



The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter



July
2025

SCHOOL NEWS

KAStonbury 2025

Huge congratulations to everyone involved in this year's KAStonbury school festival, which featured fun, food and excellent entertainment!

The KAS community pulled out all the stops to make this year's event extra special. Activity stations included face painting, a nail station, a bookstall and an 'adopt a rock' stand, where children were rewarded with a parent-sketched certificate for their creative decorating efforts.

The performances were the big draw, with students taking to the stage to sing, play and cheer. On behalf of the Music department, teacher **Dan Aarons** said: "Could this year's KAStonbury have even been the best one yet?! From Year 6 to Year 13, students did themselves, their families and the school proud with a plethora of praiseworthy performances."

He added: "A huge thanks to everyone involved and all the hard work put in from both staff and students alike."

Particular thanks must go to KASparents co-chairs **Ulrike Mertesacker** and **Phoebe D'Arcy**, who worked tirelessly to make the event such a great success!







Prom fun for Year 11

Year 11s celebrated the end of their GCSE journey with a fantastic prom.

Head of Year **Lynne Sasson** said: "The students have worked so hard these last few months, and it was time to kick back and have fun! Thanks to everyone for helping set up, in particular **Cydney C**, **Bea J-A** and **Eva S**. We had such fun!"



Old English translates into art

***"lof-dædum sceal in mægða gehwære
man gepēon"*** – *Beowulf*, c. 8th Century

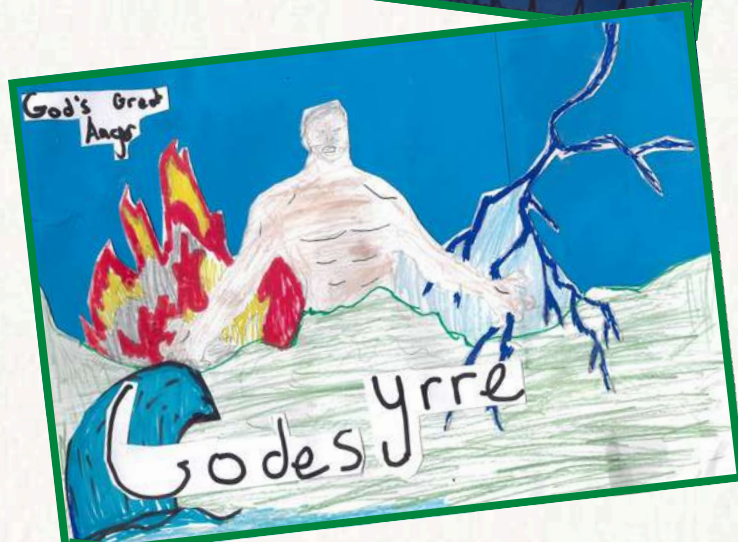
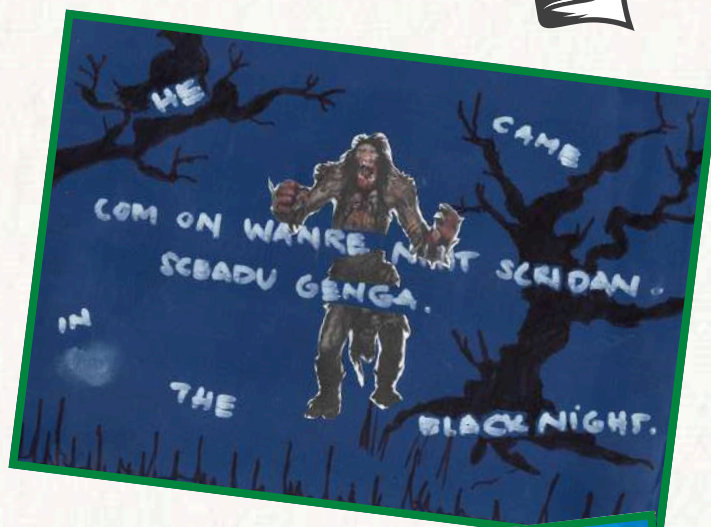
***"Behaviour that's admired is the path
to power among people everywhere"***

– Seamus Heaney translation

Y7 have been studying Old English, looking in particular at the poem *Beowulf*.

They created artwork using quotes from the original Anglo-Saxon describing Grendel on a murderous rampage in Heorot, the Mead Hall.

A selection of the students' work is pictured here.



Clockwise from top:

Artworks by Albert H,
George E, Izzy Q,
Marley S and Ella M

Year 7's week of fun!

Year 7 made the most of a suspended timetable to enjoy **Activities Week** in mid-June, a highlight of the school calendar and a brilliant opportunity for them to experience a wide range of engaging and enriching activities beyond the classroom.

