

8th December 2023

Dear Parents / Carers

There have been many fun and exciting events taking place in tutor time and after school this month. Thank you for encouraging your child to take part in these activities offered outside of the classroom. There are two events taking place in our Food department, each tutor group is taking part in the shoes box appeal and each tutor group is supporting the Swindon food appeal. If you would like to contribute to the food appeal please bring your generous donations to our main office. We will be delivering Kingsdown's contribution later next week. Thank you to you and your children.

Attendance matters

We will be updating you with your child's attendance year to date next week. If you feel you need any help with supporting your child to attend school, please contact Mrs Coles our Attendance and Family Champion mcoles@kingsdownschool.co.uk who will be happy to discuss ways in which we can help. We thank you for all your support in reinforcing the importance of being in school every day.

Year 7	93.6%	Whole School Attendance = 91.9% Our whole school target is ... <h1>95%</h1>
Year 8	93.6%	
Year 9	89.7%	
Year 10	91.6%	
Year 11	90%	

Our BEATs - what they are and why important

The Kingsdown BEATs are at the heart of what we do at Kingsdown School. In the classroom, beyond the classroom and in the wider school community. They provide our whole school community with core values which help us all demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes that are essential to success in school, but also in life beyond Kingsdown. Our students know what the BEATs are and they are continually learning how they can demonstrate these in all areas of school life. These are regularly explored and discussed. You can find a narrative for the BEATs in your child's planner. Please take some time if you can to read these thoroughly and discuss them with your child.

ILS - why we have it, how it's used and how this is tracked

Our ILS or independant learning suite, is where many of our cover lessons take place when your child's teacher is absent from school. Where possible cover lessons continue in the classroom however at times we have high levels of staff absence and the ILS is used. We do our best to minimise known cover, but there at times we do have high levels of staff illness. The room is designed to support up to 4 classes at a time and is led by a qualified teacher as well as experienced support staff. Whilst in the ILS lessons take place at exam desks and a quiet, studious atmosphere is upheld. Students are set work which they can complete independently. This may be retrieval

practice, revision, comprehension work, or pre-learning tasks. Sometimes this involves the use of the various platforms we as a school use. Every lesson is tracked and monitored and where needed and necessary there are class swaps to try and reduce the impact on certain classes. This is of course not always possible. The use of the ILS is more beneficial to our students than external supply as these members of staff know our students well, which ensures a smooth running of the lessons there.

Enrichment afternoon - plans for year groups

On Monday 18th December from periods 3-6 the timetable will be suspended for all students. Students in year 11 will undertake some focused study in either Art, History, Geography or the Core to close gaps. Year 7-10 will take part in rights respecting activities as part of our rights respecting education program. This will be delivered by year 10 and 11 peer educators and is an essential part of our progress as a rights committed school. They will learn all about what their rights are, why they are important and what enjoying these rights look like. They will also have a chance to reflect on how they can respect their rights and the rights of others.

Year 9 CAT4 Testing

Year 9 students will be taking CAT4 tests next week on Wednesday 13th, Thursday 14th and Friday 15th December. This will involve three 45 minute sittings and the tests will be taken from the start of tutor time. They measure verbal, non-verbal, quantitative and spatial reasoning skills and act as reliable indicators for GCSE examinations, which will enable us to identify how we can best support your child before they begin their options process for GCSE. No prior revision is required but please remind your child to ensure **their chromebook is fully charged before coming into school and that they bring their headphones in** as these will be required for the test sitting.

Year 9 County Line VR headsets sessions

Following the success of the trial sessions 60 year 9s took part a few weeks ago the rest of year 9 will have the opportunity to take part in an exciting VR Educational experience on Tuesday 12th as part of their personal development education. The PSHE-VR.com, as part of their ***Always Running Project***, will be delivering a whole class lesson where students view an immersive animated film educating them around the dangers of Criminal exploitation with a County Lines theme in 3D using VR headsets. You can find out more about county lines at

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking/county-lines>

You can find more information about the **Always Runnin' Project** at www.pshe-vr.com

Christmas Jumper Day - Friday 8th December

What a wonderful selection of festive jumpers. We were very thankful to Amazon who donated over 70 jumpers to our school and students. Today everyone looked very festive and over £500 was raised. Thank you to you and your child for supporting this annual fundraising event.

Christmas appeals

Thank you to you all for your generous donations towards the Swindon Food Collective and our Young Carers. A reminder that the deadline for bringing in donations is Wednesday 13th December. Please find the video in the email.

Key dates for the rest of this term

Wed 13th Dec & Thurs 14th Dec	: Christmas Lunch
Wed 13th Dec	: Year 11 Mock results assembly
Thurs 14th Dec	: Year 11 Parents' Evening (4.00 - 7.00pm)
Mon 18th Dec	: Christmas Concert @ St Phillips (6.30pm)
Weds 20th Dec	: End of Term - 12.00pm finish [Tutor time period 3 for festive time]
Fri 5th Jan	: TD Day - focus on championing each and every student at KDS

Mon 8th Jan	: All students return to school for 8.30am
Weds 10th Jan	: Data available to all parents
Thurs 11th Jan	: Year 9 Curriculum Information Evening - 6pm - Main Hall

Wishing you and your family a restful and peaceful weekend. Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Leigh-Bennett
Headteacher