



The King Alfred School

Upper School Newsletter



July
2026

SCHOOL NEWS

KAS^onbury 2026

KASparents co-chairs Phoebe & Ulrike write...

Thank you to everyone who came to this year's KAS^onbury! The sun shone down on a truly memorable celebration, with pitch-perfect student performances, amazing activities, and fun and laughter aplenty.

We particularly want to thank those parents and staff members who helped to make the event such a success.

- **Alex M**, whose team put up the monkey bars as part of our partnership with the fantastic charity Playrise.
- Upper school parent **Francesca A**, who ran the ping-pong tournament, as well as making the beautiful ceramic trophies.
- **Grace M**, who organised and ran the spectacular 'Great KAS Cake-Off' competition – with some help from the wonderful Mel Giedroyc.
- Year 1 parents Dan H and Ines P for the drinks, **Hannah dSS** for the pizza van, and Reception parents **Lara GC** and **Robert C** for the coffee truck and ice cream cart.
- Talking of ice cream, we cannot forget 'The Scoop Daddy Dads', who provided and manned the ice cream van.
- **Michelle B**, who ran the kinetic art stall.

We would also like to thank KAS staff members for their support. Big shout-outs to **Karen T**, the **KAS Music department**, and of course all the amazing student performers!

Thanks also to the **Estates Team** and **Sophie C**, who produced the stunning



ceramic cake stand prizes for the Cake-Off. In true KAS fashion, it was a wonderful community effort, and we are grateful to everyone who took part.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for next year's KAS^onbury, we would love to hear from you. Please email us at KASparents@kingalfred.org.uk.

Ed's addition: We're sure the whole KAS community would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Phoebe and Ulrike for their heroic efforts in putting on another fantastic KAS^onbury. They are true KAS legends who live and breathe the spirit of the school! Thank you and well done, both.



Deeper Learning Week at KAS

For one week each Summer Term, Upper School students (save for Years 11 and 13, who are on study leave) venture beyond the classroom to enjoy enriching self-development activities as part of our 'Deeper Learning Week'.

Take a look at what each year group got up to...

Year 7: Project Week

Year 7 students engaged in a range of in-school activities. Highlights included a Grand Prix-style engineering challenge, in which they constructed and raced balloon-powered cars, and the creation of beautiful, nature-infused artworks.

Thursday saw their attention turn to charitable pursuits. Students were tasked with making items to sell at a charity fair. Creations ranged from World Cup keyrings and handmade clocks to decorated tote bags and edible treats. The end-of-day sale saw them raise a massive **£1,537.87** for Cancer Research!

They also ventured outside of the school gates, enjoying a trip to V&A East and taking part in a scavenger hunt around the Heath, which tested their teamwork and problem-solving skills.





Year 8: The Village Project

Living in self-built huts, cooking on open fires, coming together at morning meeting... it could only be The Village!

Take a look at a selection of photos and the quotes below from Year 8s who enjoyed this KAS rite of passage...

Max L: *The Village is teaching me to amuse myself without my phone. I'm more patient and finding answers for myself rather than waiting for others to fix things.*

Astrid M: *I've loved the freedom of not having to do specific activities at specific times; being able to roam free and choose to do bracelet-making for five minutes, pottery-making for an hour, or just chilling if you want.*

George S: *It's been nice to be without my phone. I'm definitely closer with people I wasn't friends with before.*

Blythe B-T: *Being all together was so fun; lots of friendship groups have merged and just 'clicked'.*

Nadav S: *I've loved just talking with friends and building things out of wood. I built a ping-pong table with a friend so we could play*







Year 10: School & Community Service

By Eve S

Year 10s not taking part in a Foreign Languages trip (see page 29) spent time doing community service both in and out of school.

In school, students worked alongside KAS staff in various departments. Some helped out in Lower School with the children in Reception and Years 1-3, whilst others found out what it's like to work behind the scenes, for example sorting lost property with the Estates team or taking photos of school life (and writing this report!) with the Marketing & Communications department.