The week started in charitable style, with students working hard on design and craft projects over the course of two days. The finished products included key-rings, baked goods and printed t-shirts, which they sold at a Charity Market on the school field, raising over £1k for [The Brain Tumour Charity](#).

On Wednesday, students ventured into Central London to complete a Monopoly-style scavenger hunt, lovingly designed by Head of Year **Claire Murphy**. In the face of searing heat, the students displayed great teamwork skills as they hunted down clues and completed creative challenges at iconic London sites.

There was a chance to cool off on Thursday at **Lee Valley White Water Centre**, with paddleboarding, canoeing and the ever-popular Water Wipeout challenge.

And on Friday, students returned to the classroom to rotate through Science, Music, and Classics workshops.

In the latter, students created artwork based on the Greek myth of *Icarus*. "I like this story because it's got a moral," shared **Ralph F.** "He gets too drunk on power; he thinks he's a god, but he's not.

"It reminds you not to be arrogant, even when you're good at something."

Monday & Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday



Friday





TEDx
KingAlfredSchool
x = independently organized TED event

TEDx Talks now available to watch!

You will have read in our last newsletter about the fifth excellent instalment of TEDxKingAlfredSchool, and we are pleased to share the video links in this issue.

Seven students took part in this year's event, with their wry observations and personal passions covering a range of riveting topics.

You can watch individual talks using the links below, or else access them all via [this playlist](#).

▶ [Culture Shock by Samira R](#)

Samira had the room laughing along with her as she shared her wry insights on life in Britain in her talk.

▶ [I Have My Own Hammer by Alex L](#)

Alex took to the stage wearing a pair of dungarees she'd crafted herself to talk about her passion for making things, and the school's forge in particular.

▶ ["I'd Let Him Stalk Me" by Lily R](#)

Year 12 Lily spoke eloquently about the hidden bias of 'pretty privilege'.

▶ [Quick to Judge by Ella S](#)

Having joined the KAS Sixth Form from a state school, Ella analyses her preconceptions of independent schools.

▶ [Why We Hate Shakespeare by Finley N](#)

Finley argued that the stage is the only place where Shakespeare belongs.

▶ [The Devil You Know by Megan B](#)

Megan explored how the devil is represented in film and life, her interest being sparked by a childhood meeting with 'a man who could talk to the devil'.

▶ [A Cure in Crisis by Bronwen M](#)

Bronwen's talk on antibiotic resistance stemmed from a stray remark in a science lesson.

Talks were also delivered by KAS teachers [Natalie Petzal](#) (Lower School), [Adam Findlay](#) (DT) and [Hannah Lang](#) (Music). Meanwhile, the wider KAS community was represented by [Rikke Wichmann-Bruun](#), [Kimberley Olliff Cooper](#), [Julia Davis](#), [Sophie Ricard](#) and [Peter York](#). Congratulations to all!

Film Awards success 🎬

At the end of last half term, KAS students headed to the **London Schools' Film Awards** at Mill Hill School – and came home with some fantastic wins!

The quality of KAS filmmaking was clear to see, with **Eva M** (Year 13) scooping awards for:

- Best Director
- Best Screenplay
- Best Cinematography

She was also runner-up for Best Film, a huge achievement given the tough competition.

KAS had films shortlisted in a range of categories, including:

- Best Music
- Best Sound Editing
- Best SFX/VFX
- Best Actor
- Best Ensemble Acting
- Most Memorable Scene



We were pleased to be joined by filmmakers **Maeve L** and **Jake C (OAs 2024)**, along with an excited crew of Year 12 students – all showing that the future of film at KAS is looking bright!

Anyone for a pond dip?

Year 7 students swapped Newton for newts one sunny afternoon this term, as they enjoyed an exciting pond-dipping session in Ivy Wood. It was part of their current studies in **Science**, covering ecology, ecosystems and biodiversity.

