



# The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter



May  
2025



# SCHOOL NEWS

## Here's to our Class of 2025! 🌟

Our **Year 13** students, several of whom had been with us since Reception, brought their time at KAS to a joyful end this term.

The year group spent the afternoon collecting their leavers hoodies and yearbooks from **Eleanor Mitchell-Webb** (Director of Sixth Form) and **Nabihah Ahmed** (Assistant Director) and signing one another's shirts, before their parents joined us for food, music and merriment on the school field. It followed a fun week of fancy dress, water fights and a paintballing trip.

Eleanor said: "It was such a joy to see Year 13 end their time at KAS with so much laughter and lightness. Students could forget about upcoming exams and revision timetables, and simply enjoy being together."

"For some, it was also an opportunity to open time capsules and letters to themselves that they made in Lower School. It truly felt like the end of an era!"

"Sharing moments with the students and their families at the BBQ was incredibly special. A huge thank you must go to **Sofia** for organising the amazing food, and to all the tutors who came to celebrate with them."









## An emotional end to Year 11

Happy tears were shed at our annual **Year 11 Leavers' Breakfast** as students, parents and staff gathered to mark the start of GCSE study leave.

Form tutors shared words of praise for each of their students, whilst Head of Year 11 **Lynne Sasson** emotionally recounted their collective journey over the last five years.

"Being Head of Year is a complicated role," she said. "It's a balance of nurturing and lecturing; being supportive but honest; listening and talking. I hope I've taught you to live life with confidence, resilience and a sense of humour."

*"Life is a journey to be experienced, not a problem to be solved" – Lynne*

Students **Cydney C** and **Ahaan G** expertly compèred the emotional event, saying their year group would be "forever united in their memories" of KAS.

"My years here have been a time of growth, friendship, success, connection and laughter," Ahaan said.

Meanwhile, Cydney praised Lynne, saying: "Her guidance and love have made us the people standing here today. Thank you, Lynne."

Earlier in the week, students embraced their playful side, dressing as Minions for a water fight (that saw Lynne get a soaking!) and enjoying a paintballing trip.





## Year 8 prepare for The Village 2025

Year 8 students have begun preparations for their Village experience in the second half of Summer Term. This KAS rite of passage will see them live in the school's grounds for a week and govern their own community, supported by teachers.

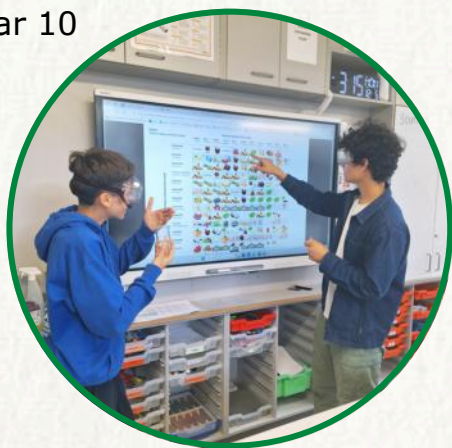
As part of their prep, they have explored the importance of meeting in a Socratic circle. As one student explained, this means that "everyone is on the same level and therefore equal; there is no hierarchy. On a practical level, it also means that we can all see each other."



## Chemists enjoy fruits of their work

This term, Year 10 Triple Award chemists learnt about esters as part of their organic chemistry topic. Esters are organic compounds formed from a reaction between a carboxylic acid and an alcohol, which gives fruits their characteristic smell.

Students had the chance to create their own esters, mixing different types of the two substances to produce a variety of fruity scents.



This is one of the core **Triple Award Science** practicals, and finishes off the section on organic chemistry.



## Rising to the (maths) challenge

We continued to give Years 7 & 8 students a taste of exam formality by participating in the **UKMT Junior Maths Challenge** for the second year running.

As ever, students rose to the challenge, with lots of time spent practising in the run-up to the event.

When the results arrived, teachers gathered each year group outside at Squirrel Hall to celebrate the students who had been awarded bronze, silver and gold certificates, to loud cheers from their classmates.

The results will be published in the upcoming edition of *The Alfredian*, marking another bumper year. Well done to all!





## KAS takes to the TEDx stage

Students, parents, teachers and Old Alfredians took to the Main Hall stage this term to share thoughts and ideas at the fifth iteration of **TEDxKingAlfredSchool**.

Each of the 15 speakers was allotted five minutes to talk from memory on a topic they feel passionately about. This year, subjects ranged from science and sociology to personal passions and wry observations.

