



KEBLE ACCESS AND ADMISSIONS 2026

This is our annual report on our access and outreach activity in academic year 2024-25, as well as undergraduate admissions in the last round, December 2025.

Highlights:

- We hosted visitors from 67 schools from our linked local authorities in the West Midlands
- In partnership with the Brilliant Club, Aston University and King's College London, Birmingham Parent Power was launched
- We signed a new partnership with The Access Project at Wood Green Academy
- 155 students attended subject taster days at Keble; a quarter successfully gained offers at the University
- Five offers were made for the Astrophoria Foundation Year out of 28 for the whole University
- The University and the colleges began a new Access and Participation Plan

Access and Outreach Summary

Keble's access and outreach activities can be grouped into three main headings: bespoke programmes, run solely by Keble; partnerships with other organisations, including the University; and digital programmes, often using the services of outside providers. The table below summarises these activities.

Activity	Reach
<i>Bespoke Keble Programmes</i>	
School Visit Programme (West Midlands)	57 visits, 67 schools, avg. 3 visits/week in term

Activity	Reach
Subject Taster Days (Year 12, UK state schools)	4 events, 155 students, 122 schools (half attendees applied to Oxford, half of those who applied got offer)
Partnerships	
The Brilliant Club Scholars Programme graduations	6 events, 303 students, 22 schools
Birmingham Parent Power	New chapter launched with Aston University and KCL to empower parents/carers
The Access Project	Long-standing partnership at Colmers School; new partnership at Wood Green Academy
UNIQ Summer School	One week of subsidised accommodation and facilities
Digital Access	
Admissions Webinars (students)	1,166 sign-ups; peak attendance 297
Interview Preparation sessions	5 sessions, c.50 students
Webinars for parents, carers and supporters	3 sessions, 263 sign-ups
Ambassador Platform	72 new accounts; 24 applicants to Oxford; 10 offers

Bespoke Keble Programmes

The college runs two flagship in-house programmes designed to support students from underrepresented backgrounds in applying to Oxford and other highly selective universities: the School Visit Programme, which has a regional focus on the West Midlands, and Subject Taster Days, which are open to state school applicants across the UK. Both are organised entirely by Keble staff and evaluated annually for their impact.

School Visit Programme

The school visit programme is a core element of Keble's Access & Outreach activity, offering tailored visits to Years 7-12 from state schools in our linked local authorities of Birmingham, Sandwell, Solihull, Coventry and Warwickshire. In 2024-25 we hosted 57 visits involving 67 individual schools, with 7 returning for a second visit during the year and 11 visiting for the first time. There were on average three visits per week during our term times.

All but one of the participating schools were non-selective, in line with our continued prioritisation of non-selective schools, first-time visitors, and schools with high proportions of Pupil Premium or Free School Meals eligibility.

School visits to Keble 2024-25: number of schools

Birmingham	41
Warwickshire	11
Coventry	6
Sandwell	6
Solihull	3

Most of the schools were in Birmingham, reflecting both the number of non-selective state schools and the high concentration of underrepresented pupils. We hope to grow participation from Sandwell and Coventry over the next two to three years, given the high deprivation and below-average HE progression in parts of both areas.

There was a high demand from schools for visits to the college and our calendar consistently full. The feedback was strongly positive: of the 39 schools that returned forms, all reported that their group was engaged, left motivated about their studies and with more confidence that top universities like Oxford are for them, while 98% said the visit covered breadth of courses not previously addressed in lessons and 95% of post-16 respondents said the same about the Oxford admissions process. Student ambassadors, interview skills sessions, and academic taster sessions were singled out for particular praise; the consistency of taster sessions delivered by volunteer graduate students was identified as the principal area for development within our control and will be addressed in 2025-26 through increased training and feedback.

Subject Taster Days at Keble

Subject Taster Days are one of the most effective elements of our access and outreach offer. They are designed to help Year 12 students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds make strong applications to selective universities, with a particular focus on Oxford. Participants are selected on GCSE performance and access criteria (non-selective state school, FSM, Care flag, first-generation, and gender for subjects that face challenges on a gender representation front)

We ran four Subject Taster Days during Hilary Term 2025, in Human Sciences, Geography, Biology and Ancient History, targeted at high-achieving Year 12 pupils at UK state schools, who were selected on the basis of deprivation criteria.

