



AKS Lytham

PERFORMING ARTS

MUSICAL HANDBOOK

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CONTENTS

WELCOME MESSAGE 3

THE TEAM 4-5

MUSICAL LAUNCH 6

AUDITIONS AND CASTING 7-9

BACKSTAGE OPPORTUNITIES 10

CODE OF CONDUCT 11

COMMUNICATIONS 12-13

REHEARSALS 14-15

WELLBEING SUPPORT 16

ACADEMIC SUPPORT 17

REHEARSAL UNIFORM 18

COSTUME, HAIR AND MAKE-UP 19

PROMOTIONAL AND FUNDRAISING EXPECTATIONS 20-21

PARENT SUPPORT & TICKET SALES 22-23

SHOW WEEK 24-25

POST-PRODUCTION 26-27

FAQs AND USEFUL INFORMATION 28-29



WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the AKS School Musical!

Whether this is your first or your final production, we are delighted that you have chosen to be part of our musical theatre community. Each year, our school musical provides students with an opportunity to develop their confidence, creativity, teamwork and performance skills whilst creating unforgettable memories and friendships along the way.

As our productions continue to grow in scale and ambition, so too does the number of opportunities, events, rehearsals and communications that take place throughout the process. We have therefore created this handbook to provide students and parents with a clear guide to the journey, from audition to final performance and beyond.

Within these pages, you will find information about rehearsals, auditions, expectations, fundraising, communication, wellbeing support, Show Week and many other aspects of the production process. Our aim is to answer common questions, provide clarity and ensure that everyone feels informed and supported throughout the year.

Whilst every production is unique, the values at the heart of our programme remain the same: commitment, teamwork, kindness, professionalism and a shared passion for creating outstanding theatre.

We hope this handbook becomes a useful point of reference throughout the production process. If you have any questions that are not answered within these pages, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Performing Arts Department.

We look forward to working with you and sharing another incredible production together.



Miss Martha Worthington

THE TEAM



Martha Worthington (Director and Producer)

Leads the creative vision of the performance while organising rehearsals and ensuring all elements of the production come together successfully.

Contact: musical@akslytham.com



Emily Mitchell (Co-Director and Head of Wardrobe)

Supports the Director in shaping the performance and leading rehearsals while overseeing costume design and organisation to ensure characters are presented effectively on stage.

Contact: musical@akslytham.com



Adam Brown (Music Director)

Oversees all musical elements of the production, working closely with the musicians and performers to rehearse, coordinate and deliver music that enhances the storytelling and overall audience experience.

Contact: musical@akslytham.com



Chris Hodder (Co-Music Director)

Supports the Music Director in rehearsing performers and musicians, helping to coordinate musical elements and ensuring the music effectively supports the storytelling and atmosphere of the production.

Contact: musical@akslytham.com



Helen Hotchkiss (Safeguarding and Wellbeing Lead)

Oversees the wellbeing of the cast throughout the production process. Working alongside the VENT team, Matron acts as a key point of contact for students who may need emotional support. During Show Week Matron manages the backstage team, ensuring student safety and wellbeing around the dressing rooms.

Contact: Helen.Hotchkiss@akslytham.com and vent@akslytham.com



Dr Chris Jessop (Academic Lead)

As Assistant Head of Teaching and Learning, Dr Jessop works closely with the production team to support students in balancing the demands of the production alongside their academic studies, providing additional guidance and intervention where needed.

Contact: Chris.Jessop@akslytham.com

**Annie Millard (Director of Finance and Operations)**

Oversees the production budget and finances, helping to manage income, fundraising and expenditure throughout the production process. Annie Millard works closely with the production team to ensure resources are used effectively and that the production remains financially sustainable.

Contact: Annie.Millard@akslytham.com

**Abby Newby (Chair of the Parent Committee and Fundraising Co-ordinator)**

Leads the Parents' Committee and coordinates fundraising activities that support the production. Mrs Newby will often be the first point of contact for parents with general queries, maintaining strong communication between families and the production team.

Contact: Abby.Newby@akslytham.com

**Sam Dobson (Programme Manager)**

Oversees the production of the programme, working closely with the design team to develop its content and presentation. Mrs Dobson coordinates advertising requests, manages written submissions including Break-a-Leg messages, and staff and student biographies to ensure the programme celebrates everyone involved in the production.

Contact: Samantha.Dobson@akslytham.com

**Sarah Shepherd (Marketing Lead)**

Oversees the promotion of the production, working to raise awareness and encourage audiences to attend. Mrs Shepherd helps coordinate marketing materials, social media content and publicity to showcase the hard work of the cast and crew.

Contact: Sarah.Shepherd@akslytham.com

**Kelly Akers (Production Photographer)**

Captures rehearsals and performances through photography, helping to celebrate and preserve memories of the production. Families will also have the opportunity to purchase production photographs directly from Mrs Akers following the show.

Contact: photography.kelly.akers@gmail.com

Additional Key Staff

AKS Staff

Music

Nikki Greig
Tony Harrison
David Hewitt
Nikky Howard
Ed Rugman

Nicola Stevens
Daniel Thomas
Lisa Atherton
Nick Powlesland
Rodger Boyes

Drama

Grant Armstrong
Amy Armstrong

Additional AKS staff will volunteer at Lowther during Show Week

Lowther Staff

Tim Lince- CEO
Dan Creasey- Technical Manager
Simon Miller- Venue Technician

A professional stage manager will be hired for the week.

