

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2025





HEADMASTER'S MESSAGE

Being interested to know and to hear what every child thinks...

Great teachers are constantly checking that their pupils are making strong progress, and so they are necessarily curious about what their pupils are thinking and how much they are learning. In the many academic schools where I have previously taught, like most teachers with larger classes of up to 28, I've relied on hearing the answers of a small proportion of my pupils, most often from the ones who are the most confident and so quickly put up their hands.

By contrast, when I do my daily walk around the lessons at KPS, I see and hear the majority of pupils answering and asking questions. The uniquely small classes of no more than 12 in the Senior School, and no more than 10 in the Sixth Form, mean that our teachers can check the quality and depth of learning. Misunderstandings and misconceptions can be readily identified and corrected because every pupil's thinking can be checked with instant feedback.

With a very low 1:5 ratio of teachers to pupils, KPS teachers know their pupils and can connect the new knowledge they are teaching to what the pupils already know. Pedagogical practice in small classes is much more precise: I'd go so far as to say it is a pure form of education. It mirrors the practice of ancient Greek philosophers and of university seminars based on small-group instruction, questioning and discussion. The tangible outcome is seeing KPS pupils who enjoy being challenged and enjoy learning, and that has been my experience this spring term.

The end-of-term award assembly was a fitting conclusion to all this good work, with the school sections coming together to celebrate academic achievement and community spirit across all year-groups. Year 11 and 13 students' own curiosity and independent learning now come to the fore over this holiday as they build on the excellent momentum from mock exams, revision and intervention sessions that ran through the term. With offers from nearly every Russell Group university among other top higher-education destinations, our Year 13 students are excellent role models for our younger pupils and show how protracted hard work brings long-term rewards.

Mr Antony Faccinello, MA (Oxon) PGCE
HEADMASTER

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LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

SCHOOL LIFE



The Lunar New Year at KPS

To celebrate the arrival of the Year of the Snake—the sixth animal in the Chinese zodiac—our school hosted a vibrant series of cultural events, including a traditional Lion Dance in our theatre. Our catering team also provided daily meals inspired by popular East Asian cuisines, with Year 8 and 9 students working in the canteen as part of a traditional dumpling-making course.

With Mandarin taught at KPS from Year 7, our students were able to put their knowledge of the language into practice and deepen their understanding of Chinese culture and history.



Pizza Masterclasses at PBH

Our boarding students were treated to exclusive culinary masterclasses at Princess Beatrice House, where Holroyd Howe's Head Chef taught them how to craft the perfect pizza from scratch.

The sessions began with students stretching the dough by hand before adding a rich tomato base, traditional toppings, and fresh mozzarella cheese. Once prepared, the pizzas were baked in a high-temperature oven, and final touches such as fresh herbs and parmesan were added before students enjoyed their delectable creations.

EDUCATION, EDUCATION,
EDUCATION

ARTS & CULTURE



Education, Education, Education

Our talented drama students brought their latest production, *Education, Education, Education*, to the KPS stage—a satirical and nostalgic look at life in a British comprehensive school in 1997.

Over two sold-out evenings, students stepped into their teachers' shoes, delivering outstanding comedic performances that had audiences erupting into bursts of laughter and applause. Offering humour, heart, and a generous helping of '90s nostalgia, this sharp and entertaining production reminded our school community of the transformative power of dramatic storytelling.



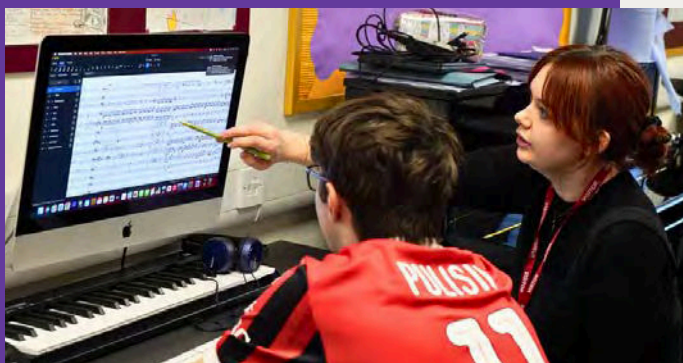
French Students Visit BFI Southbank

KPS students visited the **BFI Southbank**, the UK's leading film and moving image charity and film-education centre, for a KS3 French study day designed to get them thinking and speaking in French through a range of vocabulary activities and film screenings.

