

Two students are posing against a plain white background. The student on the left is seen from the back, wearing a black dress with a long, flowing train decorated with a pattern of yellow, orange, and blue squares. She holds a large, blue, teardrop-shaped prop with a yellow and black eye design. The student on the right is facing forward, wearing a light purple top and a long, flowing grey skirt. She wears a large, orange, teardrop-shaped prop with a red and black eye design on her head. She has her hands clasped over her mouth and is wearing several colorful bracelets and a purple flower in her hair. The text "The King Alfred School" and "Upper School Newsletter" is overlaid on a green banner across the middle of the image.

The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter

January & February 2023

SPORTS NEWS

January and February have been busy for our PE team who've braved the cold and wet to accompany our teams to lots of fantastic sporting events. It's been a feast of fixtures so we decided to round them all up here:



Year 7 & 8 students played in the ISA table tennis tournament at King's School on the 11th Jan and gave an impressive performance with Matt making it as far as the semi finals.

On Monday 16th Jan our Year 7 boys won 35-16 in their basketball match against Northbridge House Canonbury.

The Year 8 boys continued the winning streak when they took on Northbridge House Canonbury on Monday 23rd Jan and came out the victors with a score of 20-18.



On Friday 20th Jan Year 7 girls were in action in a Netball match against Whitefield. It was a frosty day out on the courts so the girls layered up and started the game with a mindset to progress the ball quickly down the court without wasting any time! After five minutes their strategy was working as they were 4-0 up. Some excellent collaboration from Ellie, Eila and Luz in attacking positions meant Alma was set-up in a strong shooting position. The girls placed the emphasis on collaborative team work and the result was an 8-1 victory. Well done Year 7! According to PE teacher Lauren, it was too cold to take photos—we think she was too busy applauding!





On Wednesday 25th Jan the Year 9 boys took on Dwight School in a hard fought football match in tough conditions. Despite the best efforts of the KAS team, Dwight School ended up with a narrow 4-3 win.

On Thursday 26th Jan Laurie (Y8) and Freddie (Y7) ran in the Middlesex cross country race. Sadly for Laurie he picked up a hamstring injury while running so couldn't complete the race and as a strong runner, we know he will have been frustrated by that. Freddie gave a great performance to come 74th out of 100 runners.



The 1st Feb saw Head of Sport, Henrietta taking two teams to a regional ISA Netball Tournament in East London where the girls performed brilliantly. We asked Hen to explain why she was so proud of them.

"It was a really successful day at the ISA Netball for both the Year 6 and Year 8 teams. The Year 8 girls made it through to the quarter finals, winning two of their league games with some impressive netball skills. They are a wonderful team, who support each other in every way and show excellent resilience on and off the court. Well done to them!"