This taught us resilience and gave us a glimpse into the reality of working environments. "I enjoyed myself very much and loved working with the little kids," shared **Gabriel F.**

Students also visited green spaces in London and helped local volunteer workers with upkeep – for example, clearing weeds and tidying a bog. **Orsan F** told us: "It was a really rewarding thing to do."

The week ended with fun trips to Whipsnade Zoo and Thorpe Park!



Helping
in Lower
School



Park
upkeep



Assisting
Comms





Year 11 prom

Head of Year 11, **Sam Kirkwood**, writes...

The Year 11 prom was a lovely celebration of the journey the students have been on.

They all looked incredible and grown-up in their outfits, and it was a fantastic send-off for those leaving KAS this summer, with some of them having been with us right the way through from Reception.

One particular highlight was Aviv performing *Universe*, his song that he wrote back in Year 8 during The Village. All of the Year 11s know the words and were singing along. It was a pretty incredible moment to witness.

It was also great to see outgoing Head Robert getting a crash-course in DJ-ing from Learning Support teacher Pat – here's hoping the students enjoyed his efforts!

Thank you to everyone who helped make this such a wonderful evening for the students; they loved it.

We look forward to welcoming Year 11 students back into school on GCSE results day, from 9am on Thursday 20 August.







Year 13 graduation and prom

Director of Sixth Form, **Eleanor Mitchell-Webb**, writes...

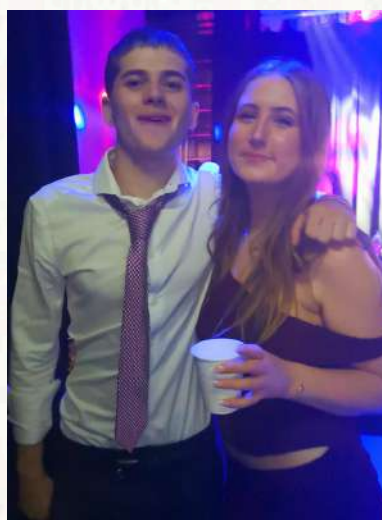
Our Year 13 graduation and prom event was a wonderful conclusion to the students' time in the Sixth Form.

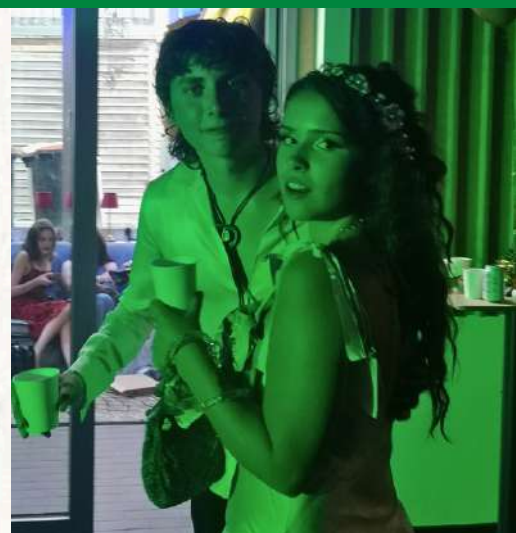
Graduation was both poignant and uplifting - it allowed students and parents to reflect on achievements, celebrate successes and mark the end of an important chapter together.

Prom was a fantastic final send-off, with students fully embracing the occasion and clearly enjoying the chance to celebrate together after two years of hard work!

It was a pleasure to see them having so much fun and creating lasting memories. The perfect way to celebrate and recognise everything this exceptional year group has accomplished.

We look forward to welcoming Year 13 students back into school on GCSE results day, from 8am on Thursday 13 August.





Science and technology challenge

Twelve Year 8 and 9 students took part in this year's **North London Science and Technology Challenge Day**, where they got to speak to like-minded students from other schools and develop their teamwork and planning skills.

The day is designed to raise enthusiasm for STEM subjects and encourage more students to study them at college and university. Activities include robotics, battery-powered vehicles, E-FIT forensics and medical challenges.

