



Kingsmead School



A PARTNER ACADEMY IN JOHN TAYLOR MAT
Headteacher: Mrs M Mincher, Bsc, NPQH

RESILIENT



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Newsletter – Half Term 1

Dear parents and carers,

I wanted to thank you all personally for your support over the last half-term. Feedback from our local community about the excellent behaviour of our children when they are out and about has been lovely to receive, and is often down to the choices and lessons that you pass on as parents.

Thank you all for all that you do to work with us as a school!

Some important notices for the next half-term:

1. Keeping children safe and really knowing your child – From the Safeguarding Team

Probably one of the best things for us all about the lockdown was talking more to our children. It is something that even now we need to work at, thinking of ways that we can try to really understand what they feel and what they do when we are not with them.

To help keep our children safe please continue to be vigilant about where your child is during the October half-term and after school. We have wonderful students who almost always live the Kingsmead values of resilience, innovation, mindfulness, and employability, but you cannot always control who they might encounter when they are out and about on their own.

To keep them safe please consider talking to your child about areas in the local community to avoid and what to do if they are approached by someone that they do not know. More information on issues in Staffordshire that you should be aware of and support for starting conversations with young people are included below:

<https://www.ahaparenting.com/read/family-discussions>

<http://www.actionagainstabduction.org/clever-never-goes/>

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/behaviour/challenging-behaviour/what-is-county-lines-drug-trafficking/>

2. Progress Reviews – putting parents at the heart of learning – Save the Date

One of the most important events in your child's learning journey at Kingsmead will be the three Progress Reviews that your child will undertake this school year. It enables parents to be actively involved in their child's learning and encourages the students to critically reflect on their strengths and areas for development across their subjects, setting SMART targets that are agreed by the child, parent and Progress Tutor.

The first Progress Review will be on **Wednesday, 23rd November**. Mr. Truby has sent out a letter on Parentpay detailing the process for Progress Reviews. Information on how to book appointments will follow after half-term. Please refer to this for more information and contact your child's Progress Leader with any queries you may have.

3. Sixth Form Open Evening – Save the Date!

Calling all Year 11 students, your future awaits! On **Thursday, 17th November** Kingsmead's exceptional, area-leading Sixth Form will throw its doors wide open for you to come and find out everything you need to know to help you make your subject choices for Year 12. The Glasshouse, Sixth Form Centre and E Block will be open from 4:30 until 6:30 for you to speak to specialist staff and gather information and details about all of the 30+ Key Stage 5 courses Kingsmead Sixth Form has to offer. Whether you are considering University or an apprenticeship, Kingsmead Sixth Form has the broadest offer in the area of academic and vocational qualifications, don't miss out!



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Immediately following Open Evening, applications will open for next year's cohort and places are very competitive, so make sure you come along and find out everything you can!

4. Student Grievances – No stone left unturned

We have had a positive start to our new Student Grievance programme at Kingsmead. It has enabled parents to feel more informed of an issue that their child may have experienced with another peer, encouraging important questions and conversations to be had.

It has allowed Progress Leaders to ascertain more accurate information about a grievance and has built confidence amongst our students on the support they will receive if needed. If your child experiences a grievance of any kind with a peer, they should come and collect a Grievance Form from the Progress Hub and fill this in with parents at home in the first instance, handing it to their Progress Leader when it has been completed. Thank you for your continued support.

So far, the response from students and parents has been very positive to the process, but if you have suggestions for making the process even better, please do get in touch.

5. Supporting Staff – Respect – I need your help

Thank you to the many parents who ensure that interactions with staff are almost always positive and supportive. The times that you take a moment to send an email or a message to thank staff means more than we can say. There are however some adults where the increased stresses and worries across the country seem to be influencing their interactions with school.

This is manifesting in a very small number of people who behave in an aggressive or abusive way. I know that every reasonable and supportive parent would agree that staff at Kingsmead work incredibly hard and always try their best for the children in our care.

It is with some sadness that I find myself having to say that there is no valid reason to make staff feel abused, threatened, or distressed in their place of work. Please support me by making sure that all interactions are conducted in a manner of mutual respect.

We are here to support each other with the children at the centre of all that we try to do. We will always listen, we may not always agree, but for those who need to hear this - please work with us. Children excel when their school and parents work together and are united.