Year 6 and Year 8 teams together

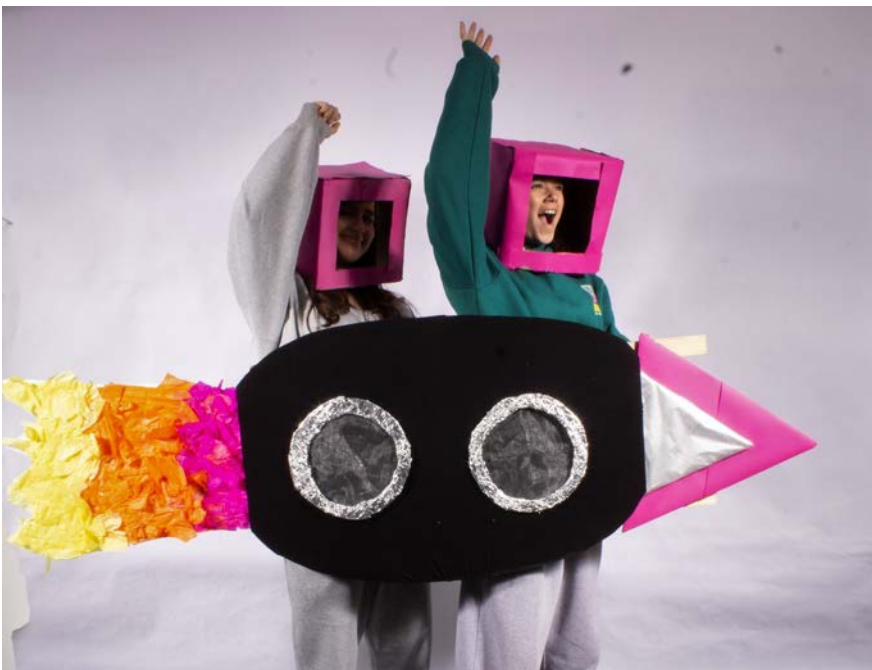
ABSTRACT OUTFITS

Year 9 students took a day off timetable to fully immerse themselves in a creative project with the Art Department.

Teacher Nic explained to us how the project worked. "We started by looking at examples of famous abstract artists and we talked about the themes we saw there. There were lots of bold colours, strong geometric shapes and straight lines. We wanted the students to take those ideas and create three dimensional, wearable sculptures so we also looked at some fashion designers for inspiration."

Students spent the first session sketching their ideas and expanding on the elements of the inspiration materials they most liked. Then in groups they picked the best elements and got to work making their two dimensional drawings into three dimensional reality.

Nic explained why the project is useful to the students, saying: "They are trying things out and learning as they are doing and transposing their ideas from one medium to another and it all comes together in a quite unusual and beautiful way."



More fantastic photos (taken by our fabulous Photography Department) can be found [on the school website.](#)

DRAMATIC GOINGS ON

AT THE PHOENIX

Jan has been a busy month with no rest after the Christmas break. Regular bookings like Lower School Breakfast Club, Debutots, lessons and UAL workshops continue meaning there is never a quiet day. The theatre has also hosted a Year 12 clowning extravaganza and the Year 13 UAL students devised a piece of theatre that took place in the back of a removal van. The theatre has also hosted the Big Ten conference, a meeting of the School Directed Courses Consortium and a yoga class. Feb promises to continue in a similar vein with Year 2 rehearsals and performances of Persephone, the Music Department's Unplugged concert as well as a continuing series of lectures and seminars; not to mention outside bookings.



Y12 Clowning



Y12 students playing it for laughs



Matthew Modine
@MatthewModine

What a pleasure to meet the future of art and story



King Alfred School @kingalfredscho · 31 Jan

Year 10 Drama students met star @MatthewModine after watching him in To Kill A Mockingbird. Eva said: "It's a great production with amazing staging." Sofia added: "It's important to see different productions as part of @UAL Level 2 Diploma as it helps to widen your perspectives."



12:36 pm · 31 Jan 2023 · 6,667 Views



Year 13 students Jacob and Bertie performing their devised play 'The Van' in an actual van parked outside The Phoenix.

Year 10 Drama students went to see the production of To Kill a Mockingbird featuring Matthew Modine and they loved it. They met the man himself at the stage door and he returned the respect in a touching twitter post! Thanks Papa!

The Phoenix is a great space for theatrical productions or events - [click here for bookings.](#)



KAS 125

THE KAS SOCIETY LOGO DESIGNED BY CHARLES F.A.VOYSEY (1857-1941)

Another date to celebrate in this 125th year!

In February 1898 the Arts and Crafts designer and architect, Charles Voysey, one of our first parents, delivered the design for the logo of the Society. We have lived with this beautiful logo for the Society ever since but how often have we looked at the detail of it?



Happily Voysey left a note describing the ideas behind the design. Central is the tree of good and evil springing out of the heart. He depicted Alfred with details drawn from early manuscripts, notably in a crown copied from an image of the later King, Edgar. On the King's left is a monogram taken from a coin minted in 880AD in Alfred's reign. The monogram is formed by the letters of Londonia (London).



