

KINGS NORTON GIRLS' SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

February 2025

Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Kings Norton Girls' School is now a founding member of the West Midlands Academy Trust. The transfer all went very smoothly and even after just six weeks we are seeing the benefits of this collaboration. There has been some very effective



sharing of best practice between staff both in the support teams, leadership and subject areas. A number of cross school peer reviews are planned and staff are learning much from their counterparts in the other two schools. One of the highlights of the WMAT collaboration to date has been a Student Leadership Event. This event brought together student leaders from across all three schools to explore the WMAT vision 'achieving more together'. You can read more about this in our Student Leadership Update on page 5 and on the WMAT website: www.wmatrust.co.uk

I would like to thank all parents and carers for your support during our recent OFSTED Inspection and for completing the Parent View questionnaire. The report of this ungraded inspection should be with us shortly after half term, at which point we can share the outcome. I can let you know that your children were absolutely brilliant, they spoke eloquently to the Inspectors about their work, behaviour and safety in school, they were polite, respectful and followed our norms and routines perfectly. As always, I am incredibly proud of them.

We have also recently had our A Level Value Added (VA) results published and we are delighted to announce that with a VA of 0.12, we are significantly above national average for progress. This is testament to the hard work and commitment of our students, teachers and support staff - congratulations again to all our Year 13 class of 2024!

As well as showcasing in this newsletter all the amazing things that have happened at KNGS this half term, I am thrilled to highlight the success of our very first House Variety Show. The performers entertained us for two lunch times with everything from dance, singing and cycling. The event was incredibly well attended by students cheering on their respective houses, all of whom were respectful and supportive.

I hope that you have a wonderful half term holiday.

Nicola Raggett - Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- ◆ Friday 14th February Last day of Half Term
- ♦ Monday 17th February Friday 21st February Half Term Break
- ♦ Monday 24th February Start of Half Term
- ◆ Tuesday 4th March Year 12 & 13 Interim Reports Issued via SIMS PARENT APP
- ◆ Thursday 6th March Year 9 Parents Evening (Online), 3.30pm 6pm
- ◆ Tuesday 11th March Year 9 & Year 11 Parents as Partners (Timings TBC)
- ◆ Tuesday 25th March Year 13 Parents as Partners, (Timings TBC)
- ♦ Monday 31st March Year 8 & 10 Interim Reports Issued via SIMS PARENT APP
- ◆ Monday 31st March Tuesday 8th April Year 10 Exams
- ◆ Thursday 3rd April Year 8 Parents evening (Online), 3.30pm 6pm
- ♦ Wednesday 9th April Friday 11th April Year 9 Exams
- ◆ Friday 11th April Year 7 & 9 Interim Reports Issued via SIMS PARENT APP
- ◆ Friday 11th April Last day of Half Term



ATTENDANCE - PARENT SURVEY

KNGS are keen to keep improving attendance. We have an upcoming review of our approach and are very grateful for parent feedback. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey using the QR code or link provided. Thank you!

https://forms.office.com/e/ZuHMQcdrDY

Mr Charlett - Deputy Headteacher

EVENTS, TRIPS & CLUBS

MP VISITS KNGS

On Friday 17th January, Al Carns, MP for Selly Oak held a question and answer session at the school. The A Level Politics students and Form Captains from all key stages attended this event, along with some students who had a particular question or interest.



The students had prepared some questions during Parliament Week in

late November and they questioned him on a wide variety of subjects from his role as Secretary for Veterans, Elon Musk's political influence, through to climate change.

Al Carns was hugely impressed by the students and their level of engagement with current affairs. They listened to his answers attentively and had more questions than he had time to answer.

Ms Thatcher - Subject Leader, Politics

UNIFEST 2025 - OPPORTUNITY LAUNCHED FOR YEAR 10 STUDENTS

On the 31st January, we welcomed an external visitor into school to launch Unifest 2025 with Year 10.

What is it? It's a free summer school that takes place at 5 different universities across the West Midlands for Year 10 students only.