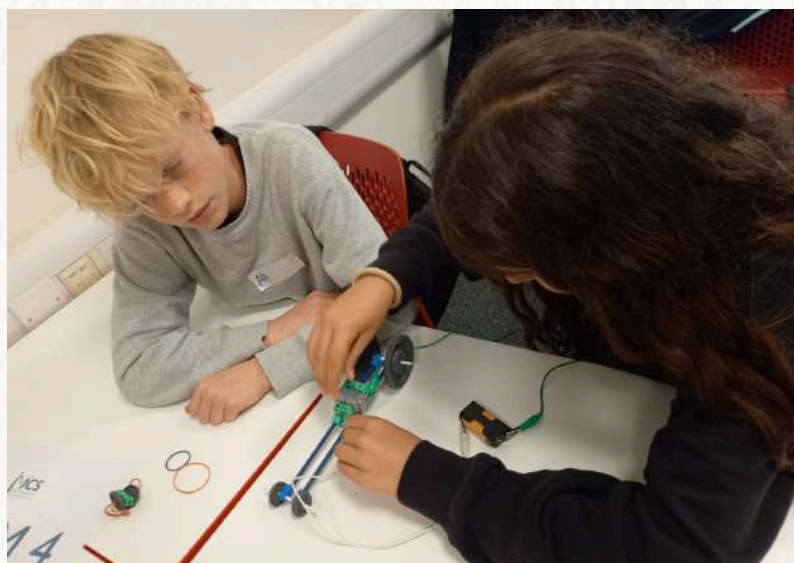
KAS students were put into teams with students from other schools, and did the school proud with great performances in the various challenges.

During the lunch break, the group had the opportunity to visit an interactive exhibition set up by the STEM academics. They showcased robotic arms, autonomous robots and puzzle-solving robots.

Councillor Zahra Beg, Mayor of Barnet, attended the event as a VIP guest, and delivered a speech in which she wished the competing students every success.

Nadav S (Y8) said: "I really enjoyed having the day out and discovering new career options. I especially enjoyed making faces on the police software."

Mylo C (Y8) added: "The day introduced me to new developments in technology that would otherwise have been unknown to me. I also made friends with other students and saw some of Middlesex University, which was a great experience."



So long, farewell...

We said a sad goodbye to some Upper School staff members at the end of this term. They include:

- **Eleanor Mitchell-Webb** – Director of Sixth Form
- **Al McConville** – Deputy Head
- **Caren Barnett** – Admissions Officer and Data Manager
- **Irene Praga Guerro** – Modern Foreign Languages Assistant

We're sure the whole KAS community will join us in thanking them for all they have done for the school, our students and their families. They will all forever be a part of KAS, and we look forward to seeing them thrive in their lives beyond our grounds and gates.

At the end-of-year callover, we also paid tribute to former KAS Philosophy teacher **Paul Dawson**, who sadly passed away in the spring.

And of course, many tributes and gifts were shared for our outgoing Head, **Robert Lobatto**, who is leaving KAS after 11 years.

As School Six rep **Ahaan G** said during his callover speech, "King Alfred is a kinship that Robert has so expertly cultivated, where every child is valued and can flourish.

"He has been fully committed to the protection of our principles of mutual respect and self-governance.

"Robert, we thank you for all your years of service to this place, and wish you a long and happy retirement".



Students pen song for Robert

There was a special moment at the end of this year's Village. A group of Year 8 students performed a song that they had composed in tribute to Robert.

Aided by Learning Support teacher Pat and music teacher Neven, the students were:

- Nevo R
- Caspian F
- Ben B
- Eddie K
- Rufus SdG
- Greta B
- Thomas M
- Rafi O

It was a touching tribute that Robert really appreciated. Enjoy the lyrics!

"Robert"

Robert, you're so cool
Please don't leave our school
Mistakes...We've made plenty
You don't look a day over 20

Without you we feel empty
And you know that you'll be missed
For once were not being dismissed
For head teachers, you're top of our list

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

Robert, we know you're retiring
But in our eyes you'll still be inspiring
For the future we wish you the best
You really deserve your rest

The teachers should buy you a Happy Meal
Because you are the real deal
This song is sadly ending

..... JUST LIKE YOUR TIME AT KAS!!!!



