



NEWSLETTER



Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to our first digital newsletter. We are exploring ways of making this ultra-reader friendly so you will notice improvements edition on edition over the next few terms.

This half term although only 5 weeks long has been full as usual of a huge number of events and activities. Worthy of particular note are prizes won by the girls both individually and collectively for going that extra mile. Two of those, The Barclay's Enterprise Challenge and the International Women's Day award are detailed for you to read in the letter.

You will have noticed if you attended a parent evening this term that we are now seeking your views via questionnaires. Thank you for your responses, they have already been discussed by senior leaders and governors and will certainly help us to improve on what we do. One change we have made already is to work towards greater use of electronic communication.

I would like to make you aware of some staffing changes for the new term. A restructured student support team will be in place. This will mean that we have greater capacity to support students who face challenges and issues which may get in the way of them thriving both personally and academically. Two of our teachers are getting married over the holidays: Miss Barnett, RAL for Year 8 and drama teacher, and Miss Alexander teacher of RE and humanities. We wish them all the best for their special day. We also have two members of staff leaving us, Mrs Hufton who has been with us for 2 years and has been acting Head of Geography. Congratulations on her new post! Also Mrs Daines, Head of English, is retiring after 38 years at the school. The girls had an opportunity to say thank you and goodbye in our whole school assembly this week. I know she will be much missed by everyone and I am sure you will want to join me in wishing her every happiness in her life beyond KNGS.

Mrs Stanway has been appointed as the Head of English and Mrs Baxter will be assuming responsibility for Geography.

For those with exams on the horizon the Easter holiday is an important time to store up some energy for the home run. All the best for getting the balance right between work and relaxation, and to all our families for a lovely Easter break.

International Womens Day Celebration and Award

KNGS presented with the first ever Julia Varley Award!



History ambassadors and winners of a poetry and photography competition on the theme of 'women' took part in a celebration of women on International Women's Day 2015 hosted by Unite. The winning poems were read aloud at the event by the girls themselves and the winning photography project was on display. Our girls also took part in a panel discussion, giving thoughtful and mature responses to audience questions. To top off this fantastic day our girls were also the first recipients of the Julia Varley Award, in recognition of their contribution to the commemoration of this local suffragette.

Fellow guest Alan Richens passed on compliments; "The girls impressed both individually and collectively, reflecting very favourably on the school".



KNGS and KNBS present Grease!

21st-24th April 2015 - KNGS School Hall 7pm

With the sound of rock 'n' roll flowing, the class of '59 give us a taste of American High School life at its 'best'! Danny and Sandy have had the summer of their lives, but neither of them are prepared for what happens next! Is somebody going to have to change their image for the sake of love, and if so, who?

Join us at KNGS for the most electrifyin' extravaganza on

Tickets are on sale now -Adults £8 Children £6 Family £22 (2 Adults, 2 Children)



Governor News

This has been a very busy time for Governors supporting and challenging the school to help ensure that all the girls get the best possible experiences whilst at KNGS.

There are several new Governors and they are helping us move forward by bringing fresh ideas and perspectives into the work of the Governing Body. There is soon to be an election for a Parent Governor so please put your name forward if you would like to be part of this renewal!

Some of the key things we have done recently include a morning with the leadership of the school looking at where the school wants to be in three years' time. This was exciting and helped us all to keep a long term view whilst, like all schools, money is tight. One of the things that came out of this was a recognition that not all parents and girls feel as positive about the school as most do. We are developing some ideas about this and you will have a chance to contribute to these in the near future.

Governors have made many visits to school, speaking to girls and staff, visiting lessons and generally getting a feel for the way the school works in practice. We were actively involved in the recent HMI Safeguarding Inspection. Our visits always remind us of what a great place KNGS is and the girls always speak passionately about their experiences. These visits focus on the key improvements that the school is working on and ensure that we understand how they are going from everyone's point of view.

Governors are always happy to hear from parents but please remember that all individual issues or concerns must first be addressed to the school. I can be contacted by email: DGGreen@kingsnortongirls.bham.sch.uk

Over the next few weeks there are several meetings including a full Governors meeting. Brief notes of these will be posted on the website.

David Green
Chair of Governors



RS Visits for Years 8 and 12

Year 8 explore sacred spaces while Year 12 debate God and Morality.



A total of 42 girls joined two members of staff to see Cotteridge Church, Shree Geeta Bhawan Mandir, Gurdwara Bebe Nanaki Ji and Darul Barakaat Mosque as part of their 'Sacred Buildings' unit in RE. The girls were able to study the features of each building and understand more about Christian, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim beliefs and traditions. Some excellent questions were asked by the girls, and answered by our very hospitable hosts. The girls provided some really positive feedback following the trip. Year 8 pupil Poppy Ellis said, "I enjoyed going to the mandir and joining in with their prayer". Fellow Year 8 pupil Isabella Ivory agreed, "I enjoyed how we got to ask questions because it helped my understanding".

