



The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter



October
Half Term 2023



Events

KAS Boats Take on The Thames

On a very sunny Saturday in September, two of the KAS boats and a group of intrepid staff and students made their way to Canary Wharf to take part in the epic Great River Race.

The boats were designed and built at KAS as sailing boats, but with a sturdy set of oars (and the masts removed) they are eligible to take part in this marathon on water and have done for many years. Despite there being over 300 other fixed seat boats taking part, the only real competition that mattered was the one between the student and staff boat. After 22 miles, 28 bridges and a lot of sunny rowing, the students were victorious beating the staff by over 12 minutes.

We spoke to student Ale about the experience:

"I think part of being at KAS is being spontaneous and I love the joy that can come from doing unexpected things – I certainly didn't expect to be taking part in the Great River Race. I knew that in the moment it would be hard but that when I looked back on it I wouldn't remember the hard parts, I'd only remember the good parts of it."



Meera Syal Visit Brings Literature to Life

KAS Literature is a school directed course (SDC) which the School introduced this year as an alternative to the GCSE Literature qualification. The course includes a wider range of texts from far more varied cultures and time periods, and so we were excited to welcome Meera Syal to give a talk on her book, *Anita and Me*, to our Year 10 students.

One Year 10 student commented: "The talk from Meera Syal was so useful for my studies. The talk has definitely helped me enjoy the book; you can see it through her eyes and learn which parts she loved – it feels more sentimental."

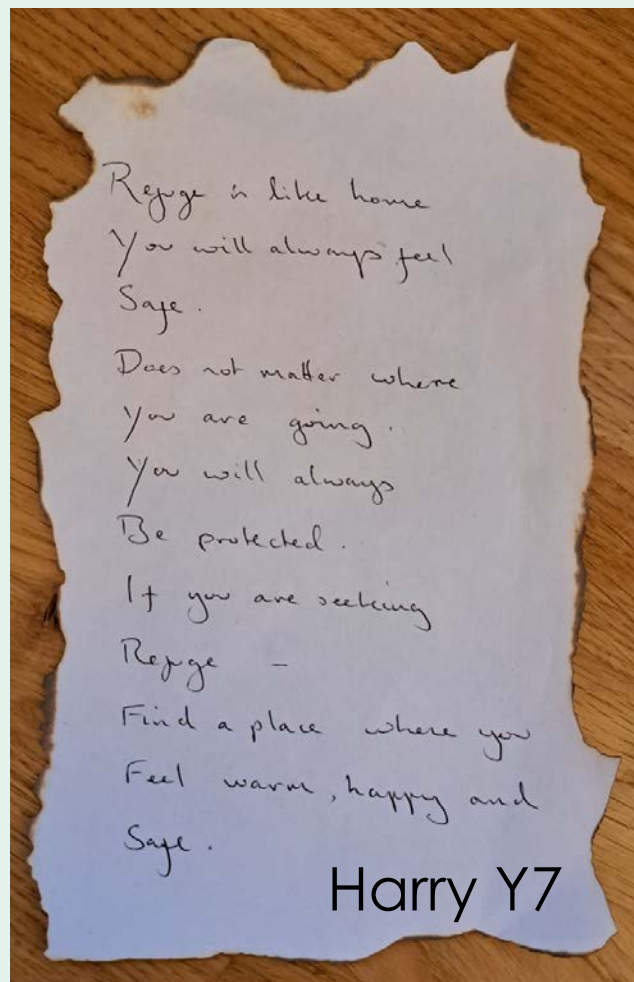
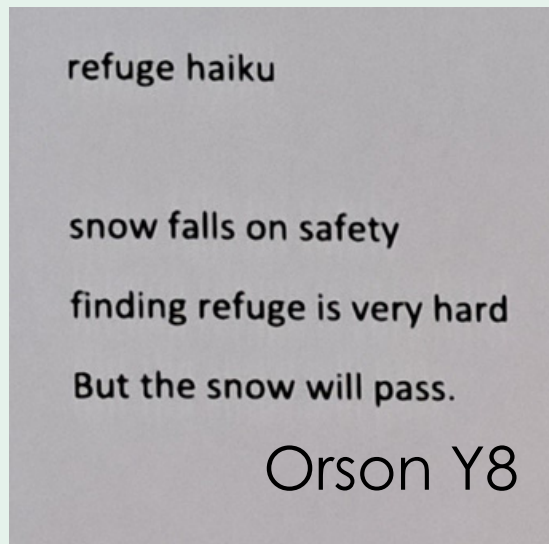
Meera said: "I knew how I felt growing up not being able to find books that I could see myself in and not being represented. I wanted to stake our place in British history as we were never really commemorated; I didn't want us to just be a footnote."

