

Kingsmeadow news

Year 9

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, and Thrive activities. 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.



We believe that every interaction is an opportunity to develop the good character of our students, and the promotion of positive attitudes, skills and behaviours such as self-control, confidence, motivation and resilience feature heavily in our curriculum.

These essential life skills give our students the ability to work well with others, build relationships, manage emotions, and cope with difficult situations, or respond to setbacks when they occur.

This half term, through our assemblies, tutor time, and living and learning the school's values our students have been learning about the following topics in their daily Tutor sessions:

Thrive

Dangers in relationships
Recognising abusive relationships
Gender identity
Hate crime

Wellbeing Wednesday

Self care

Wider world Thursday

Christianity and Judaism



Hello from Mrs Diston Head of Year 9

Year 9 is often described as a turning point - and for good reason. This year is all about looking ahead and starting to shape what comes next.

It is an exciting and important year because it's when students really start to think about the future. From choosing subject options to completing key assessments and exploring career ideas, this year is all about preparation and possibilities.

One of the biggest milestones in Year 9 is choosing subject options for the years ahead. These choices help shape the path students will take in Key Stage 4, so it's a great opportunity to reflect on strengths, interests and goals, and our teachers, tutors and careers staff are on hand to offer guidance and help students to make informed decisions they feel confident about.

Year 9 is also a time when key assessments become increasingly important. These assessments help students understand where they are academically and what they need to focus on as they move forward. Developing good study habits, organisation skills and resilience now will make a real difference in the years to come.

Alongside academic progress, Year 9 students are encouraged to start thinking about careers and life beyond school. Through lessons, assemblies and careers activities, our students are introduced to a wide range of pathways, helping them to see how today's learning connects to tomorrow's opportunities.

Overall, Year 9 is a year of growth, reflection and forward thinking. It's about building confidence, making choices and taking the first steps towards an exciting future.



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.



Celebrating the International Day of Women and Girls in STEM

Women can't do science. That is what women scientists were told throughout history. Yet, they smashed the gender bias and forever changed the world.

The percentage of people in STEM careers who identify as female has increased and is now higher than ever before, but there is still inequality.

We wanted to increase awareness of the fantastic contributions to STEM made by women, and challenged our Key stage 3 students to create fact file style posters that celebrate the achievements of a woman in STEM.

There were many fantastic submissions, so well done to everyone who entered.

Congratulations to Leen N in Year 9 who was selected as the winner of vouchers to buy some yummy treats from Greggs the bakers.



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.

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 larger red curtains with tassels. The background behind the curtains is dark blue with faint white icons of cinema-related items like a camera, film strip, and popcorn.

Disney
HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

WEDNESDAY 1ST APRIL 2026

Join us for a glittering
Kingsmeadow
Community School
performance

