

The KD Times

KASSIM DARWISH GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS



**KD
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL
FOR BOYS**

FAITH • LEARNING • LIFE

Hadith of the Term

“Whoever takes a path in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to walk in one of the paths to Paradise. Indeed the angels will lower their wings in great pleasure with the one who seeks knowledge”

Sunan Abi Dawud

A New Normal

KD Grammar reopened its doors after a long lockdown for all students, including the new Year 7s, in September. Although Year 10 students had had returned in June, the building still felt empty without the rest of our students. The return to school, however, would bring a different set of rules this year.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Welcome	2
New Staff	3
End of an Era	4
New Beginnings	7
Extra Curricular	10
Scented November	14
Safeguarding	23

On the first day of the new term, we were visited by the Manchester Evening News, wanting to discuss our Covid-safe restrictions. The students spoke to the reporters about how they had felt during lockdown, separated from their friends. Many students commented they were glad to be back in school, with a sense of routine and normality back in their lives.

Bilal, from Form 8A, said it was different being back. He initially found it difficult wearing a face mask and his glasses, due to the movement of the glasses and the steaming up, “If you meet your friends, you can’t shake their hands. Most of us haven’t seen each other in a long time, it’s great to be reunited.”



Welcome Back!

A warm welcome from our Executive Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Guardians & Friends of KDGB

Assalamu'Alaikum

Welcome to our first issue of this academic year 20-21. I hope everyone is well and in the best of health and *imaan*. *Ameen*.

What a year 2020 has been for everyone! When January 2020 started we were preparing for inspection, forward-planning for Ramadan, as well as planning many activities/trips. Unfortunately life changed for everyone when we were struck with this pandemic and the subsequent lockdown.

This has been, and still is, a very testing time for us all and I pray we get through this difficult time by ensuring that we take care of our own wellbeing and everyone around us.

Alhumdulillah, this academic year we were able to come back to school at the beginning of term, to teach and support our students so they can gain maximum benefit in their learning. Students are the heart of our school, and we were overjoyed to see everyone, safe and happy.

Sadly, due to the ongoing Covid-restrictions, we haven't been able to open our doors for Macmillan Coffee Morning, PTFA meetings, parents evenings or opening evenings. Therefore, this newsletter is a prime opportunity for us to be able to share with parents and friends the different activities and successes that have taken place during this term alone.

Firstly, I would like to extend a particularly warm welcome to our new parents/guardians. I pray that your sons have settled into school life and are thoroughly enjoying this new experience. I would like to re-affirm that the school is always here to support your son. We welcome and seek parental support throughout the time your son is with us. We share a common aim to help your son to achieve his very best spiritually, academically and socially, so please maintain contact with his Form Tutor and Head of Year in particular, so that relevant support can be provided.

Congratulations to former year 11 students who attained their GCSEs in various subjects under these difficult circumstances. They did exceptionally well and the results are a reflection of their hard work and determination throughout their five years at KDGB. Well done and best wishes for a successful future.

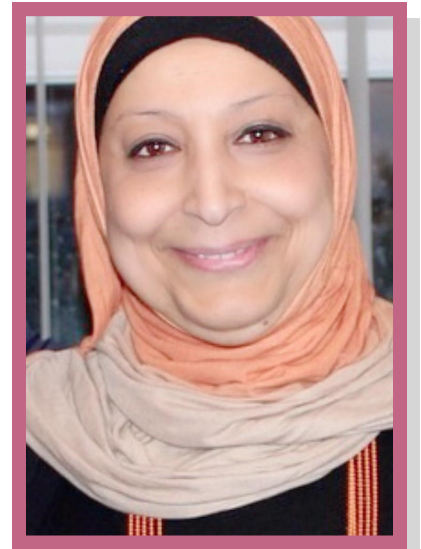
Thank you to all parents; for their support and understanding, teachers; for their hard work to provide effective learning, remotely as well face-to-face and our non-teaching staff for their continued support through their various roles. It has been a challenge for everyone on a daily basis, but with effective team work, we have continued to educate our students and maintain their well-being.

As usual we have been very busy with many virtual and face-to-face activities and events taking place. I hope you all enjoy reading about them in this newsletter. Please feel free to share your thoughts with us.

Insha'Allah I hope and pray that this academic year is filled with success and our students continue to excel in their work. My thoughts and prayers are with all families that have suffered, or are suffering, because of this pandemic; may Allah (SWT) make it easy for everyone *insha'Allah*. *Ameen*.

Walsalam

Mona Mohamed
Executive Head Teacher



**Mrs. Mohamed, Executive Head
Teacher of KD Grammar School
for Boys**

Staff News

This September saw the addition of new staff members to the KDGB team, as we continue to expand our departments. We have had additions to the English, P.E., Science and Administration departments in school.

Name: Mr. Fisher
 Department: English
 Favourite Book: The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
 Favourite Movie: Gladiator
 Tell us about yourself: "I grew up in Sunderland, studied in Birmingham, and now live in Manchester. I have always had a love for English, and I am an avid reader. I am a keen sports fan – staunch supporter of Sunderland AFC. You can see me in the back of shot of Season 2 of 'Sunderland Till I Die' on Netflix. I was also interviewed once on BBC's Match of the Day 2 (when Sunderland were relegated.)"



Name: Mrs. Battye
 Department: Science
 Favourite Book: The Witches by Roald Dahl
 Favourite Movie: Star Wars: Return of the Jedi
 Tell us about yourself: "I studied Zoology with Marine Zoology at University before starting my PGCE. I enjoy going to the theatre and watching musicals, my favourite being Back to the Future. I am an adrenaline junkie and love exploring nature by walking. My favourite science has to be Physics!"

Welcome

Name: Mr. Unsworth
 Department: P.E.
 Favourite Book: The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien
 Favourite Movie: Gladiator
 Tell us about yourself: "I was born in Liverpool, and still live there today. I support Liverpool FC, and enjoy going to watch them play at Anfield whenever I get the chance. Although my speciality is P.E., when I was younger I really loved studying History in school. My hobbies include playing football, and going on hikes. Snowdonia National Park is one of my absolute favourite places to go walking. In my spare time, I like to read and I am currently reading 'The Power of Habit' by Charles Duhigg."