In the past we've worked with Christine Felkin and Andrea Claire.

MUSICAL LAUNCH

The announcement takes place at our annual Stardust Diner fundraising event on the first Friday of September. Students perform songs from the West End and Broadway while serving a two-course meal. The evening also includes a raffle, licensed bar and fundraising activities. The highlight is the reveal of the next school musical, with clues gradually leading to the show's title.

The Stardust Diner

Sign Up

Students can sign up via the weekly bulletin during May/June. The form will ask how they would like to be involved, including:

- performing a musical number
- serving guests
- hosting the event
- assisting with set-up and organisation

The performance line-up will be confirmed before the summer break, giving students time over the holidays to prepare their chosen numbers.

Rehearsals

In the week leading up to the event, all performers must book at least one rehearsal session with the Performing Arts Department. Rehearsals can be arranged for:

- breaktime
- lunchtime
- after school

On the day of the Stardust Diner, all participating students are required to remain in school after 4.00pm. We will run a full dress rehearsal of the show, before welcoming guests when doors open to audiences at 7.00pm.

Dress Code

All student volunteers should wear smart black attire.

Purchasing Tickets

Ticket information and booking forms will be distributed via the weekly bulletin in June and promoted through our social media channels. It is advised to take advantage of the Earlybird discount codes that will be available throughout June.



AUDITION INFORMATION

Following the musical announcement, an audition pack and sign-up form will be shared via the weekly bulletin and promoted through our social media channels in September. Students will have one to two weeks to prepare their auditions. Audition Week will take place following the Year 9 Residential.

The Audition Pack

The audition pack is designed to support students throughout the audition process and will include:

- a synopsis of the production
- character profiles and role descriptions
- production mood boards and visual references
- audition songs, scripts and preparation materials
- rehearsal and performance commitments
- specific audition requirements for principal and ensemble roles

Students are encouraged to read the audition pack carefully and familiarise themselves with the style, themes and characters of the production before attending their audition.

Audition Information

All auditions will take place in the Drama Studio between 4.00pm and 6.30pm. Students may be released earlier depending on the schedule and the requirements of the audition.

All students auditioning for the production must wear Drama Blacks. It is strongly recommended that the AKS branded Blacks are purchased over the summer holiday in advance. Students may change into their Drama Blacks during lunchtime on the day of their audition.

Auditions may require students to demonstrate a combination of:

- singing
- acting
- dancing (where appropriate to the production)

Throughout the audition process, students should focus on communicating character through their performance. Successful auditions demonstrate not only strong vocal ability but also effective use of facial expression, physicality and an understanding of the character's background, objectives and emotional journey.



AUDITION PROCESS

Ensemble

Ensemble auditions take place on a Tuesday. Following a vocal warm-up and character workshop, students will perform the audition song in small groups. Students may be asked to repeat sections and respond to direction from the audition panel.



Principal

Principal auditions take place on a Wednesday. Following a vocal warm-up and character workshop, students will perform their audition song individually. Depending on the production, students may also be invited to take part in script readings, dance auditions or additional acting workshops.



Call-backs

Call-backs are by invitation only and take place on a Thursday. Students selected for call-backs will be notified by email on Wednesday evening. During call-backs, students will work on material for a range of characters and may be asked to perform different songs and scenes as the audition panel explores casting options.



Please note the audition process will be documented via film and photography.

CASTING

Announcement

The principal cast will be announced on Friday during morning break in the Drama Studio. Students should come directly from their Period 2 lesson, with the announcement beginning promptly at 11.00am.

This is an exciting moment as the principal roles are revealed and the production begins to take shape. As casting is a competitive process, not all students who audition will be offered a principal role. This is due to limitations on stage space, backstage facilities and health and safety requirements. Ensemble casting will be communicated separately via email on Friday afternoon.

After the Announcement

Students cast in principal roles will be asked to stay behind briefly for photographs and important production information. Please note that the cast announcement may be filmed and photographed for promotional use by the Performing Arts Department.

Supporting Student Wellbeing

We understand that cast announcements can bring a range of emotions. While some students will be celebrating, others may feel disappointed.

Casting decisions are made based on the needs of the production and are not a reflection of a student's talent or potential. Every role is important and every cast member contributes to the success of the show.

