



The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter



December
2025

SCHOOL NEWS

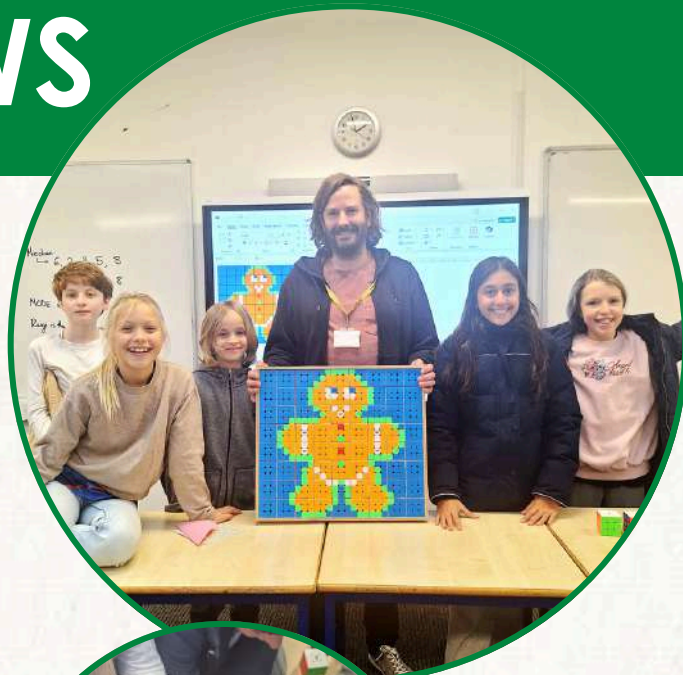
Maths Club gets creative

Students at our weekly **Maths Club** embraced their inner artists this term. Working together, a group of Year 7s created a seasonal gingerbread scene using 72 Rubik's Cubes!

They followed a pattern set by Maths teacher **Sam Kirkwood**. It was based on a design submitted by **Ace B** and **Mateo R** (Year 12), and required one side of each cube to be in a precise formation. Their work was displayed in a custom frame built especially for the Maths department by DT and Forest School teacher **Chris Raymond**.

Earlier in the term, Year 7 student **Aviv C** impressively learned how to solve a Rubik's Cube in just three weekly sessions. "I've been waiting all week to come to Maths Club and finally finish it," he said proudly on the day of completion. "It feels great!"

Maths Club runs every Friday lunchtime for all Upper School students keen to try their hand at cube art, puzzles or problems.



Space to create and connect

More creative fun can be found at our weekly **Vintage Music and Arts Club**, which runs every Wednesday lunchtime.

The 'VM and A Club' provides a space for students to enjoy and discover music from the 60s and beyond, whilst making arts and crafts. It's a chance to connect with peers and enjoy a mindful moment.

It is run by Learning Support teacher **Pat Leacock**, who students say is "the best thing about the club"!

Year 7s get crafty for a worthy cause

Five creative Year 7 students – **Hayley R, Eve A, Marlen M-A, Ola G and Reva N** – have folded an incredible 1,000 origami cranes as part of a charity project. They were inspired by the Japanese tradition of *Senbazuru*, which symbolises hope, healing, good fortune and peace.

The idea was sparked during a Callover and brought to life with support from Learning Support teacher **Simon Kerslake** at his Origami Club. Each crane is being sold for £1, with the team aiming to raise £1,000 for **Make-A-Wish**, a charity that grants life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

Marlen explained: “This project was created to brighten the Christmas of young people who may be struggling, and to make their wishes come true.”

Beautiful art, meaningful tradition and a powerful cause – a true reflection of KAS values. Well done, girls!



Published paper propels KAS Sixth Former towards a career in law

Please join us in congratulating **Rani G** (Year 12) on co-authoring a paper that has been published by **OxJournal**, an online academic platform for intellectually engaged young people.



Rani shared how it came about: “I was proudly selected as one of five participants for the four-week Oxford Scholastica Academy Commercial Law Internship. As part of this, I helped co-author a published paper that critically

evaluated the common law Spiliada test and its ability to adapt to the post-Brexit and digital environment.

“The project required me to manage and balance complex legal concepts from key cases like *Lubbe* and *Al Assam* alongside challenging geopolitical and commercial considerations.