Name: Mrs. Zia
 Department: Administration
 Favourite Book: Anything history related
 Favourite Movie: Gladiator
 Tell us about yourself: "I am originally from Lahore, Pakistan, but I have lived in the UK for over 22 years. I have spent time in Newcastle, Liverpool and now live in Manchester. I enjoy reading, walking, and spending time with my family as I have two children. I also love swimming and travelling, but these are on hold for now!"

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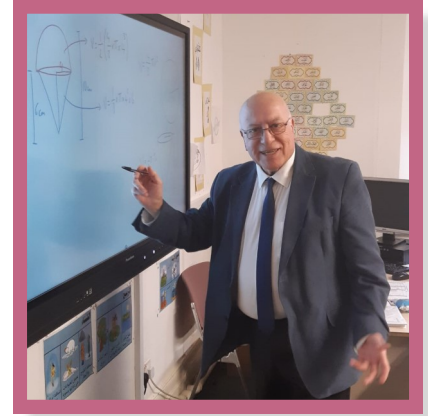
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The End of an Era

It is with a heavy heart that we said a fond farewell to Mr. Abdula at the end of the Autumn term. Mr. Abdula was one of the longest-serving members of staff at KDGB and was known affectionately seen as a father figure to many.

With a keen passion for Maths, and a love and care for his students, he has been an exemplary role model to his students, providing them with support, even long after they have left school.



Mrs. Mohamed said, “Mr. Abdula has been a pleasure to work alongside all these years. His commitment and dedication have always shone through. We will truly miss him, but we thank him for all his years of hard work and hope he enjoys his retirement.”

As well as being an outstanding teacher, Mr. Abdula was known for his legendary BBQ fish. Always taking the lead in school barbeques, his delicious cooking will also be missed, alongside his many jokes.



It's not just staff who will miss Mr. Abdula, but also the students. Upon hearing he would be leaving, the new Year 7s were shocked. When asked how they felt about his retirement, the students said that they were “extremely saddened” because “he is the funniest teacher in school!” Some students declared Mr. Abdula to be their “favourite teacher” because “he is so kind, he’s the best, he’s always so caring.” Maths featured highly on

their list of favourite subjects “We’ve never enjoyed Maths before as much as we have since we came to KDGB.”

We wish Mr. Abdula the best of this world, and the next, and pray he is rewarded immensely for all the students he has helped and supported over the years. His leaving is truly the end of an era in the history of KD Grammar School for Boys.

We are sorry to say a fond farewell to Mr Hussain, Head Teacher, Mrs Ahmed from the English department and Mr Dadabhai from the P.E. department. We thank them wholeheartedly for their commitment and service to the school and wish them well in their future endeavours. They will surely be missed!

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Covid Restrictions

Continued from Page 1...

Mrs Mohamed, Executive Head Teacher of KD Grammar School for Boys, said she was glad everyone was back safely and adapting so quickly to the changes, including socially distanced prayers, one-way systems and socially-distanced break

times. "There is nothing that replaces face to face (learning). It's for their mental well-being...it's not just the children, it's the adults. People can't go to work if their children are at home."

"Most of us haven't seen each other in a long time, it's great to be reunited."

Bilal, 8A



KD — where learning never stops

Lockdown brought a new form of learning to KD Grammar in March—the much discussed Online Learning. As schools were told to get prepared for closure, staff at KDGB were working hard to ensure all students were ready to use Google Classrooms for online learning.

Setting up virtual classrooms was the easy part, but getting students used to a new way of learning so quickly required the support of teachers, office staff, parents, and the students themselves.

As we came back from the Spring Holidays and students settled in to their virtual learning platform, Ramadan came to visit us. In school, Ramadan is a big event in the calendar—timetables change, activities are added to the day, and the atmosphere is one of unity and support. There were many advantages to a Ramadan at home, but with the mosques closed, we knew our students were missing the Ramadan spirit in school. And so we launched the online Ramadan programme—activities for students to do at home, but discuss online. We had poems, Eid card designs and heartfelt du'a. The lockdown might have separated us physically, but we were united in spirit.

Post-Ramadan, we moved a full live-lesson timetable, along with online extra-curricular activities taking place, including Debate club and Sports Week. Nothing replaces face to face learning, but we know, whatever the future holds, at KD we will never stop learning, *insha'Allah*.

An Outstanding Ramadan 1441 AH

Ramadan with a difference in 2020
Did not leave our stomachs empty
In lockdown we got creative
to the point our mothers shouted
"Ramadans not about food!"
But still we associate it.
We must think about the needy
And stop being so greedy
My sadqa box all decorated
Contributing to it daily
A month full of Barakah
A month of peace
No entry into the Masjid
instead our family is our Halaqa
Longer hours in bed
No schedules to follow
Punctual salah is our timetable
Prostrating for closeness to our creator.
Our eyes are blessed in the sacred text
The special gift revealed to our Beloved S.A.W
On the special night of decree.
Al Quran, truly the best.
Darkness of the nights
Eyes swell, fingers rotate, hands lifted up in prayer.
Bringing light in to our hearts
Taking away the envy and despair
Preparing for the celebration
Eid al-Fitr we await you
Hearts are yearning for congregation.
Family gatherings replaced this year
We compensate with virtual affection.
Ramadan with a difference in 2020
Alhamdulillah

Ghiyas, 9A

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Farewell Year 11

Mrs. Grover's goodbye message for Year 11 students

It has truly been a pleasure watching students growing up, from being unexperienced boys to becoming an exceptional group of young people! I don't really need exam results to tell me how remarkable every one of them was. In fact, myself and every member of staff at KDGB is so proud of the hard work and

commitment that they have shown throughout their short five year 5 stay at KD Grammar school for boys.