A culmination of many weeks' hard work spent writing, refining and rehearsing the talks – a process that pushed participants out of their comfort zone and developed a range of skills.

Year 12 student **Lily R**, who spoke about the notion of 'pretty privilege', said: "I want to be a film director when I'm older, so the skills I've learnt here will be useful for pitching ideas. Because the talk is only five minutes, you really have to refine what you want to say; it's hard!"

Lower School teacher **Natalie Petzal** spoke movingly about her relationship with her brother. Enjoying a well-deserved cup of tea afterwards, she said: "It was really amazing watching everyone's reaction. I've been overwhelmed by the number of people who have shared their own stories with me."

Organiser **Kara Conti** presented all the speakers with the now-traditional TEDx mug after the event. She said: "I was so impressed by everyone's calm bravery. All their hours of hard work, writing and memorising truly paid off. The support they gave each other was heartwarming, and the sense of achievement will be lasting."



YouTube links to all 15 talks will be shared with the school community shortly. Until then, we will leave you with the summary of audience member **Sreeja**, who said: "The range of speakers was wonderful. Having parents, students, staff and Old Alfredians up there together really shows the community side of the school. I enjoyed every bit of it."



## CSI: King Alfred School edition!

Year 7 donned hazmat suits in a recent **Science** lesson to gather evidence at the scene of a 'crime' in the Science block.



Our budding crime scene investigators used forensic techniques including fingerprinting, DNA testing and footprint analysis to sift through a list of shady suspects and determine which teacher committed the crime (spoiler: it was Biology teacher Ryan!).



## An easy way to help KAS raise funds

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly food shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for KAS?

Over 8,000 retailers, including John Lewis, ASOS, Booking.com and M&S, are part of the [Easyfundraising](#) network, and will donate a percentage of your total basket value to the school every time you shop. The cost is covered by the brand; it doesn't cost you any extra.



There are no catches or hidden charges, and the funds raised will go towards key KAS events and initiatives.

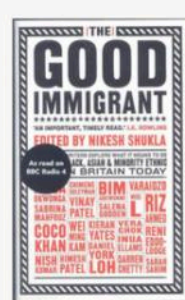
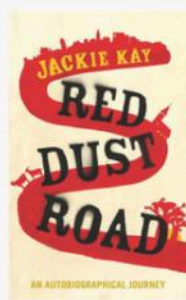
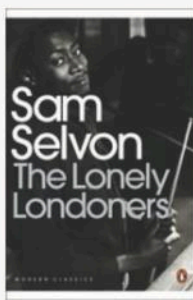
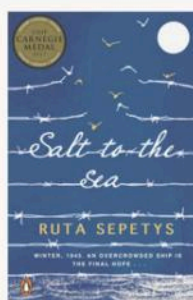
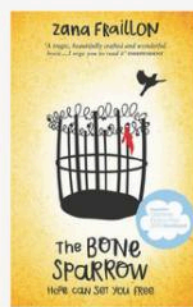
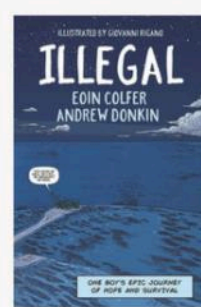
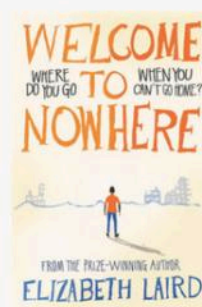
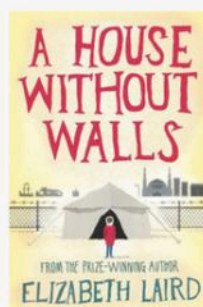
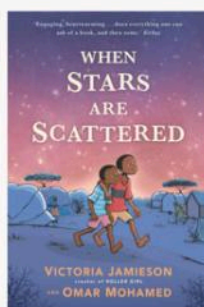
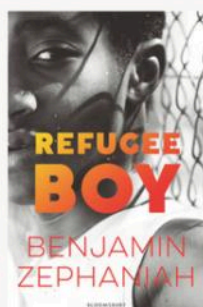
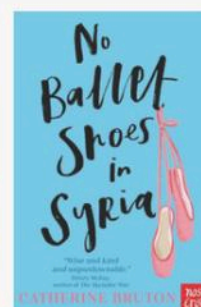
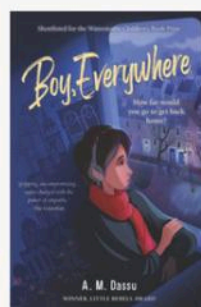
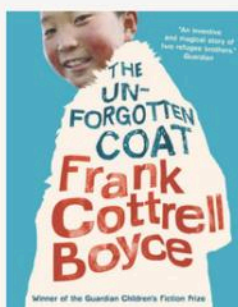
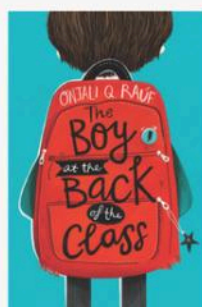
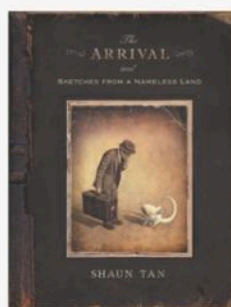
Head to the [Parent Portal](#) for a handy step-by-step guide to get started on desktop, Android and Apple devices.





