended Learning Platform was created and since then has evolved into a system that runs shoulder to shoulder with our day-to-day school life; students use our BLP to support and enhance their learning experience. This is the system they use when they are reviewing and reflecting on their progress after each of our 6 assessment cycle windows and where they go to find the lesson materials, support and guidance to close the gaps in their learning. Our PLCs (Personalised learning checklists) are shared with parents and students in each learning cycle.

The subject PLCs that you receive via MCAS, outline the key knowledge and skills that your child needs to be successful. Teachers will identify the skills your child has successfully mastered; where there are gaps that need closing and identify ways in which your child can challenge themselves even further. All skills are hyperlinked to the BLP where you and your child will find a plethora of materials all designed by educator professionals to close gaps and ensure your child is on track to achieve and move beyond their expected grades.

## How to use the 'new look' Blended Learning Platform

The Blended Learning Platform is a website, that can be accessed through the "Kingsmead Hub" site. It serves as a knowledge organiser which includes a comprehensive list of the personal learning checklist objectives for every subject, that you commonly know as "PLC's". These PLC statements are the knowledge and skills that your child will learn each half-term in every subject at Kingsmead.

Each of these PLC's found on the Blended Learning Platform has a hyperlink to a resource, that can be used to revisit key knowledge and understanding. There is also an upgrade task linked to each help task, so that you and your child can check that they have understood the help task and applied their new learning.

When you receive a progress report, you'll see the plc's that are not yet met. Using the Blended Learning Platform, you'll be able to independently improve your knowledge and upgrade your progress to meet every PLC for a subject topic. We will continue to develop the Blended Learning Platform to ensure its meeting your needs in enabling you to be the best learner that you can be. For more information on how you can use the Blended Learning Platform effectively, get in contact with your subject teacher or Mr. Egere, found in the computing department.



# YEAR GROUP FEATURE - YEAR 11

As we approach the midpoint of the academic year, we are delighted to share the remarkable achievements and progress made by our Year 11 students. It has been a busy and productive time, filled with academic endeavours, valuable life lessons, and exciting extracurricular activities.

Our Year 11 students have been diligently preparing for the challenges ahead. In preparation for the recent mock exams, students have taken proactive steps by creating revision plans tailored to their individual needs. Both in the classroom and at home, our students have demonstrated exceptional commitment to their studies. The additional support provided during our Period 6 booster sessions has proven instrumental in reinforcing key concepts and supporting in any areas of difficulty, enabling us to work with our students to effectively close any gaps in their learning.

Recognising the importance of a healthy mindset and wellbeing, our students participated in dedicated sessions addressing exam stress. These sessions offered varying strategies for students to try and reiterated the support we have available in school. In addition to this, they emphasised the significance of maintaining a positive attitude, the impact of regular attendance, and the cultivation of a resilient mindset. We believe these skills are essential not just for exams, but for lifelong success.



To enhance their understanding of literature and support their GCSE English preparation, our Year 11 students recently enjoyed a captivating theatrical experience. A visit to the theatre to watch 'A Christmas Carol' proved to be both enjoyable and educationally enriching. We are very proud to note that their behaviour during the outing was nothing short of outstanding, reflecting their maturity and respect for the arts.

Celebrating success on the sports field, our Year 11 boys' football team secured victory this half term, showcasing exceptional teamwork, skill, and determination. Additionally, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to James, who recently clinched the 2023 Junior Rods Gold Roof Championship in Skegness, adding to his British Championship award earlier in the year—a truly impressive accomplishment. Well done, James!

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for the unwavering support you, as parents and guardians, have provided throughout this academic journey. Your encouragement and partnership are invaluable in shaping the success of our students.

As we look forward to the remainder of the academic year, we remain committed to fostering a positive and nurturing learning environment for our year group. Together, we will continue to inspire, guide, and celebrate the achievements of each and every one of our students on their journey to success.

Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Nyari





# SEND

## HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR NEURODIVERSE CHILD

Did you know that 1 in 6 children between the ages of 3 and 17 are considered neurodiverse? That equals about 17% of children in that age group. All it means is your child's brain is wired differently than others. Being neurodivergent does not have to and should not be viewed as a bad thing. In fact, at Kingsmead, we have staff dedicated to supporting the progress and wellbeing of students with neurodiversity.

Neurodiversity refers to the differences between how people think, process information, behave and communicate.