On the reverse of the coin there is an image of Alfred in profile and around it the letters AELFRED RE. Voysey used some of the lettering in the logo from the coin but strangely not all of it. The L is missing and the F is not fully formed. That's a little mystery.

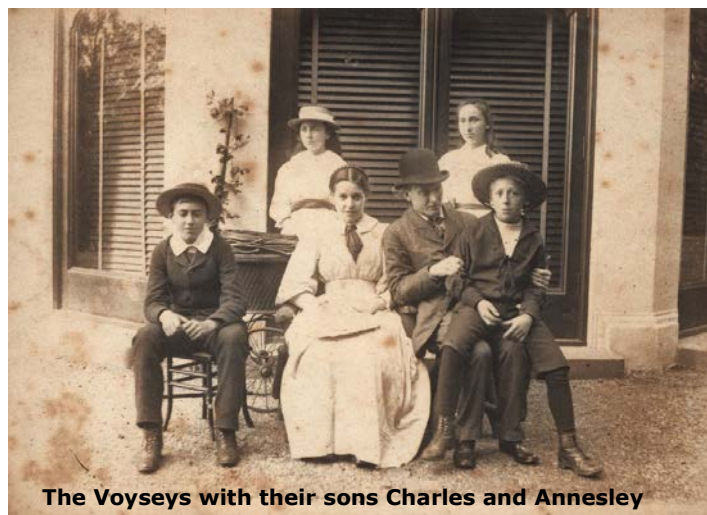
A non-religious, secular school?

King Alfred is holding The Bible in his right hand indicating Proverbs chapter 2 verse 6 which reads "For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding". How odd to find a Bible quote in the logo of a school whose founders were so intent that no religion be taught to their children. Another mystery.

What is true is that Alfred was an ardent Christian, known for his zeal and ability to convert Vikings to Christianity. His other great passion was education and learning, which is why the founders had chosen to name the School after him, not least because he educated his daughters as well as his sons.

Perhaps we need to look more closely at Charles Voysey himself. He was not one of the seven founders but enrolled his children at the School from the earliest days.

Charles was the son of a Church of England priest who had educated him. Interestingly his father had been dismissed because he disagreed with certain accepted beliefs, for example he refused to preach the church's doctrine on eternal damnation. He formed his own church, Theism, breaking free from the constraints of his previous role.



The Voyseys with their sons Charles and Annesley



What did the founders think when they first saw the design, one wonders? There is no record of any dissent (that we have found yet!) but it is significant that the next design produced by Voysey for the school lacked any religious references. It was for a stained glass window for Ellerdale Road, the first School building. The V&A has this watercolour of the window design. No biblical quotes just the simple Latin motto 'ex corde vita' - 'out of the heart springs life'. We wonder whether the original window is still there. Who is going to knock on the door of number 24 and politely enquire?

The Voyseys remained a part of the School for many years. The eldest son, also called Charles, became an architect like his father. He was latterly called Charles Cowles Voysey as he took his wife's surname as his own middle name upon marriage. It was this Charles Voysey who drew up plans for the School at Manor Wood, beautiful buildings that sadly had to be exchanged for used army huts when the move was made due to a severe lack of funds.

Charles F.A. Voysey is known to this day for the many beautiful and distinctive houses he designed. Have a look at Annesley House, 8 Platts Lane, Hampstead. He built this for his father and it is where his father, the erstwhile C of E priest, died.

Kara Conti, President of The King Alfred School Society



OLD ALFREDIAN REUNIONS

We held the A level certificate presentation at the very start of this term and invited both Old Alfredians and their parents back to KAS to share in the celebrations. Takako and Al presented the Class of 2023 with their certificates and drinks were enjoyed in the Main Hall afterwards.

The presentation also coincided with the Recent Leavers Drinks reunion for those that left school in 2019, 2020 and 2021. It was a great opportunity for Old Alfredians to catch up before returning to university and work after the festive break.