Who can apply? Young carers, children in care or have been in care, have a disability or a learning difficulty, live in an area where not many people go to University, first in their family to be thinking about university, students in receipt of free school meals.

The Unifest Programmes on offer are:

- **Step into health careers** (physiotherapy, paramedic science, adult nursing, mental health nursing, psychology, dietetics) @ University College Birmingham
- The mind of a criminal (law, forensic biology, criminology, policing) @ University of Worcester
- Future media makers (TV, radio, photography) @ Birmingham City University
- STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) @ Aston University
- Your future, your choice (generic university workshops) @ University of Birmingham

Year 10 Students need to apply themselves directly and the **application deadline** is <u>Friday 21st March</u>. Students will be contacted in April to see if they have secured a place. Unifest will take place in July.

Further details on the programmes and application process can be found at: aimhigherwm.ac.uk/unifest

Miss Wattison - Head of Year 10

YEAR 12 PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS WELCOME VISITING SPEAKER

On Monday 20th January, photographer and University of Gloucestershire Photography Tutor
Matthew Murray met with the Year 12 photographers. During this session he spoke about his work and his journey as a photographer and Photography Lecturer. He provided some interesting information about the photography related courses that are available at degree level and gave some invaluable advice about how to pick the appropriate course. He also had time to give some feedback to the students on their individual A Level projects, all of which he was very impressed with. The students also appreciated the feedback, which they found very helpful.



YEAR 9 TEXTILES - SUSTAINABLE BORO & SASHIKO PROJECT

The current Year 9 Textiles Rotation group have surpassed all expectations by creating a range of often complex and creative outcomes utilising only upcycled materials. They have created everything from Kimono style jackets inspired by Karate to whimsical teddy bears and sophisticated handbags. Students have learned about the Japanese technique of using Boro (translated to meaning Rag) using recycled and upcycled fabrics and applied decorative embellishments using Sashiko (translated to little stab stitch).





BOXY

Who are we?

Boxy is a Young Enterprise company run by Year 12's at Kings Norton Girls' School and Sixth Form. We are a Social Enterprise dedicated to reducing waste while promoting youth sports participation and are excited to announce the launch of our Football Boot Donation Program. This initiative aims to provide children in need with access to upcycled boots, ensuring they can participate in football regardless of financial constraints, because did you know:



- **4.4 million children** are not able to participate in sports that interest them due to cost-of-living crisis.
- Nearly a **1/3** of UK parents have said their children missed out on sport opportunities due to economic reason.
- With around **105,000** children living in poverty in Birmingham their opportunities when it comes to sport and activities are limited.
- On average the cost of children's football boots is around £70
- 22 billion pairs of shoes are thrown away a year with 33 million running shoes discarded in land waste.
- Each pair of sport shoes requires 2257 gallons of water.
- For one pair of sport shoes has approximately a carbon footprint

of 14kg of CO2; this is equivalent to 17 pineapples!!

Our program will place donation bins at well-known sports venues including football pitches, local parks, and football club stadiums across Birmingham and Solihull. These bins will offer a convenient and eco-friendly way for individuals to donate old, outgrown or unused sports shoes. Our aim is to inspire people to contribute to this cause and help equip young children with the proper footwear they need to succeed in sports. We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to play sports, but financial barriers often prevent that from happening, by repurposing donated boots, we can help level the playing field and give kids the basics they need to be active, confident, and engaged in football and making sports accessible to all, regardless of their background or economic status.

How Boxy Works (The three ways to be involved!)

Donate: Drop off your old, outgrown, or unused football boots at our convenient donation bins, located at football pitches, local parks, and football club stadiums across Birmingham.

Exchange: Bring in your old boots and swap them for a pair of upcycled boots that fit. This ensures kids always have the right footwear as they grow, eliminating the need to buy new boots while reducing waste.

Buy Recycled Boots: Purchase a pair of high-quality, upcycled football boots at an affordable price. By choosing recycled boots, you're not only saving money but also supporting a sustainable future.