6. Laptops in Lessons – enriching learning

Students should be encouraged wherever possible to **bring their laptop into school** to support their learning in lessons and via the '**Blended Learning Platform**'.

Please reassure students, they **do not need to wait for their teachers to ask them to bring in their laptops**, students should be confident they can use their laptop in the vast majority of their lessons freely to support their learning. An exception to this would be if students are completing handwritten assessments at the end of a learning cycle. Please contact your Progress Leader if you have any questions regarding laptops or Blended Learning.



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7. Calculators in Maths

In the Maths Department, we encourage pupils to bring their own calculators, the model we recommend is a Casio FX85 GTX which works up to and including GCSE. Two out of the three GCSE Maths papers are calculator papers and learning to use a calculator efficiently can gain a significant number of extra marks in exams, on average around 20 marks. You can purchase a calculator directly via Parentpay through school at a small saving compared to shops – what a great idea for a Christmas gift!

8. New toilets are on their way – Who would have thought that toilets were so exciting

1 week after half term the new toilet block will be opening near to the exotic classroom. Straight after this work will start on our third new block near to maths. We will share pictures of the ribbon being cut in the next newsletter.

In other facilities news we're having some work done on the fencing at the top of school alongside Wood Lane to create a safe drop-off and pick-up point for parents, keeping roads clearer, pedestrians safer and being mindful of our neighbours. This will be ready in the coming months.

9. Cost of Living Crisis – We are in this together

As a school we are trying to do everything that we can to support parents and children at this difficult time. As the cost of living continues to rise, we have looked at the different ways that we can support our Kingsmead family.

When looking within the school community we identified different areas in which we could cut costs. For example, we know how much families value school photos each year, however the cost of these can soon add up. Therefore, this year we have taken these photos in house with our resident photographer Mr. Summers. This has allowed us to dramatically cut costs for parents whilst also provided more individualised photos. The feedback from parents has been fantastic. Below is one message from a Year 7 parent that we wanted to share:

Good afternoon,

I just wanted to email to say that I received my son's year 7 school photos and I have to say they are great, it's so nice that they are so much more affordable, more fun and it's lovely having a selection as I normally have to just choose the one as they are so expensive and I have 2 children at high school.

I really hope it can stay like this as its these memories that we will never get back, but I just don't have the funds some years. So, what a relief it was to have an affordable selection.

Well done, Kingsmead.

10. Warm Space and Breakfast

All students in receipt of Free School Meals can come to the House of Pi from 8.00am for a free breakfast that they can take to the library and eat by a cosy fire. We will have the whomping willow lit up and lots of opportunities to read a book while you relax with friends. This is our start towards free breakfasts for all and I know that it will be a welcome opportunity for many.



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11. Hardship Fund – there to help everyone

The Kingsmead Hardship Fund was created using money raised in school by our children and is there to help anyone in genuine need within our school community. Applications can be made through emailing r.force@kingsmeadschopol.net

12. Enrichment – unlocking the potential inside every child

We officially have **101** completely free enrichment clubs making us the most enriching school around! Children really have enjoyed their opportunities to thrive this half term and here are some comments on what they thought about their experiences:

- War Hammer and Dungeons and Dragons - *“Really enjoyed this new activity that I wouldn’t have done without enrichment”* – T
- Clay Modelling – *“It has been really satisfying working with the texture of the clay making a Day of the Dead skull”* – E
- Fascinating Science – *“I enjoyed learning about the heart and dissecting it”* – E
- Top Secret Digging Club – *“Great doing a hands-on activity and being allowed to get dirty as part of a lesson”* – R
- Netball – *“It has been good as I have been learning new skills to help me improve at Netball”* – S
- *‘I really look forward to the days that I have Little Shop of horrors, I am learning to sing, dance and act. It has started a new skill in singing and now I also have singing lessons’* – L
- *‘Doing football in enrichment means that I have developed new abilities that I didn’t know I had’* – W





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13. Developing Cultural Capital – for free during half-term

Try Walking:

Why not go on a guided tour of your local area? The cities, towns, and villages of the UK are replete with history. **Treasure Trails** offers cheap, downloadable guides for a broad range of UK destinations ranging from Aviemore to Ulverston, and Broadstairs to Wylam Waggonway. See what's near you and get out there.