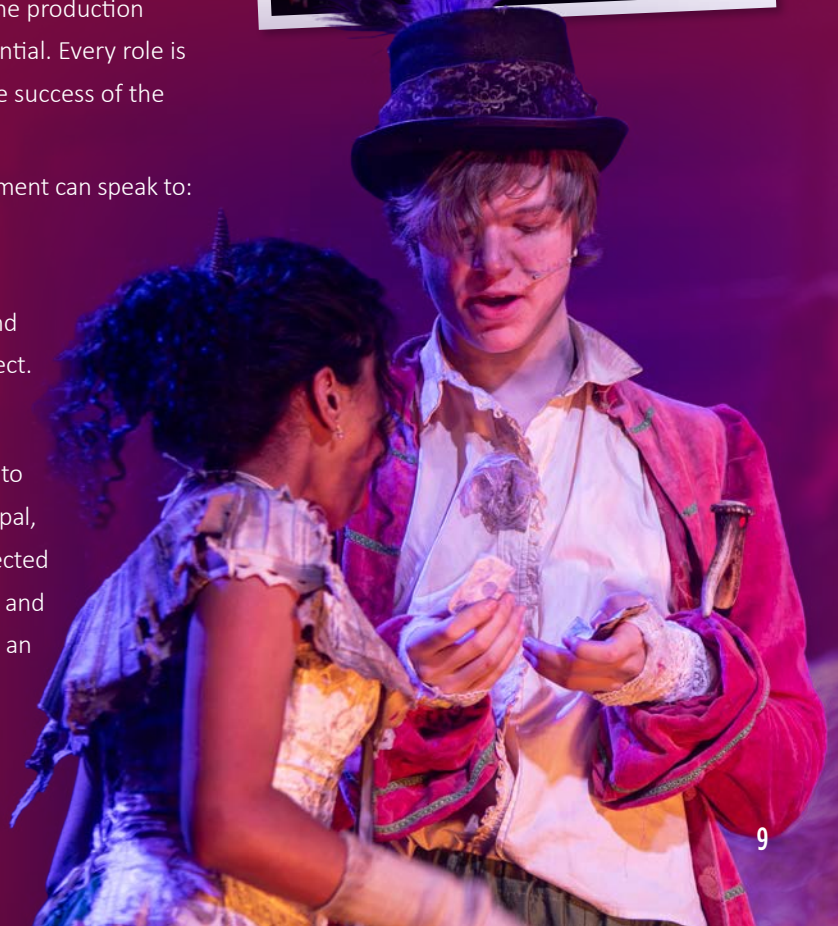
Students who would like support after the announcement can speak to:

- the VENT Team
- Matron

We encourage all students to support one another and approach the casting process with kindness and respect.

Accepting a Role

By auditioning for the school musical, students agree to accept any role offered to them, whether it is a principal, featured or ensemble role. All cast members are expected to approach their role with enthusiasm, commitment and professionalism. Every member of the company plays an important part in bringing the production to life.



BACKSTAGE ROLES

Prop Making

Students in the Prop Making Team help create and look after the items used on stage during the production.

Responsibilities may include:

- making props
- painting and decorating items
- repairing props when needed
- organising props backstage

This role is ideal for students who enjoy art, design, making things and being creative.

Student Stage Managers

Student Stage Managers help rehearsals and performances run smoothly.

Responsibilities may include:

- helping organise rehearsals
- recording notes and changes
- looking after props and equipment
- supporting backstage during performances
- helping different teams work together

This role is ideal for students who are organised, responsible and interested in leadership and theatre production.

Branding Team

Students in the Branding Team help promote the production and share what happens behind the scenes.

Responsibilities may include:

- filming rehearsal videos
- taking photos and videos
- designing posters and promotional materials
- helping advertise the show

This role is ideal for students interested in photography, graphic design, marketing or content creation.

Costume, Hair and Make-up Assistants

Students in this role help create the look of the characters by assisting with costumes, hair and stage make-up. They may help organise outfits, support performers before shows, manage quick changes and work as part of the backstage team to bring the musical to life.

Opportunities to join the backstage team are advertised through the weekly bulletin, with students able to sign up via an online form.



CODE OF CONDUCT

Being part of a school production is both a privilege and a responsibility. The Cast Member Code of Conduct helps ensure that rehearsals, performances and events are safe, positive and enjoyable for everyone involved.

The Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all cast members regarding communication, behaviour, attendance, independent preparation, promotion and fundraising. These expectations help create a professional working environment where every student can contribute, develop and achieve their best.

The Code of Conduct will be shared with families in advance of the Parent Welcome Meeting. Students and parents are asked to read the document carefully and sign it to confirm their understanding and agreement.

Cast Member Code of Conduct

By signing this document, all cast members agree to:

Communication

- use musical@akslytham.com for all communication with the creative team
- attend the Monday breaktime meeting each week
- keep up to date with all cast and crew communications which will be shared via a range of media, such as email and Teams
- regularly check the Production Teams channel for updates

Behaviour

- be respectful of staff running rehearsal sessions, by arriving on time and maintaining focus throughout
- not use phones in any rehearsal spaces, unless permission is granted
- be respectful of other students by maintaining positive working relationships with all cast members
- be respectful of the rehearsal space by wearing appropriate clothing and not leaving litter of any kind
- bring appropriate healthy food and drink to rehearsals

Attendance

- attend all required rehearsals
- use the Planned Absence Log to communicate any absences from rehearsals

Promotion and Fundraising

- take an active role in promoting ticket sales via delegated promotional activities
- take an active role in fundraising, supporting and attending events
- where required, attend promotional performances/events as directed

Independent Preparation

- bring homework and study materials to rehearsals
- work between rehearsals to learn lines and lyrics for assigned scenes and songs

COMMUNICATIONS

Parent Welcome Meeting

The Parent Welcome Meeting will take place on the Monday following the cast announcement.