On the 7th February, Boxy Boots had a fund raiser day. Students were allowed to come to school in their trainers and make a £1 donation or donate an old pair of football boots. In total we **raised £397 and had 53 pairs of boots donated**. Thank you to everyone who supported the event!

For any other information feel free to contact us at boxyboots@outlook.com or on Instagram @boxyboots

YEAR 7 VISIT SYMPHONY HALL

This half term the Music Department took the whole of Year 7 to Symphony Hall to experience listening to a live orchestra. On Wednesday 12th February we went to watch the world class City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra perform in an hour-long concert especially for students in Key Stage 3. The conductor Kazuki Yamada, presenter Catherine Arlidge and the world-class musicians of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra took students on a magical musical journey exploring a variety of repertoire – including orchestral classics through to film favourites. It was a wonderful experience that the students really appreciated.



YEAR 10 DUKE OF EDINBURGH STUDENTS COMPLETE FIRST AID TRAINING

Our Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh students have taken an important step in preparing for their upcoming expedition by completing two evenings of first aid training. These sessions equipped them with essential

lifesaving skills to ensure they can respond effectively in an emergency while out on their expedition.

During the training, students learned key first aid techniques, including CPR, treating burns and fractures, managing bleeding, and recognising the signs of hypothermia. They also practised dealing with common outdoor injuries such as sprains, insect bites, and dehydration. The hands-on nature of the sessions allowed students to gain confidence in applying their skills in real-world scenarios.



This training is a crucial part of the DofE programme, reinforcing the importance of safety, teamwork, and resilience. Well done to all the students for their enthusiasm and commitment! We look forward to seeing them put their skills into practice on their expedition.

Mr Willis

READING WEBINARS FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Reading webinars 2024/25 for Parents/Carers

Thank you to all of you who joined our first two reading webinars in December & January. Please find a link to the **resources here.**

Please do join us for the next sessions on 13th March which will focus on help with your own reading skills. A TEAMs link will be sent out closer to the event.

Details on future events to support reading are listed below.

We are planning a series of webinars for parents/carers focusing on how to support their child with reading.

The focus and dates for sessions are listed below. The sessions will run from 4pm and will last approximately 20-30 minutes.

Resources from each session will be shared with parents/carers via newsletter and website after each event.

- Thursday 13th March 2025 @ 4pm Help with your own reading skills
- Thursday 15th May 2025 @ 4pm Accessible reading- things to consider to make reading more accessible
- Thursday 3rd July 2025 @ 4pm Tips on getting your child(ren) interested in reading. Fitting 'reading together' into your daily routine. Advice on how to bring a story to life when reading together.

Ms Cartin - Assistant Headteacher, SENCO

PUPIL SUPPORT GROUPS

Dyspraxia Pupil Support Group 2024-25

Spring Term date:

 Wednesday 26th February, Form Time, ICT 3

Dyslexia Pupil Voice Group 2024 -25

Spring Term dates:

- Kindness Raffle Wednesday 26th February, lunchtime, Learning Hub
- Wednesday 12th March, Form Time, ICT 3, focus: Positive about Dyslexia

STUDENT LEADERSHIP GROUP

Sixth Form Christmas Movie Night

Last December, our Sixth Form students gathered for a cosy and festive Christmas Movie Night, featuring the perfect romantic movie called 'The Holiday'. Students enjoyed a classic holiday film while indulging in popcorn, fizzy drinks, and sweet treats. Laughter and holiday spirit filled the room as everyone took a well-earned break from studies to relax with friends. The event was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the season, unwind before the holidays, and create lasting memories.

A big thank you to the Head Students for making it such a special evening - we can't wait for next year's edition!

WMAT Student Leadership Event - Achieving More Together

On January 27th, student leaders from Kings Norton Girls' School & Sixth Form, Hall Green Secondary School, and Swanshurst Secondary School came together for a transformative Student Leadership Event. The afternoon provided an exciting opportunity for young leaders to collaborate, develop key leadership skills, and share ideas on making a positive impact within their school and across the MAT.