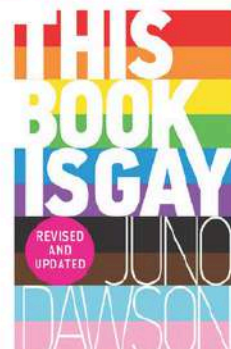
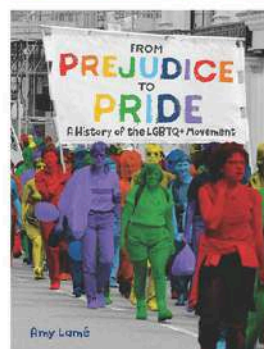
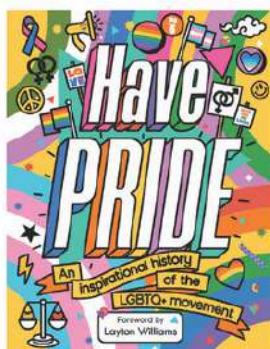
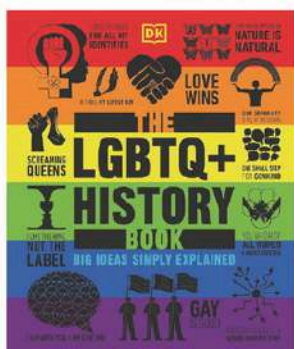
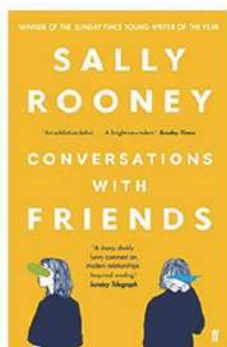
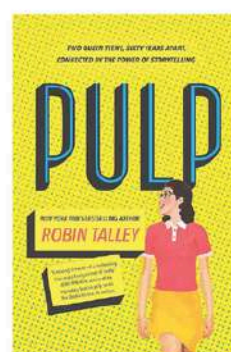
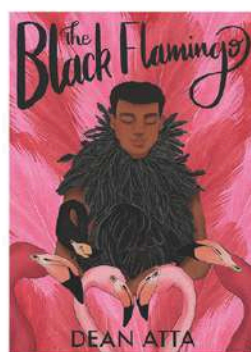
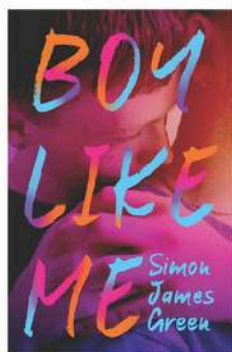
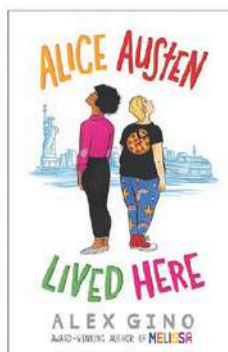
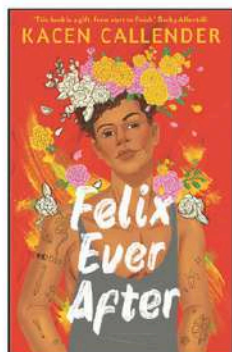
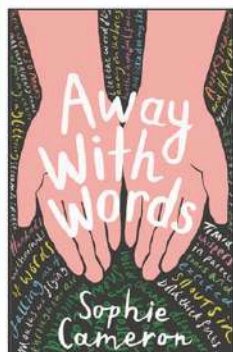
They discovered several newts, which sparked lots of curiosity and discussion about aquatic habitats and the role these creatures play in local ecosystems.

It was a fun, hands-on way to bring classroom learning to life, giving students a glimpse into the biodiversity to be found in our very own grounds.



READ WITH PRIDE

KAS UPPER SCHOOL LIBRARY



- Away With Words - Sophie Cameron
- Felix Ever After - Kacen Callender
- If You Still Recognise Me - Cynthia So
- Alice Austen Lived Here - Alex Gino
- Stay a Little Longer - Bali Rai
- The Gifts that Bind Us - Caroline O'Donoghue
- Boy Like Me - Simon James Green
- The Girl from the Sea - Molly Ostertag
- The Black Flamingo - Dean Atta
- All that's left in the world - Eric J. Brown
- Pulp - Robin Talley

- Nothing Ever Happens Here - Sarah Hagger-Holt
- The Secret Sunshine Project - Benjamin Dean
- All the Invisible Things - Orlagh Collins
- Conversations with Friends - Sally Rooney
- In Memoriam - Alice Winn
- The LGBTQ+ History Book - DK
- Have Pride: an Inspirational History of the LGBTQ+ movement - Stella Caldwell
- LGBTQ+ Issues - Tracey Biram (ed.)
- From Prejudice to Pride: a history of LGBTQ+ movement - Amy Lame
- This Book is Gay - Juno Dawson

ART, MUSIC & DRAMA

UAL students wow with *The Welkin*

Our team of UAL teachers would like to congratulate our **Performing Arts** students on their outstanding work in the production of *The Welkin*, their final performance as part of the course.

Set in 18th-century England, the play explores themes of justice, friendship, women's bodies, and women's suffering. It sees 12 local women debate the fate of Sally Poppy, who has been found guilty of murder but claims to be pregnant – which, if true, would save her from death.

The performance showcased not only the students' exceptional talent but also the culmination of the skills they have developed throughout the course. Their dedication and professionalism was so impressive – no wonder they have been accepted into the drama schools of their choice!

Libby S (Year 13), who is going to leading drama school Mountview to study Musical Theatre, said: "I've loved the UAL course; it's really pushed me. We've tackled so many types of drama and theatre, and I've learned so much."





Art and old faces in Paris

Year 12 **Art** students spent a long weekend exploring Parisian art galleries, gathering ideas for their individual projects. The city was, as ever, *très chic* and *très chaud*!