The meeting starts at 6.00pm after the first full cast rehearsal and gives students and parents the chance to learn more about the production.

We will discuss:

- rehearsals and attendance
- Show Week arrangements
- ticket information
- key dates and deadlines

There will also be time to ask questions. We encourage all cast members to attend with at least one parent. Any required online forms will be shared during the meeting and should be completed before leaving.

Weekly Company Meetings

All cast members must attend a weekly company meeting every Monday at breaktime. Students should arrive at the Drama Studio by 11.00am.

These meetings are used to:

- share production updates
- confirm rehearsal schedules
- discuss upcoming events and performances
- answer questions

They also give students the chance to speak with the Creative Team about any aspect of the production.

Attendance is compulsory and registers will be taken each week.

WhatsApp

Parents will have the option to join a WhatsApp group for the production.

This will be used to share reminders, updates and any last-minute changes quickly and easily. Details of how to sign up will be shared at the Parent Welcome Meeting.





Production Email

To help everyone stay informed, all production communication will be sent through:
musical@akslytham.com

Please use this email for:

- reporting absences
- updating availability
- general production enquiries

Students and parents should use this email regularly throughout the rehearsal process.

Rehearsal Schedules

Rehearsal schedules will be distributed to parents via email on Mondays and will normally be published up to one month in advance.

To ensure schedules are easily accessible, they will also be:

- shared through the Production Teams channel
- published on our Performing Arts social media channels
- displayed on the Performing Arts office doors

Parents and students should check rehearsal schedules regularly.

Absences and Attendance

To help us plan rehearsals, all known absences from September to January should be included on the Planned Absence Form, which will be completed at the Parent Welcome Meeting. If availability changes, please let us know. Where possible, we ask for at least one month's notice. If a student is unable to attend due to illness or another unexpected reason, please email as soon as possible.

Regular attendance is essential and students are expected to attend all rehearsals to which they are called, unless an absence has been agreed in advance or is unavoidable.

REHEARSALS

A rehearsal schedule will be emailed to families each month.

To help us plan rehearsals effectively, please complete the Planned Absence Form as early as possible. Knowing about absences in advance allows us to organise rehearsals efficiently and make the best use of students' time.

Rehearsal Schedule

Regular rehearsals will take place on:

Monday: 4.10pm to 6.10pm

Wednesday: 4.10pm to 6.10pm

Thursday: 4.10pm to 6.10pm

Sunday: 10.00am to 4.00pm

Please check the rehearsal schedule carefully as not all cast members will be needed at every rehearsal. As the production approaches, rehearsal times may be extended, particularly in December and January. Families will be given as much notice as possible. Additional rehearsals may also take place during the October and December holidays. These dates will be shared once all Planned Absence Forms have been received.



Rehearsal Information

The rehearsal schedule will show:

- which students are needed
- rehearsal locations
- the focus of each rehearsal
- the start and finish time

Students are responsible for checking the schedule regularly and knowing when and where they are required.

There may be times during rehearsals when students are not actively involved. During these periods, students should use their time productively by completing homework, revision or independent study. We strongly recommend bringing study materials to rehearsals.

Rehearsal Expectations

Students should attend rehearsals in AKS Drama Blacks or, later in the process, their designated rehearsal kit.

All students must arrive on time and be in their rehearsal space by 4.10pm. Lateness will be recorded.

Students should bring:

- their script and/or vocal score
- a pencil
- any material that should be learnt for rehearsal
- a water bottle
- snacks for longer rehearsals

Students are also expected to rehearse independently between scheduled sessions. To help rehearsals run smoothly, all cast members must be fully off book by the first rehearsal back in January.



WELLBEING SUPPORT

Being part of a school musical is an exciting and rewarding experience, but it is also a significant commitment. We recognise that balancing rehearsals, performances, academic studies and other commitments can sometimes feel challenging and we are committed to supporting students throughout the production process.

If a student is experiencing difficulties, feeling overwhelmed or would simply like someone to talk to, support is available through both Matron and VENT.

Students can access support by:

- visiting Matron's Office
- contacting VENT via email at vent@akslytham.com

In addition, a wellbeing representative will attend our weekly company meetings wherever possible. This provides students with an opportunity to check in informally, ask questions or seek support in a familiar environment.

To help new members of the company feel welcomed and supported, we will also operate a student mentorship programme. Students joining the production for the first time will be paired with an experienced cast member who can offer guidance, answer questions and help them navigate the rehearsal and performance process.

We encourage students to speak to a member of staff as early as possible if they have any concerns. Seeking support is an important part of maintaining a healthy balance throughout the rehearsal process and our priority is ensuring that every student feels supported, valued and able to enjoy their experience as a member of the company.





ACADEMIC SUPPORT

We recognise that participating in a school musical requires students to balance rehearsals and performances alongside their academic studies. We are committed to supporting students throughout the production process and providing opportunities for them to remain on track academically.

Academic Support

Students in Years 10 to 13 can access support from an Academic Advisor.

Academic Advisors can help with:

- revision planning
- managing workload and deadlines
- study and revision strategies
- accessing additional academic support

Students who are finding it difficult to balance schoolwork and the production are encouraged to seek support.