# Refugee and Migrant Stories

KAS Upper School Library



## All books available in the library

- The Arrival - Shaun Tan
- The Boy at the Back of the Class - Onjali Rauf
- The Un-Forgotten Coat - Frank Cottrell Boyce
- Boy, Everywhere - A. M. Dassu
- No Ballet Shoes in Syria - Catherine Bruton
- Refugee Boy - Benjamin Zephaniah
- When Stars are Scattered - Victoria Jamieson
- A House Without Walls - Elizabeth Laird
- Welcome to Nowhere - Elizabeth Laird
- Illegal - Eoin Colfer
- The Bone Sparrow - Zana Fraillon
- Salt to the Sea - Ruta Sepetys
- The Crossing - Manjeet Mann
- The Lonely Londoners - Sam Selvon
- Red Dust Road - Jackie Kay
- Americanah - Chimamanda Adichie
- The Good Immigrant - Nikesh Shukla (ed.)

[refugeeweek.org.uk](http://refugeeweek.org.uk) 16-22 June 2025



# ART, MUSIC & DRAMA

## “Magical from start to finish!”

The KAS community was blown away by this term’s **Middle School Show**, which was hailed as “sensational”, “sheer joy” and “magical from start to finish”.

Over 60 students from Years 7 to 9 participated in a two-night run of *Sister Act Jr.* at the Arts Depot. It was staged with the help of our **UAL Performance and Production Arts** students in Year 12, who took on duties from costumes and choreography to backstage crew.

**Eila Z-J** (Year 9) played the role of Dolores, a nightclub singer hiding out in a convent from her murderous mobster ex. She excitedly said: “I’ve waited since Year 7 to do this, and I’ve loved it. Everyone’s worked so hard, and seeing it all come together is amazing.

“I think the thing I’m taking away from this is just a lot of joy and happiness.”

One audience member declared: “If I’d paid £80 to see that in the theatre, I wouldn’t have felt disappointed in the slightest. The performances were West End worthy!”









## Snapping up industry experience

A level **Photography** students **Georgie B** and **Felix E** gained industry experience alongside photographer and artist **Miles Aldridge** at Photo London Fair this month – a great opportunity to pick up some tips from one of the best in the business!

Their hard work was rewarded with a Polaroid of the pair taken by the respected photographer, who said: "Thanks, Georgie and Felix — you were great!"



## Performing with distinction!

Congratulations to Year 9s **Scarlett S**, **Tierny C** and **Cara M-S**, who achieved distinction in their LCME Musical Theatre for Actors – Cabaret exams. The girls had to introduce and perform four solos and a short monologue in a one-take exam recording.

Music teacher **Nell Buckingham** said: "I am so proud of the girls' achievement! Their hard work paid off, and I look forward to seeing their singing journeys progress in the coming years."



## KAS bands battle for title

Two KAS groups entered local community organisation JW3's **Battle of the Bands** competition during the half-term break.

**The Curlies** and **The Souvenirs** were two of seven school bands from across London to take to the stage. They were all fantastic, but there could only be one winner... The Souvenirs!

Well done to both groups for their performances.