Highlights included the Post-Impressionism at the Musée d'Orsay, a visit to Rodin's house, and visiting the vast Père Lachaise cemetery. There was also time to enjoy lemon tartlette patisseries and a spot of vintage clothes shopping.

Unexpectedly, there was a surprise visit from former KAS French teacher **Pauline Moloney**, who was hiding in the Picasso museum – much to the students' shock!

"It was great to get out of school and see all sorts of art – historic, modern – in Parisian galleries," shared **Rose F.** "I had a great conversation about Picasso and the context of his work with (art teachers) **Nic** and **Will.**"



"I'm looking at decay in my work, so visiting the cemetery was a highlight. It was interesting to see how nature was taking over the graves."

Year 10 enjoy open air theatre

Year 10 **Drama** students visited Regent's Park Open Air Theatre this term to see *Noughts & Crosses*, the stage adaptation of Malorie Blackman's powerful novel.

Before the show, they enjoyed a picnic in the park, a chance to relax and spend time together.

The performance used a bold, political style to explore themes of racial inequality, division, and forbidden love. Performed in a Brechtian style, the production used direct address, minimal set, and stylised movement to challenge the audience and provoke reflection.



It was a memorable trip that not only entertained but raised important questions about society – an excellent way to finish the academic year.

A stunning A level show

The first half of Summer Term ended with an incredible exhibition of work by our students studying A level **Art & Design** and **Critical & Contextual Studies** (CCS). It was a memorable evening, with staff, students, parents and OAs coming together to celebrate the students' creativity.

This year's cohort was particularly strong, with 10 students studying Art and five taking CCS. Many of them are going on to study in art colleges next year.

Head of Art, **Will Lewer**, said: "We are so proud and delighted with the outstanding work and effort of our A level Art and CCS classes. The students' work this year is varied and ambitious, from ceramics and drawing to installation and animation."





Fantastic photography on display

This summer's Photography Show featured work from our largest cohort yet, with over 40 student photographers' work on display. It also marked the debut of our newly redesigned space, which allowed us to showcase GCSE and A level work side by side.

What is always striking is the diversity of ideas and techniques our students produce, often from the same theme or starting point. In addition to photographic prints, this year also featured giant handmade magazines, textiles, moving film, animation, work with AI and photographic sculptures.

For the first time, we also exhibited student portfolios, offering staff, parents and fellow students a glimpse into the full creative journey – from initial research and planning in journals, through project highlights, to the final curated exhibition.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended, shared their feedback and supported our students' work.



CHOICE, EXPLORATIONS & GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Slavery and the City

Year 7 students took an illuminating walking tour around the City of London on a sunny Friday this term, exploring sites and institutions with direct links to the slave trade and the abolitionist movement.

They also heard about how some of the most powerful and influential institutions in the City have issued apologies for their role in “an appalling and shameful period of English history” and how they now wish to bring about changes.

The information gathered helped inform students’ latest **Liberal Arts Exploration** enquiry: “How should we commemorate events that we are not proud of?”



