



The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter



May
2026

SCHOOL NEWS

From graveside to classroom... English Lit learning gets creative

By Eva S (Y12)

A level English Literature students visited Highgate Cemetery this term as part of our study of Christina Rossetti's poetry. We had the opportunity to see Rossetti's grave in person and learn more about her life, as well as the wider context of her family.

In addition to visiting her grave, we were taken on a tour of the cemetery by Nigel, our engaging guide. He shared a large amount of information about the cemetery and about some of the remarkable individuals buried there. The cemetery itself was beautiful, and we were fortunate to visit on a sunny day, which made the experience even more enjoyable.

After our tour, we returned to school for a lecture on one of Rossetti's poems, *Goblin Market*, delivered by two engaging speakers.

We were first introduced to a range of possible interpretations of the poem and then took part in a debate, discussing which interpretation we felt was the most convincing.

Following this, we were set a creative task to write our own version of a verse from *Goblin Market*, derived from the interpretation we each found best fit.

Next, children's book illustrator Robyn introduced us to the illustrations of the poem, originally created by Christina Rossetti's brother, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. She demonstrated how visual



interpretation can better our understanding and also change our perception of the poem. We were then set the task of creating our own illustrations, based on how we personally perceived the goblins to be.

Overall, the day was enriching and helped deepen our understanding of Rossetti's life and work, while also encouraging us to engage with her poetry in both analytical and creative ways.

Year 11 start study leave

Emotions ran high as our Year 11 students marked the start of study leave.

They were joined by their parents for a breakfast in the Main Hall, where form tutors and Head of Year **Sam Kirkwood** summed up the year group's Upper School journey.

Students also performed and shared a few words about their experiences. In a moving speech, **Charlie T** said: "What makes this school special isn't just about its grades, but the kind of people that it produces. Everyone here is well-rounded, respectful, and they all have aspirations that I love to see."

After a group photo in our amphitheatre, the students enjoyed a fun day out at Inflata Nation – a chance to relax with their friends before knuckling down for some serious GCSE revision.



Year 13 mark final day in school

Year 13 brought a week-long programme of activities to a close with a BBQ on the field to mark their final day of school before going on study leave.

Pat took to the decks as the students enjoyed tasty burgers and sweet treats, threw themselves down an inflatable slide, and signed one another's shirts.

They also perused their yearbook and cracked open a trio of time capsules they had filled with notes and artefacts in September 2018, when they joined the Upper School in Year 7.

Elsewhere across the week, they also enjoyed dress-up days, a trip to Thorpe Park and the traditional end-of-school water fight (dressed as Smurfs...). Seeing 18 year olds joyfully running around the grounds never fails to raise a smile!



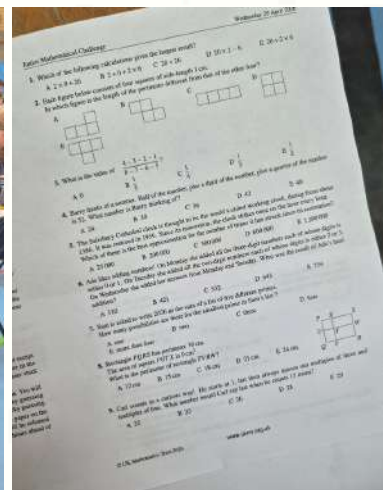
Students take on Maths challenge

Students from Year 7 and 8 took on the UK Maths Trust Junior Mathematical Challenge this term.

The 60 minute, 25 multiple choice challenge encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought and fluency to make students think.

Students performed brilliantly, with many achieving bronze, silver or gold certificates. Excitingly, Year 7 **Theodore HB**'s best-in-school score meant he qualified for the Junior Kangaroo, an invitation-only challenge taking place in June.