Alongside students from invited London schools, they watched a selection of short films and enthusiastically participated in discussions on their themes and styles. The day culminated in a screening of the feature film *Belle et Sébastien*, a popular French adventure drama for young adults.



ARTS WEEK



Celebrating Arts Week Through Music

The spring term brings with it one of the key events on the academic calendar: Arts Week, a week-long celebration of creativity and collaboration, with students participating in music, drama, and art activities across both of our teaching sites.

This year, our musicians had the opportunity to attend woodwind workshops, songwriting lessons, and a lunchtime concert series, while our young artists enjoyed clay and sewing workshops at our Sixth Form art studio—just a stone's throw from London's iconic Victoria and Albert Museum and the Serpentine Galleries!



A 'Flowers' Exhibition at Chelsea's Saatchi Gallery

No Arts Week would be complete without a visit to one of the outstanding museums and galleries in the local area. To that end, our A level art students drew creative inspiration from the 'Flowers' exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery, exploring over 500 unique artworks dedicated to flora in contemporary art and culture—including a room filled with over 100,000 dried flowers!

After the tour, the students moved to the museum's private workshop to create pieces inspired by the artwork they had seen, which will be displayed at the museum alongside other works by talented local students.



SCIENCE WEEK
AT KPS

SCIENCE WEEK



Centre of the Cell at Queen Mary University

As part of our busy Science Week calendar, KPS Year 10 students visited the **Centre of the Cell**, an educational experience at Queen Mary University of London that immerses students in the world of biomedical sciences.

With 'Change and Adapt' as this year's British Science Week theme, students attended a lecture on 'Ingenious Genes,' where they learned about genetic research, how genes create proteins, and genetic mutations.



KPS in the Top 10% at the British Biology Olympiad

Our Year 13 students participated in the 2025 **British Biology Olympiad** where Adela was awarded a Silver Medal and Jeremy and Alex received commendations for their outstanding work. This year's competition saw a record-breaking number of participants, with over 18,000 students from across the nation competing.

Despite the competition, KPS students ranked among the top 10% of participants—a testament to their commitment and passion for the subject.

ANIMAL FARM AT
STRATFORD EAST THEATRE

TRIPS TO THE THEATRE



Orwell's *Animal Farm* takes Centre Stage

We celebrated World Book Day with a trip to see George Orwell's classic fable ***Animal Farm*** performed live on stage at the Theatre Royal in Stratford, a historic Grade II-listed Victorian theatre in East London. Marking 80 years since the publication of Orwell's novel, the talented cast brought its vivid characters to life, with Tatty Hennessey's adaptation faithfully retaining the novel's haunting power.

With many of the book's themes still relevant today, the experience sparked lively discussions among our students about the importance of power and individual liberty in society.



Encounters with *Macbeth* at Shakespeare's Globe

KPS students visited Shakespeare's Globe, the Southwark replica of the original Elizabethan open-air theatre, to experience the new production of ***Macbeth***, designed to make the tragedy of ambition and power accessible to a younger audience.

Part of the Globe's 'Playing Shakespeare' series, the initiative vividly dramatises key curriculum texts and was devised by the venue's Director of Education with the goal of inspiring further inquiry into the extant works of Shakespeare, beyond what students will study in the classroom. After all, the best way to encounter any great play is on the stage.

MARTA AND SOFIA'S MEDALS
FROM THE WESTMINSTER GALA

SPORTS



Yasha: International Taekwondo Champion

Throughout the term, Yasha has scored major victories on the youth Taekwondo circuit, taking home medals in three major international competitions. At the ITF England National Championships, he won a silver medal in sparring before securing gold at the ITF Union Grand Prix. At the Warrior Open—a highly competitive event featuring approximately 600 competitors from 20 different countries—he claimed another gold medal in sparring.