“This analytical experience is vital to my university goal of studying International Relations, and my long-term aim of entering the legal profession through a conversion course.” [Read Rani’s article here!](#)

Year 9 volunteers do KAS proud

Please join us in saying a big well done to our Year 9 students who represented the school so wonderfully as volunteers at the recent **Barnet Bar No One (BBN1)** event.

Held at Hendon Leisure Centre, BBN1 gives primary school children with a range of SEN needs the opportunity to participate in different sports.

Eleven KAS students – some of whom are on our Sports Leaders programme – helped to run the event, either leading or supporting the delivery of activities including Boccia (a seated bowls game), NFL skills, and rugby with Saracens pros.

It was a demanding task, with the mini-lessons delivered in fast-paced eight-minute sessions – but our students rose to the challenge beautifully.

In the process, they developed what the organisers called “key employability skills” such as communication, teamwork, resilience, problem-solving, and adaptability – all core to the KAS ethos.

The students who took part were: **Harry M, Harry F, Elijah B, Panos C, Summer P, Iris C, Luke N, Vivian S, Odin M, Poppy S** and **Penny F**.

PE teacher **Victoria Stewart**, who co-ordinated KAS’s involvement, said: “Two of the professionals commented on how impressive our young people were.

“It was wonderful to see our students thrive in a challenging situation and give back to the Barnet community.”



Black History Month student discussion

Early this term, students from Years 10 to 13 took part in a panel discussion during Form Hour, to mark the end of **Black History Month (BHM)**.

It was a chance for students to engage in reasoned, informed discussion – an increasingly vital skill in a time of growing polarisation and cancel culture.

A panel of four students – **Eva S, Izzy J Rani G, Ahaan G** – discussed a range of issues, moderated by Assistant Head of Sixth Form and DEIB Officer, **Nabihah Ahmed**.

After the discussion, the floor was opened up to students in the audience, who asked questions, including:

- Why are other ethnic groups excluded from BHM?
- Does KAS do enough to mark BHM?
- Would getting rid of BHM be giving in to racism?



KAS remembers

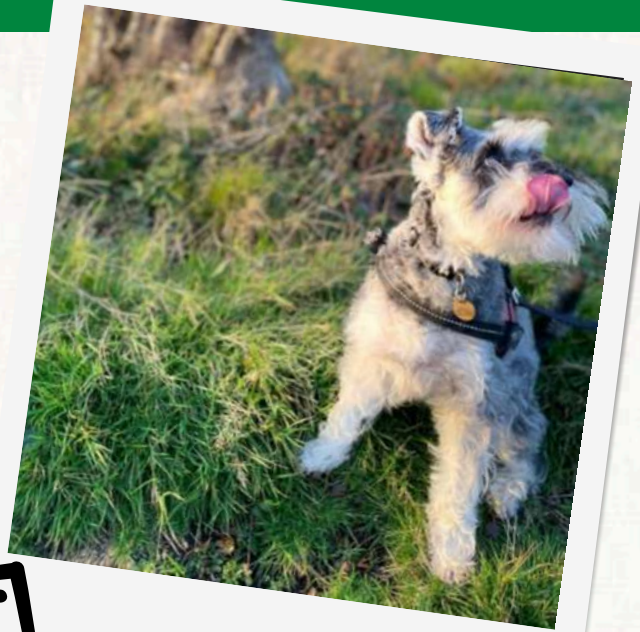
Our annual Remembrance Day break-time service was as moving as ever.

Music set a solemn, reflective mood, with **Elvis S** playing Fauré's *Élégie* on cello and **Dylan V** playing *The Last Post* on trumpet. Meanwhile, Head of History **Leon Whitman** gave a poignant speech, saying: "By keeping our connections to the past alive, and our history closely studied, we protect ourselves from taking peace for granted."

Students also sold poppies on the drive at drop-off in aid of the Royal British Legion.

Year 8 photography competition

Congratulations to all who entered our Year 8 photography competition this term! Students submitted entries over the course of four weeks, with a different theme announced each week. They were: Transport, Animals, Night Time and Reflections. The winners (selected by **Photography** teacher **Clara Cowan**) are featured here. Nice work!



'Animals'
winner
Alys H



'Transport'
winner
George E



'Reflections'
winner
Eddie K



'Night Time'
winner
Rafi O

End-of-term fun for all!

The final few weeks of Autumn Term provided a lovely opportunity for everyone to come together.