I really hope that they will all look back at school life and have fond memories of being at KD Grammar School for boys. I will certainly not forget the Oreos cheesecakes, the perfect personification of



Pablo Escobar, the unforgettable moments shared in French and Spanish lessons, the amazing talent of our young *huffadh*, and all the positive changes that happened thanks to the Student Council. All those cherished moments will remain forever printed in my heart and mind.

I pray each and every one of them goes on to achieve their dreams whatever they may be and 'surely what comes after is better for you than that which has gone before' (Surat Al-Duhaa 93:4).



Times may be tough at the minute and I imagine some are feeling uncertain about the future but hold your head up high and carry on because you are a Kassim Darwish student and Kassim Darwish boys go on to achieve great things. 'Surely Allah is with the patient' (Surat Al-Baqarah 2:153).

Mrs Grover, Head of Year 11



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New Beginnings

A special welcome from Mrs. Grover, Head of Year 7

We have been delighted to welcome our new Year 7 students to our fantastic school and we are excited to share this new educational adventure with them. In fact, despite the challenging times that our young boys have experienced lately, the transition from Primary School has been very smooth and our newbies have settled remarkably well in their new environment and are rapidly getting used to the expectations of a Grammar School, the homework timetable, the Prayer Schedules, and the delicious lunches! Of course, becoming a responsible

young man does not happen overnight and 'mankind will not get anything unless he works hard' (Surat Al-Najm 53:39).

At Kassim Darwish School for Boys we work together with parents and students in an effort to make our students pious and successful, both in life and the *deen*. It is Allah alone who guides.

Secondary School is an essential part in the transition to adulthood and our Year 7 boys are already learning the deeply cherished values of respect, religion, study and commitment that our institution highly promotes. There are no words to express how truly impressed we all are with what these young men have already achieved in such a short amount of time and the confidence that they are gaining by day. It is honestly an immense pleasure to be part of their journey and I pray that every one of them will keep on making us all proud. We will endeavour to educate our future generations the importance of remaining positive and have full trust in Allah in every decision we make.

To every new Year 7 student, on behalf of KD Grammar School for Boys, a big welcome again and, before you know it, you will be walking out of the school at the end of Year 11, ready for the next phase of life, *insha'Allah*. That day will be an important one, where you will have learned so much more about Islam and having successfully accomplished one of the biggest milestones of your life. It is a day your parents, teachers, and, no doubt, yourselves are all looking forward to, and working hard towards. Until then, myself and the rest of the staff members at Kassim Darwish will follow you every step of the way providing you with support, comfort, encouragement, motivation and many, many memories, *insha'Allah*.



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First Impressions

We asked Year 7 students to share with us their first impressions of KD Grammar School for Boys from the first few days of Secondary School.

In normal circumstances, new students are invited to the school for a 'Taster Day' while they are still in Year 6. This allows students to get a feel of the school, understand how the school day works, experience some new learning and connect with fellow students. Sadly, we were unable to invite our new students in June, and so these really are their first impressions!



"As I walked to the front of the school, I saw big, brown, castle-like doors. I imagined students walking through them to get to their lessons."

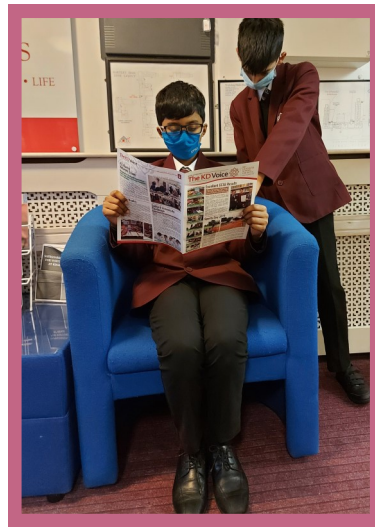
Zohaib, 7A

"At lunchtime we have the most delicious and scrumptious food."

Khaled, 7B

"As soon as I entered the classroom, I saw a door, that wasn't an actual door, at the end of the corridor. Was this the entrance to Platform 9 and 3/4?"

Nory, 7A



"As I walked along the corridors, I saw happy and smiling faces...as I walked further I saw the teachers smiling at me encouragingly."

Mahd, 7B

"As I came in through the main entrance, I looked to my left and saw a very big library with lots of books inside. I couldn't wait to explore!"

Zain, 7A

"As soon as I entered the mosque, I knew this was the right school for me."

Zakariyya, 7B

"As I entered the beautiful mosque, I felt the softness of the carpet and saw the reflection of the stained glass windows in my own glasses."

Azan, 7A

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Democracy Prevails!

Each new academic year, a School Council is voted for by students in each form, and this year was no different. There is one Student Council Representative for each form group. Students put themselves forward for the election, and are then given one week to campaign within their form groups. The campaign takes place in the form of speeches, posters and negotiations – the foundations of every strong election campaign!

For the first time ever, Electronic Voting was introduced in to the KDGB Election Process. With Year 7s in isolation at home, our lockdown

friend, Google Classroom, came to the rescue. As American citizens readied themselves for postal or in-person voting, Year 7 prepared themselves for Electronic Voting and Virtual campaigning. There was a flurry of negotiations on Google Classrooms – what would each candidate offer, why should he be voted, what benefit would he bring, would he be a representative of himself, or the people? Online voting is not available in many countries, due to worries of voter fraud, but here at KDGB, we were confident that our online voting system



was robust, and our preliminary testing proved us correct.

Campaigning in school was even more intense. Break and lunch times were consumed with conversations on who would best represent each form. There were fantastic speeches from all candidates, showing how much they had thought about the school and the welfare of their fellow students. The candidates shared their hopes for KDGB and what legacy they hoped to create.

The results were not available for in-person voting immediately, due to the long process of counting and verifying the votes. Finally, the results were confirmed and verified by Mrs Bani, Head of Pastoral, and the winners were announced – by Google Classroom!

Social distancing has meant that School Council meetings have moved online also, with KS3 and KS4 meeting separately, and then holding a joint meeting online.