The event featured a range of engaging workshops and interactive discussions focused on communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Students participated in activities designed to enhance their confidence, decision-making abilities, and understanding of effective leadership for example building the tallest tower using only paper and cellotape.

One of the highlights of the day was the opportunity to connect with like-minded students from different schools, allowing for a

rich exchange of perspectives and experiences. By the end of the event,

students left feeling empowered, motivated and ready to take on leadership roles within their respective schools and also together as a MAT.

A huge thank you to everyone who organised and participated in this fantastic event. The dedication and enthusiasm shown by all attendees truly reflected the potential of these future leaders. We look forward to seeing the positive changes they will bring to their schools and communities!



Miss Sikander

LANGUAGE AMBASSADORS

'Une lettre un sourire' Christmas Cards to French Care Homes

We were delighted to return after the Christmas break to discover that we had received some hand-written responses from some of the residents of one of the care homes we sent Christmas cards to. The residents of Maison Saint-Charles in Verrières-Le-Buisson (just outside of Paris) were touched by the cards that they received and thanked our pupils for taking the time to write to them. They wrote personal messages to some of our pupils, emphasising the importance of learning languages and some talked about their childhood experiences growing up in France during World War II. We hope to continue this link with them in the future.



Year 7 French Spelling Bee

Some of the KS4 and KS5 Ambassadors have been preparing a French Spelling Bee for Year 7 pupils. This will run on Tuesday 11th March at lunchtime in room 22. Pupils who are interested should wait for more information next half term but we hope to see lots of you there!

Duolingo Leaderboard

Some of the KS4 Ambassadors have been setting up a KNGS Duolingo leader board for both pupils and staff. Please refer to the email sent out last half term if you're interested in joining.

SPORTS UPDATE

Inter House Netball Results - December 2024

Year Group	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place
7	Goldfinch	Nightingale	Kingfisher
8	Goldfinch	Nightingale	Kingfisher
9	Nightingale	Goldfinch	Kingfisher
10	Nightingale	Goldfinch	Kingfisher
11	Kingfisher	Nightingale	Goldfinch
12	Nightingale	Kingfisher	Goldfinch
13	Kingfisher	Nightingale	Goldfinch

A fantastic turnout by all year groups. Well done to all that participated!

U19 West Midlands Regional Schools Netball Tournament - Sunday 2nd February

After successfully qualifying for the Regional Schools tournament back in October, the students competed against the top schools in the West Midlands. The team played some lovely netball throughout the tournament. They qualified for the semi-final after losing only one game in the group stage. The semi-final was a highly competitive game with KNGS losing out to the eventual winners of the tournament. The team were a credit to the school and they should be very proud of their performance. Well done to all involved!

Group stage:

Solihull School - Lost 14-10		
RGS Worcester - Won 15-10		
Wolverhampton Grammar - Won 16-10		
St Joesph's College - Won 21-3		
Shrewsbury School - Won 14-11		



PE Department

Semi-final:

Wrekin College - Lost 18-10

SUCCESSES

SUCCESS ON THE TRACK

Huge congratulations to **Araya Williams (Year 8)** on her recent successes on the track. Araya is a dedicated sprinter, regularly competing in the 60m, 100m, 150m & 200m for Birmingham Running, Athletics and Triathlon (BRAT) Club, where she trains religiously 3 times a week.

On Saturday 8th February, Araya travelled to the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield to compete at the England Athletics Under 15 Indoor Championships, 60m Competition, where she won her heats and semi finals, gaining a new Personal Best (PB) along the way.

In the final, Araya placed 4th beating some extremely tough competition, with her new PB in the 60m putting her currently 5th fastest in the country! Well done Araya - we are super proud of you and we can't wait to see how you do in the Spring/Summer outdoor season!