ARTS, MUSIC & DRAMA

Visual arts exhibition

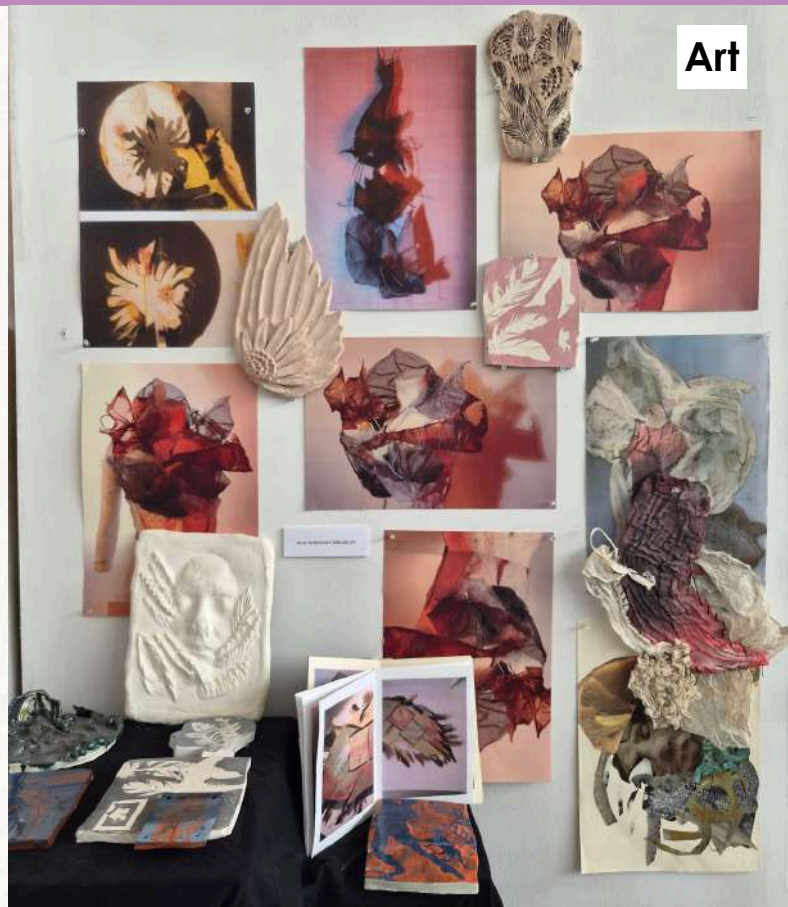
On a (seemingly rare!) balmy Friday evening this term, students, parents and staff gathered for a major visual arts exhibition.

Student work from three departments – **Art, Photography and Three-Dimensional Design** – was shown on the same night for the first time in some years.

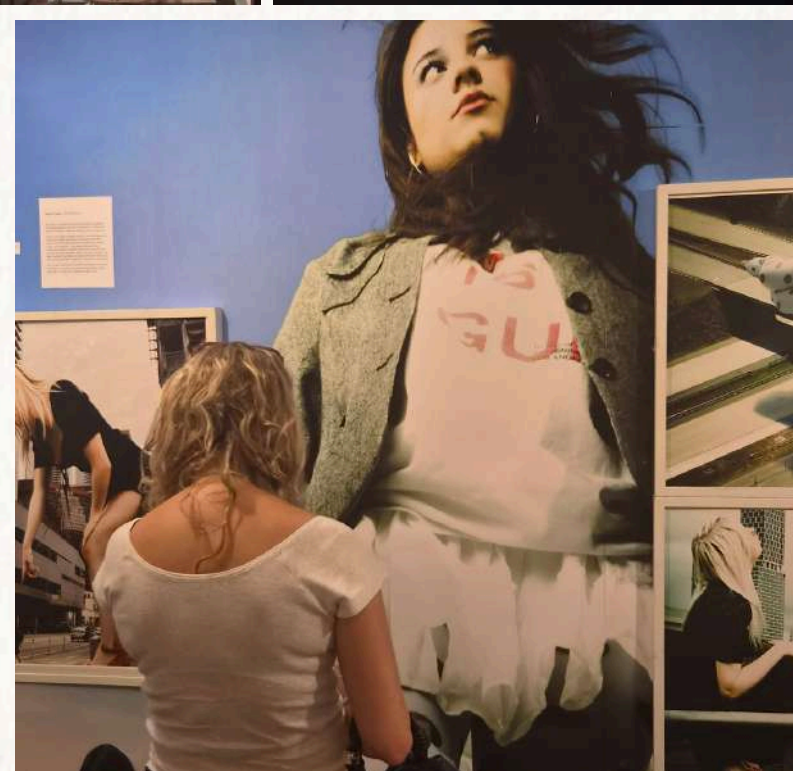
And for the first time ever, the work of our GCSE students featured alongside those studying at A level.