A massive congratulations to the newly elected Student Council Representatives:
7A – Nory Shaikh, 7B – Abdullah Jawad, 8A – Kamal Seddiq, 8B – Mohammad Abu Bakr, 9A – Mohammed Ali Musa, 10A – Waleed Mustafa, 10B – Munye Munye, 11A – Abdelrahman Abouzeid, 11B – Amaan Parvez.



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Extracurricular Activities

At KD Grammar, we pride ourselves on our extensive and varied Enrichment Programme. Students look forward to clubs during lunchtimes and after school, as a means of developing their skills and knowledge in different areas.

Students were waiting eagerly for news on this terms extra-curricular activities. We have kept some firm favourites, and introduced some new clubs this year.



iDea

iDea is the Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award which is an international award. We have launched this programme in school this year, on Wednesday lunchtimes, to help students develop digital, enterprise and employability skills.

Students are expected to work through a series of challenges which allow them to win badges, progressing through each stage of the Award.

The iDea allows students to “unlock new opportunities and, ultimately, gain industry-recognized Awards” that will help our students “stand out from the crowd.”

We look forward to our students working hard and achieving success in each stage, *insha'Allah!*

Book Club

KS3 Students have been enjoying Book Club this year, with two books chosen so far: ‘The Dog Runner’ by Bren MacDibble and ‘Oranges in No Man’s Land’ by Elizabeth Laird. There were mixed reviews towards both books, with an average rating of 3/5 for both books.



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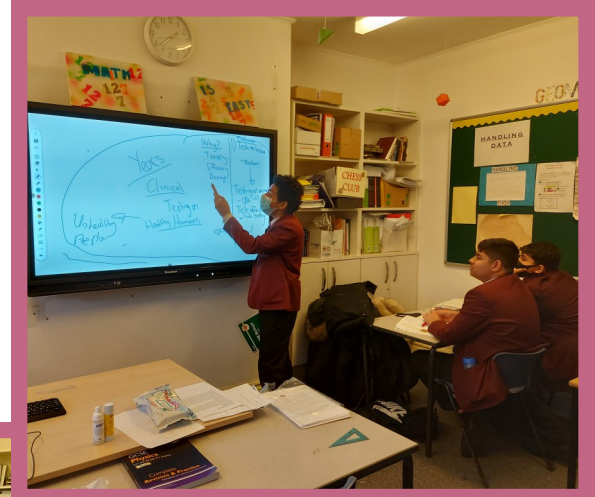
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Debate Club

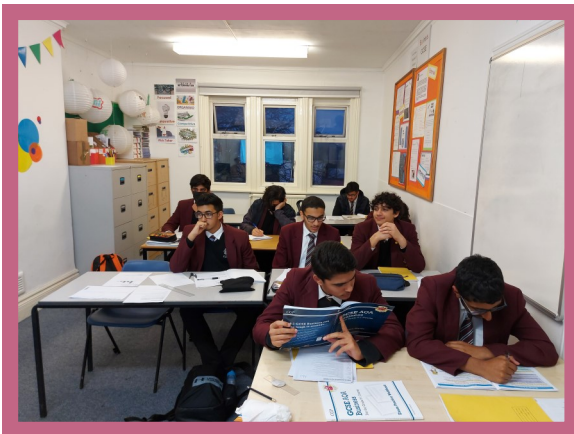
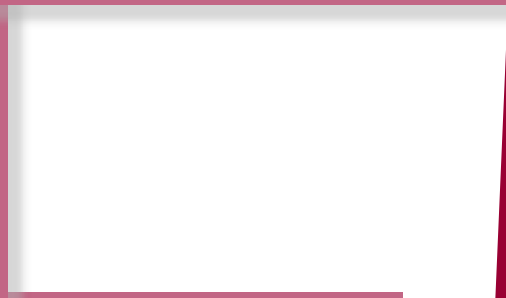
The KD Debate Club is one of our most popular activities in school. Students gather together at lunch time to learn the art of debating, public speaking and non-verbal communication. Topics are always centered around current affairs and topics of relevance, affording the students of the opportunity to research and develop their ideas before bringing them to Debate Club.

This term, students have been debating the motion “The house believes that the Corona-virus vaccine should be compulsory for everyone to take.” The teams were thorough in their research, bringing arguments focused on science, culture, history and religion.



Revision Sessions

Year 11 Revision sessions have been taking place during lunch-times and after-school. Teachers have been superb in their support of our students, and have inspired students to provide peer-to-peer support for each other also. These sessions will continue up until the GCSE exams.



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The Young People's Book Prize

This year, KD Grammar were selected as a judging panel for the Royal Society's Young People's Book Prize.

The Young People's Book Prize "aims to promote literacy in young people and to inspire them to read about science. It also supports the writing of excellent, accessible STEM books for under-14s.

Students from across KDGB came together to form a judging panel, and met every two weeks to discuss and review the books that they have read.

In January, the final reviews were submitted, and our students now await the announcement of the overall winner.



GCSE Art & Design

Year 11 students spent two full days working on their GCSE Art and Design mock exam, and by the close of the second day had produced amazing, creative and individual pieces of art work. In doing so, they demonstrated and developed many skills and talents, including drawing from direct observation, observing lines of symmetry in nature, colour mixing, screen printing, and painting.

Themes that students worked upon included calligraphy and the work of Ahmed Mustafa with ayahs from the Qur'an incorporated in to beautiful outcomes. Others looked at insects and birds of prey and the artwork of Christopher Marley and Eugene Segue for inspiration.



Year 11 students will continue to develop their portfolios of coursework over the Spring and Summer terms to achieve the highest grades in the subject. Their efforts and achievements will be celebrated in an exhibition of their work in June, *insha'Allah*.

