

Kingsmeadow news

Year 11

February 2026

It may be deep into February, but I am writing this on what I think has been the first day of 2026 when it has not rained! At times like this we are glad that we invested in the canopies over the Key Stage 4 yard, as well as being thankful for lunchtime indoor pursuits such as basketball, games club, homework zone and our brand new darts club.

Having just mentioned the Key Stage 4 yard, I cannot miss the opportunity to point out our new grab-and-go catering pod. Serving street food, it has been a huge hit with our key stage 4 students who are enjoying their own menu, whilst it helps to keep the canteen quieter for Key Stage 3 students.



Mr Barrett
Headteacher

This half term brought a visit from Ofsted. We knew that they were due to visit us and I have to say that I am pleased with what they saw and some of the wonderful, positive feedback they gave us. They were particularly complimentary about how well our students conduct themselves around school and engage with learning. Our Ofsted visit was under the renewed framework, which puts inclusion at the heart of the inspection and has much more exacting standards than previous frameworks. It is more difficult to achieve in this framework than it was in the previous one. I am not allowed to share the outcomes yet, as the report is only in draft format. However, I will say that the inclusion agenda really suits our educational principles here at Kingsmeadow and the Ofsted inspection team acknowledged the huge improvements we have made over the last sixteen months.

This half term has also seen our exam year groups, years 11 and 13, complete their final set of mock exams. Both year groups enjoyed a celebration event where they opened their results envelopes in much the same way they will for their final exams. Both year groups have seen an improvement on the previous year's results and so are on track for a record year at Kingsmeadow. As always, we have a strong pastoral support team around if they are disappointed in their results or need some final support to improve those grades even further.

In this newsletter you will read about our holocaust virtual reality event, special birthday celebrations, and parent and carer forums. As ever, I am proud of the way that staff and students work together, with parent and carer support, in order to keep Kingsmeadow Community School such a positive and successful place to work and learn.



Our 2026 mock exam series

As this mock exam season comes to a close, we want to congratulate our Year 11 students for their hard work, focus, and resilience. Mock exams are never easy, and this term truly showed the commitment our students have to their learning.

Our students approached their exams with maturity and determination. From early revision sessions to focused study during lessons, the effort put in was clear. Many students also took the opportunity to reflect on their performance, identifying strengths and areas for improvement - exactly what mock exams are designed to encourage.

Our subject teachers have praised students for their positive attitudes and calm behaviour throughout the exam period.

While results are important, the experience gained from sitting these exams is just as valuable. Mock exams help build confidence, improve exam technique, and prepare students for the challenges of the real exam season ahead.

Well done to Year 11 for completing the mock exams successfully, and thank you to parents and carers for their continued support. We look forward to seeing students use this experience to build even more success in the upcoming summer exam series.



Hello from Miss Hornsby Head of Year 11

Our Year 11 students are to be congratulated on the excellent way they conducted themselves during the recent mock examinations. Throughout the exam period, students showed maturity, focus and real resilience, approaching each paper with determination and a positive attitude.

The mocks have been an important opportunity for students to experience the demands of the GCSE exam series and to identify areas for improvement. Regular attendance, strong routines and sustained effort will be crucial in the months ahead, and we would like to remind students and families that being in school every day really does make a difference as we build towards the final exams.

We are proud of the commitment shown so far and encourage all Year 11 students to maintain this momentum as they continue their GCSE preparations.

Year 11 Prom - a reminder

The Year 11 Prom takes place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Newcastle, on Friday 3 July 2026. Parents and carers can secure their child's place on the MCAS app.



Cake, flowers, gifts and lots of surprises for our Dot!

Monday 26 January 2026 was a very special day at Kingsmeadow because we celebrated a milestone birthday for our staff member Dot.

Dot turned 80 years young on the 26 January, and we have been very lucky that she has chosen to work at our school for 39 of those wonderful years.

We couldn't resist but make a fuss of her, and mark 29,220 days of being awesome! Happy 80th birthday Dot!

You can watch her surprise on our YouTube channel at

<https://youtu.be/HpuCtzuoLlo>



Raising aspirations, confidence, skills, and knowledge

Our Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance programme supports our students to identify their future aspirations by exploring potential progression routes and helping them to make informed decisions that affect their future education, training, and employment opportunities.

On the 6th February we welcomed local employers and further education providers to Kingsmeadow to talk to our Year 9 - 13 students about future opportunities at our careers fair. It was a great event, and our students made some valuable connections to set them on the road to post-16 and 18 success.