Students can request an Academic Advisor at any time by emailing: chris.jessop@akslytham.com

Study Spaces

Study spaces will be available during rehearsals and Show Week.

Students can use these spaces to:

- complete homework
- revise between scenes
- keep up with schoolwork

Students are encouraged to bring study materials so they can use any free time productively.

During Show Week, Sixth Form students will have access to dedicated study rooms with Wi-Fi, allowing them to continue independent study around their performance commitments.

Library Facilities

The Library provides a quiet space where students can:

- complete homework and revision
- access books, computers and study resources
- work independently between rehearsals

Library Opening Times (Monday to Friday)

Morning: 8.00am to 8.40am

Lunchtime: 1.00pm to 2.00pm

After School: 4.00pm to 5.30pm

REHEARSAL UNIFORM

All cast members are required to purchase the official production rehearsal uniform, which includes:

- a personalised production T-shirt
- a personalised zip-up hoodie

Additional T-shirts can be ordered if required.

The uniform should be worn with:

- plain black leggings or jogging bottoms (e.g. AKS branded Drama Blacks)
- white trainers and white socks, or black trainers and black socks

Ordering Your Uniform

Information about ordering will be shared in advance of the Parent Welcome Meeting.

Students will be able to try on sample sizes at the meeting before placing their order. All order forms must be completed on the evening to help ensure uniforms arrive as quickly as possible.

When the Uniform Will Be Worn

The rehearsal uniform will be worn for:

- rehearsals
- promotional performances
- photos and media opportunities
- publicity events
- Show Week

Students must wear their official rehearsal uniform to be included in production photographs and promotional materials.



COSTUMES, HAIR AND MAKE-UP

Costumes help bring the production to life. Students are expected to take responsibility for their costumes, hair and make-up throughout the production.

Student Requirements

Students should provide:

- neutral undergarments
- any required performance shoes
- make-up wipes
- hair bobbles
- a hairbrush or comb
- hair grips and pins

Additional costume items may be required depending on the production. Information will be shared well before Show Week. Hair and make-up guidance will also be provided closer to the performances.

Costume Measurements and Fittings

Students will be measured during the audition process to help the costume team source costumes.

At the auditions, students should know their:

- shoe size
- trouser size
- dress size (where appropriate)
- shirt size
- jacket size

Students will attend costume fittings throughout the rehearsal period. Details will be shared through the Production Teams channel.

Looking After Costumes

Students are expected to take care of all costumes during rehearsals and performances.

If a costume is damaged, does not fit properly or needs adjusting, students should tell Mrs Mitchell (Head of Wardrobe) as soon as possible.

Students should not make alterations or repairs themselves unless asked to do so by the wardrobe team.

At the end of each performance students must hang their costumes up and store them neatly in their dressing rooms.



PROMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Every member of the company is expected to play an active role in promoting the production. Creating a successful school musical is a team effort and effective promotion helps us reach wider audiences, increase ticket sales and celebrate the hard work of everyone involved.

Throughout the rehearsal process, students may be asked to contribute to the promotion of the production in a variety of ways, including:

- writing or filming rehearsal diaries (all)
- appearing in promotional photographs and videos (all)
- distributing posters and flyers within the local community (all)
- supporting ticket sales through positive word-of-mouth promotion (all)
- liking, following and sharing production content on social media (where age appropriate)
- promotional film and/or photography (selected cast members)

Select students may also be asked to represent the production at a number of key school and community events, including:

- School Open Day
- music concerts
- Carol Service
- Christmas Fair
- local switch-on events
- Lower School assemblies
- Middle School assemblies
- Primary Liaison workshops and events

These opportunities help students share their work, promote the production and inspire others to get involved in the Performing Arts.

We are grateful for the support of both students and parents. Whether promoting the show, sharing information or encouraging others to attend, every contribution helps make the production a success and strengthens its connection with the wider school and local community.





FUNDRAISING EXPECTATIONS

Producing a school musical involves significant costs, including costumes, set, technical equipment and production resources. To help support the production, all cast members will take part in our fundraising programme.

Musical Theatre Scratch Card

Each cast member will be asked to complete one Musical Theatre Scratch Card during the rehearsal period.

- Each student will receive one scratch card with 40 musical titles.
- Supporters (family, friends, neighbours) pay £3 per square to select a title.
- Once completed, one supporter wins £60; the remaining £60 goes directly to the show.
- Each student is responsible for completing one card and returning £60.

Incentive: the first three students to return a fully sold card will each receive a £20 Amazon voucher. Scratch cards will be distributed to the cast, in person, at the Parent Welcome Meeting.

Raffle Prizes

Each cast member is also asked to provide four raffle prizes, one for each performance.

Suggested prizes include:

- chocolates
- candles
- gift vouchers
- gift sets
- hampers
- other suitable new items

Raffle prizes should be handed in to the Drama office, during the first week back in January. A reminder will be sent in December.

Viewing Party

A viewing party may be organised at the start of the rehearsal process. This is a chance for students to celebrate the cast announcement and become familiar with the musical, by watching a professional recording/film of the production. Pizza, snacks and drinks will be provided. The cost will be £10 per student. Further details will be shared at the Parent Welcome Meeting.