There are lots of ways we can support your neurodiverse child at home and at school. We understand through studies that anxiety and worry can often affect how a neurodiverse child perceives school, having an impact on attendance and their academic progress. Success is key! But what does that look like at home? We acknowledge and the research provides broad suggestions because every child is unique. How can we help them succeed?

1. Listen to what they have to say and try to not give your opinion. Giving too much advice can overstimulate your neurodiverse child, so try just empathizing with them at first.
2. Give them outlets for any sensory sensitivities they have. When a child feels sensitively towards a sensory input often a body break can help them reset. This can help students understand where their body is in the space "proprioceptive input".

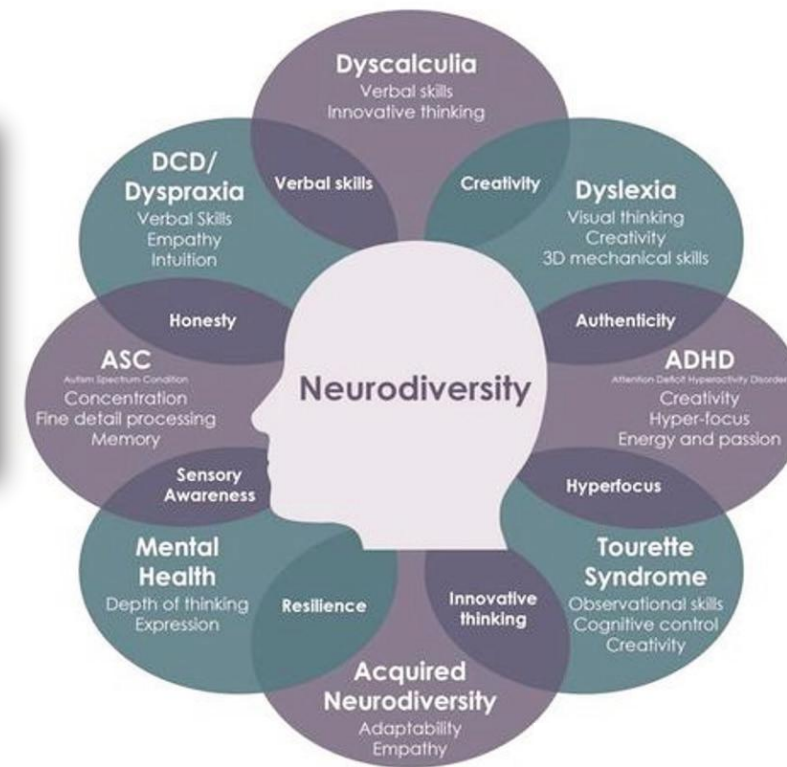
3. Encourage your child in their strengths.
4. Break down tasks into smaller tasks.
5. Encourage them in self-regulating activities, such as exercise, and enforce positive reinforcement.

Remember to be patient with your child. It may take them some time to get used to a new idea or routine.

Support proprioceptive inputs at home and in school. Your child may need to equip their own toolbox with low key body break strategies which can be used both at home and at school to allow their senses to create space in their thinking capacity.

Suggestions of proprioceptive inputs are:

- Finger pull: Lock your hands together by your fingertips and hold for ten seconds.



- Bubble Breath: Breathing in for five seconds and out for five seconds with a hand on your chest and one on your tummy.
- Arm Massage: Firmly squeeze your arms, from your wrists to your shoulders or from your shoulders to your wrists.
- Arm Pretzel: Hold for ten seconds, cross your arms, touch palms and fingers hold your chest.

Teaching children who are both neurodivergent and neurotypical these strategies can support in their emotional regulation.

Kingsmead are holding a parent workshop on supporting your neurodiverse child on Thursday 11th January 4pm-6pm. If you are interested, please contact [n.bannister@kingsmeadschool.net](mailto:n.bannister@kingsmeadschool.net)



## Kingsmead students with SEND make **MORE** progress than non-SEND students nationally

The National average of students with no special education need was +0.1 in 2023; this is equivalent to 1 in 10 students achieving one grade above their predicted grades.

The Kingsmead average of students with special educational needs was +0.4; this is equivalent to 4 in 10 students achieving one grade above their predicted grades. Whereas the progress 8 score of students with a special education need in Staffordshire was -0.4 which means 4 in 10 students achieved one grade less. **GO KINGSMEAD!**

The students with a diagnosed special educational need at Kingsmead achieved 38.5% which is equivalent to an average of a Grade 4.

The national average of students with a diagnosed special education need was 33%, which is equivalent to an average of a Grade 3.

