

26th January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am going to leave the letter to speak for itself this week, but my goodness has the school been a hive of activity! As you will read and see, the experiences and opportunities for our students beyond the classroom really do intentionally develop their character and everything we do is because we firmly believe that all students should have high ambition for themselves. Enjoy reading about our wonderful week.

### **Active Minds**

This week, students are being told about Tracking Not Watching in class which links to our **Responsibility** STEP. This Active Mind element concentrates on the way a teacher circulates around the class tracking what students are doing. When tracking, teachers are looking to spot mistakes and misconceptions in student work – this is often more effective than questioning from the front as a teacher will be able to assess more students. Students are then supported to ensure they use the teacher's feedback to improve their efforts.

Mr Trevor Lee  
*Assistant Headteacher: Teaching & Learning*

### **Holocaust Memorial Assembly**

This week students were learning about International Holocaust Remembrance Day and our Y11 students Erika P And Lily O spoke with compassion about their experiences of the Dachau concentration camp during their recent history trip to Munich. Each year group sat compelled by the retelling of their visit and, although a difficult subject to share, students will have left wanting to learn more in their history lessons and self-reflective of their own personal situations. Key takeaways for students were the need to promote tolerance, that situations can escalate if left unchecked, and the need to learn from history.

Mr Steve Pritchard  
*Deputy Headteacher*

### **'Poetry Live' - Bristol**

The trip to 'Poetry Live' in Bristol, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January, was a fantastic experience. Having the opportunity to see poets perform the exact poems that we are studying for our GCSE Literature exam gave a whole new insight into what the poems mean and the intentions of the poets themselves.

The emotions the poets showed through performing live was heart-pounding and so moving. Being able to discover more about the process of writing the poems, as well as the poets themselves, gave me many more new ideas to write about.

We also heard some new poems from outside of the GCSE curriculum and I feel that this really inspired young people, like me, to get creative and to find a new passion or hobby in poetry. As the legendary John Agard said: "Make words your friend". We were also able to hear from AQA's Chief Examiner who gave model answers and helpful ways to achieve higher marks.

The young audience were also given the amazing opportunity to ask questions, which was a great chance to get more details and insight. I personally loved this, as I was able to ask the poet Imtiaz Dharker who inspired her. Overall, 'Poetry Live' was a really amazing experience and I would suggest that all of Year 10 and 11 should go if given the opportunity. A huge thank you to Miss de Carles for organising the trip.



Holly M  
Student - 11D

*\*Photo caption: The legend that is John Agard.*

### **Charity Bake Sale**

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January we held a bake sale to raise money for The Brain Tumour Charity. Students from Year 8, as well as various members of staff, made an incredible variety of cupcakes, flapjacks, and cookies. Thank you to all of the students who spent time making the delicious treats, it was great to see the pride taken in this. Thank you as well to everyone who donated, we raised an amazing £172.08.

Mrs Libbie Herbert  
Mathematics

### **Student (Sports) Leadership**

Students in Year 8, 9 & 10 have the opportunity to be a sports leader. Through this role they develop key skills such as communication, organisation, resilience and confidence working as part of a team. They often have to make lots of quick decisions at an event adapting to the players and the environment through to carefully planning when delivering a session. They are fantastic ambassadors of the school as they welcome hundreds of children to events and are an important part of inspiring those children to be active and to feel at ease when they arrive. Our leaders also deliver some before school and after school activities in local primary schools. Our sports leaders fulfill many different roles including mentor, official, coach, team manager, pitch manager and motivator.

We are very proud of the time and commitment given by these students to enable so many children to enjoy being active in a variety of settings and activities. Without them many of the events could not go ahead. During Term 1&2 they helped to deliver 12 different events which involved approximately 1,100 primary children. They also ran an in-house dodgeball tournament for Year 7 involving about 75% of the year group. We have lots more events coming up this term and we are currently planning to deliver bench ball, inclusive football, archery and multi-sport during our lunchtime sessions.