Year 8's Explorations exhibition

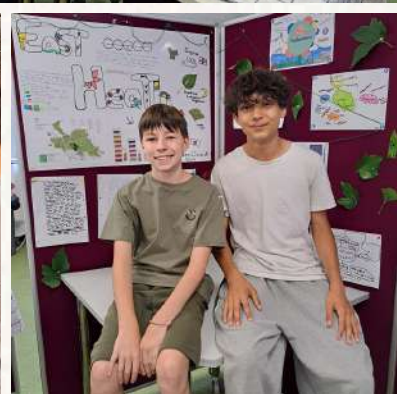
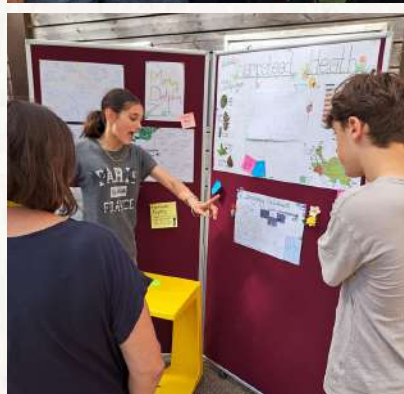
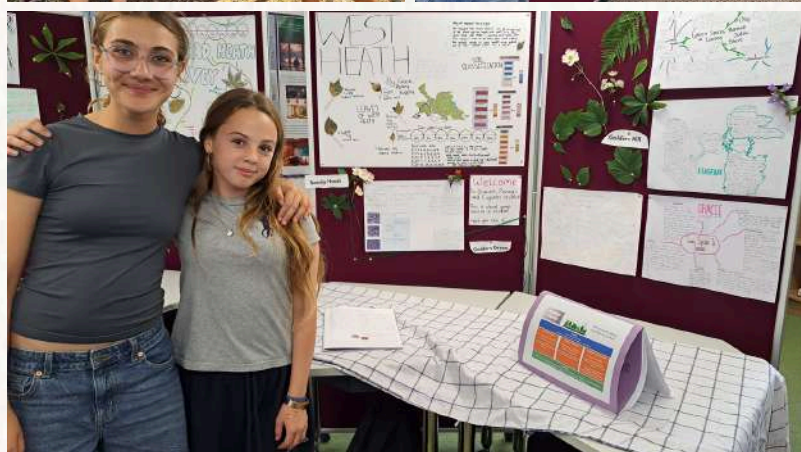
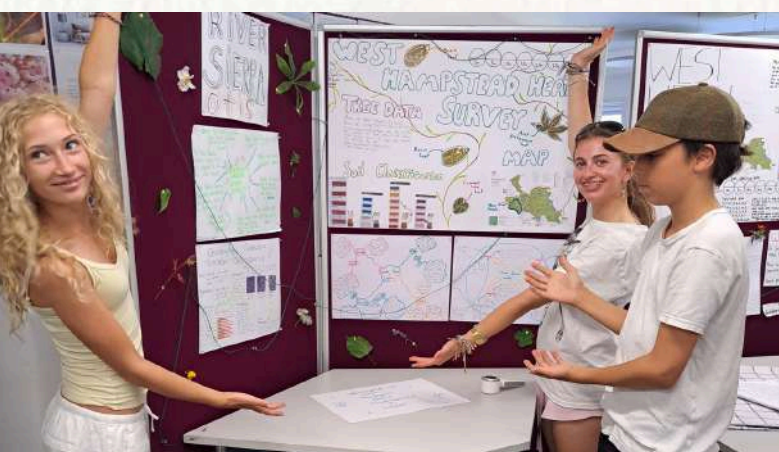
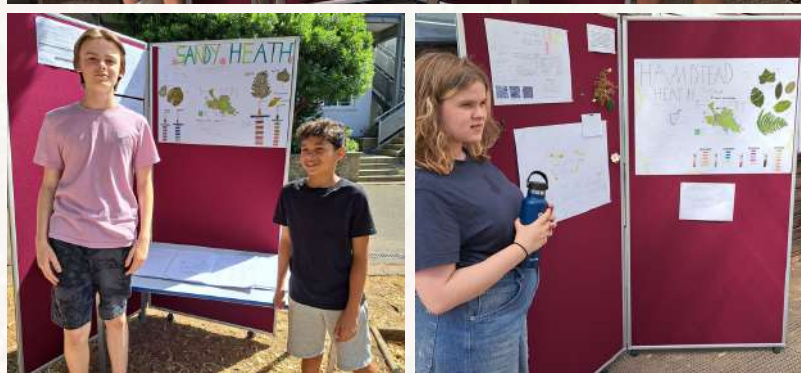
This term's enquiry question: *Why are green spaces important in London?*

This term, Year 8 took part in an interdisciplinary Exploration focused on London's environment and history.

Combining Geography, Science, Maths and English, students examined urbanisation, London's geology, how to gather and interpret environmental data, and historical texts to gain insights into the development of London's green spaces.

They conducted fieldwork, analysed data and presented their findings, developed key skills in creative thinking, collaboration, and communication.

The project concluded with visual displays – some, fittingly, staged outside – showcasing their insights into biodiversity, ecosystems, and the history and importance of Hampstead Heath.



SPORT

Sports Day brings out students' best

This year's Sports Day was a joyous display of effort, excitement and enjoyment – not just of sport, but of togetherness!

Students from Year 6 to Year 10 participated in track and field events under the banner of Team Blue, Yellow or Red. A fun benchball tournament was also held on the field.

Dressed in their respective colours, everyone gave maximum effort, whether running, jumping or throwing. But most energies went into cheering on their teammates, with the StoneX Stadium – usually home to the Saracens – filled with a supportive roar!

As **Robert** reflected afterwards: "What I saw on Sports Day was definitely competition, but I'm glad to say it was of the healthy kind, with every student motivated to do their best."

Well done to all of our athletes for a fantastic day – and to the victorious Red team!





A terrific term for tennis

Three Year 9 students travelled to Wren Academy in Finchley for tennis matches this term.

Filippo W-A lost 6-7 after forcing a tiebreak – an excellent effort. Meanwhile, **Keiran S** and **Harry P** played hard against tough opponents, losing closely to them. And **Reuben B** won in his first-ever tennis match by 6-2!

Elsewhere, Year 7 & 8 students **Luke N**, **Shen N**, **Martino W-A** and **Zach W** travelled to Stoke Newington School for a host of singles and doubles matches. Despite an absence of wins, the boys showed excellent sporting etiquette.



Success for our Sports Leaders

Over the course of this school year, our Sports Leaders have worked incredibly hard to complete their qualifications, and their efforts have truly paid off.