Well done girls for being so well behaved and a credit to the school and many thanks to Mrs O'Connor for her help and support on the day.

Meanwhile on 12th February a group of Year 12 Religious Studies students attended a 'Religion and Ethics' conference in Leicester exploring big ethical questions relating to God, goodness and assisted suicide. The students heard a range of lectures from experts in the field, took part in a debate on whether euthanasia should be legalised and contributed their thoughts to a range of challenging questions. All involved did the school proud. Well done!



Amnesty Youth Group

It is 25 years since the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was agreed upon internationally.

Only 3 countries in the world have not ratified the convention (i.e. made it law). Two countries are in the process of ratifying the convention. This will leave the USA as the only country not to ratify the convention. KNGS Amnesty Youth Group decided to organize a petition campaign on this issue to put pressure on the USA to ratify the CRC. They worked hard to produce information for forms and advertised the campaign throughout school. On Friday, 6th March, we invited school members to come and sign the petition and we were delighted that over 100 pupils and staff came to sign it. This will be sent to the US government along with those from other Amnesty groups (both youth and adult) in the UK and in other countries. Thank you to all of our supporters at KNGS.

KNGS Amnesty Youth Group meets at lunchtime in Room 21. New members are always welcome.



Valentine's Science Club

Our Year 7 science club explored real hearts in preparation for Valentine's day.



The club started with Dr Dawkins demonstrating the anatomy of the giant ox heart. At first some of the pupils were apprehensive, but their intrigue won over and they asked some superb questions before conducting their own dissections with care and maturity. Well done to all of the girls who took part in the themed science club, and thank you to staff for providing such an exciting opportunity.

Forward Thinking

Year 8 pupils attend the launch of 'Forward Thinking' at University of Birmingham.



On Wednesday 11th March three year 8 girls – Malak Bahrani, Intisar Salim and Mia Gray – visited the University of Birmingham for the launch of 'Forward Thinking'. This programme is designed to motivate and inspire the girls to achieve their potential through showing them the opportunities that university can offer. During the afternoon the girls had a tour of the campus, and took part in a variety of activities with students from other Birmingham schools. These included 'University Pictionary' and a team challenge to build the tallest tower from spaghetti and marshmallows. The day finished with a buffet in the amazing 'Great Hall', stories from university students who had been through the Forward Thinking programme themselves, and an engaging motivational talk. The girls had a fantastic time and were great ambassadors for our school.

Netball High 5

Young Leaders from KNGS lead event for local primaries.



A netball High 5 competition for 6 of our local primary schools took place on the afternoon of Wednesday 18th March. We welcomed pupils from Chilcote, The Oaks, Yardley Wood, Cotteridge, Hollywood and Hall Green. 10 of our Year 8 Young Leaders received an hour of High 5 training from the School Games organiser and then organised and led the event themselves, refereeing excellently and making the primary schools feel very welcome. A big well done to the young leaders who took part.

Thanks also to Baverstock School Sports Partnerships for facilitating this event. The winning primary team from this competition will go on to the Birmingham School Games.





Ski Trip to Torgon

30 Year 8 pupils along with three staff from KNKS joined pupils and staff from Swanshurst, Lordswood Girls' and Bishop Challoner on a ski trip to Torgon in Switzerland.



Read updates from the trip at www.kngs.co.uk/Latest-News and check out more stunning photographs on the International School Gallery page www.kngs.co.uk/Galleries.

Visit to Madrid

KS4/KS5 students to visit Madrid on a cultural trip.

On Tuesday 24th March 19 KS4/KS5 students will visit Madrid for 5 days on a cultural trip. There, the group will visit local attractions such as the Plaza Mayor, Puerta del Sol, Teatro Real, Palacio Real, Parque del Retiro, Estadio Santiago Bernabeu and Zoomadrid. Students will also experience the thrills of a flamenco evening and use their linguistic skills in real life role play situations at places such as the San Miguel market. We return on Saturday 29th March and look forward to sharing photos on our return in the next edition of the newsletter. Hasta luego amigos!



KNGS Careers Fair 2015

6th Form team hosts inaugural Careers Fair.



Wednesday 4th March saw the first of what will be an annual careers fair take place at KNGS. Exhibitors were available both during and after school to see pupils from every year group to discuss options for both further and higher education as well as their future careers.

There was an exceptional turn out from both the exhibitors and our students with wonderful feedback from all. Year 8 pupil Olivia said, "We've been able to learn a lot about subjects we don't study yet and the careers they can lead to, like Photography, Law and Psychology."

The exhibitors also had nothing but praise, "The students are really articulate; asking relevant questions. It is good to see the career planning process starting early."