Justin who is studying BMus in Music Performance (Vocal Studies) at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire wrote, "I just wanted to thank you so much for yesterday evening. Ethan, my brother and I had a lovely time catching up with the recent leavers and staff alike!"

We had more great feedback from attendees on the night:

"This is a great idea!" Jane, past KAS parent

"It was so lovely to be back at the School with my parents, friends and teachers. It was great to catch up with old friends and see what everyone was up to." Harriet (OA 2022)

"The A level presentation and drinks was a lovely low-key evening, where it was really nice to be able to catch-up with students and teachers I hadn't seen since leaving school and to hear all the exciting things people were up to." Sal (OA 2022)

"Thank you so much for a really special night. It was KAS through and through, just with a wonderful touch of style and luxury." Victoria, Old Alfredian and KAS parent.



SCHOOL NEWS

LYON CALLING

Year 13 French students were privileged to attend the Fêtes des Lumières in Lyon back in December. Each prominent building was transformed into a scintillating display of light, with each building's individual history in mind. We saw the Musée de Beaux-Arts where there was a projection broadcasting France's favourite songs being lip-synched by animated faces of the subjects in the gallery's portraits - with various crêpes to compliment the experience, c'était génial!

Pauline Moloney,
French teacher



KAS COUNSELLING SERVICE

Confidential counselling support is available for all students.

Contact Tracy via email tracyp@kingalfred.org.uk to make an appointment.

YEAR 8 DESIGN CHALLENGE

In Design Technology, Y8 have been creating exciting and innovative designs to encourage children under five to take their asthma medication. The design challenge is part of a competition organised by the University of Cambridge called [Designing Our Tomorrow](#).

Students came up with loads of incredible design solutions to encourage children to carry their asthma spacer around with them. Some of our favourites included getting children to keep their spacers in a crocheted octopus bag, fabric pizza pouch, and rucksack designed with animal characters.



Elena worked on improving the experience by creating a system that rewards a child for taking a spacer. Every week a child carries their spacer with them, they earn a toy ghost from the 'ghostie family'.

DT teacher Miranda told us that the design challenge has focused less on practical skills and more on developing students' ability to "step into someone else's shoes and design with empathy" and consider the needs of lots of different clients in a single product, including the nurse, the child, the mother, and the grandmother.

SOCIOLOGISTS PUTTING EDUCATION UP FOR DISCUSSION

Dr Tony Sewell CBE held a Zoom session with Year 13 Sociology pupils and a few Year 12s back in December. Dr Sewell is a renowned international education consultant, head of educational charity 'Generating Genius' and is also a life peer in the House of Lords.

Sociology teacher Nabiha told us, "Sewell makes numerous appearances in the A level Sociology textbook and has definitely gained 'celebrity status' amongst the students. They confidently engaged in a challenging discussion on the British education system, particularly the role of upbringing when it comes to educational achievement and the extent to which the system is meritocratic."



FAST TRACK CAREERS

The gym was the location for a Year 9 careers speed dating event this term. There were 30 volunteers, most of whom were from our parent body, ready to talk about their profession to the students about to pick their Year 10 & 11 options.

The students were lucky enough to get an opportunity to talk and learn about a variety of careers, including: TV, film, mental health, marketing, medicine, law, accountancy, architecture, finance, business, design and a variety of arts-based pathways. Head of Year 9, Lynne, said: "The students were inquisitive and engaged and I was very proud of their efforts and very grateful to all who helped out. It was a hugely successful event with a lot of positive feedback from parents, staff and students."



THE GLOVES ARE ON

Boxing has arrived at KAS!

This term we have introduced a new Choice activity in Upper School. We are very lucky to have Ricardo Edwards, our new boxing coach, come every week to teach the students the skills and discipline that Boxing requires. The students have worked hard in the sessions and are gaining more confidence each week.