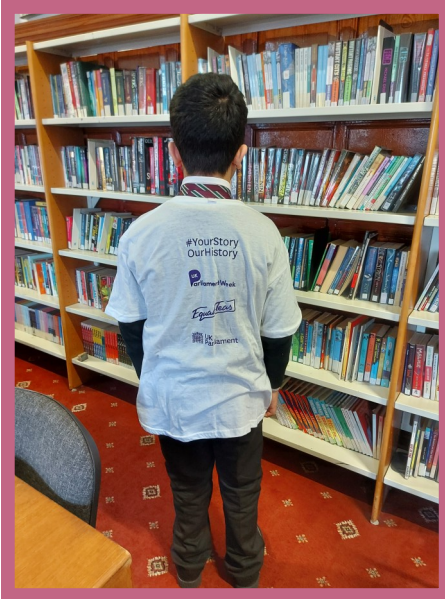
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Parliament Week

To mark Parliament Week, students were asked the importance of Parliament in everyday lives. Students watched a video recorded by Afzal Khan and then held a discussion and debate on the role of politicians, British Values, democracy and Members of Parliament. Students were able to understand their right to speak to their local MP about issues that concern them. They then learnt about the difference between MPs and the local council, and debated which one question they would ask their local MP. Questions mostly centred around Covid-19, showing students were aware of how life was different because of the pandemic.



As this was the week that the American Presidential elections were also taking place, this even was tied in to Parliament Week during Form Time. The American Political System was explained and compared to the British Political System, contrasting the benefits and weaknesses of both systems, the differences between the voting methods and the impact that has on the voter. Students also discussed the media headlines about the election, and discussed whether or not this was representative of the truth, with some students volunteering their opinions on who they would vote for if they were American citizens.

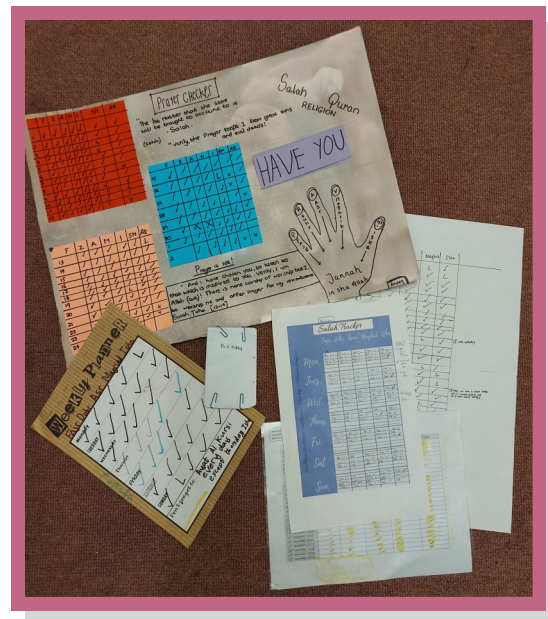
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Serene Salah

Year 8 students have been focusing on the importance of Salah during Islamic Studies lessons this term.

Students designed their own salah tracker to help them stay on top of their prayers and ensure they are prayed on time, especially with these shorter days. In class, students discussed the benefits of prayer, the reason behind it and how it impacted their life, and whether or not we honestly gave priority to our prayers.

This month-long project allowed students to put prayer at the centre of everything they do, and gain the serenity and peace that comes from prayer.



Scented November

To teach persuasive skills as part of transactional writing and oratory, year 8 embarked on a bespoke project that required: research on shop-bought de-odorants, room fragrances and deodorisers; learning the devices for the art of persuasion through blurb and science; collating, designing, writing and presenting (culminating in a multi-faceted project) where students conceived their own product, made and promoted it to pitch in front of judges.

This project animated how products on the shelves artfully use language and imagery, science and opinion to drive consumerism. Evaluating the role of essential oils and the need for purifying our daily air through organic and safe means, year 8 were excited to take on the challenge posed by Mrs Beevers realising English means business!



**“I am happy to say
it’s been much
better at home since
I took the air
freshener for my
family.”**



“We learnt about the benefits of essential oils, like curing acne, helping reduce stress, lowering blood pressure and promoting weight loss. The next step was, in my opinion, the most enjoyable, as we researched and then bought our essential oils and made our own room fragrance in class.

When we started this project, I wasn’t that interested in it, as I thought it was quite a girly thing to do. But I found my inspiration when I smelt the lovely aroma of ‘Fruity Freshness’ - the scent I had created using grapefruit, lemon and mandarin essential oils.”

Hamza, 8A



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“I was horrified to learn that we were spraying (dangerous) chemicals at home and school. We decided that we were going to make our own organic and healthy air fresheners, which purified the air and body, and wouldn’t cause harm.

The solution consisted of two or three essential oils, water and washing up liquid. The essential oils were for the scent, and medicinal properties, and washing up liquid was an alkaline that emulsifies the fat and mixes it with the water.

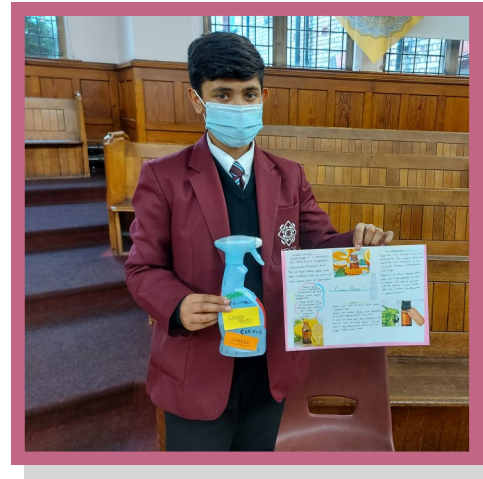
I decided to use three oils, orange, lavender and geranium. All of these oils had medicinal properties and caused relaxation. This inspired me to name it ‘Flotation: floral relaxation.

I was excited. I sprayed it and took a deep breath—it was floral, fresh and relaxing! The English room smelt blissful due to everyone’s fragrances.!”

Ahmad, 8A



“We found out that air fresheners do not ‘purify’ the surrounding air but coat the nasal passages with an oily film.”