Students enjoyed fun outings with their year group and teachers (ranging from ice skating and bowling to an inflatable park and a silent disco with DJ Pat – featuring a surprise visit from Santa! We were also treated to a tasty Christmas lunch, courtesy of our wonderful caterers and served by Robert!

It's been a relaxed and cheerful way to end the year, and we're excited for what's to come in the new year!

Have a
Fun-Filled
Holiday

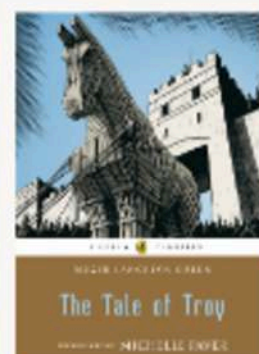
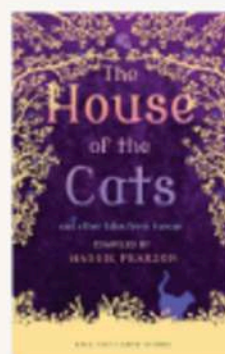
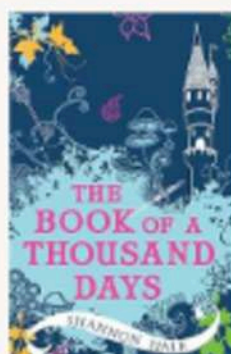
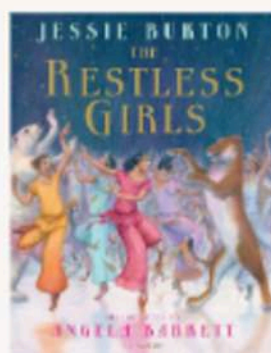
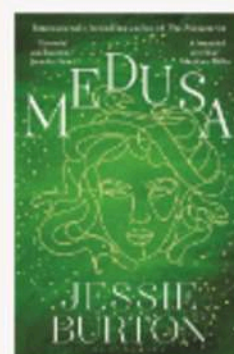
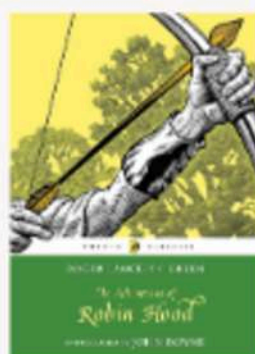
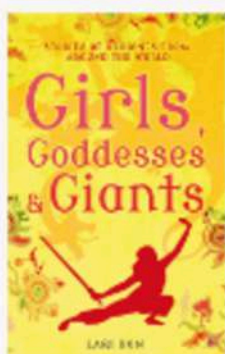


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our Instagram
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& other fun
insights!



FOLKLORE, MYTH, AND LEGEND

All books available in the Upper School Library



ART, MUSIC & DRAMA

GUYS & DOLLS

This year's Upper School show took over the re-vamped Phoenix Theatre for three nights this term, with a show-stopping production of ***Guys and Dolls***.

The **Drama** and **Music** departments worked tirelessly to create a truly memorable event. With stunning sets, stand-out performances, dazzling dancing and sensational singing, the show had the audience rapt from start to finish.

Tamar L, who wowed with her comedic portrayal of Nicely Nicely Johnson, said: "Taking part in the show was an unbelievable experience. I can't tell you how much I enjoyed it. Being in a show teaches you so much about group work, putting your trust in other people and learning how to be part of a team."

The show's impressive group dance numbers were choreographed by teacher **Frances Smith**, with help from Year 13 student **Juno C**. "It was really fun to help out creating some of the numbers," she said. "I wanted everyone to use their talents and create something they were really proud of. I'm not taking Drama at A level, so it was hard fitting this around my studies – but worth it!"

With students running the show in the technical box, bossing the backstage area and joining the professional musicians in the band, the production was a triumph for the whole team – not just those on the stage.

With thanks to **Emma Ziff** for the fabulous photos.





Axe Monsters rocks the Phoenix

Students turned it up to 11 this term as they took to our Phoenix Theatre stage for **Axe Monsters**, our annual evening dedicated to rock 'n' roll!

Over 60 students from Years 6 - 13 performed, with everyone working hard to ensure another great night. "It was a wonderful night of music," said Music teacher **Dan Aarons**.

New KAS student **Marlen A-M** (Year 7) played with her newly formed band, KYOTO, made up of fellow Year 7s. "We met over our love of music, performing and having a good time," she shared.

"This was our first time performing as a group. We chose to play *Vienna* by Billy Joel as it spoke to us as young musicians and our ambition."