PARENT SUPPORT

The success of the school musical relies on the efforts of the entire production community. While students are at the heart of the process, the support of parents plays a vital role in helping us deliver a production of the highest possible standard. There are a number of ways families can support the production throughout the rehearsal period and during Show Week.

Performing Arts Patron Scheme

The Performing Arts Patron Scheme helps support productions, performances and opportunities for our students throughout the year.

In recognition of an annual donation of £250, patrons will receive:

- front-row tickets to selected Performing Arts events
- two VIP tickets to the annual school musical
- recognition in programmes and production materials
- priority access to selected events and ticket sales

The support of our patrons helps us continue to provide high-quality Performing Arts experiences for our students. Parents interested in becoming a Performing Arts Patron will receive further information in advance of the Parent Welcome Meeting.

Auction Donations

We are always grateful for donations of high-value items that can be included in our production auction.

Previous auction items have included:

- designer handbags
- signed football shirts
- overnight stays in local hotels
- restaurant vouchers
- experience packages

If you have an item you feel would be suitable for auction, please email details to:
Abby.Newby@akslytham.com

Advertising

One of the most effective ways to support the production is through programme advertising.

Parents and local businesses are invited to advertise within our professionally produced show programme.

Advertising options include:

- full-page advertisements (£350 & 2 free tickets to any performance)
- half-page advertisements (£200)

Parents interested in advertising in the programme will receive a sign-up form in advance of the Parent Welcome Meeting.

Break-a-Leg Messages

Families and friends have the opportunity to purchase a “Break-a-Leg” message in the show programme for £25.

These messages provide a wonderful way to celebrate and support performers while also contributing to the production's fundraising efforts.

Parents interested in purchasing a “Break-a-Leg” will receive a sign-up form in advance of the Parent Welcome Meeting.



Logistics Support

We also welcome support with the practical and organisational aspects of the production.

This may include:

- organising costumes and props
- transporting production materials
- supporting the get-in and get-out process
- assisting with backstage organisation during Show Week

Parents interested in supporting throughout the rehearsal process will receive a sign-up form prior to the Parent Welcome Meeting. Every contribution, no matter how large or small, makes a significant difference. The support of our parent community helps us provide exceptional opportunities for students and enables the production to have a lasting impact both on stage and beyond.

Creative Support

Parents with creative skills are often able to provide invaluable support throughout the production process.

This may include:

- sewing and costume alterations
- set construction and painting
- prop making
- craft and design projects

Parents interested in supporting throughout the rehearsal process will receive a sign-up form prior to the Parent Welcome Meeting.

Show Week Support

During Show Week, we rely on a team of parent volunteers to help ensure the smooth running of performances.

Volunteer opportunities may include:

- programme sales
- raffle ticket sales
- auction ticket sales

Parents interested in supporting throughout Show Week will receive a sign-up form prior to the Parent Welcome Meeting.

Ticket Sales

As a thank you for the commitment and support shown by our company members and their families throughout the production process, families will receive priority access to ticket sales for one week before tickets are released to the general public.

Information about the priority booking period, including booking instructions and key dates, will be shared in advance via Groupcall.

Tickets can be purchased:

- online
- by telephone
- directly from the Lowther Pavilion Box Office

Following the priority booking period, any remaining tickets will be released for general sale.

SHOW WEEK

Show Week is the final stage of the production process and an exciting opportunity for students to perform in a professional theatre environment. All cast members will be off timetable for the week and will spend their time rehearsing, preparing and performing the production. A full Show Week schedule will be shared with students and families in advance via Groupcall. Please note that finish times on performance days may vary slightly.

Day	Times
Monday	8.50am to 6.00pm
Tuesday	8.50am to 6.00pm
Wednesday	8.50am to 10.30pm (estimated)
Thursday	8.50am to 10.30pm (estimated)
Friday	10.00am to 10.30pm (estimated)
Saturday	11.30am to 10.30pm (estimated)

Transport to the Theatre

Students travelling directly to the theatre should arrive at the Stage Door no later than the scheduled start time.

A minibus will also be available from school for students who require transport. Students wanting to travel via the minibus can sign up via a form shared through Groupcall.

Collection Arrangements

At the end of each day, students must be collected and signed out by a parent.

- Monday to Wednesday: collection from the Stage Door
- Thursday to Saturday: collection from the Backstage Door

Any alternative collection arrangements must be agreed with the Performing Arts Department in advance.

Study Materials

Although students will be engaged in rehearsals, there will be times when students are not required on stage. Students are strongly encouraged to bring homework, revision materials and independent study work so they can use this time productively. Where possible, departments will provide work and revision materials to help students keep up with their studies throughout the week.





Food and Refreshments

Hot lunches will be provided by the school during Show Week. Students are encouraged to bring additional snacks and drinks for longer rehearsal and performance days.

From Wednesday to Saturday, students will also be able to pre-order food from the Lowther Pavilion Café and pay on the day. Further details will be shared closer to Show Week.

To protect costumes and equipment:

- no eating while in costume
- no eating while wearing microphones
- food is not permitted in dressing rooms unless approved by a member of staff

Rehearsal Uniform

Students should wear their official production rehearsal uniform whenever they are not in costume during Show Week.

