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### **Gemstones Reunion – Saturday, 25 January 2025**

In January we welcome back the classes of 1965, 1975, and 1985 for the Gemstones Reunion. It was a truly joyful occasion filled with nostalgia, laughter, and reconnections. Chief Master & Principal, Kirsty von Malaisé, warmly welcomed all the attendees and updated them on life at both schools today. It was lovely to see so many Old Edwardians catching up, and recognising faces they hadn't seen in over 50 years.

The day featured an archive stand, giving attendees the chance to contribute to their very own special *Alumni Yearbook*, which was followed by a delightful afternoon tea, and finished with guided tours of KES. Another fantastic opportunity to reminisce about school days, revisit familiar haunts, and marvel at how much (or how little!) things had changed over the past 40 to 60 years. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in ten years' time!



### **Tolkien Lecture**

On Friday, 7 March, we were delighted to host our first Tolkien Lecture since 2019, a series named in honour of one of the school's most distinguished alumni, J R R Tolkien. After a hiatus in the series due to the pandemic, it was a pleasure to resume this highly anticipated tradition of academic talks.

We were honoured to welcome back Old Edwardian, Professor Chris Hodges OBE (1972), as our speaker for this lecture. He delivered an insightful and engaging lecture on the major issues surrounding the compensation schemes for sub-postmasters and mistresses in the aftermath of the infamous scandal. He also shared his expertise on his role as Chair of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology's Regulatory Horizon's Council, which advises the Government on the regulation of emerging technologies. His talk was certainly thought-provoking and engaging which led to a lively Q&A at the end of the lecture.



The Tolkien Lecture has always been a highlight in the school calendar, bringing together our entire community for an engaging and intellectual experience. For those that missed it, you can watch the [recording here](#).

## CCF Annual General Inspection



On Friday, 28 March, the CCF celebrated its Annual General Inspection in front of an audience of approximately 200 friends, family and Old Edwardians. We were very proud to welcome Major General Tim Hodgetts CB CBE KHS DL, chairman of Nato's Committee of the Chiefs of Military Services and Master General Army Medical Services, who presided over the Parade as the Inspecting Officer.

After parading onto the square to the accompaniment of Section specific music, the cadets and audience were then entertained with displays from the RAF RAST Competition Drill team, the newly created Corps of Drums and the Field Gun Teams before each Section set about their evening's work; showcasing a variety of activities that would encompass a normal Friday afternoon in the CCF.

## Neurodiversity Week

KES held its Neurodiversity Celebration Week from 17 March. Some of the highlights were:

Welcoming back writer and historian Simon Jarrett (1974). As a KES alumnus, he gave a fascinating talk to a crowd of staff and pupils on the perception and treatment of mental disability throughout history; from the pertinent and integrated presence of the so-called 'idiot' in 18th century cartoons, to the horrific realities of eugenics and institutionalised care in the 20th. It was an important reminder, and a perfectly historical start to a week of looking toward bettering present support for neurodivergent conditions.

Listening to four neurodivergent pupils share their experiences of school and lessons, with an audience of teachers. They explained strategies that they find effective and supportive. Many members of staff gave really positive feedback as they found the session so useful.



## Senior Production

Our phenomenally creative KES/KEHS students displayed all their skills in this year's Senior Production, 'Let The Right One In'. This vampire tale set in 1980s Sweden explored dark themes of isolation and loneliness. The stage crew and company relished the challenge of bringing such complex characters and weighty themes to the Ruddock stage for three nights, and the audiences were on the edge of their seats!

## Sports News Highlights

King Edward's School has been ranked in the top 10 schools for sport in England. At 9th in the list, KES is the only Birmingham school in the top 10. School Sport Magazine compiled a list of the top 200 sporting schools, based on results data from more than 4,000 schools.

### Water Polo - ESSA Plate Finals

On 18 March, the U15s returned to Northampton for the ESSA Plate Finals, aiming to claim the trophy from reigning champions Bolton. They led 3-1 at halftime. However, despite a late surge in the second half, KES fell 6-5. Finishing 8th in the country is a remarkable achievement!



