Newsletter

Friday 16th January 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we enter into 2026, I wanted to share with you my thoughts on where we are here at Kingslea currently and where we are with education in the country in general.

As a school we really are in a great place, with a school and a staff team I am very, very proud of. There are over 50 people who work at Kingslea—be it as teachers, teaching assistants, in the Inclusion Team, in the office, as part of the site team and in other roles. Each person plays a role that adds value to your child's education and wellbeing, day in, day out. My bottom line has always been, 'Would I want my own children at Kingslea?' My answer is a definite, 'Yes'. You can clearly see why: high academic outcomes, staff stability, high levels of pupil wellbeing, varied and engaging curriculum, the number of clubs, the range of events our children take part in, the waiting list for places and perhaps my favourite, 'the feel of the school.' In short, we are in a good place. I see us as a combination of Singapore (high achieving and very well organised, but without the great food), Finland (the happiest country in the world, but without the snow) and Switzerland (who just seem to do things very successfully in their own way, but without their chocolate and finances)!

Do we get everything right? No, we certainly do not. Are there areas we can improve in? Absolutely. Will we ever be content with what we provide? Absolutely not.

Obviously, what we provide and can do is impacted on the national picture for education. These are my thoughts on where we are, and national changes in motion for the next few years.

Recently there has been a curriculum review, which—certainly from a primary school perspective—will lead to little change, and which I think was a missed opportunity to look at how engaging and relevant the secondary school curriculum is in this day and age.

We are waiting for the outcomes of the government's Special Educational Needs review. On a **national** level, the SEND system is 'broken,' according to the National Audit Office. Although spending on children with SEND has doubled over the past decade, 'the system is financially unsustainable and in urgent need of reform'. Whilst our teachers and Inclusion Team do an excellent job ensuring we are an inclusive school and our outcomes for children with SEND are good, we are working in a system that requires urgent and radical reform. I fear that this will not happen.

I believe we are the most accessible public service, coupled with society's and the government's expectations of the role of schools continuing to rise; meanwhile, we are being 'asked' to make 'efficiency savings' ('budget cuts' in plain English) of around 2% of our budget. Obviously, this presents a significant challenge, particularly for small schools and schools that aren't full. Kingslea is an above-average-sized primary school and we are full, but still the challenge remains.

The final change is OFSTED. Schools have changed enormously over the last 20 years, but OFSTED hasn't changed in that time. OFSTED has inspected schools every four or five years in a very similar manner for decades. Imagine working in a business with over 500 employees (at Kingslea equivalent to our 428 children and 50 staff) and you are audited/judged/monitored so rarely by three people who arrive at school with a small number of data sets and judge you after two days. They write a highly-subjective report and leave, only to come back four to five years later. I'm sure you'd love that lack of accountability! I don't.

I think education is too important for schools to be held accountable, supported and reviewed so infrequently. I think OFSTED, or an equivalent body, should visit schools every term and really get to know the school: what's working, what's not working, setting short and long-term goals, directing particular schools to work together so the education system as a whole improves.

In summary, as a school we are doing well, but the national context within which we are working could do with some work. Happy New Year, Alexis Conway

Spotlight on Homework

We have been extremely impressed with the quality of homework across the school, for example Year 4, who were asked to make an ancient Egyptian exhibit for a classroom museum display.

The children have been very creative and used a variety of resources, including clay, cardboard, paint, papier mâché and gemstones to make an array of objects.

Egyptian people believed in the afterlife and were often buried with items from their life on Earth, which they believed would sustain them in the life beyond. The Year 4 classroom display includes many everyday objects, items from the burial process as well as monuments and special artefacts from this ancient civilization. Examples include the Rosetta Stone, which unlocked the secret code of the hieroglyphic writing system, and canopic jars decorated with the heads of gods (inside they traditionally contained the organs of the deceased). Other exhibits include cross sections of pyramid models, chariots, barges for sailing on the River Nile, gemstone-encrusted necklaces, shabtis (small figurines that come to life to serve the nobles in the afterlife), and masks of the boy king, Tutankhamun. The Year 4 staff are incredibly impressed with the creativity and artistic talents of the children and grateful for the support from parents in the making process.

Artist of the Half Term

Each half term we showcase creativity at Kingslea by celebrating the Artist of the Half Term. One artist is chosen from each year group by their teachers. Their work is then shared in assembly. All the children receive a certificate and an overall winner receives a well-deserved art-themed prize. All the children chosen have their work on display for the other children to admire throughout the term.

Artist of the Half Term Spring 1:

Amna - RR, May - 1HU, Albert - 2D,

Rory - 3BW, Edie—4B, Joshua—5C,

Overall winner: Evelyn 6W

Creativity, Confidence and Community is all about drama

Our Drama Club has had a fantastic start to the year, bringing together an enthusiastic and talented group of children who share a passion for performing. Each week, the hall buzzes with imagination as the children explore new characters, develop their acting skills and support one another through creative challenges.

Last term, the club performed 'Edith's Wartime Scrapbook', a powerful and moving production that blends storytelling, history, and drama. The pupils worked hard to bring the characters and scenes to life, learning not only their lines, but also how to express emotion, build tension and work as an ensemble. Their dedication and excitement was clear to see when they took to the stage in December in front of an audience of over 100 people.

Being part of Drama Club offers pupils a wide range of benefits that go far beyond the stage. It helps them develop confidence as they present in front of others, improve communication skills, learn to listen carefully and support their peers. Drama encourages creativity, allowing children to think imaginatively and problem-solve in fun, expressive ways. It builds teamwork and resilience, as pupils rely on each other and rehearse until everything comes together.