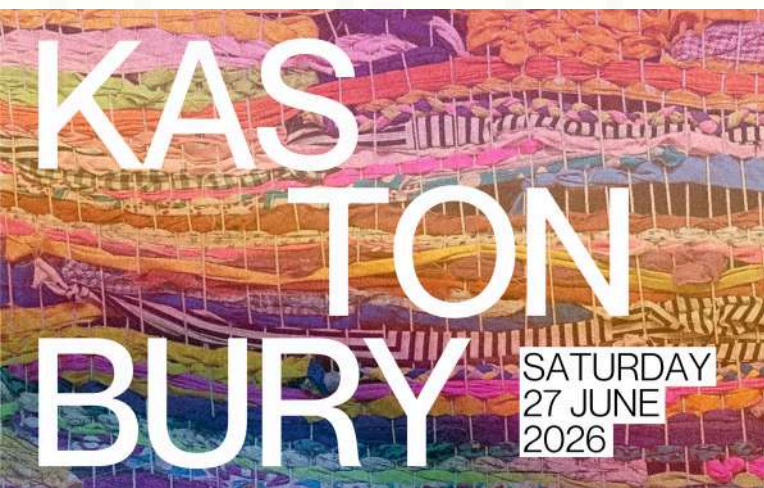
All results from this year's UKMT challenges will be published in this year's *Alfredian*, released next term.



Great Chemistry

Our Year 12 **Chemists** took on the Royal Society of Chemistry's Olympiad, a two-hour paper with some very challenging questions.

Well done to those who took part, and congratulations to **Eva S** and **Zoe W** for achieving bronze certificates.



KASTonbury tickets on sale now!

KASTonbury, our annual summer celebration, returns on Saturday 27 June. Early bird tickets are available until Friday 12 June – [book yours now](#). We look forward to seeing you under the tipi!

ARTS, MUSIC & DRAMA

Annie Jr double bill

This year's annual Middle School show was a tale of two performances as students from Years 7, 8 and 9 took on **Annie Jr.**

With so many talented and enthusiastic performers across the years groups, the two-night run was split into two parts. Students in Years 7 & 8 performed a showcase of songs (pictured on the next page), whilst Year 9 students staged a theatrical production of the much-loved musical (this page and next).

Sixth Formers studying for our UAL Level 3 Diploma in Production and Performing Arts were on hand to help out, directing rehearsals, coaching dance numbers, doing the lighting and running backstage.

Zach W (Year 9), who played Mr Warbucks, shared: "It was great working with the Sixth Formers. They're really fun to work with and inspiring to see."

Of the show, he said: "I love putting on my costume; it really makes me feel the part, and the new changing rooms at the Phoenix Theatre made me feel like a professional actor."

Taisie M (Year 9), who played Miranda, added: "Being in Annie has been so much fun. The rehearsals and the scenes where we're all together are my favourite thing – it's helped cement friendships.

"I'm looking forward to taking the Drama UAL Level 2 Diploma next year as part of my GCSE studies and getting back on the stage."







From text to stage

Year 10 UAL **Drama** students performed extracts from two plays this month: *DNA* by Dennis Kelly and *The Beauty Manifesto* by Nell Leyshon.

Students studied both texts in depth across the term, developing their understanding of performance, including how to communicate with an audience, stage a performance, and apply contextual research.

It was a valuable opportunity for students to demonstrate their progress so far as they reached the mid-point of their course.



Year 9 LAMDA results

Huge congratulations to Year 9 students, all of whom got either a merit or distinction in the recent **LAMDA** public speaking exam. Please do say well done when you see them!

Year 12 stage original play

Year 12 **Theatre Studies** students devised and performed an original piece of theatre inspired by the work of director Katie Mitchell. *Whatever Happened to Lola Lavine?* used multimedia devices to explore the imagined lives of two Hollywood actors, examining themes of ambition, fame and competition with creativity and sophistication.



CAMPS & TRIPS

Year 8 chart changing London

For their latest Exploration, **Year 8** students have been answering the enquiry question '**How has London changed over time?**' They have explored how factors such as immigration and urbanisation have contributed to the city we see today.

Students visited various local sites, including Sandy Heath, Golders Hill Park, Golders Green station and the Heath Extension, to carry out fieldwork research.

As part of their **Geography** studies, they conducted environmental quality surveys across three different locations. And in **Science**, they gathered soil and lichen data to demonstrate the importance of biodiversity.