CAREERS & MATHS

STEM Ambassador Profile

Lieutenant Commander Hannah West Royal Navy

Requirements Manager, Air Platform Systems Project Team

MOD Abbey Wood, Bristol

Education

- GCSEs: Maths, Science, English Literature, English Language, Geography, History, French, Latin, Textiles, Technology
- A levels: Physics, Maths, Geography
- Degree: MEng Aeronautical Engineering, Imperial College
- MA International Liaison and Communication, University of Westminster, London
- Other: Chartered Engineer

Last week two of our Year 8 classes reached the end of stage D of the curriculum and completed a STEM ambassadors careers lesson incorporating literacy and maths in the

work place. They were introduced to Lieutenant Commander Hannah West a Royal Navy STEM ambassador.

Students created mind maps about Hannah's career and her role within the Navy and Stem. They were then presented with some data that required

organising and represent mathematically to analysis.

Students produced scatter graphs from the data and drew conclusions. They were keen to hear how mathematical knowledge they had learnt in stage D is used in a persons day-today job.



Ms Yeomans





WELLBEING AMBASSADOR TRAINING

On Tuesday 28th September, a group of Year 12 students spent the day training with Mrs Merrell, Sixth Form Pastoral Support, to become Sixth Form Wellbeing Ambassadors. The Sixth Formers spent the day immersed in a range of written and physical activities; individual, pair and group-work.

This programme is in collaboration with the 'Worth It' organisation and encourages young people to take charge of their own wellbeing and offer support and encouragement to their peers.

What is this Programme?

Wellbeing Ambassadors are a group of Sixth Form Students who are passionate about improving the mental health and wellbeing at KNGS.

They hope to create an environment which empowers young people to take control of their own mental health.

This is the 3rd cohort of students trained to become Wellbeing Ambassadors. The plan is for them to work with identified students in the new Pastoral Base. Students will learn ways to improve their own wellbeing and strategies that help reduce stress in school and at home.

Alongside this, the newly-qualified Ambassadors will further develop their own skills by working with staff to support students promoting the need to talk about our mental health throughout the school.

This is a fantastic opportunity and Mrs Merrell was thoroughly impressed with the way in which the Sixth Formers engaged with this programme.



Mrs Merrell





Roisin H

Lily M

Emily C

Grace V

Evie G

Esme M

Rowan I

HOUSE NEWS

Our new 2025 Student House Team have all been appointed and have been thrown straight in to the deep end with their 1st House Event being a big one. They rose to the challenge well with special thanks going to the House Captains and their Deputies.

Last week saw the House Variety Show. Each house was set the task of putting on a 15 minute show slot with points being awarded for; variety and quality of entertainment. There were bonus points for including staff members in their show.

On Thursday 6th February KS3 had an extended lunch to watch **Kingfisher**, **Nightingale** & **Goldfinch's** shows. KS4&5 got the chance to watch the show on Friday 7th. The hall was rammed full and both audiences provided a fantastic atmosphere. There were singers, dancers, musical performances, poetry along with some comedy sections.

It was great to see some staff performing too – students gave a rapturous reception to Mr Houston's cheerleading dance with Year 7's, Mr Hextall's drum solo accompanied by some bike tricks from Sam in Year 13. Mrs Barron de Burgh's flute performance and Mr Tabberer's guitar and song performance. The quality of student performances was impressive and it was great to see the confidence of some Year 7 performers. Well done to all who performed and supported.

Our MFL Faculty have started organising next terms main House event – their student ambassadors are organising an international themed House Quiz in the hall.

Mr Steele



SIXTH FORM NEWS

Year 12 Work Experience

The Work Experience programme was launched to students in September 2024 with the week taking place between the 10th and 14th February.

Many Year 12 students found exciting and interesting places to carry out their work experience giving them an insight into the world of work and upon return to sixth form they will be asked to reflect on this valuable experience that we hope has enabled students to build their soft skills, their employability skills, and be more confident in their choices post-18.