Well done to all the students and teachers who worked tirelessly to create something one parent described as “better than a lot of art collages”.

Art

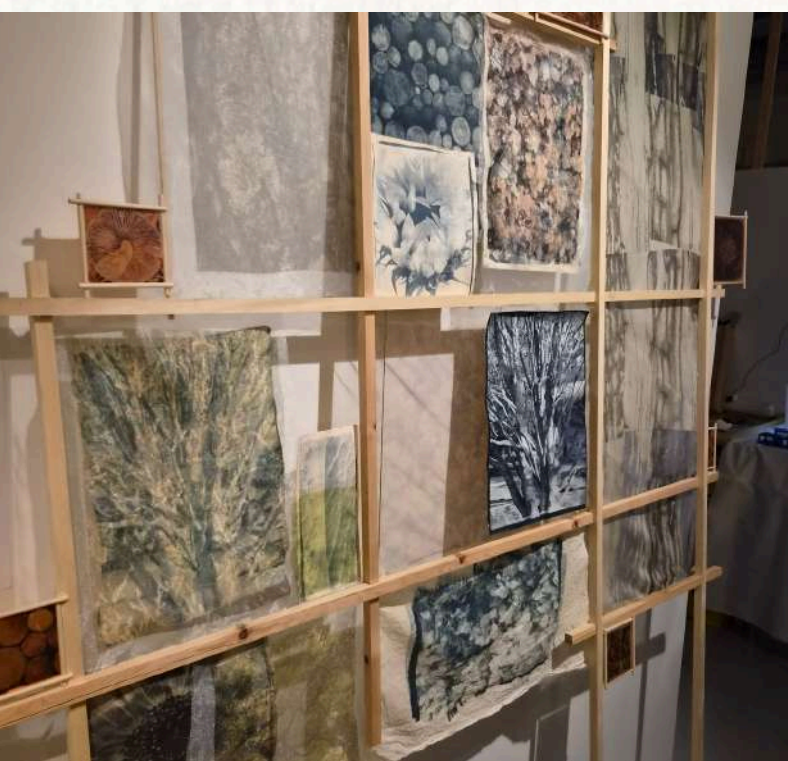


Photography





Three Dimensional Design



Arsenic and Old Lace

The final performance from our Year 13s studying for the **UAL Level 3 Diploma in Performance and Production Arts** was a fitting tribute to the talents that the course has honed.

Their production of the 1940s dark comedy *Arsenic and Old Lace* featured West End-worthy performances, fantastic costumes and staging, and a unique KAS spin.

"The play's been done quite a lot before, so we wanted to put our own spin on it," shared **Flo E-O**, who played Mortimer Brewster.

"We did live foley [sound effects] from the top deck of the theatre to make the most of our technically talented student crew.

"Because of that element, we decided to set it as a radio show that then goes into being performed as a play. So we wrote and recorded vintage-style radio ads. It was a lot of fun."

And as for the two-year course coming to an end? "I don't think it will hit me for a while, just because of how closely we've worked all together for so long, and then it's just going to be done in one night.

"I've loved all of it. The course helps you discover your strengths and helps you use them to the best of your ability, rather than making you conform to what people think an actor or a performer should be."