14. Year 11 Revision Over Half-Term – unlocking potential

Revision for Year 11 and 13 should be well underway now if students are to achieve their full academic potential in the Summer. To help and support Year 11 students preparing for exams there are a range of interventions that will be run by staff over the October half-term:

	Morning session	Afternoon session
Monday 24 th October	10am-12pm Music session with RCS, in A03 10am-1pm Health and Social Care session with CFR, in B02	N/A
Tuesday 25 th October	10am-12pm GCSE PE /BTEC Sport session with JMN & DFL, in B21 & B22	N/A
Wednesday 26 th October	10am-12pm Geography session with KPL, in B06	12:30pm - 1:30pm Chemistry session with GSR, in C03 1:30pm - 2:30pm Biology session with EBE, in C04
Thursday 27 th October	10am-12.30pm Business Studies session with BBY, in B12	N/A
Friday 28 th October	10am-12pm Animal Management session with AGN, in B04	N/A



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15. Houses - currently winning are...



But who will win at the end of the year?

The following information was shared before the Summer, but we felt that you may want to see it again.

Combatting The Cost-of-Living Crisis Together

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are all aware of the current crisis we are all facing regarding the dramatic rises in the cost of living within the UK. I wanted to put this letter together to share with you some ways in which you can seek support and relief in our local area.

Please be aware that not all of these events are strictly affiliated with us, we are just sharing a message.

1. Hardship Fund

As you will know, we recently conducted a sponsored walk to raise money for our in-house hardship fund. This fund is designed to help those in crisis with support towards the cost of uniform, equipment and trips.

The application form for this fund is attached to this letter for you to read through.

2. Kingsmead Pre-Loved

On the 16th August, a pop-up pre-loved stall will take place within school where all sorts of items such as uniform, equipment, text books etc. will be available for you to purchase for reduced price/donation. We will also have some food bank bags available this day if required. A letter fully detailing this will come out to you soon.

3. Discounted Food Apps

Recently there has been a huge rise in platforms which allow businesses to sell grocery products for heavily discounted rates. Examples of these are Olivo and Too Good To Go. These are free to sign up to and by selecting the area in which you live you can get fantastic deals on a large variety of items.



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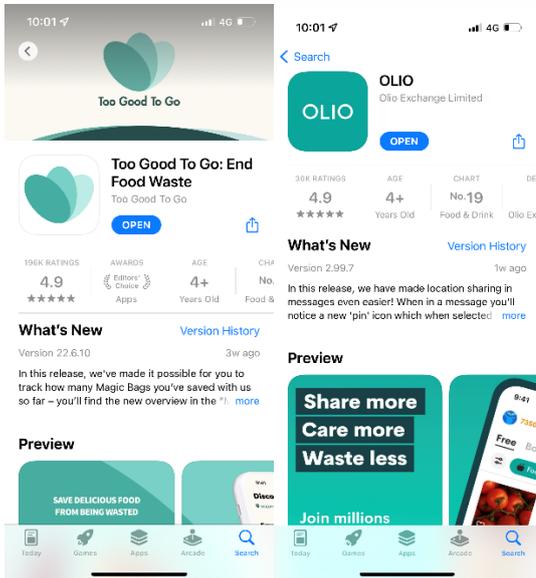
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4. Eat out for less

Many businesses are offering fantastic deals such as children eat free of for a £1. The website and poster below give details on the many different retailers offering this.

[Places where children can eat for free - or for £1 - over the summer holiday - Staffordshire Live \(staffordshire-live.co.uk\)](http://placeswherechildrenlive.co.uk)

Kids Eat For Less Summer 2022

Current Offers Available

- Kids Eat For £1 At Asda. See Website For Dates & Terms.
- Free Kids Meal For Every Adult Meal Purchased £4.99 Or Over. All Day Every day!
- One Free-Mini Main, Two Snacks & Drink For Every £4 Spent In Our In-Store Cafes
- Get any two kids hot meals, jelly, fruit & drink for £5 (Regular price £2.95 each) in our Swedish restaurants. Offer subject to availability.
- Kids Eat For £1 Monday-Friday All Day During Summer Holidays!
- Kids eat for £1 with the purchase of every adult main from 4-6pm on Monday-Thursday! One adult main must be purchased per child to receive the offer.
- Kid's eat free from 3pm-5:30pm, Monday to Thursday. One child eats free for every £10 spent on food.
- Kids Eat Free With an adult main meal. Includes our kids lunch menu or pick 'n' mix' meal, plus a drink