Our Year 8s passed Level 1 qualification with flying colours, while the Year 9s (pictured) successfully achieved Level 2, showing real growth in confidence, responsibility, and leadership skills that will benefit them well beyond the sports field.

Run by Head of Sport **Tom Franklin**, the Sports Leader Award equips students with the ability to plan, organise and deliver safe and engaging physical activities, particularly for younger people and within the community.

Key skills developed include leadership, time management, organisation and coaching.



Most recently, the Sports Leaders played a vital role in **Lower School Sports Day**. From setting up equipment to running events, they brought energy, confidence and a strong sense of responsibility to proceedings, helping to make the day run smoothly.

Well done to all of our Sports Leaders on a fantastic year!

CAMPS & TRIPS

The Village Project 2025

The sun shone on The Village Project this term, as all of Year 8 spent five days living in self-built huts on the school grounds – immersed in a unique, off-grid experience that blended creativity, craftsmanship and community.

Each day was filled with hands-on activities. Students could try their hand at traditional crafts like wood whittling, blacksmithing and yarn spinning, whilst artistic pursuits included charcoal sketching, nail painting and hair wrapping. Off-site sailing trips provided adventure beyond the Village grounds, too.

In the bushcraft area, students sipped nettle tea and grounded themselves in nature, receiving their own nature-inspired Village names.

Rufus C, who was given the name Robin, reflected: "My Village highlight has been making an axe in the forge. It took me two hours and it was really good fun."

For **Phoebe C-H**, the freedom of choice stood out: "There are so many activities, but you get to choose what you want to do. It's been really relaxing." Her hut-mate **Ella R-P** added: "It's also been nice not having any technology."

Living in The Village meant taking full responsibility for daily life, including cooking and cleaning. "Cooking on the fire has been one of the biggest challenges," said Rufus. "You can't control the temperature like a hob, but you get the hang of it. So far, we've made pasta, chicken wraps and a nice soup." >>>



The King Alfred School grounds



>>> Each hut housed four to five Villagers, and many personalised their spaces with handmade signs and decorations.

"There was a lot of excitement on the first night," said Phoebe. "People didn't get much sleep! But after that, it calmed down."

"I've probably slept better here than I do at home," Rufus added. "I think it's because of everything we're doing; some of the activities work you really hard, especially blacksmithing. So when you go to bed, you just need to sleep, ready to wake up and do it all again."



Year 9 & 10 camps

Whilst Year 7 were enjoying Activities Week and Year 8 embraced Village life, students in Years 9 and 10 took enriching trips to a variety of locations – as detailed in the photo fact files below!

Year: 9

Destination: Haven Holiday Park, Poole, Dorset

Highlights: Kayaking, windsurfing, paddleboarding, hike to Lulworth Cove

A student says: "The best bit for me was hanging out with new people and making new connections" **Eila Z-J**



Year: 9

Destination: Tintagel, Cornwall

Highlights: Paddleboarding, hiking to Tintagel Castle, seeing the Gallos sculpture, biking the Camel Trail

A student says: "We took a boat and did cliff jumping one day – that was a real highlight for me" **Max C**





Year: 9

Destination: Surf Camps in Woolacombe and Twitchen, Devon

Highlights: Surf lessons, hiking to Baggy Point, coasteering, beach games

A student says: "This camp was great for pushing your abilities. Being in a smaller group really encouraged you to make friends with new people in your year group." **Kitty M**



Year: 10

Destination: San Sebastian, Spain
– living with a local family

Highlights: Spanish lesson drama performances, sea kayaking, bike tour

A student says: "I enjoyed the independence we had and meeting my host family. It was interesting to see how people live somewhere different." **Maia M**

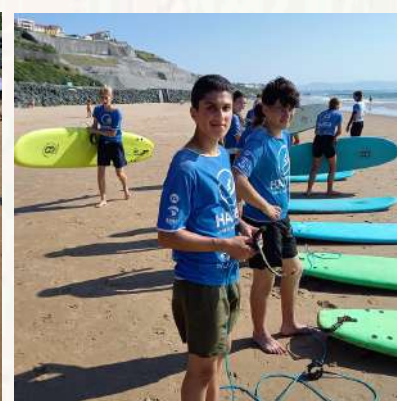


Year: 10

Destination: Biarritz, France

Highlights: Daily 3hr French class, visit to Saint Jean de Luz, surf school, French farmer's market

Students say: "We made some good friends at language school and have kept in touch" **Silvie A**
"I liked the surf lessons and hanging out at the beach" **Holly C**



Year: 10

Destination: Emilia-Romagna, Italy

Highlights: Exploring the Renaissance cities of Bologna, Modena, Florence & Mantua

Students say: "I loved walking around the cities and soaking up the atmosphere" **Louise H** "We ate cannolis in Bologna – they were amazing!" **Isla C**



Exmoor National Park, Somerset



Learning comes to life for geographers

On the penultimate week of the year, Year 10 **Geography** students headed to Somerset for a two-day fieldwork residential, supported by experts at the Field Studies Council.