“At the start of the project we were told that we were embarking on a new project about Aromatherapy. I had no idea what that was but hoped to learn a lot and achieve a lot. We (class) researched about the dangers of shop bought air fresheners and deodorants. At home we didn’t use either air fresheners or deodorants so I wasn’t too worried but I was for the hundreds of thousands of other people unknowingly using them every day

When I went home I did extensive research about the properties and health benefits and chose some oils which I wanted to include in my air freshener. I chose Lavender because it helps calm people down and feel peaceful and then chose Peppermint for the uplifting of the person who smells it and then Lemon for the burst of freshness.

I felt the mixture of Lavender, Peppermint and Lemon would be great as it would help calm people down, and lower stress levels and lift moods.”

Awab, 8A



Strategy, Knowledge and Skill

Our students end each term with a round of healthy competitions in the form of the Inter-house competitions. Students are test in various skills—sports, talent, strategy and general knowledge. This terms competitions took place in the form of a football match, chess tournament and the KD version of “Who Wants To Be A Millionaire.”



Years 10 and 11.

It is always fascinating to see our students’ competitive side come out and their zeal to win points for their house shine through.

The football matches were thrilling, the chess games intense, and the general knowledge quiz was informative and hilarious, compered by Mr Kennedy, Head of



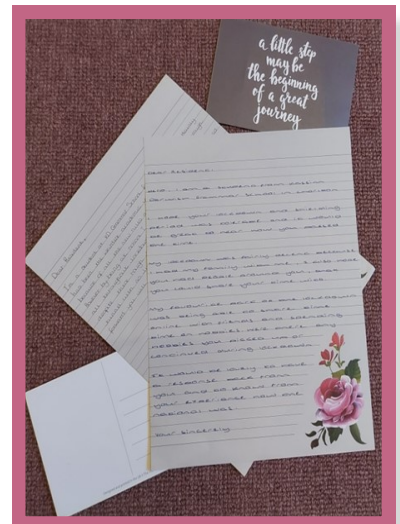
Caring for the Elderly

Last year, Year 10 Living Islam students would visit the residents of Mariana House, an residential care home just opposite the school. During their lesson time, they would cross the road, giving their time to playing games, listening to stories and answering questions with the utmost patience.

The current restrictions mean it is not safe for the students or the residents for us to visit.

This year’s Year 10 students weren’t going to let that stop them. They didn’t want to miss out on the benefits of inter-generational learning, and they didn’t want the residents to think they had been forgotten. And so, the Year 10s launched a pen-pal service. Writing letters and postcards to care homes across Greater Manchester, the students’ aim was to ensure that no one felt lonely, even when family members and friends were unable to visit.

The students’ plan to continue this on a monthly basis, ensuring they have a robust system for next years Year 10 students to continue.



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From the Indoors to the Outdoors

Like all other things, assemblies moved online this year, to ensure social distancing whilst still retaining the feel and impact of assemblies. Pre-recorded and delivered in Form Rooms, Dr. Beevers was able to take students through a journey from the indoors to the outdoors...

“Emerging from ‘lockdown’ we travelled ‘outbound’ to: the great woodlands of the UK to ‘forest bathe’ (the *gift of trees* across the world was enthralling); we stood by the lakes to visit *swans* and learn about their amazing qualities, laws protecting them and their place in English culture. We dived into the seas to examine the wonders of *seahorses* and the majesty of Allah (swt) and came up truly amazed.

We visited the wonders of *mint*, its folklore, its properties and medicinal benefits; we visited Australia and the *Aborigines* admiring their art and tawakal; we delved into *Black History* to acknowledge the achievements of great men such as Percy Lavon Julian, Haile Gebrselassie and Bilal (RA); we visited the



significance of *anti-bullying* awareness with self-reflection; we investigated the *dangers of fireworks* and the law and the importance and benefits of salah. From the natural world to the world of striving and excellence to the social realities we need to be informed about today, we have spent time learning from assemblies and implementing that knowledge to respect one another and inspire our young men to be the leaders of tomorrow”



A Japanese maple tree,

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Duke of Edinburgh

Year 10 students took part in a virtual assembly with the Duke of Edinburgh coordinator to learn about how the Duke of Edinburgh Award is run, the requirements of the programme and what changes have been made to take in to account the current situation and safety of students. There were a lot of questions and interest shown, with students wanting to learn cooking, baking, skateboarding, and sewing as part of their skills. We will aim to get the Year 10 students started on this in January, and have the current Year 11 students complete their activities in the Spring term also.



International Volunteer Day

December brought us the UN's International Volunteer Day—a day dedicated to the celebration of the sacrifices and efforts that volunteers make. At KDGB, we encourage our students to take part in volunteering activities, as not only is it beneficial to society and others, but it also a means of earning reward. Students take part in volunteering opportunities both inside of school, and outside. We asked one of our Year 11 students, Jamal, why he chooses to donate his time to volunteering, especially in such a busy time of his life.

“I have been volunteering at an educational institute that helps people gain further qualifications. I have been volunteering for over a year. As I started my GCSE's, I wanted to gain an insight in to how businesses work, and run. I felt that the experience would allow me to develop my skills, ready for college and university. My role has involved working as a Teaching Assistant with ESOL classes as well as some administrative tasks for online classes. Recently, I have completed work on the institute website. I received some training and got started from scratch. At times, it was quite frustrating – one mistake meant starting from the beginning, but overall it was a rewarding experience to see something I had created as a finished product. I want to use my time wisely. The Prophet (saw) said to take care of five before five, indicating youth and free time. I want to ensure I have something to look back upon with pride, and volunteering allows me to do that.”