We wish all of our Year 13 UAL students the best of luck with whatever stage they find themselves on (or behind) next!





Year 9 X Triadic Ballet

Year 9 Art students created their very own Triadic Ballet this term, inspired by the avant-garde work of Bauhaus master Oskar Schlemmer.

His original Triadic Ballet premiered in 1922 and featured dancers wearing geometric costumes. "They were really unwieldy and difficult to move in, and so completely changed the nature of the dancers' movements," explains Art teacher **Thea**.

"The students laughed their heads off when I showed them the film of it from the 70s! But then they got very much into it. They made collages of their ideas, constructed costumes out of mixed materials such as paper and cardboard, and created their own dances."

[See the whimsical results on the KAS Art department Instagram page.](#)

Go Flo!

Please join us in toasting **Flo E-O (Y13)**, who has won a place in the National Youth Theatre REP company for 2026/27.



Flo is one of 16 young people to successfully audition for the company, which prepares its members for a successful career as an actor.

Flo, who this year completed our UAL Level 3 Diploma in Performance & Production Arts, shared: "It's going to be a great training ground for me. I think I'm the youngest person ever to get in. I'm just so excited." We wish him every success!



CHOICE, EXPLORATIONS & GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Explorations exhibitions

Well done to all our Year 7 students who exhibited their work from their Explorations enquiry project at the end of term!

Students tackled one of three enquiry questions over the course of the term. They were:

- How should we commemorate events that we are not proud of?
- Is space exploration ethical?
- How could we survive and thrive on a desert island?

As ever, parents were invited into school to take in the students' work and ask them questions about it.



CAMPS & TRIPS

Year 9 Camps Week

Every Summer Term, Year 9 heads off on camp as part of our Deeper Learning Week (see page 4).

This year's camps took students to Devon, Dorset, Wales and the Lake District for a week of fun activities, strengthened friendships, and the development of independence.

Activities on camp ranged from gorge walking and surfing to escape rooms and laser tag.

Student **Summer P**, who went to Wales, said: "Camp gave us the chance to really bond with each other. I definitely got to know everyone, including the teachers, a lot better."

There's also an element of independence, with students living together and cooking meals for one another. "That aspect made it feel like we were one big family," Summer shares.

Enjoy these pictures from the various Year 9 camps!

 Woolacombe, Devon









Year 10s take on *pintxo* challenge

This term saw 24 Year 10s travel to San Sebastián, Spain, for our annual six-day language, cultural and gastronomic immersion experience.

Staying with local host families, pupils gained an authentic insight into Spanish life while putting their language skills into practice every day.

In addition to daily half-day Spanish lessons with native speakers, students also embraced the best of the Basque Country through a programme of activities, including a city bike tour, surfing, kayaking, and a boat trip to the island of Santa Clara. All students showed enthusiasm, resilience and a willingness to step outside their comfort zones.

A particular highlight was the *pintxo* challenge, where teams used their Spanish to order the most unusual small plate they could find in local restaurants. Their adventurous choices included sea urchin soup and the iconic *gilda*, a traditional Basque delicacy.

Teacher **Camilla** said: "It was wonderful to see students grow in confidence, independence and linguistic ability over the course of the week. We are proud of the maturity, curiosity and positivity they demonstrated throughout the trip."

Student **Troy S** said: "*Fue la mejor experiencia de este año y tuvimos la oportunidad de probar comida nueva y pintxos. Fue inolvidable.*"

Grace R and **Micaela S** added: "*Fue una experiencia increíble y me ayudó mucho a mejorar mi Español.*"



Year 10 Biarritz trip

During their trip to Biarritz, the Year 10 **French** group spent each morning developing their language skills at a French school before enjoying a range of exciting water-based and cultural activities.

Highlights of the visit included surfing lessons and a sea excursion on a traditional Hawaiian *pirogue*, offering breathtaking views of the stunning west coast sunset.

Teacher **Véronique** said: "The students made us very proud throughout the trip, with staff at the language school commenting on their exemplary attitude and enthusiasm!"