All that jazz!

The Phoenix Theatre transformed into a haven for jazz lovers this term for our second annual **Jazz Night**.

“For a few magical hours, our theatre could easily have been mistaken for one of the city’s legendary jazz venues,” said Music teacher **Neven Vangelov**. “The atmosphere was electric, the music sublime, and the talent on display nothing short of extraordinary.

“The KAS Jazz Band showcased their unity and understanding of the intricate language of jazz. Each note reflected teamwork and communication – hallmarks of any great ensemble – whilst the Jazz Combo and UAL students demonstrated remarkable independence and artistry, revealing a maturity beyond their age. Their sound was rich, confident, and deeply expressive, proving that jazz is not just learned but lived.

“The professional band, those remarkable performers who grace London’s finest jazz clubs, set an inspiring standard, and it’s clear that the students have learned from the very best!

“This year brought an exciting addition: vocalists. Their presence elevated the evening to new heights. With strong, confident voices, they tackled a repertoire that was anything but simple. Jazz standards demand not only technical skill but emotional depth, and these singers delivered both.

“Of course, no great performance thrives in isolation. The audience played a vital role, offering unwavering support and infectious enthusiasm. Thank you to all who attended and supported our students!”



CHOICE, EXPLORATIONS & GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Cold-water swimmers make a splash!

Autumn Term saw eight courageous students join Maths teacher **Bettina Robbin-Coker** for an unforgettable cold-water swimming programme.

The group began by learning about the risks and benefits of this invigorating sport before taking their first dip at Parliament Hill Lido. At 19°C, the water felt refreshing – despite braving a sleet storm!

As the weeks passed and the temperature dropped to 17°C, the students were diving in with confidence. By the end of the term, they ventured to Hampstead Mixed Pond, where the water was a brisk 12°C. With no hot showers available, the group showed incredible resilience – armed with layers, hot water bottles, and the occasional hot chocolate.

Year 11 student **Mathew L** thoroughly enjoyed the experience, saying: “Cold-water swimming was the perfect way to start the weekend. I found that it helped me to relax after the school week.

“It really wakes you up and the feeling you get afterwards is amazing! I loved testing myself and becoming stronger.”

The students’ determination and enthusiasm were inspiring, and Bettina looks forward to welcoming more brave swimmers when cold-water swimming Choice returns in Summer Term 2026.

Choice is our Friday afternoon programme of co-curricular activities designed to help students try new things and develop skills beyond the curriculum.



Explorations outings and learnings

Year 7 Liberal Arts students have begun a thought-provoking **Exploration** this term: *'How should we commemorate events we are not proud of?'*

They have been tasked with designing a model to pitch as a new monument for the iconic **Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square**. Their designs will aim to commemorate slavery in a way that highlights resilience, resistance and positive advocacy.

For inspiration, students visited the Fourth Plinth to explore its existing statues and learn about the debates and controversies surrounding public monuments.

In class, they have been learning about the history of the slave trade, and heard from historian Paul Crooks, who spoke about Black British ancestry and identity.

Meanwhile, **Year 7 STEM** students have begun an engaging **Exploration**: *'Is space exploration ethical?'*

Students visited the **Science Museum** and learnt about the history of space exploration, and saw a demonstration on the physics of rockets.

In **Maths** they are learning how to calculate how far away planets are from stars (and therefore might have liquid water), in **Design** they are coding Mars rovers, and in **Science** they've been discovering the benefits to society achieved through research linked to space exploration.

Explorations are term-long projects in which students examine a compelling question or real-world problem from a variety of academic subject perspectives.





Net results for our netballers

Our netball teams have had an incredible run this term, showcasing talent and teamwork at recent tournaments.

The **Year 11** team and **Year 9 A team** both claimed first place to bring home the shield, while the **Year 9 B team** secured a fantastic third. The 9 As demonstrated fantastic adaptability and maturity in the final, convincingly beating an opponent they had lost to narrowly earlier in the tournament.

Meanwhile, **Year 7** impressed with two teams finishing 3rd and 5th, with the **B team** proudly bringing home the Plate.

These results highlight not only the skill of our players but also the depth of participation across year groups. Congratulations to all of our netballers – you've done us proud!



Basketballers shoot to success

Our **Year 7 & 8** basketballers stole the show at the **Under 13 ISA Basketball Tournament**, going all the way to win the event!