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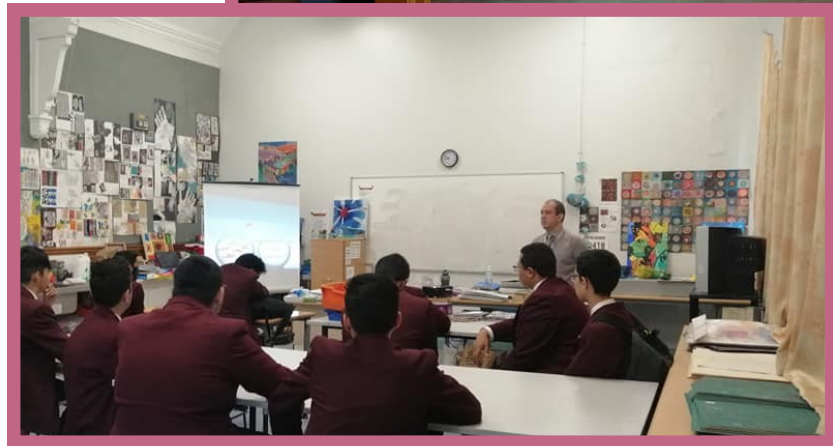
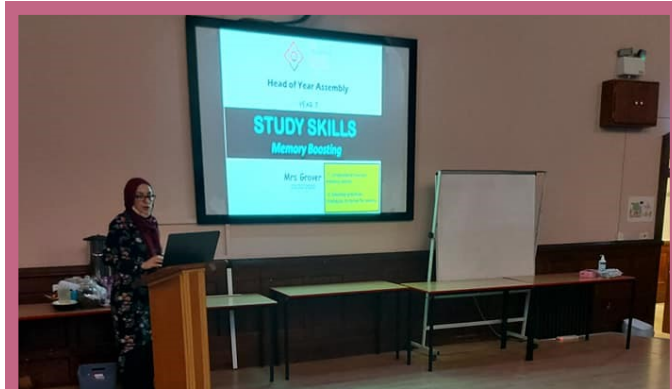
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Head of Year Assemblies

At the start of this year, we introduced fortnightly Head of Year assemblies for all year groups. The purpose of these assemblies was to help students achieve their highest potential during their time at KDGB.

With themes ranging from anti-bullying awareness, study skills, revision tips, sleep cycles, and much more, Mr. Kennedy (Head of Years 10 and 11) and Mrs. Grover (Head of Years 7, 8 and 9) always ensure that the content of the assembly is suited to the needs of the year group at any particular time. In addition to our weekly assemblies, these sessions allow our students to grow and develop, not just academically, but also personally. The assemblies are always interactive and focus on the Islamic elements of the topic, ensuring the students are well-grounded and ready for achieving the best that they can.



Year 7 Information Day

We had some fantastic feedback from our new Year 7 parents during our end-of-term calls with them in December. In normal circumstances, we hold a new Year 7 Parents Evening every October to inform parents about how their son is settling in.

This year, we converted these into end-of-term welfare phone calls. The pastoral team were enthusiastic about informing parents of all the fabulous achievements of our students, but also ready for feedback. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

Parents praised the school for the strong Islamic ethos, reiterating the happiness in choosing an Islamic school and environment for their son. Parents also praise the teachers and thanked them profusely for the support they had given, during online learning and in school. One parent commented that teachers were always looking for ways to help the students succeed, always encouraging and motivating.

We are glad our students have settled in so well, despite the Covid-related challenges, and we look forward to seeing amazing achievements from them in the future, *insha'Allah*.

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Humanities Awards

Every term, the History and Geography departments crown ‘Historian of the Term’ and ‘Geographer of the Term’. These are the students who have worked hard in these subjects, showcasing knowledge and skill.



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End of Term Fun

The last day of term was a day of celebration for students at KDGB. Celebrating the end of the first term of this academic term, students came to school in their own clothes and spent the last hour of the day celebrating with parties in their form groups. Students have been extremely responsible and resilient this term, despite the social distancing measures in place. To thank them for all their efforts, Form Tutors hosted small parties where students were able to eat, watch movies and play games.



Careers Update

It seems like yesterday when the current Year 11 students stepped in to KD Grammar School for Boys for the first time. Yet this term has brought the realisation that they are now ready to embark on the next step in their journey to adulthood – their time to leave KDGB is coming closer, and the choice of where to continue their education is the hot topic.

We are fully committed to ensuring that our boys leave school with a place at 6th Form, college or in employment with training. The autumn term is a crucial time in which to make decisions about post-16 education, which route students should take and which 6th Form College will be best. Since the beginning of term we have been encouraging the students to consider their options for life after their GCSEs via workshops, lessons and a dedicated Google Classroom for Careers.

This year, like every year, colleges have been offering open days and tours of colleges. However, due to COVID-19, these have been taking place virtually. Our students have been registering and participating in these events and should continue to do so. Parents can also get involved in the process. We encourage parents to sit with their sons and explore the various college websites and attend the virtual open evenings together. Each college offers a different variety of subjects and different routes, including traditional A-Levels, vocational courses offering both academic and practical experience, and apprenticeships. Students can choose to continue studying a subject they studied at GCSE or opt for new subjects. As well as academic education, each college also offers different opportunities to develop each individual personally, through developing skills, extra-curricular activities and post-18 advice.