National Poetry Day at KAS

KAS Gets Poetic

This half term, the English Department held a poetry competition for students in Year 7 to 13. This year's theme was refuge and we saw lots of fantastic entries!

[Click here to see more.](#)



Adisa the Verbaliser Performs and Workshops with Year 7

For National Poetry Day, we were excited to have performance poet, Adisa, visit our Year 7 students. Adisa gave a fantastic performance and conversation session before running two workshops to help students with their poetry. It was a fun and valuable experience!

Music

Axe Monsters 2023

The performance was a huge success, showcasing all the wonderful musical talent we are so lucky to have here at KAS. The evening was full of joy and togetherness and it was fantastic to see everyone enjoy themselves

Thanks to everyone who supported the event.



Photos: Sonya Walzer

Sports

Students Race at ISA Skiing Nationals

This half term, a group of students participated in the ISA skiing nationals at Hemel Hempstead Snow Centre. The slalom course was set up on a 150m slope and it was clear there were a range of abilities across the 160 races. Many in the KAS team were new to racing and all did extremely well, showing confidence, resilience and determination on the course.

Well done to Polly (Y9) who came 6th out of 54 in the U14 girls race, Felix (Y11) who came 4th out of 83 in the U16 boys and Lorenzo (Y11) who came 4th out of 18 in the U18 boys races. Finally, big congratulations to all those who participated in the Senior Mixed Team, coming first in their competition!



KAS Student Signs Arsenal Scholarship

Congratulations are due to Year 11 student Louis who has signed a scholarship at Arsenal Youth Academy for another year. And this story doesn't just feature one member of the KAS Community, as Louis is pictured here with Per Mertesacker who is a KAS parent, ex pro and also head of Arsenal Academy.

We caught up with Louis who is in the second year of studying for his GCSEs: "My teachers understand that I have this huge commitment outside of school and they are supportive of my dream. The PE Department are obviously my biggest champions and I'm able to use my training as part of my Physical Education GCSE coursework."



Reminder! Information on fixtures is now available through our new sports management system, SOC's. Find out more [here](#).



Year 8 boys football 5-2 away win against Highgate



Year 7 girls netball 7-1 away win against Normanhurst



Year 7 girls netball 12-8 away win against CCF



Year 7 girls football 3-2 away win against Whitefields



Year 9 Sports Leaders receive their certificates



Year 7 boys football 2-1 win in the ISA tournament final, securing the Plate

Trips

Year 7 Camp - Somerset

The beginning of the new academic year brought about another Year 7 camp for our latest cohort. This time, the students were taken to Somerset for a week of bonding and activities. A brilliant time was had by all. See what our Year 7 students had to say about their experiences on [our website](#).



Namibia Trip 2023

At the end of the 2023 Summer Term, a group of staff and students went on a unique trip to Namibia for two weeks. This amazing opportunity involved volunteering at a school in Anixab, having close encounters with elephants and being fully immersed in the landscape with walks and hikes.

Year 12 student, Rosalind, wrote about her experiences on the trip:

"The chance to go on the Namibia trip is one I will be forever grateful for. I knew this experience would be so different from anything I have ever done before. We learnt so many new skills both in terms of being able to direct ourselves in the desert and working together as a team. There were the moments that made me truly appreciate how lucky I was to be there. Although I have attempted to, I don't think words can ever completely describe how magical the Namibia trip was, but I just know the memory of this trip will stay with me forever."

Read more on [**our website.**](#)



Year 12 Camp - Essex

At the start of the Autumn Term, Year 12 left for their cohort camp in Essex. A fantastic time was had by all and we asked one Year 12 student to report on their experience:

"The entire experience was wholesome and such an effective way for everyone to collaborate and bond on another level. It truly contributed to a growing feeling of community and belonging, which we were all very grateful for."

Read more on [our website](#).



Exploring San Sebastian

At the end of the Summer Term, 24 students embarked on the annual Spanish trip, accompanied by Ander, Nuray and Camilla, to enrich their Spanish language skills and explore the vibrant culture of San Sebastian.