Ricardo has also been in to offer boxing as an option in Year 11 Games lessons where he's proved very popular.



Year 9 choice



Year 11 Games



Year 11 Games

SCHOOL NEWS

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

The King Alfred School and Rethinking Assessment were making our voice heard in Parliament again in January. The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Schools, Curriculum and Assessment, led by Flick Drummond MP, had called Rethinking Assessment to give evidence on the impact of current assessment methods on the curriculum schools are able to offer. Deputy Head Al McConville (who's hands can be seen circled in red in the official photo!) presented on the narrowing effect of government accountability measures ('Progress 8' and the 'EBACC')



on the breadth of subjects schools can offer. He highlighted the horrible decline in creative subjects in particular. He told us: "KAS is happily exempt from these measures, which is why students are able to make such broad choices here, but in our quest to have an impact outside our gates we're working to open things up for other schools too. I told them about our School Directed Courses Consortium, which collaborates on alternative qualifications and whose members share the KAS emphasis on a 'broader definition of success'. Al added: "Robert and I had been making the same case the previous week in Draper's Hall in front of 250 school leaders, accompanied by a Year 10 Student, Hannah, who was canvassing views about the issues in education for her Global Challenges project. Our campaign goes on!"

CRÊPE-TACULAR!

Year 9 French students have been studying the tradition around 'La Chandeleur' (pancake day in France which took place on 2nd Feb) and how to make crêpes. Sandrine's class made them at home and brought them in to enjoy in class while Pauline broke out the crêpe making machine and they made them fresh in the classroom!

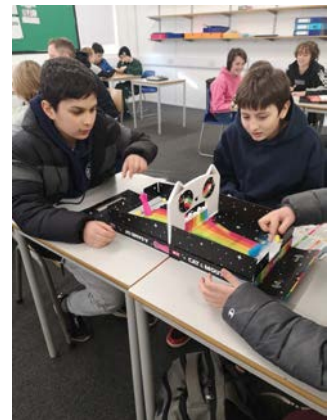
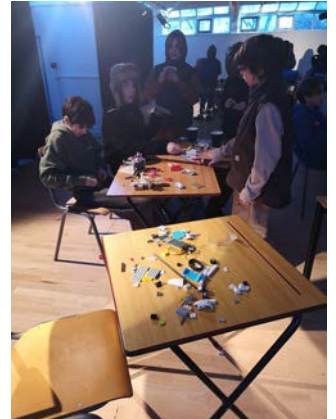


MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

This week we've been focusing on wellbeing and connections as part of [Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week](#).

In the Upper School, School Six delivered Callovers on strategies to support mental health to each year group, and on Wednesday during Form Hour there were sessions all over school dedicated to connecting with activities which support good mental health. Years 7, 8, and 9 tried out wellbeing activities including spoon whittling, sushi making, and Lego building organised by Claire Murphy, Head of Year 7.

We asked our students why they decided to take part in their chosen activity and what they liked about it. Yasmin said she chose to take nail painting because "it's a nice time to relax and do something nice with friends".



Further up the school, in Year 11, Form Tutors shared the ways they look after their own wellbeing with their students which saw some people heading off for a lovely walk in nature and others taking part in a self-care pop-up spa.

In the Sixth Form's session, documentary producer and writer [Jeremy Thomas](#) spoke about practical and effective strategies for protecting mental health. As someone who has been affected by mental health issues he gave a humorous talk which, between the laughs, included a toolbox of ways to deal with anxiety, depression, resilience, and self-esteem.

To fully support our students' wellbeing, we believe it's also important to support their parents, so we also hosted two online parent talks on digital safety and supporting children with exam stress.

LAMDA SUCCESS

Our Lamda legend Tammy had a fresh set of smiling faces when students who took Lamda qualifications were all awarded Distinctions!

Lamda is a great confidence builder and also delivers UCAS points for those taking their Bronze, Silver or Gold medals.