EXTREME COUPONING AND BARGAINS UK

Breakfast Offers

- Choose any kid's breakfast up to £2.49 for free when you buy an adult breakfast for at least £3.49 in a Hungry Horse pub.
-
- Two kids under 16 eat for FREE with every adult breakfast purchased.

Download App For Offers

These restaurants often have offers and discounts when you download the app or sign up for their newsletter to receive offers.

-

Still To Come.... (Possibly!)

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Information sourced from company websites. Please see company websites for latest information, dates & terms & conditions and more.



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5. Local Support (through Facebook)

There are two key Facebook organisations I wanted to draw your attention to: Chase Lighthouse and Free Food For All UK.

Chase Lighthouse is a local organisation that helps local people in numerous ways, they have furniture, clothing and food for those in need. They also have a community café open in on weekdays in Cannock.

There are likely many more schemes out there and if you hear of any more please share them with us so we can share through our social media with our whole Kingsmead family.

Now is a time for us to all come together.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Rhiannon Force

Removal of Barriers to Learning Lead

r.force@kingsmeadschool.net

KINGSMEAD HARDSHIP FUND 2022/23

Staff contact: Miss R Force, Removal of Barriers to Learning Lead r.force@kingsmeadschool.net

OVERVIEW

The Hardship Fund is a discretionary source of financial help available to all registered full-time Kingsmead students.

The aim of the fund is to help students who have difficulties in paying for:

- Curriculum trips, visits, year group residential courses and other activities (The amount covered will be agreed upon depending upon circumstances, cost of the trip as well as time until trip departs)
- Uniform, shoes, or sports kit
- Other materials or equipment to assist in academic studies
- Other necessary expenses

Payments from the Fund are discretionary and if awarded do not need to be repaid.

Limited resources are available from the Hardship Fund. Funds are topped up through fundraising and voluntary contributions. Donations of school uniform to the fund are welcomed (please note: the current logo is in place for another 12 months so the purchasing of brand-new uniform is not necessary at this point)

ELIGIBILITY

The Academy will consider hardship fund applications in relation to the following groups:



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1. Parents/Carers in receipt of benefits which qualify for Free School Meals:

- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, with an annual income below £16,190
- Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit.
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

2. Students:

- Who have disabilities
- Who are in care, or who have left care
- Who live alone outside the family home
- Who have a very low family income
- Proof of Benefit is required. Proof must be in letter form and:
 - Must have been issued within the last six months
 - Must show the family address given
 - Must be included with the grant application.

Bank statements, incapacity, housing and council tax benefit are not valid proof.

If you are experiencing hardship and do not fall into the categories above, please contact your Miss Force to discuss your exceptional circumstances.

APPLICATION PROCESS

An application should be made through the member of staff detailed on the application form. The application must remain confidential and will be considered by Miss Force given their knowledge of the student's circumstances.

If approved by Miss Force, the application will be passed to the Headteacher and the Finance Director for review and final approval.

A student may be able to apply for hardship support at any time during the academy year. It is possible to apply more than once, but usually only where circumstances have changed – approval of one application does not necessarily mean that further applications will be approved. Students and their families cannot appeal a decision not to award a hardship grant as the Headteacher and Finance Director's decision is final.

Payments from the hardship fund would normally be 'in-kind' e.g. direct provision of uniform or sports kit, materials and equipment, or by contribution towards trip and visit expenses. Applications for hardship support towards activities taking place in the future (e.g., curriculum trips) will not routinely be approved until close to the time of the activity. This prevents the Academy from committing itself to financial support that may not be require.



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Please note that if your child is in receipt of Pupil Premium then there is already support in place for the provision of uniform and payments towards trip. Please be advised that additional support through the Hardship Fund will be limited.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Mincher'.

Maria Mincher
Headteacher