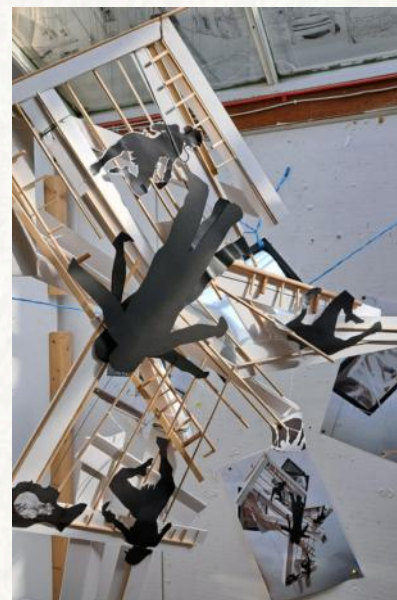
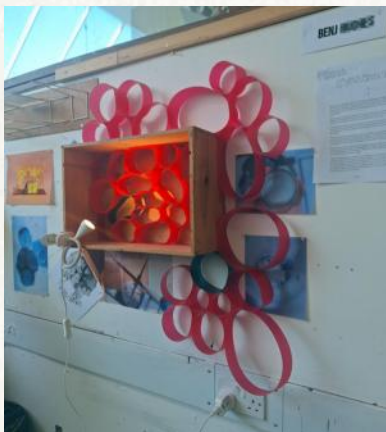


## KAS 'gathers' for GCSE Art show

Our GCSE **Art** students held an exhibition of their coursework in the Art department this term.

Parents, teachers and fellow students spent an enjoyable afternoon taking in their work on the theme of 'Gathering'. Using every material imaginable, the varied display featured everything from miniature worlds to fashion sculpture and metalwork.

Congratulations to all our GCSE Art students on your beautiful work and a wonderful show!





# SPORT

## Athletic achievements

The penultimate day of term saw students journey to Bedford International Athletic Stadium for the **ISA North London Athletics** event. It was a fantastic day out, and KAS wins included:

- **Penny F** (Year 8), who threw over 20 metres in the javelin, beating second place by over 5 metres;
- **Emil B-A** (Year 9), who threw over 10 metres in the Year 8 & 9 shot put;
- **Henry D** (Year 9), who cleared an impressive 1.6 metres in the high jump;
- The **Year 7 boys relay team**, who won their relay heat some distance ahead of the other teams.

There were some outstanding second places too, including **Mylo C** (Year 7), who narrowly missed out on first in the 100m sprint, and **Ben B** (Year 7), who forced a sudden death situation in the high jump after tying for first.

"Students showed great resilience when competing, said Head of PE **Henrietta Farr**. "The support they gave one another was also wonderful to see. Overall it was a great outing. Well done to all involved!"



## Racquets at the ready!

Summer Term saw the start of the tennis season, with two KAS teams in action.

**Luke N** (Year 8) secured a convincing 6-0 win, whilst Year 7 **Martino W-A** beat his Year 8 opponent 6-3. Whilst the Year 7 & 8s lost 4-2 overall, the Year 9 & 10 team won 2-1, with **Samuel N** and **Harry P** (both Year 9) winning their matches.

Henrietta said: "All the boys played their best tennis and enjoyed the sunshine – just how tennis should be played!"





# CAMPS & TRIPS

## Right on Kew

Year 7 made the most of the May sunshine on a recent trip to **Kew Gardens** to get inspiration for their **Exploration** enquiry, 'How can we redesign the Middle School Common Room?'

Students spent half of the day exploring Kew's glorious grounds. Highlights included The Hive, a 17-metre installation in a wildflower meadow (where some students held an impromptu yoga session!), and the Treetop Walkway, which offered fantastic views across London and a different perspective on the surrounding foliage.

They also enjoyed an educational session with one of Kew's on-site teachers, who shared many interesting facts – such as the site holding a Guinness World Record for the largest collection of living plants at a single-site botanic garden.

The session introduced students to some of Kew's magnificent buildings, including the Temperate House, Palm House and Princess of Wales Conservatory. They discussed elements of the buildings' designs and why they were suited to the plants they housed.

Students also spent some time sketching the structures and some of the plants, and conceiving their own designs. They will use their learnings to inform their Middle School Common Room project.

Student **Lev F** said: "I liked that as a group we had the choice of where to go and what to see. It was also interesting to consider the buildings and understand more about the design process."



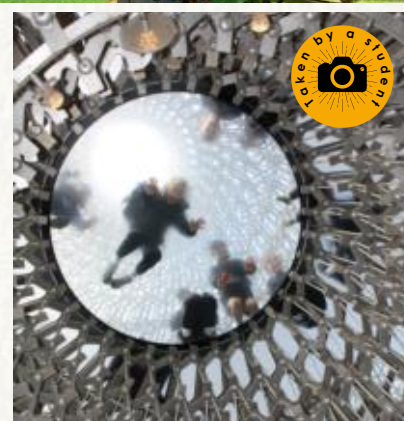


## Snapshots from Kew

Photography enthusiast **Thomas B-M** took his camera along on the Kew Gardens trip and took some fantastic pictures.