In addition to competing, Yasha was also invited to coach at both the ITF England National Championships and the Warrior Open, allowing him to gain new insights into another major aspect of the sport.



Gold Medals for Girls' Swimming

The girls' swim team delivered an impressive performance at the Westminster Gala, competing against Francis Holland, St Marylebone, Maida Vale, Grey Coat, and Southbank. Marta in Y8 dominated her races, claiming first place in both Butterfly and Freestyle, along with a strong second-place finish in her individual medley. Meanwhile, Sofia in Y11 secured third place in the highly competitive backstroke event.

Our partnerships with several local sports facilities, including The Porchester Centre, provide students with regular access to Olympic swimming pools, ensuring they receive the training needed to achieve outstanding results.

NEW SIXTH FORM
STUDENT COUNCIL



HEADS OF SCHOOL



Senior School

The final assembly was a significant moment for our Year 11 students who handed over their leaderships role to our new Year 10 team. Our outgoing school leads, Fadwa and Henry, addressed their peers, thanking them for their support and cooperation as they represented student voice across the Senior School throughout the academic year.

Following a rigorous process of interviews, presentations to the school, and voting by staff and students, we are delighted to announce that Xander and Lavi will be our new Heads of Senior School. In their roles, they will engage with prospective families at our regular Open Day events and help facilitate student-led initiatives such as charity drives and performing arts events.



Sixth Form

Our Sixth Form community has elected its next student council, with Karine, Benjamin S., and Marin serving as our new school leads. Each will be assigned individual tasks that they will carry out and will also help to organise and promote student events such as Sports Day and Prom.

They will be supported in their efforts by a team of talented elected student representatives, including Alissa, Anaïs, Giulia, Lillyclaire, Sergio, and Sophia. As a team, they will work to ensure that student voice is effective and purposeful and that agreed-upon decisions are successfully implemented across the Sixth Form.

2025 Leavers UNIVERSITY OFFERS





THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE

This term, Kensington Park School was selected for inclusion in The Good Schools Guide, the most comprehensive, prestigious, and trusted school review in the UK. You can find the full review below:

The Head

Since 2024, Antony Faccinello MA (Oxon) PGCE, educated at Manchester Grammar School and Pembroke College, Oxford where he read English. He has taught in a number of prestigious independent schools including Cheltenham College, Haberdashers Elstree, head of English at RGS Guildford and senior deputy head at Alleyn's School, Dulwich.

Most interestingly, he also spent six years as head of Trinity Academy in Brixton helping to establish a higher achieving state secondary for South London with a sixth form that was starting to send its more able pupils to Oxbridge. Warm and welcoming, he advocates a modern approach to education, its need to be holistic, provide good learning models and strategies to inspire the futures of those who pass through the institutions he leads. All in all, definitely seen as a thoughtful and flexible character, with a wide experience of senior education management, a bonus for everyone.

'Early days,' said one parent, 'but he has slotted in well and seems to be a good influence on the school.' Younger pupils agreed, 'Yeh, he is okay.' A keen sportsman, tennis player, former rowing coach and cyclist, although today he is on a motorbike, he also appreciates the arts and going to the theatre. He has two of his own children, now in their 20s, and lives not far from the school in south-east London.

Entrance

At 11+ and 13+, children come from various independent and state schools across London. Entrance assessment covers English, maths, non-verbal reasoning and an interview. Interview is a very important part of the entry process, head says this helps identify children who will flourish at school. Sixth form entry requirements flexible as the school takes students from around the world, but benchmark is a minimum of five GCSEs or equivalent international qualifications at grade 6 or B.

Exit

One or two leavers at 16+, usually due to relocating abroad or to a specialist arts school. Majority move across the park to the Queen's Gate premises where an additional 30 places are available annually. At 18+ all to higher education. London universities popular - UCL, Kings, Queen Mary's LSE; further afield to Warwick, Bristol, Newcastle. Two or three each year to Oxbridge, medical schools and US colleges including Yale.