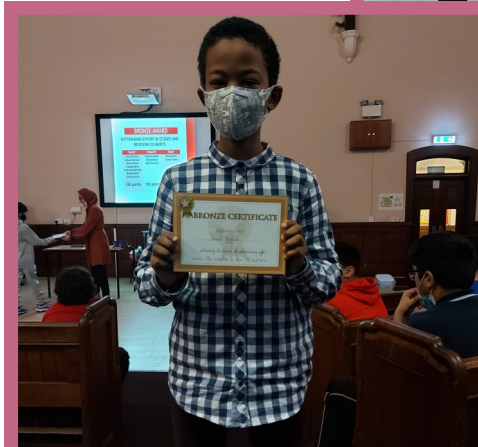
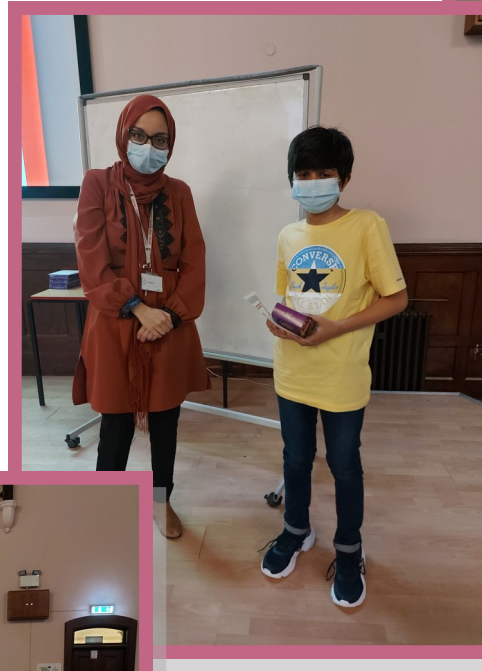
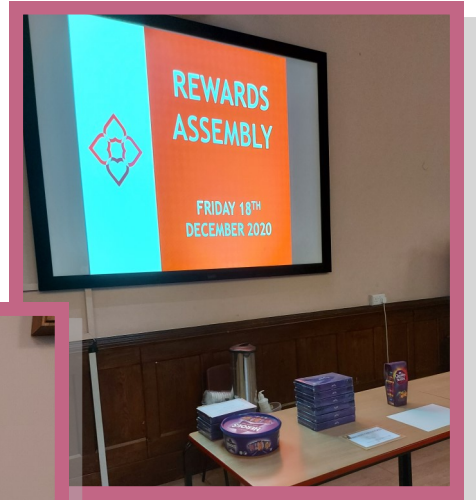
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Rewards Assembly

The end-of-term rewards assembly was hosted by Mrs Bani and Heads of Years. Last year ended with Tenacity in the lead with points. Awards and points were awarded for merits, punctuality, leading prayer, delivering the khutbah, as well as giving the adhan. The Head of Year Awards this term were awarded to Mahd (7B), Musab (8B), Ghiyas (9A), Ahmed (10B), Youssef (11A). Once all the points were calculated, Tenacity finished in the lead for House Points, with a grand total of 9,096.



As the Year 7 students were in isolation before the October half-term holidays, Mrs. Bani and Mrs. Grover organised house competitions. Brains were exercised, the atmosphere was tense, but there was a winning house—Talent! The students cheered—a truly fabulous end to their first term at KDGB, *masha'Allah!*



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Safeguarding

Safeguarding is at the forefront of everything we do at KDGB. During the Autumn term, we held training sessions for staff and students.

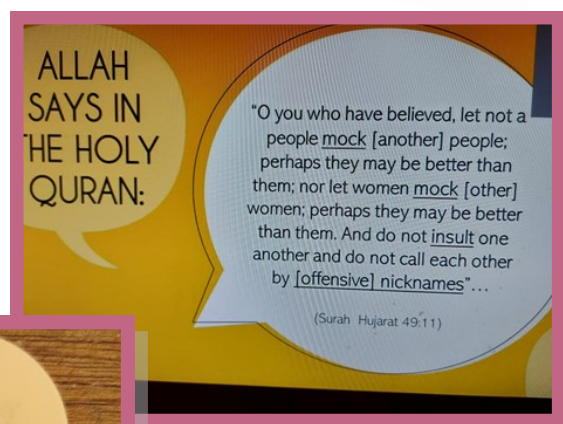
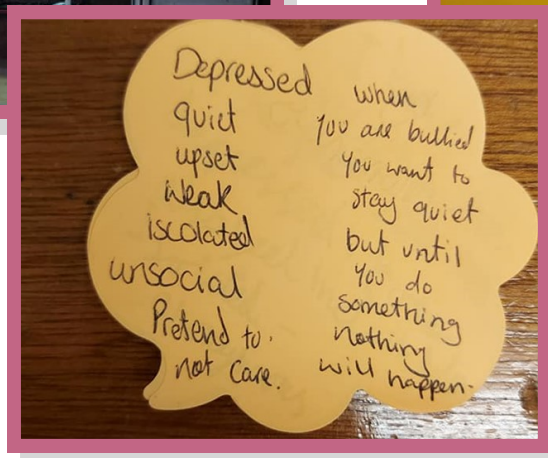
1. Safeguarding training for Staff

Teaching staff had a training session on safeguarding at the beginning of term during the inset days.. One of the sessions held focused on safeguarding issues after reintegration.

**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**



Further training was held in October, this time focussing on Mental Health and Well-Being alongside online Prevent sessions.



2. Safeguarding Training for students

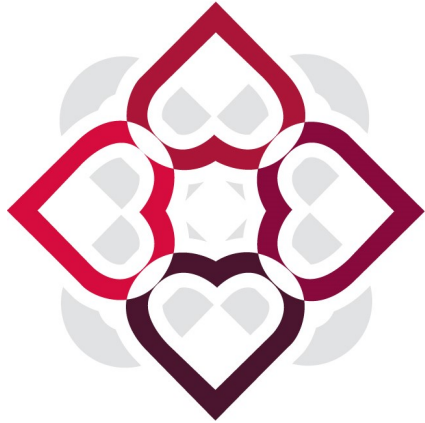
As we returned to school in September, students were taken off-timetable and were able to attend various sessions focussing on Mental Health and Well-Being. The aim of the session was to raise awareness on mental health issues and learn about basic techniques which would be effective in helping the students themselves, and others.

Further training was delivered to students on the topics of Online Safety, Radicalisation and Isolation. Building Resistance Against Extremism and Violence (BRAVE) sessions are planned for next term in partnership with other organisations. Students also took part in a week-long range of activities for National Anti-bullying week, including Khutbahs, assemblies and in-form activities.

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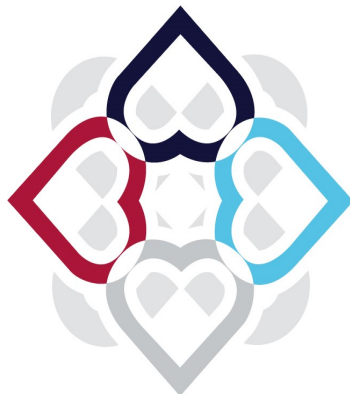
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