Students studied Taunton (an urban environment) and compared the quality of life in two areas of the town, conducting environmental surveys and questionnaires, and making annotated field sketches.

On the second day, they headed to the River Holford in the Quantock Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Walking 3km along its banks from the source, they examined changes in the river, helping to bring the theory they had studied in the classroom to life as the river became wider and deeper.

Coursework research at The Globe

A level **English Literature** students enjoyed a lovely evening at The Globe, attending a compelling production of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.

They watched as 'groundlings', standing in The Yard section of the theatre, which made for an engaging and immersive experience as actors and set pieces weaved in and out of the audience.

Directed by Ola Ince, the impactful performance had many moments of hysteria, panic and injustice, and gave everyone much food for thought for their upcoming coursework.



The Globe,
London



King's Cross,
London

Geographers explore King's Cross

Year 12 students took a day trip to Kings Cross as part of their 'Changing Spaces, Making Places' unit in A level **Geography** to study the regeneration work that has taken place there.

Students were taken to the top of the area's iconic Lighthouse building by KAS parent **Nick Capstick-Dale**, who was involved in the site's redevelopment and spoke about his work in the area.

Back on the ground, students examined how various stakeholders contributed to different aspects of the area's rebranding, including establishing transport links, encouraging cultural events, and attracting investment in the area.

They were also able to develop valuable fieldwork sampling skills, such as interviewing members of the public to gather opinions on the development.

OLD ALFREDIANS & DEVELOPMENT

KAS marks Old Alfredian's 100th!

Anne MacMillan (OA 1942) celebrated her 100th birthday in June, and the school honoured her big birthday with a very special project.

Lower School students collaborated to design 100 individual cards, as well as a large card from Year 4 teacher **Sophie**.

Each card represented a year from 1925 to 2025. Students researched and included a world fact from that year in the card, as well as a birthday wish.

Anne joined KAS in 1936 and experienced first-hand one of the most pivotal moments in the school's history when it evacuated from London to Royston during World War II. Her centenary is not only a celebration of her remarkable life, but also a reflection on the resilience and spirit of the KAS community.

Anne sent a thank-you letter to the students, noting she enjoyed receiving the KAS cards more than her card from King Charles!



21st June 2025

Dear Pupils at King Alfred School

Thank you all so much for all the lovely cards you sent me for my 100th Birthday. You must all have worked so hard to make such beautiful cards. I am enjoying reading all the fun facts you found to write in each of the cards.

I had a lovely party with my family, and I also got a card from the King, which was wonderful, but I enjoyed receiving your cards more.

It is a very long time since I was at King Alfred School, but I have very fond memories of being at school. A few years ago, I wrote a short book about my life and I thought you would be interested to read what I remember about King Alfred School, so I have added this below. Unfortunately I don't have any photographs as cameras were not so common in those days.

Thank you very much again for the cards. With very best wishes

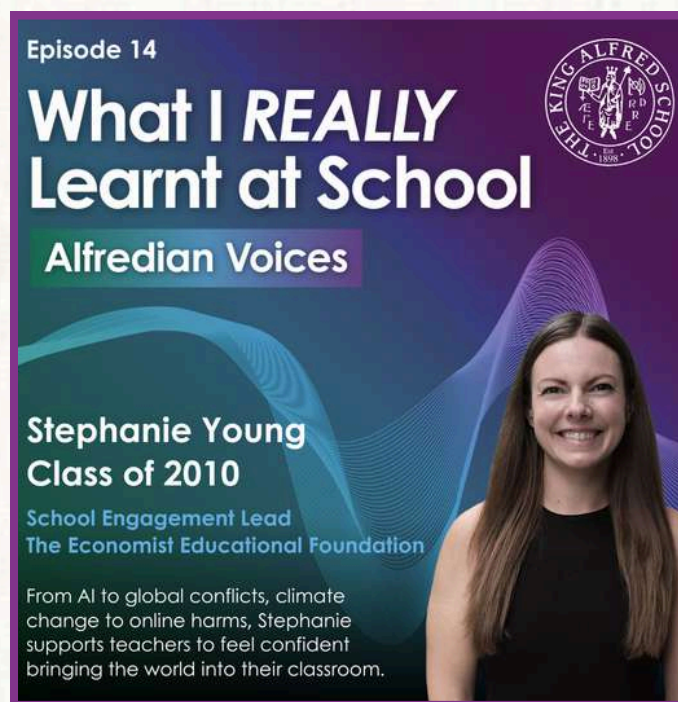

Anne MacMillan

Alfredian Voices: episode 14

In this month's episode of [Alfredian Voices: What I REALLY Learnt at School](#), we speak with **Stephanie Young (OA 2010)**, about how she has carried the KAS ethos into her career.