Latest Results

In 2024, 42 per cent 9-7 at GCSE: 96 per cent 9-4 in both maths and English. At A-level 25 percent A*/A (57 per cent A*- B).

Teaching and learning

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Teaching and learning

As one of the new kids on the block Kensington Park is developing a positive reputation for inclusion and a more tailored approach to individuals across the academic spectrum, not forgetting their personal development. Class sizes are maximum of 12, everyone brings their own laptop with school providing an extensive range of software for different subjects and learning needs. Mixed ability intake so lots of differentiation is embedded into teaching to cater for those who need extension work and others who may need more over-learning or an alternative plan.

STEM is popular with both boys and girls, we watched a number of interesting classes and experiments in labs, pupils were engaged and encouraged to ask questions. Good number of pupils enthusiastically join maths and science clubs and enjoy competing in subject Olympiads. Traditional English lessons are core, incorporating grammar, parts of speech and learning to write formally and creatively. Pupils study a broad range of literature, recent theme of Victorian Gothic novels was on display when we visited.

Whole school approach works towards teaching pupils that learning is a skill, the key being the best ways that work for you. Teachers attend regular training in metacognition and multisensory methods, one size definitely doesn't fit all here. Study skills and exam techniques are incorporated into classroom teaching, pupils told us that they get lots of opportunities and help to identify the best ways of learning for them.

One remarked, 'Teachers are really encouraging and help you to do well.' MFLs French, Spanish, and Mandarin, active language lessons with lots of visual prompts and oral exchanges between teachers and pupils, no hiding for anyone, even quieter ones, in small classes. Foreign trips are planned and if there's a demand for another language a club can be set up; pupils are always encouraged to take a GCSE in any additional or native language they speak. Progress is regularly tracked, with plenty of drop-in clinics before and after school for those who need additional explanations and help. Parents we spoke to were pleased with the progress their child was making, one commenting, 'My child had become rather disengaged with education but since moving to KPS he has really picked up.'

Everyone takes up to nine GCSEs and, unusually for a London day school, KPS also offers a one-year GCSE course with pupils taking five or six subjects. Over 20 subject choices for A level, most popular are business, economics, politics and maths, other options include sociology, philosophy and Latin. Lots of guidance provided on choosing and opportunities to try out different subjects at A level. Timetables are personalised so can accommodate anyone who may be participating in elite sports or acting. Each student is matched to a tutor/mentor who shares the same or similar subject interests, they work closely, covering all aspects of the sixth form programme, academic progress, personal development, careers ideas, work experience and other topics.

Careers education aims to be as far-reaching as possible and to engage with alumni and the business sector; students are encouraged to find work placements during holidays. Regular pupil-led assemblies on a huge variety of topics, current affairs and charity pitches. Sixth form head described as a 'lively personality', very approachable. When not available in person she can be contacted via a QR code if students want to get in touch to give her feedback.

Learning support and SEN

As an inclusive school that embraces difference, academically able pupils with specific learning differences and neuro diverse profiles are welcome. SENCo works in collaboration with teachers, parents and pupils to help ensure positive outcomes. Parents feel the school is supportive and understanding towards pupils with different strengths and weaknesses.

Additional needs are dealt with flexibly and on an individual basis, SENCo arranges targeted support for small groups and individuals, there is also an assistant who works in classrooms as required. With an international intake, a number of pupils receive EAL and will prepare for IELTS tests.

The arts and extracurricular

Cosy and compact, the light filled art room bursting with colourful displays of pupils' work; a big effort is made to accommodate individual interests and talents. AQA art, craft and design GCSE offered for its flexibility, pupils can choose any combination from ceramics to textiles and work to their strengths. Corridors decked in ever-changing art displays, creative installations set up in nooks and crannies, even electrical sockets can get a makeover. Purpose-built, purple seated theatre doubles as creative hall where pupils get involved in the annual production either on stage, behind it or with sound and music. Pupils are very good at teaching each other technical theatre skills with sound mixing and lighting. Good deal of class and house productions run throughout the year and those interested can opt for external professional qualifications via LAMDA. Well-equipped music studio, mixing boards, microphones, recording devices and software for producing digital music.