Grade 9-4 English and Maths comparison: 77% of students with an special educational need achieved a standard pass, which is a pass between 9-4, this is 7% more than the national average. When delving into Maths, 56% of students achieved the standard pass, putting our students with a special educational need 12% above national average.

Case Studies: How did they do it? How where they supported?

Case Study 1: Progress 8 score of +2.7, which means this student achieved 3 grades above their target grades.

Case Study 2: Progress 8 score +1.3, which means this student achieved a grade above their target grades.

Case Study 3: Progress 8 score of +2, which means this student achieved 2 grades above their target grade.

Quality first teaching builds the foundations of great success. This is ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching, which is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them, this allows and enables students to learn methods and master skills needed for their GCSE's. Students are given opportunities to learn revision styles and tips through their tutor time and through assemblies. Tutor times and Period 6 are academically led so students can work with their personalised learning check lists to upgrade their knowledge. Lessons are supported by a second teacher to support students with special educational needs; this allows staff to support their needs but also to have the knowledge and expertise to break down the learning and information. Exam provisions were in place for their mock exams; students with a special educational needs more often than not require an exam access arrangement which Kingsmead implement early on in Year 11 so that they can become comfortable and secure in their exam arrangements. Students had mentoring from specialised members of staff.

This support has been paramount in the students achieving the positive progress results which we are extremely proud of them for getting. This year we continue to work closely with the teachers who are supporting in lessons, we offer professional development opportunities to staff who are teaching and supporting students with a special educational needs.



# UNIFORM

Here at Kingsmead School, students are encouraged to be themselves in their own unique individual way and whilst this is embraced by all the staff here, it is important that the students enjoy the benefits of being young before the ever increasing need for cosmetics.

Acrylic nails, false eyelashes, make up (in Key Stage 3) and facial piercings are not permitted. "How do they affect learning?" you may ask; well quite frankly they don't, but it is vital that the young people of Kingsmead enjoy being young and get used to meeting standards and expectations of school that will in turn teach them life skills that are essential for the workplace and the big wide world that awaits them all.

So please bear in mind this Christmas that if your young person is treated to any of these beauty treatments it is imperative that they are removed for the return to school on Monday 8th January 2024. If any student arrives to school with any infringements, their Progress Leader will be in touch with you and your young person will be asked to remove them.

On behalf of all the Progress Team, I would like to thank you in advance for supporting us with the high standards and expectations for all the young people here at Kingsmead. Merry Christmas!

Mrs. Thomson  
Progress Leader





# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A ... PROGRESS LEADER

## MRS. MILNER, YEAR 7

As Progress Leaders we are responsible for the pastoral care and progress of the students in our year group. This means that progress, safeguarding, behaviour and wellbeing all come under our remit.

The job is very varied, and no day is the same. We must be resilient as it can be tough juggling the many responsibilities throughout the day. Sometimes feeling like a yoyo backwards and forwards from our desks!



7.45am – When we come into school we start looking at and responding to emails.

8.15am - Our day starts with duties involving greeting students as they enter the school site. Ensuring that uniform standards are met, and behaviour is good. Always greeting students with a reassuring smile and wishing them a good day ahead.

Period 1 – attendance clinic meeting. This includes parents, student, progress leader and our attendance team to address issues with any student attending school.

Period 2 – targeted lesson drop in to remove barriers to progress. This involves looking at books - are students responding to feedback, liaising with teachers and phoning parents about progress in that subject. During this time behaviour is also monitored.

We have safeguarding cases to deal with and these at times may take priority over everything else.

10.20 - during morning break we spend time with our year group who can speak with us if they have any questions or concerns.

Tutor time: 10.45am – Leading assemblies once a week gives us the opportunity to share important notices, expectations across the year and discuss topics relevant to the time of year. The gathering of students is a prime opportunity to teach and reinforce self regulation and appropriate social behaviour.

In Year 7, we are asking students to volunteer to talk in assembly about hobbies and interests in a way to get to know each other. A brilliant way to build confidence and resilience!



When not in assembly we visit forms to quality assure sessions and to share important information. This week I had the pleasure of hearing some of our Year 7s practice their singing in preparation for our Christmas Carol Service on Wednesday, 20th December.

12pm - lunch time break is also spent with our year groups. We have various activities to access such as football, table tennis, table football and rubik's cubes. Sometimes needing to jump on the cash tills to help get students through quickly so they have time to eat their lunch.