All four events were significantly oversubscribed, with 155 attendees drawn from 122 individual schools. Depending on the subject, the percentage from non-selective schools

ranged from 76% to 93%, and from POLAR4 quintile 1-2¹ from 22% to 40%. The post-event evaluation was overwhelmingly positive – 51% of attendees responded to a request for feedback. The headline figures were:

- 91% said the event had influenced their subject choices and university plans
- 90% felt more confident about applying to Oxbridge
- 86% said they were more likely to apply to Keble or Oxford

Almost half (45%) of attendees went on to apply to Oxford, and almost half (47%) of those applicants received offers, including three under the [Opportunity Oxford transition programme](#). The applications were disproportionately concentrated in the most disadvantaged bands of applicants to the University; 60% were categorised in Bands A and B, together making up 40% of all applicants. One in ten of applicants applied to Keble itself, and two of them were made offers. Students applied for subjects different to those they had attended on taster days, including several subjects not offered at Keble.

To evaluate the longer-term impact of the programme, UCAS conducted a Strobe analysis of the combined cohort of 273 participants who attended Keble Subject Taster Days in 2023 (Modern Languages, Chemistry, History, Mathematics) and 2024 (Philosophy, Computer Science, Engineering), tracking their applications, offers, and acceptances through the 2024 and 2025 admissions rounds. The Strobe methodology compares each cohort's outcomes against a control group drawn from UCAS's potential applicants database. For application-rate benchmarks the control group is matched on age, home-area socio-demographics, and the eligibility for Free School Meals at the participant's nearest school. For progression benchmarks (offers and acceptances), matching additionally incorporates ethnicity, gender, school FSM rate, and GCSE attainment.

Across the two cohorts combined:

- 88% of participants applied to a higher tariff university, compared to an expected rate of 35% for a matched control group. UCAS classifies this as “very significantly high”.
- 88% applied to a Russell Group university, against an expected rate of 35% — again very significantly high.
- 66% applied to Oxbridge, over twenty times the expected rate of 3% for a matched control group.
- 83% of those who applied to higher tariff universities were accepted, against an expected rate of 62%.
- 77% of the cohort were accepted at a Russell Group university, against an expected rate of 58%.

¹ *POLAR4 quintile 1 or 2 means that the applicant's home postcode is within the bottom 20-40% in the UK for progression to Higher Education.

Just under a quarter of those who attended the sessions in 2023 and 2024 applied to Cambridge University and 15 were successful.

Partnerships

Alongside its in-house programmes, Keble works with a range of charities, educational equality organisations, and University-wide initiatives to strengthen our presence in the West Midlands and contribute to larger programmes of national impact. We maintain long-standing partnerships and embark upon new ones in line with our access and outreach priorities, and receive regular reports from partners on progress and outcomes.

The Brilliant Club

The Brilliant Club mobilises the PhD community to support those students facing the greatest barriers to access university. In 2024–25, it formalised a consortium of 12 Oxford colleges, moving Keble's involvement from an individual partnership to a collective approach to widening access for students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds. Within this consortium, Keble hosted six Scholars Programme graduation events, welcoming 303 students from 22 schools drawn from different regions, including Birmingham. These events gave students experience of a university setting through college tours, contact with current students, and guidance sessions intended to demystify Oxford.

Across the consortium, 83% of students supported by Oxford researchers met one or more widening participation criteria, making them target pupils: 63% were eligible for Pupil Premium; 51% had no parental history of higher education; and 47% lived in the 40% most deprived. The longer-term impact is reflected in UCAS Outreach Evaluator findings for 2023–24: of 260 Scholars Programme graduates who applied to Oxford, 55 were accepted, including 30 target pupils.