Bravo to all involved!



Biarritz,
France



SPORT

Sports Day 2026

StoneX Stadium was buzzing with energy at this year's Upper School Sports Day.

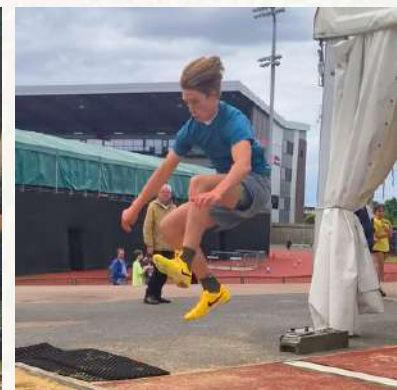
Students from Years 6 to 10 ran, threw and jumped their hearts out for their teams – the Reds, Blues and Yellows.

While competition for the coveted trophy was fierce, the support shown across teams was even stronger. "It's a really great atmosphere," said **Elvis S** (Year 10). It doesn't matter what team you're on, everyone's happy for everybody."

But there could only be one winner... and this year it was Team Blue!

Head to the school's Instagram to watch some [trackside student interviews](#).







Students head to SW19

PE's Vicky and Aarun recently accompanied a group of Year 9 students to Wimbledon for a memorable day at the world-famous tennis tournament. Students enjoyed watching elite athletes compete at the highest level, gaining an insight into the dedication and skill required to perform on such a prestigious stage. With plenty of sunshine, laughter and learning throughout the day, it was a fantastic experience for all involved. The Wimbledon ticket ballot will reopen next Spring Term, so be sure to sign up!



Parents vs staff rounders & football

Huge thanks to all those who attended the staff vs parent football and rounders event this term! A great time was had by all.

Following the event's success, Head of Sport **Tom Franklin** said: "We are going to aim to deliver this once a term and will be doing the next one in September. I will be looking to include sports like badminton/basketball alongside football for the winter terms."

If you would like to take part, [get in touch with Tom](#) now!



Representing KAS at Nationals

Following their strong performances at the ISA Regional Athletics Championships in May, five Year 7 and 8 students proudly represented both the school and the North London region at the National event.



Kaiden D (Y7)

qualified for an impressive three events: the 1500m, high jump and Year 7 boys' relay.

Fellow Year 7 students

Paul N, Mika F and Luca MB also competed with distinction.

Meanwhile, **Caspian F (Y8)** earned a superb silver medal in the triple jump – an outstanding achievement for someone new to athletics.

Congratulations to all five athletes for representing KAS with pride and determination.

OLD ALFREDIANS & DEVELOPMENT

OA Reunion at KAStonbury 2026

Alongside the wider KAStonbury celebrations, we welcomed Old Alfredians and former members of staff back to KAS for a special reunion lunch and an opportunity to celebrate Robert's contribution to the school ahead of his departure.

Many alumni returned for the first time since leaving KAS, enjoying the chance to reconnect with former classmates, teachers and the school. Guests also shared personal messages and memories in a commemorative book for Robert.

A highlight of the afternoon was a heartfelt speech from **Georgina Cooper Friedlos (OA 2020)**, who spoke on behalf of Old Alfredians about Robert's lasting impact on the KAS community. Reflecting on Robert's arrival as Head, Georgina said: "From the beginning, Robert inherently understood that the value of KAS lay in its ethos, its belief in learning for learning's sake and the mutual respect between teachers and students. Whilst he respected and embodied these values, he was also not afraid to pursue changes that made the School an even better place."

Having also been taught by Robert, Georgina spoke warmly of his commitment to students, recalling how he continued teaching alongside his role as Head and gave his time generously to support pupils. She shared how his guidance during her university application "went above and beyond anything I could have asked of any



Georgina, Robert and Tamlyn



The OA teepee at KAStonbury

teacher" and concluded: "Robert has played such a significant role in my life, both personally and through making KAS a place I loved so much." She closed by thanking Robert on behalf of the alumni community: "I hope you can feel and see the depth of the impact you've had during your time at KAS, and how very grateful and lucky everyone in the community is to have had you here for the last 11 years."