**“The hub is a central point for students and as Progress Leaders we support each other’s year groups. It may be a student comes in upset, needs to visit the medical room or needs to borrow uniform and there is someone always on hand to support.”**

12.30pm – Catch up with emails and phone calls.

1.30pm Analysing cycle data – it is important to frequently look at data to identify areas of concern and address these with subject leaders.

2.30pm – Supervision of prep duties also falls into our remit at the end of the day and then, when we return to our desks it is a time to tidy up our day by responding to any further queries that have arisen during the afternoon and making sure that the all the events of the day are logged correctly on our systems.





# THE HOUSES



Our Year 10 Student Leader Brooke took ownership over Kingy's Kiosk to sell her beautiful handmade poppies.

She made a staggering £121 for the Remembrance charity. A great display of the RIME values.

On 27th November several of our Sixth Form Student Leaders who run the Interact Club here at Kingsmead presented to the new President of the Rotary Club, Cannock, Maurice Cryer. The Interact programme provides opportunities for students to fundraise locally and internationally – our club has voted to raise money for the 'School in a bag' charity which will conclude their international charity project for 2023.



Kingsmead student leaders heard staff bid for funding from the RIME budget in December. The money is used to drive the school values of Resilience, Innovation, Mindfulness and Employability through projects proposed by staff and judged by students. Competition was fierce but student leaders really put staff through their paces and ensured that their pot of funding was well allocated!

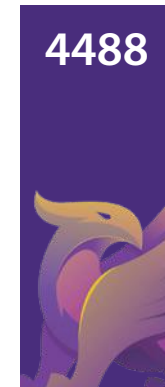
## Prefect Duties

Kingsmead Prefects have been very festive decorating the Glasshouse Christmas tree. The baubles have been made by students during tutor time following the theme: 'What Christmas means to me.'

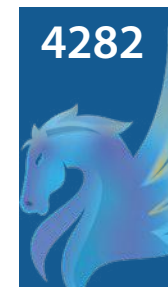
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HOUSE POINTS



# PRIMARY PARTNER FEATURE

## ANTI BULLYING WEEK 2023

Over the years, Kingsmead have been building relationships with our local Primary Partner schools and this Anti-bullying Week was no different. On Monday 13th November, ten Year 12 Performing Arts students visited Pye Green Academy, along with Wellbeing Mentors Mr Stephens and Mrs Truby, to deliver a devised performance and workshop to primary pupils.

Our Year 12 students spent just a short number of weeks preparing and rehearsing in their own time, to develop a 20-minute piece they delivered to the whole school during an assembly. The performance focused on understanding the difference between a 'fall out' which, albeit not pleasant if it happens, is something we know many students experience during their time in school and growing up. This was compared to a 'bullying' incident where a student was targeted repeatedly, intentionally and over a period of time. Our audience was incredibly respectful and attentive to the message that we must 'make a noise' and stand up to put a stop to bullying.



After a short break, the students then worked with the Year 5 cohort delivering two workshops simultaneously. The aim of the workshops was to inform the group of the impact of bullying through a poem. The students lead the workshop with an ice breaker drama game and then got the class to think about the meaning behind the words of a beat poem about bullying. They then created a drama still image and with support developed this into a short scene.

# How may banter become bullying?



Topic of the banter - topics that are sensitive, personal, appearance based, or use offensive language are often considered not appropriate to joke about as banter.

The relationship with the person - banter is more likely to be received positively by people or friendship groups that you know and are close to.

Where the banter is happening - if the banter happens in more public settings or includes individuals beyond a friendship group, then this is more likely to be perceived as bullying.

Whether the banter is repeated - if the banter is repeated many times then it may stop being funny.

The intent behind the banter - is the intent to cause harm, discomfort, social division / exclusion or public embarrassment?

The size of the audience - as group size increases the acceptability of banter may decrease.

The reactions of the target - if the person receiving the banter feels uncomfortable, regardless of the initial intent, the banter may be perceived as bullying.

Interpreting the online world - in some cases the meaning of our wording online and use of emojis, memes and gifs, can be ambiguous or may be used to try to pass bullying behaviour off as banter.





# SCAREFEST 2023

On Thursday 26th October, we held our annual Scarefest event. What a professional experience created by our Performing Arts Scholars and student actors! A Scare maze that Alton Towers would be proud of, 'The Last of Us' inspired experience gave students the opportunity to 'escape' a worldwide fungi infection in a race against time to get to the quarantine zone.