📍 Various locations, North London

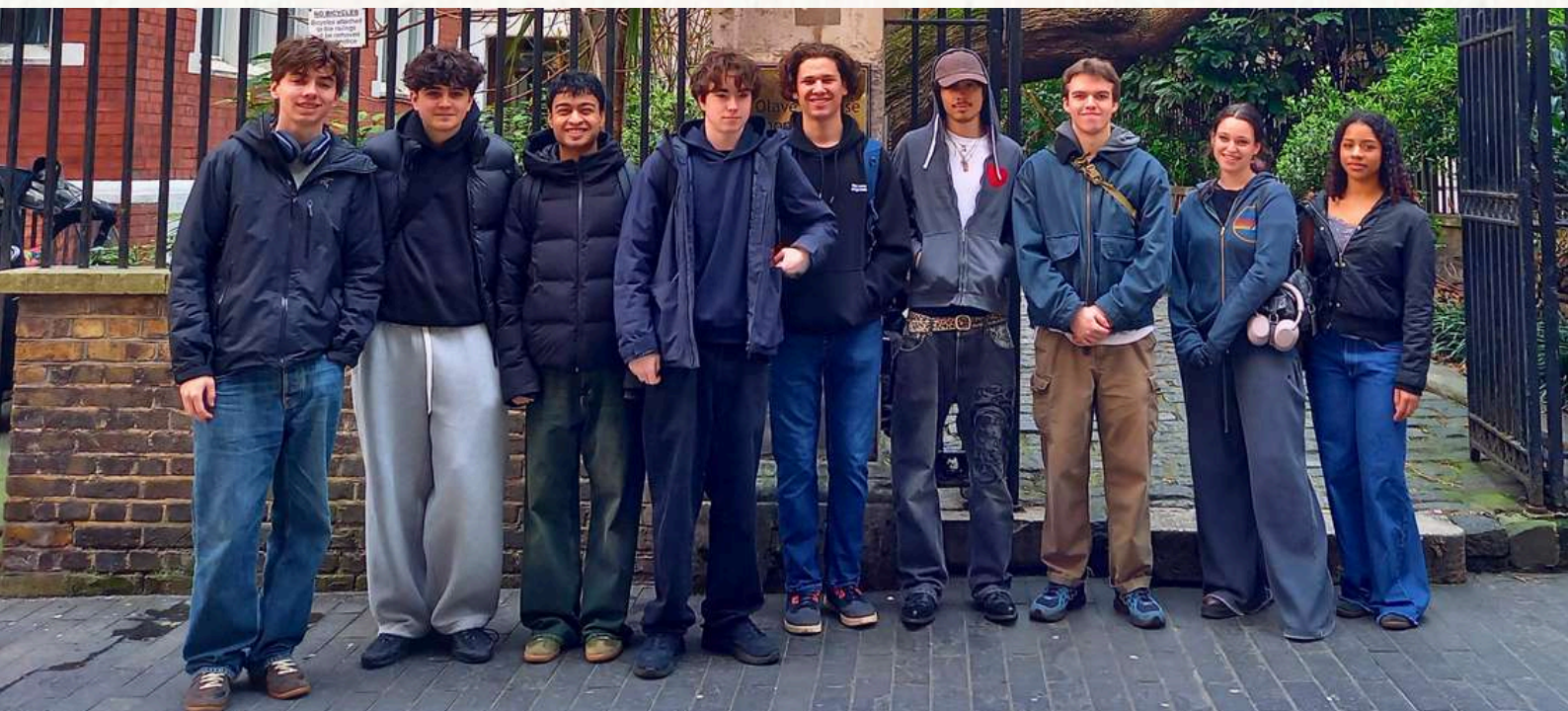


Y12 History walking tour

Our Year 12 **History** students recently took part in a walking tour exploring seventeenth-century London, bringing to life many of the themes studied in their A level course.

Visiting key sites connected to political conflict, religion, trade and urban development allowed students to deepen their understanding of the dramatic changes that shaped Stuart Britain.

📍 Various sites, Central London



Year 7 Explorations trips

Year 7 students took two educational trips as part of their Explorations enquiry projects this term.

One group visited the Science Museum, as they consider the STEM-based question **'Is space exploration ethical?'** They got to see two human-flown spacecrafts (Apollo 10 and Soyuz), a rocket engine and a three-billion-year-old piece of the moon, brought back to Earth by Apollo 15.