Our thanks also go to **Phoebe D'Arcy (OA 1999 and KAS parent)** and **Ulrike Mertesacker (KAS parent)** for their support in making the reunion lunch such a welcoming occasion, and to everyone who returned to celebrate the KAS community together. Old Alfredians loved the celebrations and the new tipi marquee, with many remarking how reminiscent it was of Squirrel Hall!

New episodes of Alfredian Voices

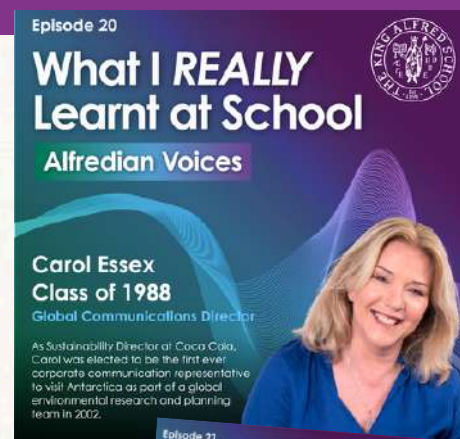
Two new episodes of our podcast are now available to listen to or watch!

Carol Essex (OA 1986)

How does a "painfully shy" student who struggled with O-Level English end up leading global communications for Coca-Cola? Carol recounts a journey that spans from the pottery classroom at KAS to the boardrooms of Bahrain and the communities of central Africa. She shares candid stories about school reports that got it wrong, launching products in the Middle East, rebuilding communities after a tsunami, and the lessons she believes young people need most today. She also reflects on the diverse friendships she formed at KAS – relationships that remain some of the most meaningful in her life today.

Wendy Jago (OA 1960)

Psychotherapist, teacher, and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) practitioner Wendy shares insights from her career, discussing the practical applications of



NLP and her long-standing desire to create NLP resources for children. She reflects on her time at KAS, recounting vivid memories of teachers, projects, and the KAS philosophy that emphasised independence, trust, and community. Wendy also delves into her family's educational values, particularly her father's belief in progressive education, which led her to attend KAS.



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

The Head's Table

We were delighted to welcome parents and Old Alfredians who have given significant philanthropic support to the school for a special evening of thanks and celebration.

Set in a warm and relaxed atmosphere over dinner, the evening provided an opportunity to recognise the lasting impact of their generosity, which continues to enrich the experience of current and future KAS pupils. It was also a wonderful chance for many of our guests to meet our new Head, **Stephen Campbell**, and hear about his vision for the school's future.

The evening was filled with lively conversation and a renewed sense of connection to the KAS community. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has chosen to support the school so generously. Your commitment helps ensure that KAS continues to thrive, preserving the values and distinctive education that have shaped generations of Alfredians.

Thank you to all who joined us. We look forward to welcoming our supporters back to school again soon. If you would like to support KAS, please reach out to development@kingalfred.org.uk.

School Calendar

<u>Term Dates 2026/27</u>	
Staff INSET Days	Tues 1 – Thurs 3 September '26
Autumn Term	Fri 4 September – Fri 11 December
Autumn Half Term	Mon 19 – Fri 30 October
Christmas Holiday	Mon 14 Dec – Mon 4 January '27 (staff INSET day)
Spring Term	Tues 5 January – Thurs 25 March
Spring Half Term	Mon 15 – Fri 19 February
Easter Holiday	Fri 26 March – Mon 12 April (staff INSET day)
Summer Term	Tues 13 April – Fri 9 July
Summer Half Term	Mon 31 May – Fri 4 June
<u>Key Events</u>	
A level Results Day	Thurs 13 August
GCSE Results Day	Thurs 20 August
OA vs Staff Football Match	Fri 11 September
Year 7 Camp	Mon 14 – Fri 18 September
Upper School Open Morning	Thurs 17 September
OA Reunion Day	Sat 19 September
Year 12 Camp	Thurs 24 – Sat 26 September
Sixth Form Open Evening	Mon 28 September

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.



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

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