With over 440 student customers entering the maze, they had a fantastic, horrified experience! Our Performing Arts Scholars directed and trained their fellow student actors and went all out with costumes, make up and props! Running concurrently was a Halloween disco in The Palace Theatre as well as tasty, Halloween inspired home baked food items.

Over £5000 was raised through Scarefest this year; this money will be invaluable in supporting Kingsmead's hardship fund as well as helping support the drama and music departments with the costs of putting on Shrek the Musical, including the hire of a professional set.

We look forward to next year when we do it all over again!





# CURRICULUM FEATURE

## LANGUAGES AT KINGSMEAD - LINKS TO FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

For many years now, the national picture for language learning in the UK has looked bleak. The latest report from the British council reveals a 'language learning deficit' which is proven to be damaging the country's economy.

Here at Kingsmead, however, we are fighting back against this trend. Nationally, fewer than 10% of English 15 year olds can speak a foreign language. Through our mission to develop confident and articulate young linguists, we are giving students the skills they need to stand out from the crowd when it comes to their career prospects when they leave school.

We are a school that values language learning and we recognise the intellectual, social and cultural currency that it can bring to our students. For this reason, staff from across the whole school are getting involved and sharing the love for languages.

Walking around the Kingsmead site, you will regularly hear a 'Bonjour' or an 'Hola' as students pass their teachers on the corridors. During our Tuesday enrichment sessions, you will find students engrossed in Duolingo as they build up their learning streaks in Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Mandarin!

In Science lessons, you will hear teachers making links between the French language and the names for the elements on the periodic table. Meanwhile over in the canteen, menus have been translated, giving students the opportunity to order their lunch in French or Spanish.

Our French and Spanish lessons are based around our 'Speak First' curriculum where teachers use the maximum target language and encourage students to do the same. We understand the need for languages to be practical and purposeful for our students. With our grammar-led approach, we teach students the mechanics of the language, how to spot patterns and make links between language so that they can formulate their own phrases and communicate in a meaningful way.

Studying a language develops the invaluable skills of communication, problem-solving, resilience and cultural understanding, all of which are highly regarded by universities and employers. As an academic subject, having a language at GCSE or A-Level demonstrates that students can deal with challenge and rigour, setting them up for further study in any field.





Potential career paths include the sectors of science and research, technology and engineering; media, journalism and broadcasting; business and finance; medicine, health and social care; fashion and creative arts; the military and intelligence services...The possibilities are endless!

Aside from the academics, being able to speak another language could create exciting opportunities to travel or live and work abroad. Students gain a better understanding of how other people in the world live – their culture and traditions. They also learn to interact with other people in situations that you do not usually encounter at school.

We have many exciting opportunities and events planned for the new year to boost students' cultural capital and love of language learning. Competitions, trips, shows, restaurant visits, and poetry readings are all in the pipeline! Watch this space!





# ENRICHMENT

Our Enrichments continue to inspire, ignite and enrich! What makes our Enrichment Programme different to others is that staff & students alike decide what should run. Staff choose what Enrichment they want to offer based on their own personal interests and experiences. Students having the opportunity to then share this time with a likeminded individual – student or staff member – truly makes Kingsmead's Enrichment Programme stand out!

Approaching Christmas, we are well emersed into our second cycle of Enrichments this academic year. Students have moved onto their third & fourth option, and we thought it would be a good time to share with you one of our newest and most successful Enrichment, Mandarin!

Let's hear from Miss Onions, who runs our Mandarin Enrichment.

*"I saw an opportunity to study Mandarin in Tianjin, near to Beijing, for a half-term when I finished my university studies and really enjoyed learning the language but also learning about the culture. ...I wanted to share what I had learned with pupils at Kingsmead.*

*In our Mandarin enrichment sessions, we have learned about the language and the many ways it differs to English (that it is tonal, that it is written in characters which do not link to sounds and the origins of the characters); we have also learned about the importance of learning Mandarin because of how widely spoken it is; and we have learned about some of the ways Chinese culture differs to ours.*

*Pupils have shown fantastic basic conversational skills in Mandarin already and have started to write and be able to recognise Mandarin characters. Pupils often stop and have short conversations with me in Mandarin when they see me around school and demonstrate that they have been practising between weekly sessions."*

Our Enrichment programme continues to prove a success. ALL students complete their chosen Enrichments, totalling up to 6 over the course of the year. Look out for Mandarin when your options for Enrichment come out this Spring!





# A CHRISTMAS CAROL THEATRE VISIT



What a month November was for the Kingsmead English department – not one whole year trip to the theatre was organised, but two on two consecutive weeks!