The main goal was for students to improve Spanish fluency and cultural knowledge, and they did so through daily language courses, cultural activities and staying with local families. The trip wasn't all about studying, though! Our students had an amazing time catching waves during their surfing lessons, exploring the sites with a bike tour, experiencing a pintxos tour and savouring the flavours of Basque cuisine while learning about the art of tapas/pintxo preparation, visiting the local aquarium and exploring an island off the coast.

Lucy in Year 12 wrote about her own experiences of the trip:

"The freedom we had to explore helped me greatly strengthen my spoken Spanish; it allowed me to practice my fluency in a very fun and immersive way. It was truly an amazing trip and forms an integral part of my journey in the study of languages!"



A Level Students Get Stuck Into Fieldwork at Flatford Mill

The Biology A level field trip to Flatford Mill was slightly earlier this year, allowing the students to gather a greater variety of organisms from the sites visited. Although it was hard work and the days were long, students learnt a lot and experienced ecological techniques how they should be experienced - in the field.

What better place to learn about Spearman's rank correlation coefficient than in Constable Country in the very stream where the horse drawn cart stood in The Hay Wain?



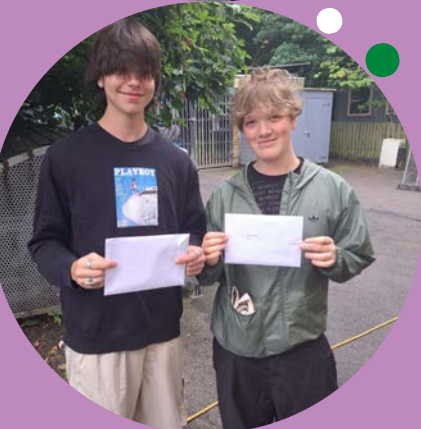
Results Days 2023



It was fantastic to welcome back our Year 11 and 13 students for their respective results days. The School, which celebrated its 125th anniversary this year, prides itself on providing excellent education for all students without undue pressure.

Robert Lobatto, Head of King Alfred School, said:

"These results are a testament to the commitment and passion the students have shown to their studies and I look forward to seeing what they all do next. Alongside their grades, KAS students are rightly proud of their independence, resilience and community spirit and I know that they will carry these qualities with them wherever they choose to go in life."



Educational Outreach

KAS continues to work towards building a better educational landscape.

Over the past year, Deputy Head, Al McConville, has given evidence and attended meetings of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Schools, Curriculum and Assessment. The APPG recently launched a report which recommended Rethinking Assessment should develop a Learner Profile as an alternative to traditional school reports based on test scores. As members of Rethinking Assessment, KAS will continue to be involved in this work. You can read the report [here](#).

We hosted a gathering of Big Education's Next Big 10 schools who shared their innovations and progress on their methodology for evidencing skills development. In the same week, we presented the KAS vision to an international group of leaders from different disciplines, showcasing how we're preparing our young people for the future.

As part of the School Directed Courses Consortium (SDCC) KAS representatives Liz, Camilla and Al recently met with 30+ like-minded schools to share best practice. Al has been gathering data from students here on which subjects they'd like to see developed next.

As part of our SDC, Global Challenges, researchers from Harvard Graduate School came in to work with students. Dr Christina Hinton, Ben Hill and Whitney Warren are supporting our students in becoming Junior Research Fellows. The students are designing activities to carry out with people who have some level of dementia and are seeking to understand whether they're able to have an impact on the well-being of those people and (by carrying out regular volunteer work) on themselves.



Robert Writes to The Times

This half term, GCSEs were once again in the news; the system is too focused on a narrow set of metrics which don't include broader skills and attributes which employment demands.

Robert wrote to The Times in response to an article titled 'Latymer Upper School ditches GCSEs for its own qualification'. Robert's letter details what KAS is doing to bring about change.

Take a look below.

Sir, The number of schools trying to change our education system is growing. At King Alfred School we are working closely with the Rethinking Assessment coalition to establish a network of schools also developing alternatives to GCSEs. Our consortium was recently invited to the House of Lords to give examples of our work and we are also part of a group, led by state schools, that is taking innovative approaches to education and challenging the status quo.

Robert Lobatto

Head, King Alfred School, London NW11

Innovation in Action

As part of the Next Big 10 project, we have helped to document some of the innovative practices which are already part of KAS in two short films.

You can watch the films by [clicking here](#) to find out more about Enquiry Based Learning in the Early Years and [clicking here](#) to see how The Village project teaches Skills for Life.