Parent and carer forum

Shaping the future together

Next meeting

Friday 20 March 2026
9.15 to 10.15am.

Alongside an opportunity to work with the school's leaders to discuss approaches to further improve our students' experience of school, the forum provides a voice for parents and carers to raise issues important to them and their children.

Our forum members are people just like you, and they bring plenty of ideas and views to the table. It meets four times a year and members talk about a wide range of topics to further help the development of strong partnerships between the school and home.

We would like to work with you and capture your rich and valuable experience and knowledge. If you'd like to play a role in shaping the future of the school please email forum@kingsmeadow.org.uk

Kingsmeadow students experience profound Holocaust education through virtual reality testimony

This month we welcomed educators from the Holocaust Educational Trust (UK) to deliver its curriculum-linked Testimony 360 programme.

Our Year 11 and Sixth Form History students learned about events through interactive eyewitness testimony and virtual reality technology, revolutionising access to survivor testimony and providing an invaluable opportunity for students to learn about the Holocaust.

Testimony 360 has changed the way that the Holocaust is taught in schools.

With this new technology our students are able to have a conversation with a Holocaust survivor, long after survivors themselves are no longer with us, and by using virtual reality, they explore historical sites associated with the Holocaust – all without leaving their classroom.



Warm conversations and strong connections at our Year 11 parent and carer coffee morning

Our recent parent and carer coffee morning was a great success. It was wonderful to see parents and carers come together to chat, share experiences, and enjoy a relaxed morning over coffee, cake and pastries. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the event so positive.

Taking place on Friday 6 February, the event brought together parents, carers, and staff for a relaxed and welcoming morning.

Attendees were treated to coffee, tea, cake and pastries while engaging in lively conversation and exchanging ideas on supporting students both academically and socially.

The event provided an excellent platform for parents and carers to meet one another, build connections, and discuss topics ranging from homework strategies to wellbeing and community activities.

Staff were on hand to answer questions, provide updates, and listen to feedback from families.

“We were thrilled to see the parents and carers of our Year 11 students,” said Mr Barrett, our Headteacher. “These gatherings are a fantastic way to strengthen the school community and ensure everyone feels supported.”

Mr Barrett added: “The success of this event demonstrates the value of creating spaces where families can connect with each other and the school. Plans are already underway for more parent and carer engagement events, and we look forward to welcoming even more parents and carers back to Kingsmeadow.”

Safeguarding at Kingsmeadow



Mrs Byrne
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mrs Lowery
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mr Wraith
Nominated Governor
for Safeguarding



Miss Bulman
Health and Safety
Coordinator



Mrs Bell
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mr Thompson
Online Safety
Coordinator

We take the health and wellbeing of our students very seriously and we are proud that safeguarding has a high profile in our school, with everyday practices supporting our commitment to keep our students safe.

Our staff receive regular safeguarding training. They have the skills and knowledge to spot concerns and know how to report these when appropriate. We do not promise confidentiality to any young person and, where possible, always share concerns with parents or carers so we can work closely to address the problem or issue.

The school's Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Lowery, supported by Mrs Byrne in the Safeguarding Team, our Sixth Form Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and the school's Health and Safety and Online Safety Coordinators. Mr Wraith is our Governing Body Safeguarding Lead.

Our safeguarding policies are available on our website and paper copies are available on request.

If you are concerned about your child or another young person, please do not hesitate to call the team on 0191 460 6004 or email safeguarding@kingsmeadow.org.uk.

Key Stage 4 attendance has a direct, positive effect on academic outcomes, and high attendance links to better GCSE results.

Students with 95 - 100% attendance in Year 11 are nearly twice as likely to achieve Grade 5 or higher in English and Maths compared to those with 90-95% attendance.

On average, every 13 days of absence equates to a one-grade drop in attainment.

Going to school consistently increases the chances of your child achieving the exams grades they need, preparing them for their future career opportunities. Attendance matters.

Make sure your child gets up, gets in and gets on!

**Get up
Get in
Get on!**

A poster for a school performance of Disney's High School Musical. The title "Disney HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL" is written in large, glowing yellow marquee letters. The word "Disney" is in its signature script above "HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL". The text is set against a red curtain background, framed by a glowing orange border with small lights. The entire scene is framed by a larger red curtain with tassels. The background behind the curtain is dark blue with faint white icons of school supplies like a pencil, paper, and a ruler.

Disney
HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

WEDNESDAY 1ST APRIL 2026

Join us for a glittering
Kingsmeadow
Community School
performance