I wanted to give the students the best opportunity to engage with the set text studied for their GCSE English Literature to best support them in their learning and progress and to also give the students a culturally enhancing experience by giving them an opportunity to see a show at the theatre. Over 400 Year 11 and Year 10 students with some Year 9 students were able to immerse themselves into the world of Dickensian London as they were guided to their seats and watched with full wonder the critically acclaimed production of Dickens' festive story, from acclaimed writer and performer Mark Gatiss titled: 'A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story' at the Nottingham Playhouse.

I knew that we wanted to make sure that the show was of a high standard, so we were so pleased to see that this production was touring, after a successful run in London's West End the previous year to critical acclaim. By specifically selecting an excellent production of the novel, it would enable the students to engage with key themes and ideas

from the Victorian novel, through the visualisation of the set design, sounds, costumes and the actors' interpretations of the beloved characters that we have all come to love. This included a fantastic interpretation of the miserable miser and Victorian businessman Ebenezer Scrooge from superstar actor Keith Allen, who has starred in many films and tv series over the years, including Danny Boyle's 'Shallow Grave'. There definitely were no 'bah humbugs' to the way that Allen brought Scrooge to life on the stage, and it was amazing to see Scrooge's transformation and redemption story presented in an entertaining manner, which the students on both weeks thoroughly enjoyed and were excited to discuss critically in their English Literature lessons that followed.





This could not have been better timing for Year 11, who started their first set of mock exams the following week, which focused on A Christmas Carol. Therefore, this enabled all students to use the show as a great revision tool to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of the plot, key quotations and ideas needed for their GCSE exam studies.

As you are probably aware, organising not one, but two trips of that magnitude was no mean feat! However, as a school we wanted to do this to ensure that every GCSE pupil could have the same experience to engage with. Even more the tickets were heavily subsidised, which made the trip especially accessible to all pupils within our school. All of this made the theatre trip the success it was, though it was even more successful due to the exemplary behaviour displayed by all students that attended, who really demonstrated the RIME values and represented everything that Kingsmead represents. The staff accompanying were so pleased to have so many comments from the general public, who complimented that the students were a clear credit to the members of staff leading them and to the school.

Every student who attended couldn't have made the school any prouder in their engagement with the whole day. It really did feel like Christmas had come early for everyone of us and that the Christmas Spirit in Dicken's most famous novel was alive for all.

Mrs Small  
Lead Teacher of Literature



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL THEATRE VISIT



# CAREERS

The careers programme has got off to a positive start this year with students from Year 7 and Year 11 taking part in the career drop-down days. 50 Year 11's attended the University of Birmingham, meanwhile 14 Year 10 students went to the University of Oxford to explore what it is like to study at Russell Group universities and to raise students' aspirations. 4 times more students went on to Russell Group universities in 2023 than 2022, and we anticipate this number to keep rising, as our students continue to aim high.

We have also kicked off our careers focussed assemblies this term by hosting Chris Hayward from Ideal Standard to come and speak to Year 8s. Legally, under the new Provider Access Legislation, students must attend one assembly each year which focuses on technical education and apprenticeships, and therefore we are delighted to have some great companies lined up for the Spring term, including Rolls Royce aerospace and JCB, who will come and present to the other year groups.

In October, we held our Sixth Form Open Evening, and it was lovely to see so many parents and to facilitate a deeper understanding about Sixth Form as one of the options available to students. We are proud to offer an array of courses taught by specialist teachers in Sixth Form and support at Kingsmead onto future destinations after Year 13. For those that could not make it, or if you have children in younger years, you can view our Sixth Form prospectus online on our website.



As we move into the Spring term, the focus will be on ensuring Year 11 students start to make plans for their post-16 pathway. We are delighted that all our 2023 Year 11 leavers secured a destination for September, and we wish them all the best in their future endeavours. We will now work with the current Year 11s to ensure this happens again. Sixth Form interviews will begin in the New Year for our September 2024 intake, as we look forward to seeing many returning faces from our current Year 11 cohort. In addition, Year 9 students will also receive personalised support and guidance on choosing the correct subjects for GCSE.

Looking ahead, we will be hosting our schools Careers Fayre on Wednesday, 7th February and further information about this will come out in the new year. We still have spaces available for companies to join us, so if you know of a business that would like to come and speak to students about careers and opportunities within the organisation, please get in touch with Mrs. Kendall, our in-school Careers Advisor.