Old Alfredians & Development

Old Alfredian Reunion Day

The new term kicked off with the annual Old Alfredian reunion day. We celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Class of 2013 leaving KAS with an impromptu game of football on the field. We also welcomed back OAs from across the decades, the earliest being the Class of 1952, to enjoy the grounds on such a beautiful afternoon.



Old Alfredian Visits

The start of term brought with it a flurry of Old Alfredians visiting KAS whilst in London. OA, Joel, was here when his father was working in London during the nineties but his time spent had such a lasting effect on him he was compelled to bring his partner with him to see the School for herself on a recent trip over from New York. OA, Stephen, and his wife, Sue, stopped by KAS whilst visiting from his home in Israel. We toured all of the special corners of the School that are still so vivid in his memories. Stephen commented that despite the physical changes, KAS still felt very much the same.

Old Alfredians Jane and Claire visited KAS. Claire was visiting from Israel and after years of sharing stories of her school days with her children, she brought them to see it for themselves. Whilst much has changed, Claire was thrilled to hear that building camps, Student Council, Choice and the lush KAS site remain constant.



Creative Industries Forum

Bringing together Old Alfredians, current parents, staff and students, the Creative Industries Forum held on Thursday 12 October in the Phoenix Theatre provided a stimulating and inspiring discussion about working in creative sectors. Jez Bond, Director of the Park Theatre, skilfully prompted our panel to share their insights, advice and anecdotes about their careers. Old Alfredians and students from KAS and local state schools had the opportunity to hear from, ask questions and network with our creative panel.



KAS Connected

We are very excited to invite you to sign up to our 'Beyond KAS' community portal. KAS Connected is an online platform, where you can update your profile, connect with Old Alfredians and use the trusted King Alfred School community to expand your professional network.

Share work experience and internship opportunities, post job openings and engage with Old Alfredians to offer advice and mentoring. Share your experiences of Higher Education choices and pathways. Upload your business or professional services to the KAS Directory. Gain access to a whole host of other exclusive features and resources.

Looking to get back into work? Sign up to KAS Connected and extend your job search.

CONNECT WITH THE KAS COMMUNITY





UPLOAD YOUR BUSINESS TO THE KAS DIRECTORY



PROVIDE MENTORING & ADVICE



OFFER INTERNSHIPS AND SHARE JOBS



HAVE YOU SIGNED UP?

WWW.KASCONNECTED.ORG

KAS Society News: The Impact of your Subscription

It has been brought to my attention that some of our Society members might have missed the occasions when I detail what the Society does with money raised by your annual subscriptions. Let me give you an idea, based on what we have invested in this last year.

The Society Committee is responsible for how to use the funds and our remit is summarised as preserve, progress and promote.

Under 'progress' we spend money on educational research and under 'promote' we share our ideas and ideals with other schools and educators.

Last year we paid for a most successful conference in association with Rethinking Assessment which attracted some of the brightest minds in education today. We invested in the Next Big 10 programme with nine state schools to work together on new ideas and best practice. We have invested in a programme for our students facilitated by Harvard University on research techniques. We offer research grants to any of our own staff who develop a research project; currently a member of staff is working on the acquisition of higher order thinking skills in our 6-8 explorations. We put money into the production of a major book on The Village which will record forever what brought this project to fruition and describe the philosophy behind it. And now we are about to invest in mounting a TEDx event in January 2024.

I thank you for your subscriptions and I hope you will agree that the money is well spent. I am so glad you are members and hope you will continue your interest in our Society activities long after your children have grown up!