A selection features on this page, marked with the yellow 'taken by a student' camera icon.

Kew Gardens,  
London





## DofE: Year 10's Silver expedition

This term, intrepid Year 10s headed to the Peak District National Park for their **Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award** expedition.

Students stayed in a hostel on their first night before setting out on a three-day hike, staying at campsites for the remainder of the trip.

Working in small groups, they used maps and compasses to plan and navigate their routes. Along the way, they encountered peacocks and lambs, stunning scenery, and rivers in which they cooled their weary feet.

The trip also presented plenty of opportunities to learn new skills, such as relationship building, teamwork and conflict resolution.

“My group was made up of people I wouldn’t usually see outside of school, so it was a good opportunity to get closer to them,” shared **Polly H.**

“When we had disagreements, we listened to both sides and took a vote on which one most people agreed with,” said **Alia G-B.**

“There was one instance where someone in our group was feeling a bit disgruntled with the decision-making, so we all had a conversation and solved the issue constructively,” Polly added.

So, how would the girls sum up the experience? “Exhausting!” Polly exclaimed. “But I also feel a sense of accomplishment and pride.”

“And the teachers bought us all ice cream at the end, which was a nice way to finish,” added Alia.



Peak District,  
Derbyshire







New Forest  
National Park



## DofE: Year 9's Bronze expedition

Some 31 Year 9 students completed a two-day self-guided expedition as part of their **Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award** over a weekend in late April.

Planning their route through the beautiful New Forest and carrying all of their kit, the students had to navigate, problem-solve, cook and manage their time in this character-building challenge.

The challenging expedition taught students many vital life lessons, as **Mollie O** explained: "I felt that I gained independence and resilience. You know that if you give up and sit down, you're impacting your whole team. When difficult things happened, we had to pull together."

**Scarlett S** added: "When the assessor asked each of us what we'd contributed to the group, we could see how we'd all made it work as a team. It gave me a great sense of achievement."

**Cara M-S** summed the experience up beautifully: "In the moment, it feels difficult or tiring, but you come away with such positive memories. I had an amazing time."



Abingdon,  
Oxfordshire



## Physicists power up their learning

As part of their A level **Physics** studies, Sixth Formers took a trip to the **Culham Centre for Fusion Energy** in Oxfordshire. "It's a centre where they test equipment, train staff and conduct research into nuclear energy," explained **Django S**. Students saw a decommissioned reactor and a model used for training purposes. **Jimmy B** said: "I enjoyed seeing the huge mechanised robot arm that they use inside the reactor – it's such a powerful tool."



# OLD ALFREDIANS & DEVELOPMENT

## OAs & Staff v Sixth Formers Football Match

In April, we hosted our annual friendly football match, which saw a team of Old Alfredians and staff take on KAS Sixth Formers on the Astro court.

The Sixth Formers came in strong this year and gave our OAs and staff a run for their money. It was great fun, and everyone stayed on to play longer than planned. Thank you to all who joined us!

Are you interested in returning to KAS for a match? Let us know and we'll schedule the next one. Email [oa@kingalfred.org.uk](mailto:oa@kingalfred.org.uk).



OAs, staff & Sixth Form footballers



Mayan Wong and Jacob Lux (OAs 2024)



Sixth Formers with Raffy Shamash



Mayan Wong, Cassidy Wallace, Jake Cossey and Raffy Shamash with Sixth Formers



Spencer Wallace & Robert Lobatto



## Remembering John

On behalf of The King Alfred School, thank you for joining us to remember and celebrate the life of former KAS teacher **John Peisley**.

It was deeply moving to see so many of you — Old Alfredians, former and current staff, and members of the wider KAS community — gather in the Main Hall and on the field to honour John's memory. Your presence, stories and warmth helped create a truly special evening, filled with memories of John, our kind-hearted trailblazer – a brilliant and benevolent force.

Every moment was made more meaningful by the community that surrounded him throughout his life; from the display of John's cherished boats and the unveiling of a bench in his name, to the collection of photos everyone helped gather and all the words shared.