### Hockey

Congratulations to the U16A Cup side who dominated Dean Close 6-2 to progress to the Tier 1 National Plate Finals. These will be held in the National Hockey Stadium, Lee Valley in London on Friday, 25 April.



### Chess

The U13 chess team completed their grand slam of all four Birmingham District Junior Chess League Tournaments this year and are the overall winners. They have also qualified for the National Team Challenge finals in June.

**Congratulations** to Preesh, Mark, Ayansh, Toby, Aryan and Mingran.

## Summer telephone campaign

We are busy preparing for this year's summer telethon - an opportunity for alumni and students to speak to one another about school, make connections, and learn about how they can give back to KES through [CareersLink](#) and the [Assisted Places Fund](#). We are just in the process of interviewing and recruiting the Sixths and they are all keen to speak with you. We caught up with one of the callers from last year to hear about his experience of the role.

*'Taking part in last summer's telethon was one of the most rewarding things I did at school. Picking up the phone to speak to Old Edwardians, I never quite knew who I'd be talking to — one moment a scientist, the next someone in the arts or business. Each conversation gave me a glimpse of life after KES and reminded me just how far the school's impact reaches.*

*What made it even more meaningful was the cause behind it. The Assisted Places Fund doesn't just open doors — it shapes the school into a more dynamic and inclusive place. I'm proud to have helped support it, and I'm confident this year's team will find the experience just as eye-opening and enjoyable as I did.'*



THE COAT OF ARMS OF KING EDWARD VI

THE KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL  
BIRMINGHAM TRUST

## ALUMNI: Services available to Old Edwardians

Here's a reminder of the many services you can expect as a member of our alumni community:

- **Events:** we run dozens of events through the year, including school concerts, special lectures and community get-togethers.
- **Reunions:** we'll invite you to a special reunion for your cohort once every ten years. These are the Milestones Reunion for 10th, 20th and 30th anniversaries, and the Gemstones Reunion for your 40th, 50th 60th and even 70th anniversaries.
- **Communications:** we'll send you our termly e-newsletter, *Gazette Online*, and our annual magazine, *The Gazette*, to help keep you up-to-date with school and alumni news. We'll also send you email updates.
- **Connections:** we can help you stay in touch with old friends, or even reconnect you with lost ones. Just [get in touch](#).
- **Networking:** join CareersLink to offer careers advice to pupils and other alumni, or to access the advice for yourself.
- **History & Archives:** you can also access our online archive - and search for yourself and your friends - [here](#).



### Sunday, 18 May - Cycle Ride with Mr Phillips

Following the success of our **2024 Strava Cycling event**, we're thrilled to announce the date for **2025!** Join Mr Phillips on **Sunday, 18 May**, for an exciting cycle ride through the stunning Worcestershire countryside. The event kicks off at 10.00 from Barnt Green Train Station, with two routes available: a 35-mile route or a 50-mile route. The ride will wrap up at The Victoria (B45 8NW) in Barnt Green, where you'll have the chance to relax and share stories from the day. As a 'well done', all alumni will be given a voucher for their first drink on us. [Click here to book your place.](#)

And while you're at it, join the '**KES Old Edwardian**' Club on Strava to continue the sports and fitness journey with fellow alumni! [Click here](#) to become a member.

### Saturday, 21 June - Milestones Reunion

We are holding a very special reunion for the classes of **1995, 2005 and 2015** from both King Edward's School, Birmingham and King Edward VI High School for Girls and we want you to be part of it! The evening will consist of tours of the school, two-course buffet dinner and time for plenty of reconnecting! If you are not one of the above year groups and still wish to attend, then please do book a place as you are more than welcome! Places are filling up fast, so [click here to book your place now.](#)

Already booked your place? Then encourage your fellow classmates to come along too!

### Friday, 12 September - University Networking

Did you leave KES in or after 2020? Then you are invited back to our Networking Event! The Class of 2026 will greatly benefit from your insights, as you share your first-hand experiences on choosing a university, exploring different degree courses and navigating accommodation options. Your advice will be invaluable to them as they start to think about their journeys outside of King Edward's. [Click here to register.](#)