# KINGSMEAD FARM



We've been watching our piglets grow quickly at Kingsmead Farm! Here's a side by side comparison of their first few days compared to now. Make sure to keep an eye out for them next time you're passing through!

Kingsmead Farm offers people the opportunity to sponsor one or more of our beautiful animals.

This is not solely open to our students but is open to anyone who would like to enjoy our farm, the animals and the experiences we offer. We have several packages available that range from £5 to £50. Popular packages include Gold, Platinum and Diamond where you get to spend around 3 hours with our animal technicians and all our lovely animals.

Our packages are very competitively priced compared to other similar offers in the local area.

## Kingsmead Sponsorship Programme

With Christmas in mind, why not give a unique Kingsmead gift



Animals that can be sponsored include



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TJ



Beau



Skippy



Willow



Cookie



Penny



Ralph



Snowy



Andrew and Carol

*If you would like to sponsor an animal, please contact Mrs. Gibson at [ae.gibson@kingsemadschool.net](mailto:ae.gibson@kingsemadschool.net)*





# THE SPORTS REPORT

Year 10 Netball - County Netball Champions

**CHAMPIONS!!** Our Year 10 Netball team entered the County Plate Competition for the first time and won the tournament!

This was a step up in standard from district netball which was recommended based on recognition of their success last year. They won all but one of their group games with the other being a draw against Painsley, who they then faced in the final and won 8-6.

They were outstanding individually and as a team throughout and stayed resilient and supportive of each other when under pressure, particularly in the final.

Their hard work and commitment to the team and sport continues to shine and they embody all of our RIME values. We are so proud of you!





# THE SPORTS REPORT

25/10/2023 - District Year 10 Tournament.

They have also had further success so far this year, coming runners up in the District tournament at Chase Terrace. They won 4 games convincingly against Chase Terrace (22-0), Cheslyn Hay (12-1), Cannock Chase High School (21-1), and Friary (16-0) and narrowly lost to King Edwards (8-4) who were the eventual winners. They played some excellent netball, moving the ball down the court with speed and precision and were a pleasure to watch.



14/11/2023 - District League Match v Netherstone and Friary.

More success! Finally, they have played two more league matches at Netherstowe. They won both games convincingly against Netherstowe (33-3) and Friary (30-1.) They didn't have any substitutes and one of them had an injury but continued to play, which shows their resilience and adaptability to overcome any challenges that they face. Their success is thoroughly deserved and continues to amaze us - we can't wait to see what else they can achieve this year!



Year 7 Netball 22/11/23 - District League Match v Cannock Chase High School.

We have been thrilled to see so many year 7's coming to netball practice and developing their skills and passion for the sport. They had their first ever league match against Cannock Chase High School and it was fantastic to see the support they got from other year 7's, our year 8 netball team, and parents. The teams were closely matched and it was an excellent game but the girls were resilient, worked hard for each other, and moved the ball well down the court, leading to them winning 2-1! This was an excellent start to their netball journey at Kingsmead, and we can't wait to see what they will achieve this year and beyond.



Year 8 Netball 21/11/23 - District League Match v SUA

They had their first match against SUA and played some great netball, resulting in a 12-0 win! They demonstrated all of their hard work in enrichment as they moved the ball down the court quickly in attack, shot consistently, and intercepted well in defence. An excellent start to the season!





Year 9 Netball

Our Year 9s have been working really hard in enrichment to develop their netball and work on their tactics as a team. They have been competing against our year 10's which has been challenging but ultimately helping them to improve. Unfortunately they have had two games postponed since their first game, however they have a match coming up soon where they can hopefully put their progress to the test.

22/11/2023 - District League Match v Cannock Chase High School.

The following day they faced Cannock Chase High School which was an extremely close match, but unfortunately they narrowly lost 2-0. They played some good netball and worked hard throughout the whole game, staying positive. However, the opposition's defence was very strong and they found it difficult to get the ball into the circle. Despite losing they are showing real improvement as a team and putting our school values in action. We can't wait to see what they achieve this year.



Year 7 Football

What a start! The Year 7 Girls Football squad played in Round 1 of the County Cup against Perton Middle School on Thurs which resulted in a 6 - 4 win.

This was their first match together and they did themselves proud in all areas - conduct, endeavour, excitement, determination, teamwork, support. Goals from Libby (3), Olivia (2) and Esme (1). Looking forward to Round 2. Go Kingsmead!