Our thanks to all exhibitors:

Aston University Engineering Academy, Birmingham City University, Birmingham University, BMW, Police and Fire Services, Francesco Group (Hairdressing), NHS: Midwifery, Projects Abroad, The RAF, Solihull College, South and City College, Universities in Cardiff, University of Bristol, University of Leicester, Atkins, Project Trust, Careers Advisor and of course, Kings Norton 6th Form!



Bite the Ballot

Advice for 6th Form students on the general election.

Following on from the Bite the Ballot presentation from Sawsan Bastawy last term, Year 13 students have been given information from political parties assisting them with their choice in the upcoming election. Students that are eligible to vote must first register. Please encourage your daughter to do so. Information about the process can be found at the following website:

www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register-to-vote/how-to-register-to-vote

Higher Education Advice Evening

Aston University - 10/06/15

Aston University are hosting a Higher Education Advice Evening on Wednesday 10th June 2015. The evening has been designed for parents/guardians of Year 11 and Year 12 students, to help with the process of applying to Higher Education and aid parents in giving informed advice and support. Please see our website for further details.

www.kngs.co.uk/Sixth-Form-News



Skydiving for Mind

The KNGS psychology department is excited to announce that staff and students are doing a charity tandem skydive for Mind this summer.

Nine A Level students together with Miss Rickard, Miss O'Connor and Miss Muncey are all participating a tandem skydive, in an effort to raise funds for a charity which is very important to us all. Mind provides vital support to those with mental health problems and aims to increase awareness and understanding of mental health in the UK. Mental health problems are not rare; in fact, approximately 1 in 4 people in any given year suffer from mental health difficulties, yet these problems are viewed very differently to physical illnesses and



far less empathy and understanding. As students of mental health problems we would like to do more than just investigate the issues, we would like to make a real practical difference. The minimum target is £4000 and in our first two weeks we raised £1300. Over the next term, we will be organising a whole range of fundraising activities. 3 members the Acrophobics team have written some excellent articles which describe what we've been up to and some of the challenges involved in fundraising on this scale. To read these and find out more please visit our website www.kngs.co.uk/Sixth-Form-News.

To support the Acrophobics please visit their Just Giving page www.justgiving.com/acrophobic or text PSYC51 to 70070. Thank you.

Business Enterprise Challenge Winners!

Year 13 students scooped the top prize at The Business Enterprise Challenge in association with St Mary's Hospice and Barclays, Snow Hill.



The team from KNGS raised a total of £2143.18, almost half the total £4472.13 raised by everyone taking part. The team also took home the Judi Millward Award for the quality of their strategic planning.

For the past 6 months students from schools and 6th Forms across Birmingham have competed to raise the most funds for St Mary's Hospice. The programme provided an excellent opportunity for A Level Business Studies students to work with mentors from Barclays, Snow Hill to develop their business acumen.

Year 13 student in the role of Communications Co-ordinator, Lauren Venables said, "We visited the hospice in December at around the halfway point in the competition. Seeing where the funds would eventually go really inspired us and pushed us to raise as much money as possible."

To read more about this is story please visit www.kngs.co.uk/Latest-News



Important Notice

May we ask all parents to kindly refrain from using your daughter's school email account to contact staff to discuss areas of concern. This account must be kept secure and should be used for teaching and learning purposes only, by your daughter. If you wish to contact the school please telephone 0121 675 1305 or email enquiry@kingsnortongirls.bham.sch.uk. Thank you.

Maths Parents' Puzzle

One of the best ways to support your daughter in thinking mathematically is to work on a puzzle together.

Asking her to explain her thinking is important as it develops flexibility and reasoning as well as the idea that you can try out different strategies and learn from the ones that don't work. The problem which you could work on together, uses ideas currently being worked with in Year 7 though the puzzle should provide some challenge for anyone (I normally set it for teachers!) :

Find the number given these clues:

- It is less than 100
- It is one more than a multiple of three
- Exactly one of its digits is prime
- If you reverse the digits you get a prime
- It is not a multiple of five
- It is not prime
- It has exactly four factors
- It is not square
- If you multiply it by 5, the answer is greater than 100

Which clues were the most and least useful?

What is the smallest number of clues required to solve the puzzle?

Once again, you can attempt this brainteaser for pure pleasure or submit your solution to the front office to win a prize for your daughter.

Submit solutions to Mr. Francome by Friday 24th April. Winner will be the first correct solution drawn at random.

And Finally....

"All good things must come to an end and finally I am retiring from teaching; I am not really sure how I got to be so old!

Thoroughly enjoying my time teaching here must account for why I stayed so long and I know that I have taught many girls, sisters, mums and aunts and thought it best to go before we got onto the grans. I know I always talk too much - I have a reputation to keep up - so it only leaves me to say - all my best wishes to the girls. I wish my teaching groups success in their examinations and in their chosen careers. To staff - friends, colleagues - past and present - many thanks for your support and friendship over the years and have a really super holiday."

Eileen Daines