Challenge Day

For this year's Challenge Day, Year 13 took part in an off-timetable day that included workshops provided by external providers. All of the workshops were put together to support students and signpost additional services and advice. We would like to thank West Midlands Fire Service who came to provide a session on driver safety, HSBC who provided students with invaluable skills to protect themselves online. We also want to thank Academy, our school catering company, for providing a really fabulous session covering food budgeting, menu planning and cooking a meal from scratch! We hope this day was really useful for our students, it certainly smelt fabulous!

Brum ChangeMakers

This half term a group of sixth form students are working with in in Unity, a local youth charity, to develop and be involved in supporting a school or local project that they develop. They are currently working on ideas. The representatives from inUnity have been incredibly impressed by the students drive, enthusiasm and commitment.

Students Finance 2025

As our students are starting to receive offers from universities and we emailed the following advice from the from the SLC website to them. We will also have a session on student finance with the Year 13s as part of their tutor programme next half term.

SLC is encouraging prospective students to starting planning their student finance as Student Finance England (SFE) launches its <u>mailing list</u> The full-time, undergraduate application service for the 25/26 academic year is expected to open in March 2025, and by signing up, students will be among the first to receive an email when the application service goes live.

SLC advises students to apply as early as possible for their student finance, even if they don't have a confirmed place on their course. This helps to ensure that their funding is in place at the start of term. Students in England can apply for Tuition Fee Loans to cover their fees and Maintenance Loans to help with their living costs.

CAREERS

Announcements

There's lots of useful information and links on our school website for our parents and carers here: https://www.kngs.co.uk/curriculum/careers/ We have also added some really informative links and details about. This highlights future employment demands and offers information about career opportunities. Definitely worth a look!

Careers website of the term: Skills for Careers

https://www.skillsforcareers.education.gov.uk/pages/skills-for-life

National Apprenticeship Week 10th- 16th February

The school used National Apprenticeship Week as a way to highlight this wonderful pathway. This year we had a display in the front entrance, in lessons teachers were able to highlight the apprenticeship options linked to their specific subject areas and we hosted lunch time quizzes to support understanding. We hope that this week has been useful for students and we have been able to signpost where further information on apprenticeships can be found. Please click on the link below for further information:



National Apprenticeship Week

Year 9 Options

Year 9 took part in a full GCSE Options Day. During the day students were able to speak with current Year 11 students about GCSEs to help inform their choices. They utilised **Unifrog**, our one-stop-shop online careers platform to find out about other post-16 pathways, including college, sixth form and apprenticeships. We were also really fortunate to have HSBC involved and they provided and interview workshop as one of the sessions and were also involved in our careers panel. A massive thank you again to the parents and carers wo were able to come in to be part of out 'live' careers forum. The whole day was invaluable in providing students to advice and guidance on their next steps.

Work Experience

All Year 12 completed their work experience in February with all students finding or supported to find places. Year 10 are busy looking for placements for their week starting July 14th.



If you think you can help by offering a placement to the school please get in touch with Mr Ali (Sali@kngs.co.uk)

Job of the Term (provided by MyPath):

Anthropologist

JOB OF THE WEEK - EPISODE #204 - ANTHROPOLOGIST - YouTube



Remember! If you feel able to support our careers programme by being a member of one of our careers forum panels please get in touch with Miss Ledwidge (sledwidge@kngs.co.uk)

KNGS SOCIAL MEDIA

We wanted to share with you that at KNGS we have added BlueSky to the range of Social Media channels that we use.



BlueSky is a similar style platform to X (formally Twitter) but you are able to view posts and updates without having to login or create an account.

As a reminder, you will see listed on the right, the platforms we use at KNGS to share and celebrate all the amazing things going on in our school community:







BMet offers a variety of additional learning support depending upon the individual's needs. We offer support to students with SEND with their transition into college and beyond.

- Interview with Inclusive Support team to assess and discuss support needs
- Transition visits and taster days
- A personalised support plan
- In class support (where applicable and stated on EHCP)
- Support in the Study Centres
- Exam concessions (where applicable). Please note concessions will only be granted when students attend the Study Centres for support

For more information visit **bmet.ac.uk** Call **0121 446 4545**