The Year 8 Football team has had an incredible start to the year with their unbeaten winning streak. They are a force to be reckoned with on the field, showing their skills and determination. Not only are they great players, but they also serve as fantastic role models and ambassadors for our school. We can't wait to see what the rest of the year holds for them! Mr. James couldn't be prouder of every single person on the team, watching them grow into outstanding young men. Keep up the amazing work, team!

Top goal scorer: Joe L - 16 goals!!

Results:

Vs Netherstowe High 4-1

Vs Great Wyrley High 7-3

Vs Cheslyn Hay High 2-0

Vs Friary School 8-0

Vs Moorside High (County cup) 8-0

29 goals in 5 games!!





Despite encountering two setbacks, the Year 7 Football team is steadily evolving in terms of cohesion. Encouragingly, moments of individual brilliance have begun to intertwine, resulting in a growing synergy within the team. Looking ahead, Kingsmead has four league games remaining, and while these may be scheduled later in the year to accommodate natural light constraints, the team remains resilient. Additionally, their advancement to the Quarter Finals of the District Cup adds an extra layer of excitement to their journey. The team's commitment and emerging unity suggest promising prospects for the challenges that lie ahead.



So far, the Year 11 boys footballers this season have played 3 games, won 2 and lost 1. The game they lost was to the current Staffordshire County Cup holders where they played very well but conceded 2 goals late on. This is a much-improved start to the season so far as last year they did not win a fixture.



The squad have returned this year with a new determination and vigour about their performances and seem to be working better as a team and enjoying stepping across that white line a lot more than the previous season. In terms of results, they lost 3-1 in the County Cup away to the holders Walton High School from Stafford, beat Cheslyn Hay 3-0 in.

the league and progressed to the second round of the District Cup beating The Hart School 5-4 on penalties after a thrilling 4-4 match. A special mention goes to Phoenix, for captaining the side fantastically and setting the example in terms of attitude and work rate and also for Oliver for scoring a hattrick in the game against The Hart School as well as a penalty in the shoot-out.



Leading by Example – Could Kingsmead Students be Refreeing the Future World Cup Final?

Over the half-term break, more than twenty of our students participated in a refereeing course conducted by the FA. It brings us great pride to learn that several students have already embarked on officiating games.

To officiate a game, students must exemplify many of our school values, particularly resilience and employability. In the photo, you can see Joe from Year 9 with the match ball and Luke from Year 10 proudly displaying the earnings he made from the matches! We eagerly anticipate observing their advancement in this role in the years to come!





Merry Christmas from  
Kingsmead School



# Let's Stay in Touch...

Kingsmead is a partnership. We value our links with parents and our community. We use a number of tools to ensure we maintain effective communication for each core area of a child's schooling. This approach provides parents full access to up to date information about their child and our school. We felt it would be useful to share the tools in one place as a reference point.

You (and your child) can use the same username and password for all of these tools of communication

**Satchel One**  
(formerly named Show my Homework) Homework

**satchel:  
one**

How?: through the app, their website or ours

This tool is how staff set home learning. There is a student view and a parent view. Everyone can see what work is set and when it is due. It is possible for some Pieces to be submitted online. If this is the case, students should use their account (and not their parents) to do this.

**MCAS**  
(My Child at School) Communication

**my child at school.com**

How?: through the app

How we communicate with parents

**Blended Learning Platform** Support



How?: through the app, their website or ours

This tool is how staff set home learning. There is a student view and a parent view. Everyone can see what work is set and when it is due. It is possible for some Pieces to be submitted online. If this is the case, students should use their account (and not their parents) to do this.

**Go4Schools** Support

**GO 4 SCHOOLS**

How?: through the App, their website or our website

How we share data on attainment, progress and attitude to learning

- You will see rewards given to your child 'live'
- We will share how your child is understanding each subject every 6 weeks
- For each subject you will see a checklist of core learning. On this you will see what they are secure in and what they need to work on at home
- You can use the blended learning platform to select activities that will help them at home to close gaps

Socials



Email



office@kingsmeadschool.net

Call Us



01543 227 320

Our Website



www.kingsmeadschool.net



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**Bronze package** £5.00

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# PTFA NEEDS YOU!

Do you want to help Kingsmead school raise money and maintain outstanding education?

Benefits

- Join the team who make the magic happen
- Free cake and coffee at all meetings
- Meet the governors and leadership team before PTFA meetings
- Use of school facilities for events
- Make a difference to your child's education
- Give back to your community
- Support fun, exciting fundraisers like Christmas Fayre, Summer Fayre, Community days and Scarefest

Please contact m.ordidge@kingsmeadschool.net to register your interest.