

CNS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 2025



Bringing former CNS pupils together



Headteacher's welcome

Welcome to the third City of Norwich School Alumni newsletter. I cannot believe Christmas is already upon us and the close of term fast approaching. The Autumn term is always the busiest and longest term as well as being my favourite. I enjoy welcoming back familiar faces and meeting new students in Year 7 and Year 12. We host lots of events throughout the term, enabling me to meet with parents and carers and celebrate our students' successes and talents, as shown in the newsletter.

Highlights of the term are plentiful and dominated by our standout music events including our Christmas Showcase and Winter Concert, both of which are a stunning display of established and emerging talent. An earlier highlight was our very busy Heritage Day and Alumni Garden Party which welcomed familiar and new faces back to CNS for a foray into the past and sharing of treasured memories. My thanks to all alumni who engaged with and supported this event.

The excellent CNS community have all worked very hard this term and are ready for the Christmas festivities and break. I wish you all a happy Christmas and peaceful 2026 and thank you for staying connected to our amazing school.

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Jo Philpott, Headteacher

CNS holds inaugural Alumni Garden Party

On Saturday 20th September, we proudly marked 115 years of education with our inaugural CNS Alumni Garden Party, held alongside our Heritage Day as part of the 2025 Heritage Open Days Festival.

The events brought together a wonderful gathering of former students, their families, and friends of the school, who enjoyed reconnecting with one another and with the CNS community.



CNS holds inaugural Alumni Garden Party



Guests explored our extensive archive collections, showcasing the school's rich history, and many took part in student-led tours which offered a unique opportunity to experience the school through the eyes of our current pupils



It was a memorable occasion that celebrated both our heritage and the enduring connection between CNS and its alumni.

Thank you to everyone who came and made it such a special day.



We're excited to let you know that a special reunion is being planned for Saturday 11 July 2026, from 12 noon to 4pm in the school refectory.

What began as a get-together for the sixth formers who left in 1976 has happily grown into a **reunion for everyone from the 1969 intake**, including those who left after the 5th year. Even though that means some of us left 52 years ago, we wanted to reunite as many as possible, not least as we were the final grammar intake before the school reverted to a comprehensive. The school has kindly offered to host us in the refectory, and we will be providing a buffet.

To register interest, please contact Andy Hewett, who has done much to organise proceedings and liaise with the school. Andy has also set up a WhatsApp group with almost 50 alumni already on board. If you'd like to join the group, please email Andy (details below) with your mobile number—just make sure you're already on WhatsApp. For those not on WhatsApp, don't worry, updates will also be sent out by email.

More details, including the cost per person and refreshment arrangements will follow once everything is confirmed. To find out more, use the following contact details:

hewetts.live@btinternet.com, andycoghlan59@gmail.com ("cody")
or paul.la.wilson@ntlworld.com.

CNS Alumni Inspire CNS Students

In October, we had the pleasure of welcoming the BBC Bitesize Careers Tour to our school for an exciting and motivational session with students from Years 9, 10, 11, and 12.

The event featured guest speakers Ellie Reeves, Jack Maclean, and **CNS alumna Jasmine Downes**, who all shared their personal career journeys. The session offered valuable insights into life beyond the classroom, the diverse paths to career success, and the lessons they've learned along the way.

Jasmine said *"One student asked if we regretted anything from our career path. I used to regret not going to university, but on stage today I realised that all the experiences along my path have made me the skilled technician that I am today, in a job that I love"*

The key message to students was dream big and don't be afraid to explore a variety of routes to success.



Jasmine Downes (centre) with the BBC Bitesize Team

CNS Alumni Inspire CNS Students

Last term we were very fortunate to welcome in to school **CNS alumna Rebecca Casson**, from the John Innes Centre, to talk to Year 8, Year 10 and Year 12 students about her use of German in her STEM career. Rebecca's work involves isolating molecules from plants and using them to create new pharmaceutical drugs to treat diseases.

Rebecca studied for GCSEs at Long Stratton High School and her A-levels at CNS before going on to do a master's degree at the University of Leicester with a year abroad in a laboratory in Stuttgart.

Rebecca spoke to students about how her German has opened doors for her in her career and given her opportunities she would not have been able to access otherwise, ranging from the ability to read academic literature in German, to her first experience of lab work while on her year abroad in Stuttgart.

Thank you to Rebecca for generously giving us her time.



Rebecca Casson



Kamran Uddin

Back in July, we had the pleasure of welcoming one of our **alumni ambassadors, Kamran Uddin**, as the keynote speaker at our Year 9 End of Key Stage 3 Awards Ceremony.

Kamran, who is now an Independent Financial Advisor, reflected on his journey since leaving CNS, sharing how his time at school, and especially his Head of Year's belief in him, helped shape the person he is today. His message to the students was be bold, be brave and embrace the uncomfortable, as that's where growth happens.

Thank you to Kamran for giving such an inspirational speech.

CNS Alumni Inspire CNS Students

At the end of November, we proudly celebrated the achievements of Class of 2025 at our annual awards ceremony. The evening was a wonderful showcase of Excellence in All, bringing together students, their families, and many distinguished guests, including the Deputy Lord Mayor.

A highlight of the night was the keynote address from **CNS alumnus Connor Southwell**, now the chief Norwich City Football Club reporter for the Eastern Daily Press, Norwich Evening News, and The Pink Un.

Connor spoke powerfully about how his time at school laid the foundations for both his personal and professional growth. He encouraged students to pursue their passions with determination, emphasising that following what inspires them is the true key to success.

Thank you to Connor for joining us to celebrate our student's successes.



Connor Southwell



Help wanted...

Could you be our next keynote speaker?

We regularly celebrate our students' achievements with awards and events, and we are always looking for inspiring speakers.

If you would like to be considered as a guest speaker at one of these events, please email h.spurway@cns-school.org

Year 10 work experience placement offers needed



We are looking for work experience placements for our Year 10 students from 8th - 12th June 2026.

Work placements offer students the opportunity to experience working life and develop their transferable skills. We are interested in placements in all job sectors.

If you are able to offer students a placement for between 1 and 5 days during this week we would love to hear from you. Please email careers@cns-school.org

Thank you for your support.

Help wanted....

Creative Futures

Can you inspire the next generation of creatives?



CNS is proud to be collaborating with Brandland and North Walsham High School on Creative Futures 2026, an inspiring new initiative designed to help young people explore future careers in the creative industries.

As part of the project, Brandland will lead a series of creative workshops for Year 10 and 11 students, giving them a taste of real-world creative practice and encouraging them to imagine their own paths in the industry.

To make this opportunity possible, the organisers are currently seeking business sponsors to support Creative Futures 2026. Sponsorship will help cover travel costs for students from their schools to the Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) campus, as well as refreshments on the day.

All other resources have been kindly donated by the mentors, Norwich University of the Arts, and the University of East Anglia (UEA).

The organisers are seeking:

- **One headline sponsor (£1,500), or**
- **Two sponsors (£750 each)**

By sponsoring Creative Futures 2026, businesses can play a vital role in scaling and sustaining the programme, helping even more schools and students benefit in the future.

Find out more here: [Sponsorship Pack](#)

For an informal chat or to express interest in sponsoring the event, please contact Alice Rose at Alice.C.Rose@uea.ac.uk.

Contact Us

We want to hear from you....

Do you have something that you would like to share via this publication?

Help shape this newsletter in to one that means something to you and your fellow alumni by sharing your news and giving us your feedback.

Email h.spurway@cns-school.org

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