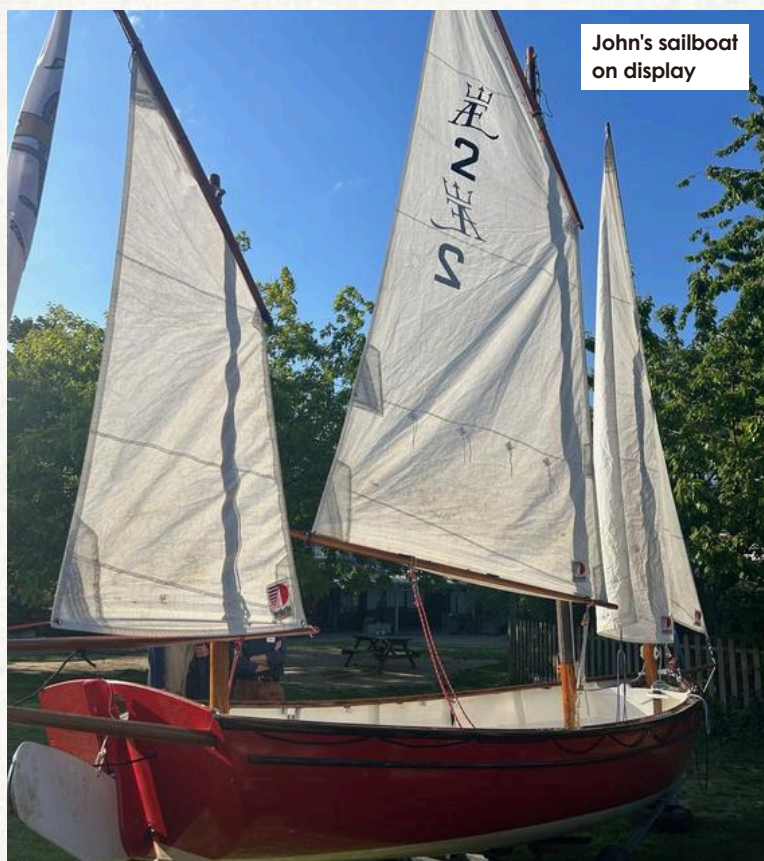
"I've been to many reunion events where alumni share the impact that former teachers had on their lives," shared our Development Director, **Tamlyn Worrall**. "Rarely have the stories been as varied and as heartwarming as those told by our Old Alfredians in memory of John, who taught at the school for 37 years.

"From physics experiments involving exploding microwaves on the school field, to designing and building the school's three sailing boats with the students, to the most important quality of all - instilling kindness. John was a true KAS legend!"

To see all the photos from the evening, as well as photos of John shared by the community, please visit [KASconnected.org](https://KASconnected.org).



Sue Peisley on John's bench



John's sailboat on display



Jeff Harlow



Kara Conti



David Peisley



Gathering in the Main Hall



# School Calendar

<u>Term Dates</u>	
<b>Summer Half Term</b>	Monday 26 – Friday 30 May
<b>Summer Term</b>	Monday 2 June – Thursday 10 July
<u>Key Events</u>	
<b>Sports Day</b>	Wednesday 4 June
<b>Soloist Concert</b>	Thursday 12 June
<b>Year 11 &amp; 13 Photography Exhibition</b>	Friday 13 June
<b>Year 10 MFL trips (Biarritz &amp; San Sebastian)</b>	Sunday 15 – Friday 20 June
<b>Year 7 Project Week</b>	W/C Monday 16 June
<b>The Village (Year 8)</b>	
<b>Year 9 Camp (North Devon)</b>	
<b>Year 11 Prom</b>	Friday 20 June
<b>Year 11 Namibia trip</b>	Friday 27 June – Thursday 10 July
<b>Year 13 Graduation &amp; Prom</b>	Friday 27 June
<b>Year 12 'Life After KAS' Conference</b>	Thursday 3 July
<b>KASonbury</b>	Saturday 5 July

*Please note, dates are subject to change*

## A note on Pastoral Care

Parents are reminded that counselling and pastoral support is available in school. In Upper School, students can either self-refer directly via [counselling@kingalfred.org.uk](mailto:counselling@kingalfred.org.uk) or talk with their Head of Year.





**The King Alfred School,  
North End Road, London NW11 7HY**

 [kingalfred.org.uk](http://kingalfred.org.uk)



[@thekingalfredschool](https://www.facebook.com/thekingalfredschool)



[@kingalfredsch](https://twitter.com/kingalfredsch)



[@the\\_king\\_alfred\\_school](https://www.instagram.com/the_king_alfred_school)



[The King Alfred School](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-king-alfred-school)