After eight years in the classroom, she now works at the Economist Educational Foundation, creating unbiased, engaging resources to help teachers explore current events with students.

Stephanie reflects on the challenges of presenting global issues in a balanced way, and why amplifying student voices remains central to her work.



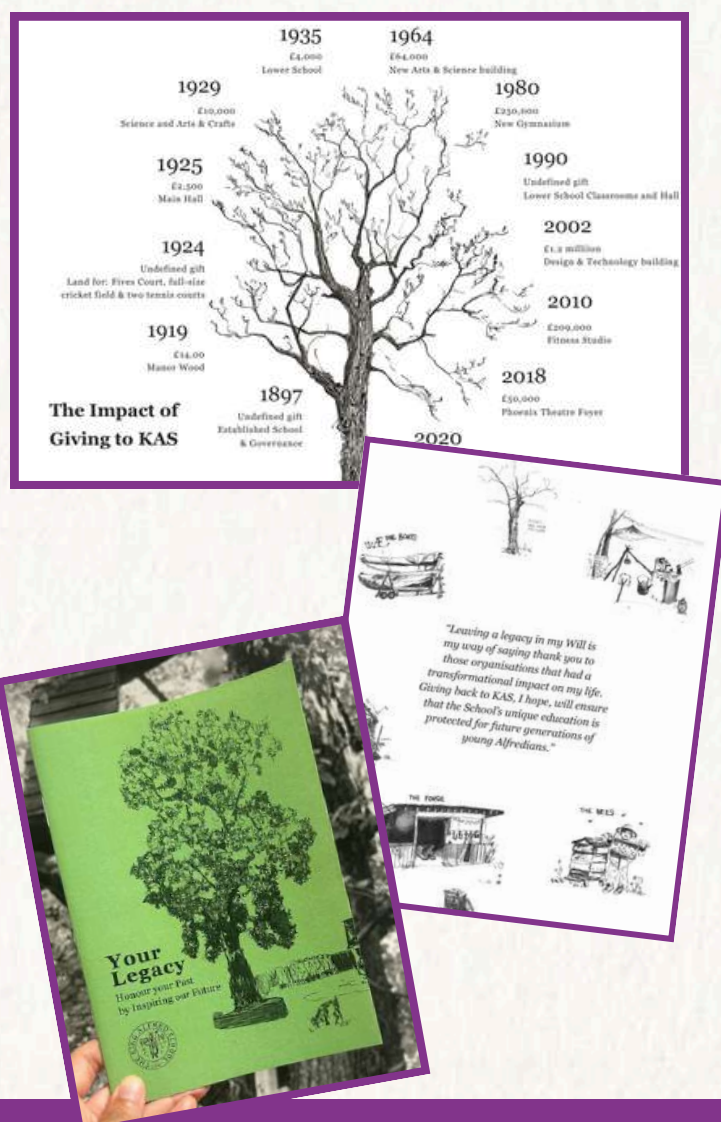
Legacy giving campaign

The school has launched its Legacy Giving programme with the release of *Your Legacy*, a beautifully illustrated booklet highlighting the schools' tradition of philanthropy since its founding in 1898.

As **Kara Conti**, President of the King Alfred School Society from 2000 to 2025, explains in the intro, "Legacies build the future of KAS, supporting the bold vision of our Founders and keeping our values alive for generations to come."

With illustrations by art teacher **Nic Bevers** and design by **Anna Harrison**, the booklet reflects the creativity and care of the KAS community.

To learn more or discuss your intentions, contact **Tamlyn Worrall** in the Development Office. Call 0208 457 5265, email development@kingalfred.org.uk, or visit kingalfred.org/your-legacy.



School Calendar

<u>Term Dates</u>	
Autumn Term	Thursday 4 September – Friday 12 December 2025
October Half Term Holiday	Monday 20 – Friday 31 October 2025
Spring Term	Tuesday 6 January – Friday 27 March 2026
February Half Term Holiday	Monday 16 – Monday 23 February 2026 (INSET Day)
Summer Term	Tuesday 14 April – Thursday 9 July 2026
May Bank Holiday (school closed)	Monday 4 May 2026
May Half Term Holiday	Monday 25 – Friday 29 May 2026
<u>Key Events</u>	
A Level Results Day	Thursday 14 August 2025
GCSE Results Day	Thursday 21 August 2025
Year 12 Camp	Thursday 11 – Saturday 13 September 2025
Year 7 Camp	Monday 15 – Friday 19 September 2025
SIMS Photos	Thursday 25 September 2025
Whole School Photo	Friday 10 October 2025

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 or talk with their Head of Year.



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

 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)