Their gold medal triumph came thanks to brilliant teamwork, skill, and sheer determination – a fantastic achievement for the squad. Congratulations to everyone involved!

Not to be outdone, the **Year 9 & 10** team had a strong performance in the **Under 15 ISA Basketball Tournament**, finishing second out of four schools.



Coach Chris praised the resilience and attitude on display, especially from the Year 9s who stepped up under pressure. Both teams showed passion and quality throughout – well done!

Gymnasts win inaugural medals

Our inaugural entry to the **ISA Gymnastics** competition was a successful, fun-filled day. A squad of 12 students – six from Year 6 and six from Year 8 (pictured) – travelled to Gerrard's Cross, where they placed second out of eight schools!

The girls performed at such a high standard throughout, with **Coach Ellie** from London Dance and Cheer Academy praising their attitude, enthusiasm and professionalism. Following the success of this competition, we will look to enter more gymnastics events going forward. Congratulations, girls!



A strong term for girls' football

Our Upper School girls' football teams have shown fantastic progress this term, with growing fluidity, teamwork and enthusiasm.

The Year 7 team has worked hard to improve their skills, while the Year 8 & 9 team is looking strong in a competitive league. We're excited to see their continued development in training and matches as they build ability, character, and leadership.

Mud, wet and cheers at cross-country competition!

Despite one of the wettest days of the season, four KAS cross-country runners braved mud and rain (as the picture left proves!) to achieve fantastic results in the **BPS Cross Country Championship**.

Ola G placed 10th out of 38 in the Year 7 Girls' race, while in the Year 8 Boys' category **Mylo C** finished 28th, **Ralph F** 45th, and **Lev F** 47th out of 56 competitors. "A huge well done to all for their determination and effort!" said PE teacher **Claire Murphy**.



CAMPS & TRIPS

Students have their say on Marseille

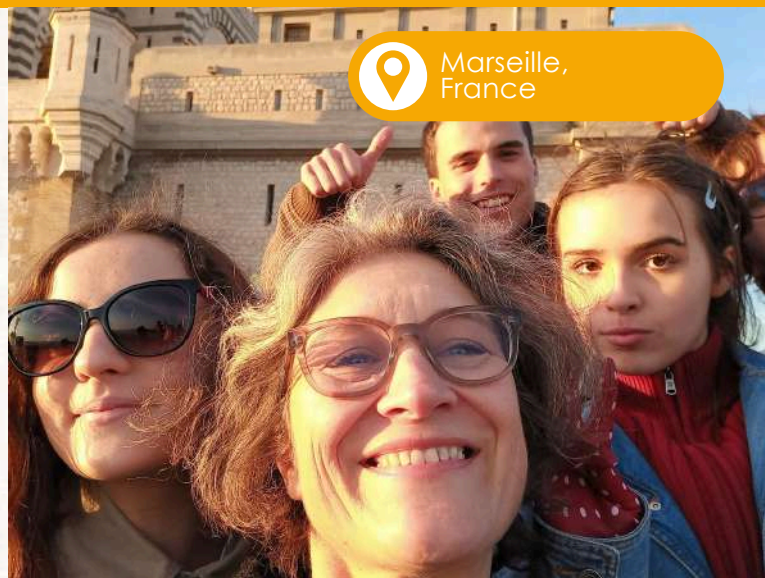
By Felix E, Frankie C, Gabriel R, Nell B & Luella G

"We arrived in Marseille on Thursday and met our tour guide outside the Town Hall in the Old Port. The building was built under Louis XIV, but, in protest, its architect refused to include a staircase – so even today the mayor enters through a neighbouring building! Bombing during WWII destroyed the area, with only the Town Hall and a draper's shop surviving. During reconstruction, workers uncovered a major archaeological find: an Ancient Greek ship.

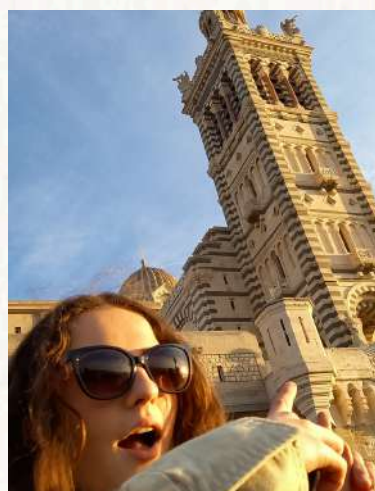
"Walking along the port, we explored Marseille's traditions, from oyster farming to its famous soap industry. We also visited a former orphanage-turned-hospice and saw political graffiti showing how street art reflects local identity. Our tour ended at Marseille Cathedral and the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilisations (Mucem), giving us a real sense of Marseille's past and present.