Pupils are encouraged to try out instruments the ukulele, jazz and blues class we saw for budding musicians looked entertaining. Proximity to top UK music colleges means tuition on any instrument can be arranged for the asking. No orchestras as yet but pupils can join quartets and ensembles and there is a music theory club for those working towards ABRSM and Trinity music exams. Teachers take full advantage of the central location to complement arts education, organising trips and visits to art galleries, theatre, lectures, concerts and eclectic mix of exhibitions that London offers.

After school clubs give different options each term depending on demand, pupils can make requests through the school council or a suggestion box. Chess club is very popular and the school is home to a Y11 chess grandmaster. Pupils have recently started to discuss requesting to set up and run some of their own clubs.

There's a weekly non-academic afternoon when pupils can choose to do something creative, sporting or get involved in a volunteering project. The volunteering programme sees pupils working in charity shops, homeless hostels and food banks, giving them the opportunity to gain new skills, work experience and a taste of the wider world.

Sport

Sport for all ethos, differing seasonal options each term, hopefully something to suit all tastes. PE staff like to emphasise the impact physical activity and fitness has on personal health and well-being. Pupils said they felt they were always encouraged to try out new sports and get others to join in, teachers want pupils to enjoy sport and have fun. A couple of pupils voiced their appreciation of the number of opportunities and sporting fixtures with neighbouring schools. Many sign up to join the DofE scheme including sixth formers going for the gold level award. Apart from the odd balcony, school has no outside space so they have to get out and about, making good use of Kensington Gardens, facilities at the Porchester Centre, tennis and netball courts at Regent's Park and the cricket and football pitches in Hyde Park.

During lunch breaks the multi-purpose hall hosts games of dodgeball, table tennis and badminton, others head out for ball games across the road in Hyde Park. A number of students compete at high levels in non school sports such as taekwondo and moto grand prix; others represent London for tennis and athletics.

Boarders

Princess Beatrice House, a stone's throw from Earl's Court tube station, provides stylish, modern accommodation in the form of studio apartments. Boarding starts from year 8 (age 12) and there is a choice of single, twin or triple ensuite rooms, all with their own kitchenettes; separate areas for boys and girls. Spacious communal areas for dining and socialising, common room for games and movies, enormous purple sofas to chill out on and a quiet study area. Laundry room so everyone learns to take care of their own washing and drying, a great self-sufficiency skill for those heading to university. Team of house parents plus academic and house tutors supervise everything on a rota basis, school nurse is part of the team and is available every morning to look after anyone who may be unwell or requires medication. Each boarder is a part of a vertical family group - good for making connections and friendships across different age groups. Boarders have a full programme for evenings and weekends with various activities and trips arranged. Everyone eats together in the colourful dining room for breakfast, dinner and weekend lunches, boarders can pop in any time to help themselves to drinks and fruit. Appetising looking menus, dishes from around the world, Sunday roasts and themed nights, build your own pizza and pasta dishes.

Pupils and parents

Cosmopolitan families, diplomats and a good number of parents from the high-end city and business sector alongside established London families. Around 30 different nationalities attend the school, with a growing number of boarders from around the world. Parents express interest and much enthusiasm for getting involved in the life of the school and a parent teacher association is in its early stages. Community coffee mornings are popular events and a good time for parents to get to know staff and each other.

Money matters

Scholarships at 11+, 13+ and 16+, academic scholarships usually up to around 30 per cent of fees and up to 15 per cent can be awarded for music, art, drama and sports. Scholarships are reviewed annually, no bursaries as yet.

The last word

An emerging school with big ambitions for what it can achieve for its pupils both academically and socially. Small is beautiful atmosphere and approach gives pupils a really independent education, enabling them to develop their strengths and talents be they niche or mainstream.

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KENSINGTON PARK SCHOOL

Want to stay up-to-date with all the exciting things happening at KPS? We provide regular updates on school life, student achievements, cultural events, and much more across our social media platforms and website. Stay connected and never miss out on the latest news and highlights.

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