Ms Helen Pauling  
School Games Organiser

## **Y9 Amazing Ambition & Resilience**

The science team have been blown away this week by Year 9 who have all delivered some amazing Famelab Academy talks in their lessons as part of a countywide competition run by Cheltenham Science Festival. Independently researching, then preparing a speech on any STEM subject of their choice is not an easy thing to do. They were then challenged to give a 2-3 minute talk, without notes, to their classes. The resilience and determination shown has been fantastic. We now have 7 students who will take part in our school final in February where we will choose a winner to go through to represent Kingshill. The pride and joy shown on the faces of all the students and their teachers after giving their talks was so great to see. These are such valuable skills to learn for the future.

A huge well done to everyone.

Mrs Pearson  
*Head of Science*

## **Parent Forum**

A huge thank you to the parents who joined me on Tuesday morning. We had an open discussion about the strategy for the school and then went to see it unfolding before our eyes in the classroom. We finished by identifying key focus areas for the next meeting so do look out for the next opportunity to come and join us at the end of term 4.

## **Farewells**

Next week, we bid farewell to two incredible members of our team, and while we're sad to see them go, we're also excited for the new adventures that await them.

Firstly, Mr Stanley Lucas, who has been a dedicated Teaching Assistant since October 2023, is embarking on a thrilling journey. His path leads him to Istanbul on his way to Japan, where he'll be mastering the art of teaching English as a second language. Stanley has brought a special warmth to our school, and although we'll miss him dearly, we wholeheartedly wish him the best of luck in this exciting new chapter of his life.

Additionally, we extend our heartfelt goodbyes to Jo Johnson, who has been an integral part of our family for an incredible 17+ years. Jo began her journey with us as Learning Support in 2006 and transitioned to the role of Student Receptionist in 2010. Her dedication, kindness, and hard work have left an indelible mark on both staff and students alike. As she concludes her remarkable career and moves into a well-deserved retirement, there are truly no words to express how much she will be missed.

## **Closing Remarks**

As a final note, I wanted to share a poem about the New Year from one of our poet Laureates, Eliza L from 8A. A reminder for us all of the optimism a new year can bring and a reminder that, at any time of the year, anything is possible.

### ***A Story Yet to be Written: A Poem for the New Year***

When you're counting down the minutes to midnight  
Anything is possible. It's like opening a present –  
That feeling it could all be just perfect,  
That it could all go right.  
A story yet to be written,  
A song yet to be sung.

It's like waiting for a flower to bloom  
Not even realising just how beautiful it could be.  
It's a feeling of chance, rolling a dice and crossing your fingers.  
So, buckle up and get ready, this could be our year.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Jo Lindley  
Headteacher

### **Sports Update**

**Cricket:** Kingshill u15s (combination of Year 9 and 10 students), played Farmors on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January in the District Final of the Indoor Cricket County Cup at Kingshill. Kingshill made a score of 136 run for 4 wickets (with all players having the chance to bat). Farmors in reply made 108 runs for 6 wickets (with the help of their PE teacher who batted). Congratulations to all the boys who demonstrated all of the Kingshill STEPs and represented the school so well. On to the County Final we go!

**Rugby:** Our U14 Rugby County Cup Semi Final has been arranged for Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb at Kingshill (2.30pm Kick Off) v Cleeve School. Parents are very welcome to come and support the boys, please park in the gravel car park. Victory in the game would lead to a Cup Final at Kingsholme Stadium (Home of Gloucester Rugby) in early March.

**Girls Football:** Over the past 2 weeks we have taken an U14s and an U16s football team to Rednock School to compete in 7-a-side tournament against schools from the Stroud District. Both teams conducted themselves brilliantly demonstrating respect, pride, and ambition. The standard of football across the district is high, and it was great to see both teams be competitive in every one of their fixtures. The U14s won their first fixture of the tournament with a hat-trick from Bethany A (Year 9). All players showed great determination and brilliant teamwork skills. Well done!! - Miss Herbert and Mrs Hussey

### **Upcoming events**

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| Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> January   | UK Intermediate Maths Challenge                |
| Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February   | Y9 Play - 'Calling it Out'                     |
| Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February   | Y7, 8, 9 – Gymnastics leaders/coaching session |
| Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February   | Meeting for Barcelona Trip students 6pm-7pm    |
| <b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February –<br/>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February</b> | <b>TERM BREAK</b>                              |