"On Friday, we joined a rap tour. Hip-hop came to France via US Marines trading tapes in Marseille, sparking a local scene. Early French rap was political and non-violent, but after a producer was killed by a right-wing militant, Marseille rap became more confrontational, reflecting community tensions. That evening, we enjoyed a fantastic rock concert.

"Saturday took us to Notre Dame de la Garde, a basilica overlooking the city. We rode a tourist train up the hill for stunning views. Later, we took a boat to Château d'If, the 16th-century fortress made famous in *The Count of Monte Cristo*. The day ended with an epic sunset."



Marseille,
France



Paris,
France



“Fun AND inspiring!” Paris Photo trip

Year 12 **Photography** students recently visited the renowned Paris Photo exhibition, an experience that proved both educational and inspiring. One of the world’s leading photography fairs, the events showcased an incredible range of styles and techniques.

Una C-M reflected on the scale and impact of the exhibition: “The exhibition was huge, so it was useful for seeing a wide variety of styles and techniques. It was very inspiring.”

For **Bea J-A**, the trip offered more than just artistic insight: “It was a great trip because we got to see loads of Paris as well as all the amazing photography. It’s useful to go to exhibitions when you’re working on projects because it can help you make decisions about what you want to do with your own work. The trip was fun AND inspiring!”

The visit gave students the chance to immerse themselves in contemporary photography while exploring the cultural backdrop of Paris – a perfect blend of creativity and adventure.



Sociologists visit mosque & synagogue

Year 13 **Sociology** students stepped beyond the classroom to explore lived religion across London at **Suleymaniye Mosque** in Haggerston and the **Western Marble Arch Synagogue**. From Buddhist principles at school to dialogues with Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders, students discovered faith as a dynamic social force. They reflected on openness, identity and shared human hopes – realising that Sociology thrives when curiosity meets experience.

Suleymaniye
Mosque, London



Designing futures in Eindhoven

Our Year 12 and 13 **3D Design** and **Art** students recently headed to Eindhoven for **Dutch Design Week** – and it wasn't just a few exhibitions in one building. The whole city gets involved. Shops set up stalls, streets turn into galleries, and you can even stumble across striking architecture just walking down the road.

"Design is everywhere," said **Tommy D.** "You just walk down the road and see some weird architecture in the middle – it's absolutely everywhere."

The event is all about new designers and fresh ideas, with people coming from all over the world to showcase their work. For Tommy, the best part was seeing the design process up close and talking to the creators themselves – including students from the famous Dutch Design School showing off their final-year projects.

"It's really nice to see more European architecture and design," he explained. "It takes you out of the London bubble."

The trip gave Tommy plenty of inspiration for his own projects and a chance to see how design trends are evolving. It's also a reminder that design isn't just about the finished product – it's about the journey, the ideas and the conversations that make it happen.



Eindhoven,
The Netherlands



The joys of a Geography field trip



Our Year 13 **Geography** students braved the elements during a busy and rewarding week in **Somerset** this term. The trip equipped them with the skills and data they need to produce high-quality coursework – worth 20% of their A level grade.

The group spent time in Minehead, where students explored quality of life through social and environmental indicators, and assessed the coastal defences.

They also visited Porlock Bay's stunning shingle beach to study coastal processes, and took part in an evening workshop to draft coursework titles.

The trip also allowed time for students to work independently to collect all the data needed for their enquiries.

They rounded off the week with a well-earned campfire evening to celebrate their hard work!



Various locations,
Somerset



An inspirational Art trip

Year 11 **Art** students headed to the **Hayward Gallery** at the Southbank Centre ahead of their mock exams this term. They took in – and inspiration from – *Gilbert and George: 21st Century Pictures*, a showcase of the artistic duo's work over the last 25 years. They also visited the Frieze Sculpture Fair.

"The trip was part of their work on the theme of 'Beginnings and Endings'," shared Art teacher **Will Lewer**. "Not everyone liked the exhibition – it split the group – but it provided a thought-provoking take on the performative aspects of the artists' work."