Kara Conti

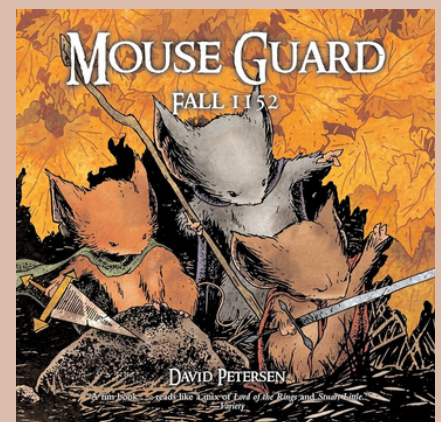
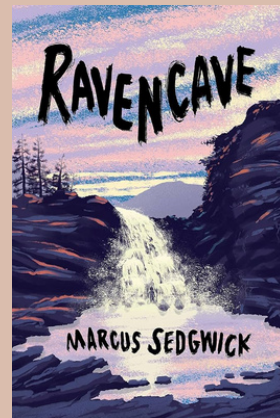
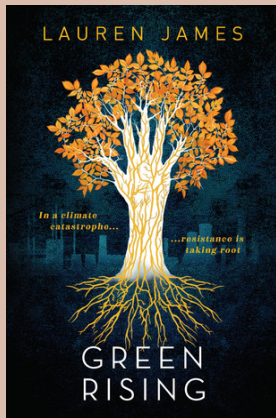
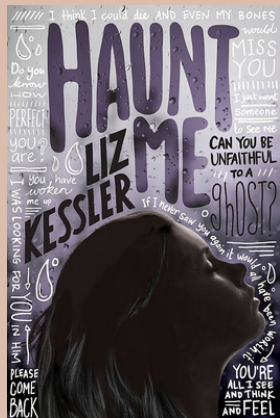
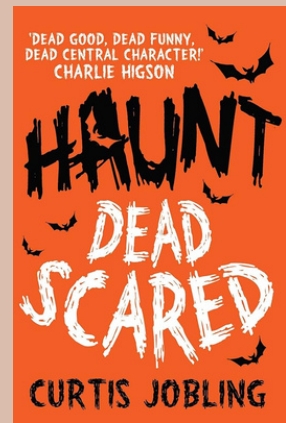
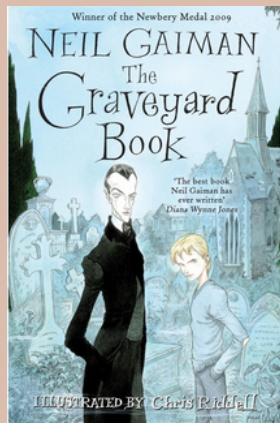
Chair of the KAS Society Committee
President of the King Alfred School Society

Upcoming Events

Title of event	Date & Time
Sixth Form DT trip - Eindhoven	Saturday 21 - Monday 23 October
Year 11 MFL trip - Lyon	Sunday 22 - Saturday 28 October
Autumn Half Term	Monday 23 October - Friday 3 November
KASparents - coat and foodbank appeal	Thursday 9 November
Year 10 UAL trip - ISTA festival, Malta	Thursday 9 - Sunday 12 November
Sixth Form Photography trip - Paris	Friday 10 - Sunday 12 November
Fireworks night	Saturday 11 November
Year 9 trip - Ypres	Thursday 16 - Friday 17 November
KASparents - Giving Tree Gift Appeal	Monday 27 November (start)
Upper School production	Tuesday 28 - Thursday 30 November
Last Day of Autumn Term	Friday 15 December (Half Day)

Autumn

Reading List



All books available from
the KAS Upper School Library



The King Alfred School

TEDx

Sunday 28th January 2024

Work has started for our next TEDx event at The King Alfred School! We have had a fantastic response from the KAS community with over 20 speakers volunteering and parents offering support.

We would now love to hear from any in the KAS community who have experience as camera operators who would like to offer their help and expertise to allow us to film the event ourselves. We would also really appreciate any caterers who can help organise lunch for 125 people.

This will be an all day event, like our previous three forays into the TEDx world. Let's make this a whole school endeavour!

Contact Kara Conti to get involved: karac@kingalfred.org.uk

Photos from 2021
TEDxKingAlfredSchool



KAS Fireworks

Saturday 11 November 2023 4PM - 7PM

DOORS OPEN: 4PM
FIREWORKS DISPLAY: 6.45PM

BAR, FOOD, STALLS & ENTERTAINMENT

Ticket prices:

£10 for children

£15 for adults

*until 5th November
then prices go up to*

£15 for children

£20 for adults

Booking fees apply



Scan for tickets

On the door tickets are
subject to availability



Winter Coat Drive

All sizes
of coats
accepted!

Thursday 9th November,
during morning drop off
outside main hall.



**WRAP UP
LONDON**
Brought to you by
HANDS ON LONDON 



The King Alfred School

Christmas Foodbank Appeal

for the Alexandra Wylie Foundation

THURSDAY 9TH NOVEMBER

**OUTSIDE THE
MAIN HALL,
DURING DROP
OFF AND PICK UP**

TINNED FOOD - OIL - JARS - SAUCES -
PASTA - RICE - LONG LIFE MILK -
SWEET AND SAVOURY SNACKS & SPREADS -
CHRISTMAS TREATS - TOILETRIES -
SANITARY PRODUCTS - BABY PRODUCTS





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