They also enjoyed learning about how rockets are powered in the Rocket Show and the science of forces in the Wonderlab exhibition.

Meanwhile, the Liberal Arts Explorations group visited Trafalgar Square to view the Fourth Plinth. As part of their enquiry, they will research and design a monument for the plinth, guided by their enquiry question, **'How should we commemorate events we are not proud of?'**

Students will present their work on both enquiry projects to their parents and staff at special in-school exhibitions, due to be held next half-term. Invitations will land in your inboxes in due course!



SPORT

Nationals beckon for KAS athletes

The annual **ISA Athletics** competition brought out the best in KAS athletes, who put on dazzling displays in their respective events. It was a day of fun, athleticism and time management, with lots of cheering from all involved!

Excitingly, those who came first in their disciplines will be offered the chance to represent the whole of North London at the yearly Nationals Event in Birmingham.

Standout performances included:

- **Mika F (Year 7)** placing 1st in the Javelin for the second year running
- **Luca MB (Year 7)** coming 1st in the Long Jump – also for the second year
- **Kaiden D (Year 7)** earning 2nd place in the 1500m and 1st place in the high jump, and also being part of the winning Year 7 relay team
- **Caspian F (Year 8)** coming 1st in the Triple Jump by an impressive margin
- **Alma VL (Year 10)** showing her power and technique in the Discus, earning 1st place.



Honourable mentions include:

- **Mylo C (Year 8)**, who sprinted his way to second place in the 100m out of 12 participants
- **Clara M (Year 9)**, who paced herself to second place in a tough 300m race.
- **Archie S (Year 7)**, who narrowly missed out on Nationals by milliseconds, finishing 1st in his heat of 200m, but second overall.
- **Sorcha F (Year 8)**, who secured 2nd place finish in the Javelin



Netball Festival fun

Our Year 7 (pictured) and Year 9 netballers enjoyed a fantastic afternoon at the BPSS Netball Festival in April. It was a friendly, non-competitive format, allowing the girls to have fun and gain valuable match-play experience.

They performed brilliantly, with some wins recorded. Most importantly, the girls had a great time, showing excellent teamwork and communication on court. Well done, teams!



Basketball season finishes strong

A flawless league performance from the Year 7s saw them pick up maximum points, winning four games in a row and cementing their position in the basketball world as a force to be reckoned with.

The Year 8 team (pictured below) also had a storming season, winning four of their five matches and finishing joint top of the table. A highly anticipated rematch against Hendon saw the boys narrowly miss out on the win, securing silver medals.

Basketball coach **Chris** has been incredibly proud of the progress made by both of the teams this season, and commends their hard-working attitudes at training and matches.

Well done to both teams!



A terrific term for tennis

Tennis is having a real moment at KAS; this summer, we entered more teams into the league than ever before!

Those teams featured the following students:

- **Year 7/8 Girls:** Naya E, Wren M, Marlen AM, Rose H, Lottie L, and Ola G
- **Year 7/8 Boys:** Martino WA, Jake S, Paul N, Rio G, Rishan K, Rafi O, Mars DS, and Mark B
- **Year 9/10 Boys x2:** Sam N, Keiran S, Reuben B, Tommy R, Filippo WA, Bushi T, Luke N, Jacob W, Zach W, and Jago DS.

All players performed to the best of their abilities against some tough opposition. PE teacher **Vicky** has had nothing but glowing reports about the behaviour and enthusiasm shown by all who have taken part and represented the school. A great overall effort and some promising talent for future years at KAS.

OLD ALFREDIANS & DEVELOPMENT

Old Alfredian Reunion Dinner (1970s to 1990s)

Classes from the 1970s to the 1990s joined us for a reunion dinner in April. The energy in the room was undeniable and a reflection of the spirit that defines our school and unites us long after our time here.

What stood out most was how naturally this spirit lives on in our OAs, diverse in their paths yet united by confidence and curiosity.

There were so many fascinating conversations throughout the night, but we will highlight just a few to give a peek into the evening.

Wayne Michaels (OA 1977) shared stories about his work as a professional stuntman, including performing the iconic bungee jump from the dam in GoldenEye. It was a reminder of the remarkable and often unexpected directions Old Alfredian lives can take.