OLD ALFREDIANS & DEVELOPMENT

Sustainability Forum

This term, we hosted a careers forum titled ***Careers in Sustainability: Working for the World You Want***. Held in the Phoenix Theatre, it explored how sustainability is shaping the future of work across industries from design and consulting to energy, finance and communications.

KAS students exhibited at the start of the event, with Years 7 through 13 showcasing their sustainability work, providing an opportunity for panellists and students to engage meaningfully.

Our expert panel then shared their diverse career journeys and powerful insights into embedding sustainability in every facet of professional life. From cutting carbon emissions and advancing renewable energy to building greener cities and transforming business practices, each speaker underscored the importance of creativity and collaboration in driving change. Panellists included **Carol Essex (OA 1988)**, **Preeyus Patel (OA 2009)**, **Roei Haberman**, **Vibhav Nuwal**, **Josh McCosh** and **Sally Watson**.

Huge thanks to our fantastic panellists, students, staff, parents and Old Alfredians, whose energy and enthusiasm make each event a success. We're especially grateful to our panellists for generously sharing their time and expertise with the KAS community.

For those who couldn't attend, please visit the Resources tab at kasconnected.org to view a recording. You can also create your profile to connect with the KAS community!



Robert with the panellists



Student exhibits



Arezoo Corrigan and Jamie Toeg with Development Director Tamlyn



The expert panel



Student exhibits

Bonfire Night Reunion

Another year of KAS tradition is in the books with Bonfire Night 2025.

Old Alfredians from the Class of 2025 all the way back to the Class of 1979 (and lots of years in between) gathered in the Sixth Form Centre for our annual reunion.

It was especially lovely to see OAs from different eras swap stories from their time at KAS, sometimes from across the room. A true community feel!

Our newest cohort of OAs joined in the fun as well, returning on Saturday for their very first reunion. Thank you to all for joining.



KAS teachers Claire Murphy & Fiona Parsons with Eve Burrow and Emma Dowland OAs 2023



Luca Lunghi & Luko Gale, OAs 2024



A friend with Theo Goffe and Kollyn & Lucy Bailey



School Six volunteers

Phoenix Theatre re-opening reception

The Upper School production of **Guys and Dolls** (page 9) was the perfect opportunity to showcase the new facilities in The King Alfred Phoenix Theatre and to thank the many in our community who helped make this investment possible, through their gifts to the school and this project in particular. Thank you to all those who supported the Phoenix Theatre. We hope those who were able to join us as our guests at the Senior School Show enjoyed the performances of our talented students in this enhanced professional space.



Above: Director of Theatre Rob Messik welcomes Phoenix supporters
Right: The event invite



KASS Festive Tea 2025

President of The King Alfred School Society (KASS), **Annabel Cody**, warmly hosted the annual KASS Festive Tea in the Old Library. We were delighted to welcome Robert alongside our wonderful group of Honorary Members, Life Members, and KAS Friends.

The afternoon was filled with lively conversation and thoughtful reflections on the year's many adventures at KAS. Annabel also introduced an exciting new concept: a series of gatherings designed to bring creative, bright minds together in unexpected London locations to explore themes shaping the world today. It's an inspiring idea – and one we hope to share with the wider KAS community soon!

A huge thank you to Annabel and everyone who joined us for this special occasion. Interested in being part of next year's Festive Tea? Become a KASS member today – simply scan or click the QR code to apply.



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ALFREDIANS
IN YOUR
INDUSTRY**



**PROVIDE
MENTORING
& ADVICE**



SCAN TO JOIN

School Calendar

<u>Term Dates</u>	
Spring Term	Tues 6 January – Fri 27 March
Spring Half Term	Mon 16 – Fri 20 February
Summer Term	Tues 14 April – Thurs 9 June
Summer Half Term	Mon 25 – Fri 29 May
<u>Key Events</u>	
A Level Certificate Presentation & Recent Leavers' Drinks	Wednesday 7 January 2026
Upper School Open Morning	Thursday 15 January 2026
Parent Talk by Dr Tara Palmer	Tuesday 3 February
Year 7 Explorations exhibitions	Tuesday 10 February
OA Lunch	Wednesday 11 February
Ski trip	Saturday 24 - Friday 20 Feb
Soloist Concert	Tuesday 24 February
Lower School Open Morning	Thursday 26 February
Spring Concert	Wednesday 25 March
Middle School Show (title TBC)	Tues 19 & Weds 20 May
KASonbury	Saturday 27 June

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**

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