Dressing Rooms

Students will be allocated a dressing room and are expected to keep it tidy throughout the week. Each student will be issued with a daily responsibility checklist, which may include:

- emptying bins
- cleaning surfaces
- hanging costumes correctly
- organising personal belongings
- leaving shared spaces clean and tidy

At the end of each day, dressing rooms will be checked before students are dismissed by their designated Dressing Room Chaperone. Students are expected to treat all theatre facilities with respect. Any damage to dressing rooms or theatre property may result in charges being passed on to those responsible. We ask all company members to take pride in their dressing rooms and help maintain the professional standards expected during Show Week.

POST-PRODUCTION

Although the final performance marks the end of the show, there are still a few important tasks to complete.

Leaving the Theatre

We understand that students and families will want to celebrate after the final performance however, before leaving, all dressing rooms and backstage areas must be left clean and tidy. As on every performance day, students cannot leave their dressing room until it has been checked by their Dressing Room Chaperone and must be signed out at the Backstage Door before leaving the theatre. Keeping the theatre tidy is a responsibility shared by the whole company. Props, set pieces and promotional materials must not be taken home unless permission has been given by the Performing Arts Department.

Costume Return

After the final performance, students may be asked to take costumes home for washing.

If required, students should:

- check all costume items before leaving the theatre
- return all items to their costume bag
- wash costumes as instructed

Each year group will have a designated day to return their costumes.

Details are as follows:

- Year 7 – Monday 1.00pm to 1.30pm
- Year 8 – Tuesday 1.00pm to 1.30pm
- Year 9 – Wednesday 1.00pm to 1.30pm
- Years 10 and 11 – Thursday 1.00pm to 1.30pm
- Years 12 and 13 – Friday 1.00pm to 1.30pm

A £15 charge may be applied for any items that are not returned.

Return to School

We understand that returning to normal lessons after Show Week can be challenging. To support students as they settle back into school, optional catch-up sessions will be available in the Library during lunchtime in the week following the production. Led by Mrs Marland and our Future Skills Co-ordinator, these sessions will provide an opportunity for students to catch up on work, access resources and receive support if needed.

Session Schedule (1.00pm to 1.45pm):

- Monday – Year 7
- Tuesday – Year 8
- Wednesday – Year 9
- Thursday – Years 10 and 11
- Friday – Years 12 and 13



Production Photography and Film

Professional production photography will be provided by Mrs Akers. A selection of photographs from rehearsals, performances and behind the scenes activities will be available for families to purchase following the production.

Subject to the terms of the production licence, a recording of the production may also be made available for purchase.

Information regarding pricing and ordering arrangements for photography and film will be communicated to families via Groupcall.



Feedback Surveys

At the end of the production, students and parents will be invited to complete a feedback survey. Your feedback helps us review, improve and develop future productions. The survey will be shared with students through the Production Team and with parents via email. We ask that all surveys are completed by the end of February.

Wrap Party

The Wrap Party is a chance for the company to celebrate the production and everyone's hard work.

The event may include:

- cast and company awards
- sharing memories from the production
- pizza, snacks and soft drinks
- a screening of the production recording (subject to licensing restrictions)

Selected props, costumes and set pieces may also be available to purchase.

The Wrap Party will take place on a Tuesday and will cost £10 per student. A sign-up form will be shared in advance by email.



FAQs

Where can I buy tickets for the Stardust Diner?

Tickets will be available to purchase through the AKS website from June to September. QR codes and booking links will also be shared via social media.

Does everyone who auditions for the production get accepted into the cast?

No. Due to the size of the Lowther Pavilion stage and dressing room facilities, we are unable to offer places to every student who auditions.

Who makes up the audition panel?

The audition panel will consist of Performing Arts staff. Mrs Shepherd will also be present to document the audition process. Sixth Form Performing Arts Scholars may assist with the organisation and logistics of the auditions.

Can anyone audition for a principal role?

This depends on the production. Some shows include principal roles for younger year groups, while others do not. Full details will be outlined in the audition pack. All students accepted into the cast will have opportunities to perform and contribute to the production.

How will students be notified if they have been cast?

The principal cast will be announced in person during breaktime on the Friday. Ensemble casting decisions will be emailed to students at 4.00pm on the same day.

When will the backstage crew be required to attend?

This depends on the role a student undertakes. Due to limited backstage space, not all crew members will be required during Show Week. Many backstage sessions will take place during lunchtimes at school. Student stage managers will be required to attend selected rehearsals in December and January, as well as the full Show Week period.

What should I do if I cannot attend the Parent Welcome Meeting?

Please notify the department via the production email. We will ensure that any important information is shared with you afterwards.

Where can I access the rehearsal schedule?

Rehearsal schedules will be shared via Groupcall, social media, Production Team and displayed outside the Drama and Music offices.

Where will rehearsals take place?

Rehearsal locations will be listed on the rehearsal schedule. Most rehearsals will take place in the Drama Studio and Music Department classrooms.

What should I do if my costume is damaged?

Please speak to Mrs Mitchell as soon as possible.

How can I get production flyers?

Please contact Mrs Shepherd.

Where and when should raffle prizes be handed in?