Most importantly, Drama Club provides a space where children can express themselves freely, make new friends, and discover their own unique voice.

We're incredibly proud of our young performers.

Pupil Governors

We would like to thank our past Pupil Governors for their hard work and commitment over the last year. They have made a valuable contribution to school life - being involved in key fundraisers, such as the annual Welly Walk and Kingslea Fest, and helping to re-position our important 'buddy bench'. They also organised food bank collections, visited Horsham Matters, set up Christmas post boxes and helped to deliver hundreds of Christmas cards across the school!

We are thrilled to welcome our new Pupil Governors for 2026:

Reception	Squirrels: Amelia, Rabbits : Dominic	Year 1	1B: Lisandru, 1HU: Phoebe
Year 2	2A: Orla, 2D: Isla	Year 3	3S: Sham, 3BW: Ivy
Year 4	4B: Jasper, 4W: Amelia	Year 5	5H: Catalina T, 5C: Mpho
Year 6	6C: Luke, 6W: Abby		

This year, the selection process was decided by teachers, rather than a class vote. This allowed for careful consideration of the attributes needed to be effective in this role. These attributes strongly reflect our Core 4 principles of perseverance, creativity, respect and collaboration. We are confident that our new Pupil Governors will represent our pupils thoughtfully and responsibly.

Notes from the School Office

PLANNED ABSENCE

- **We understand there may be the odd occasion when your child will be out of school for reasons other than illness or medical appointments, i.e. family funeral, religious festivals etc.**
- **To ensure that the office and the Class Teacher are aware of any planned absence in advance, please complete our 'Request for Absence in School Time' form using the link here at least 7 days prior to the absence.**

SPRING TERM	
Friday 16th January	4.00pm Y5&6 Table Tennis Competition @ Forest
Monday 19th January	Young Voices @ O2 (KS2 Choir)
Tuesday 20th January	Y1 Rainbow Theatre Workshop 11.00am Y5&6 Regional Football Finals @ Sussex FA
Wednesday 21st January	2.00pm Music Masterclass @ Forest (selected children)
Thursday 22nd January	10.00am Y3&4 Netball Festival @ Millais (selected children)
Friday 23rd January	4.00pm Y5&6 Dodgeball @ The Bridge
Tuesday 27th January	5:00pm Smartphone-Free Workshop (children & parents) 6.00pm Full Governing Body
Wednesday 28th January	9.00am Parent Workshop & Classroom Visit 10.00am Y6 Indoor Athletics @ Forest
Thursday 29th January	12.45pm Girls Tag Rugby Festival @ Millais
Friday 30th January	4.00pm Table Tennis Skills Festival @ Forest
Monday 2nd February	Y6 Bikeability Week (Monday-Friday) 9.00am Y3 Big Schools Birdwatch
Tuesday 3rd February	Y3&4 & Y5&6 Cross Country @ Christ's Hospital (selected children)
Thursday 5th February	1.15pm Y2 Geography Walk
Friday 6th February	3.15pm-6.30pm KLASS Discos 4.00pm Y3&4 Dodgeball @ The Bridge
Monday 9th February	Y5 Bikeability 3.40pm-7.00pm Parents' Evening & Book Fair
Tuesday 10th February	Y5 Bikeability
Wednesday 11th February	3.40pm-7.00pm Parents' Evening & Book Fair
HALF TERM : MONDAY 16TH—FRIDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2026 **Holiday Club : Tuesday 17th & Wednesday 18th February**	
Tuesday 24th February	Y4 Maps Workshop 2.00pm Class 3BW First Swimming Lesson @ Pavilions
Wednesday 25th February	9.45am Y5&6 Badminton @ Kingslea
Thursday 26th February	Y2 Arundel Wetlands Visit Y3 Horsham Park visit 10.00am Y4&5 Ultimate Frisbee Festival @ Millais
Friday 27th February	4.00pm Y6 Cup Football @ Tanbridge
Monday 2nd March	12.30pm Y3&4 Football Festival @ Heron Way
Tuesday 3rd March	12.30pm Dance Festival Rehearsal @ The Hawth 7.00pm Dance Festival @ The Hawth
Wednesday 4th March	2.00pm Drama Masterclass @ Forest (selected children)
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day 9.15am Governors Resources Committee
Friday 6th March	4.00pm Girls Cup Football @ Tanbridge
Friday 13th March	4.00pm Y5 Cup Football @ Tanbridge
Monday 16th March	Y5&6 Football Festival @ Heron Way
Tuesday 17th March	Y5 Greenwich Trip
Wednesday 18th March	10.00am Y4 Indoor Athletics @ The Bridge (selected children) 2.15pm YR Stay & Play
Thursday 19th March	Y3 Wakehurst Trip 2.15pm YR Stay & Play
Friday 20th March	4.00pm Y4 Cup Football @ Tanbridge 2.15pm YR Stay & Play
Tuesday 24th March	9.00am Y4 Horsham Park Walk
Wednesday 25th March	Y3 Indoor Athletics @ The Bridge (selected children)
Friday 27th March	Last Day of Term
EASTER HOLIDAY : MONDAY 30TH MARCH—FRIDAY 10TH APRIL 2026 **Holiday Club—Tuesday 31st March & Wednesday 1st April**	

Spring Term 2026			
First Day	Monday 5th January 2026	**Last Day**	Friday 27th March 2026
Half Term	Monday 16th – Friday 20th February	**INSET Days**	

Summer Term 2026			
First Day	Monday 13th April 2026	**Last Day**	Friday 17th July 2026
Half Term	Monday 25th May-Friday 29th May	**INSET Days**	Friday 26th June 2026 Monday 20th July 2026 Tuesday 21st July 2026 Wednesday 22nd July 2026