We are delighted that Wayne will return to speak with Sixth Form pupils as part of the Connections programme, offering a glimpse into his unique profession.

Hazel Summerfield (OA 1975) spoke about her extensive travels and work in human rights and corporate social responsibility. She spoke of her time in Cambodia, where she supported communities to establish access to life-saving medications – work designed not simply to deliver aid but to empower local systems to continue independently.



Arnab Banerjee and Wayne Michaels



Justin Parsons & Nicole Albert



Sisters Hazel Summerfield and Marina Hogan



Robert and Class of 1979

A career highlight has been contributing to a broader shift in humanitarian practice, moving towards approaches led by the communities themselves rather than imposed from outside.

We also heard from **Damon Lillitos (OA 1990)**, who has a lifelong passion for languages. Fluent in German, French and Spanish, amongst others, he shared both his love of language and his impressive ear for accents, which provided a lighter and highly entertaining moment.

New episodes of Alfredian Voices

Good news – there’s not one but *two* new episodes of our podcast available for you to enjoy! Tune in to *Alfredian Voices: What I REALLY Learnt At School* to hear from the following Old Alfredians about their KAS experience and careers.

Dana Karic (OA 2003)

In this episode, Dana talks about her enduring memories and experiences at KAS. She reminisces about building the first treehouse and constructing the school boats, recounting the physical scars and pride these projects gave.

She also shares how her family's move to England and their initial interactions with KAS left a lasting impression, leading to the creation of a similarly inspired school in Serbia.

Ali Kazimi (OA 1987)

You may recall that we recently shared a piece written by Ali, “The Teacher Who Changed the Course of My Life”, about his time at KAS and the impact of teacher **Naomi Hull**.

The conversation with Tamlyn explores Ali’s experience of arriving in the UK with very little English, finding his confidence at KAS, and how that sense of belonging stayed with him long after leaving school.

Reminders of how this school has aimed to be inclusive for all children throughout its history are touching, and we hope you enjoy the listen as much as we have.

You can listen to or watch both episodes by visiting www.kingalfred.org.uk/old-alfredians/alfredian-voices-podcast/.

Episode 18

What I REALLY Learnt at School

Alfredian Voices

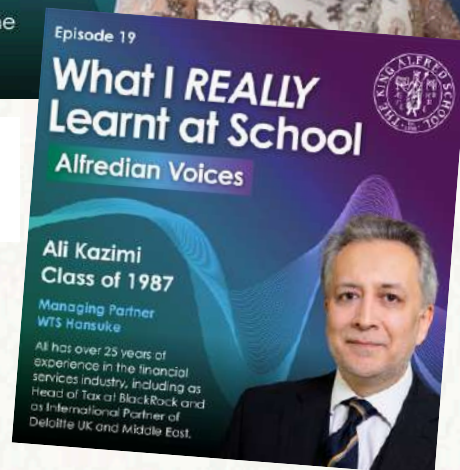
Dana Karic
Class of 2003

Singer, Songwriter and Philanthropist

Dana is President of the Karic Foundation.



Dana Karic (OA 2003) and Ali Kazimi (OA 1987) appear in our latest podcasts



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School Calendar

<u>Term Dates</u>	
Half Term Holiday	Mon 25 – Fri 29 May
Summer Term (Second Half)	Mon 1 June – Thurs 9 July (half day)
<u>Key Events</u>	
Soloist Concert	Wednesday 3 June
Sports Day (Years 6-10)	Friday 5 June
Sir Ken Robinson 'Imagine If...' Lecture	Monday 8 June
Year 11 & 13 End of Year Show: Art, DT & Photography	Friday 12 June
The Village (Year 8) & Camps Week	W/C Monday 15 June
Year 12 Work Experience	W/C Monday 22 June
Welcome to Year 7 Parent Event	Wednesday 24 June
Year 11 Prom	Thursday 25 June
Year 13 Prom	Friday 26 June
KASonbury	Saturday 27 June
Fireside chats with new Head Stephen Campbell	Monday 29 June, Wednesday 1 & Thursday 2 July
Namibia trip	Friday 3 - Friday 17 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 or by talking with their Head of Year.



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