Raffle prizes should be delivered to the Drama Office during January and must be received before Show Week.

When and where can I buy tickets for the production?

Cast and crew families will have priority access to tickets before general sale. Information will be shared via Groupcall. Tickets can be purchased online, by telephone or directly from the Lowther Pavilion Box Office.

What should I do if I am running late to collect my son/daughter?

Please contact the creative team via the production email as soon as possible"

Can parents drop off items for students during Show Week?

Items may be left at the theatre Box Office during opening hours. Hot food cannot be dropped off. Students may bring packed evening meals or purchase food from the café where available.

Can students order takeaway food to the theatre?

No. Once students arrive at the theatre, they are expected to remain on site. Students should bring suitable food with them or use the catering options provided.

CONTACT LIST

- **Academic** - Chris.Jessop@akslytham.com
- **Absences** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Auction Donations** - Abby.Newby@akslytham.com
- **Auditions** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Backstage** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Costumes, Hair and Make-up** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Fundraising** - Abby.Newby@akslytham.com
- **Parent Support** (Logistics/Creative/Show Week Support)- musical@akslytham.com
- **Performing Arts Patron Scheme** - Annie.Millard@akslytham.com
- **Photography** - photography.kelly.akers@gmail.com
- **Post-Production** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Programme Entries and Advertising** - Samantha.Dobson@akslytham.com
- **Promotion and Marketing** - Sarah.Shepherd@akslytham.com
- **Rehearsals** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Rehearsal Uniform** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Show Week** - musical@akslytham.com
- **Wellbeing** - Helen.Hotchkiss@akslytham.com and vent@akslytham.com

FORMS

- **Stardust Diner Sign-up** - distributed via the weekly bulletin in June
- **Audition Sign-up** - distributed via the weekly bulletin & social media in September
- **Rehearsal Uniform Order Form** - distributed via Groupcall in September
- **Code of Conduct Form** - distributed via Groupcall in September
- **Measurement Form** - distributed via Groupcall in September
- **Approved Absence Log** - distributed via Groupcall in September
- **Parent Support Sign-up** - distributed via Groupcall in September
- **Viewing Party Sign-up** - distributed via Groupcall in October
- **Transport Form** - distributed via Groupcall in December
- **Show Week Food Order Form** - orders placed daily during Show Week in person
- **Student Feedback Survey** - distributed via Groupcall in February
- **Parent Feedback Survey** - distributed via Groupcall in February
- **Wrap Party Sign-up** - distributed via Groupcall in March

*"We laugh together,
work hard together and
celebrate every little
win together."*

*"It's a place where
you're accepted for who
you are and supported
to be your best self."*

More
a
It's a

*"No matter your role,
you matter. We all
play our part and
make the magic happen."*

REHEARSE. GROW.



*"Being here has given
me confidence, new skills
and a second family
I'll always have."*

BUILDING PEOPLE, NOT

*"We look out for each other.
lift each other up and
push each other to be better."*

than musical. family.

*"Being part of the cast
gives you a place
where you can truly
be yourself."*

*"The school musical has become
one of the most important parts of
my school life. It's where
I've grown the most as a person."*

PERFORM. BELONG.

*"From the first rehearsal
to the final bow, you'll have a
whole team behind you
every step of the way."*

JUST PERFORMANCES.

*"You'll find your people here.
People who get you, believe in you
and will always be in your corner."*

*"It's more than the show
on stage. It's the
friendships, the memories and
the family you become."*





AKS Lytham

4

SOLD-OUT SHOWS
SEEN BY 1,800
AUDIENCE
MEMBERS

10

**CHOIR AND MUSIC
ENSEMBLES**

500+

**STUDENT ENGAGEMENTS
ACROSS THE PREP
AND SENIOR SCHOOLS**



20+

**PLAYS, CONCERTS
AND SHOWCASES
ANUALLY**

**DEGREE OFFERS FROM
SPECIALIST INSTITUTIONS
INCLUDING RCSSD, LIPA,
ITALIA CONTI, GUILDHALL**

75%

**LAMDA DISTINCTIONS
ACHIEVED
IN THE SENIOR SCHOOL
IN 2025**

5

**COMMUNITY
OUTREACH EVENTS**



**REIGNING
CHAMPIONS
AJIS CHOIR
OF THE YEAR**



**ANNUAL
SCHOOL
MUSICAL
AT LOWTHER
PAVILION**

100%

**A LEVEL DRAMA
AND MUSIC STUDENTS
ACHIEVED AN
A GRADE IN 2025**



**REGULAR COLLABORATION
WITH INDUSTRY
PROFESSIONALS
THROUGH WORKSHOPS
AND TALKS**



**NATIONAL, EUROPEAN
AND WORLDWIDE VISITS
GERMANY, HOLLAND,
MANCHESTER,
LIVERPOOL, LONDON
EDINBURGH, NYC**

*"The Performing Arts
Department is amazing.
I've loved the
opportunities I've had both
off and on stage."*

Student Comment

*"It's such an inspiring
place to be. You always
feel welcome.
It feels more like a family."*

Student Comment

*"I've really enjoyed the
bonding experience with
other years. But also,
I've loved discovering
more about myself."*

Student Comment

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