Birmingham Parent Power

In 2024 we partnered with The Brilliant Club, Aston University and King's College London to launch a Parent Power chapter in Birmingham. Parent Power brings together local parents and carers and trains them in community organising, with one-to-one and group meetings led by a local Community Organiser. The initiative extends our long-standing relationship with The Brilliant Club beyond the student community to engage parents and carers as key influencers in the university application process, and is particularly well-suited to Birmingham, where progression to higher education varies sharply by neighbourhood (from 12.3% in Castle Vale to 84.3% in Edgbaston South).

An independent evaluation by The Brilliant Club and the King's College London Policy Institute in 2024–25 identified a small but statistically significant positive effect on parents' perceived knowledge of the higher education system, alongside strong qualitative evidence of increased confidence in supporting children's post-16 decisions, raised aspirations within families, and parents taking on leadership roles in their communities.

The Access Project

The Access Project (TAP) remains a core element of our widening participation efforts in the West Midlands, supporting students in schools that need support through in-school mentoring from University Access Officers, tuition, skills coaching, and enrichment activities including university trips. Keble has continued its long-standing partnership at Colmers School in Rednal, which faces significant challenges. In February 2026 we signed a new partnership with Wood Green Academy, replacing our previous involvement at Waverley School. Wood Green is a school with which Keble has had working relationships in the past but with which contact had lapsed in recent years. The school has produced some Oxford applicants but no offers, suggesting Oxbridge potential where our involvement can add value.

Our renewed commitment comes at a significant moment for TAP, which in September 2024 launched Accelerate, a new programme model built around 1:1 mentoring for Year 12 and Year 13 students alongside workshops and assemblies for younger year groups, as part of an ambitious five-year growth strategy to support 1,200 young people into top universities each year by 2028-29 (up from 220 in 2022-23). Nationally in 2024-25, TAP worked with over 2,750 students across 42 partner schools, of whom 91% were from areas of high deprivation and 51% were eligible for Pupil Premium. Of the 460 Year 13 students supported, 245 were placed at a top university (up from 232 the previous year) and 96% received a university offer. TAP students are over 50% more likely to attend top universities than demographically and academically similar peers, with 53% placing at a top university compared to 32% in the control group. Keble is named among TAP's valued partners and university trip hosts for 2024-25, alongside Jesus College, Magdalen College, and The Queen's College.

The 2024-25 impact report for the Keble-Colmers partnership underlines the difference the programme is making in a school facing severe disadvantage. We offer visits to the college, admissions support, and fund in-school tuition. Among the 46 students enrolled, 52% were eligible for free school meals, 63% lived in the lowest-participation POLAR4 postcodes, and 70% would be the first in their family to attend university. Against that backdrop the results were the strongest of the partnership to date. Students attended an average of 16.7 hours of tuition each, above the threshold associated with meaningful impact, and 92% told us they felt more motivated to aim for a top-third university and more positive about their future. Of the eleven Year 13 students, 91% applied to and received offers from top-third universities (up from 64% the year before), and seven students took up places at one, up from 4 the previous year and 1 the year before. Most notably, one student secured a place at Cambridge, the school's first Oxbridge placement since our partnership began in 2018.

UNIQ

UNIQ is the University of Oxford's access programme for UK state school students. Priority is given to academically high-performing students from backgrounds that are under-

represented at Oxford and other universities. Like most other colleges, Keble supports UNIQ's efforts by offering subsidised accommodation, meals, and facilities for their popular Year 12 summer schools. Between 2018 and 2024, 200 UNIQ participants applied to Keble, of whom 46 (23%) were offered a place and 39 subsequently enrolled.

Digital Access

To reach prospective applicants who may not be able to visit Keble in person — whether for geographical, financial, or other reasons — we also deliver a range of online access activities, both self-organised and in collaboration with partners.

Virtual Sessions and Webinars

As part of our virtual outreach programme, we offer a series of Admissions Webinars open to state school students from all areas and Interview Preparation sessions aimed at Oxbridge candidates for schools in our link region. Sessions covered all elements of the admissions process, including preparing for interviews, introducing Oxford, and Q&As, with several run multiple times to meet demand. In total, 1,166 students signed up for the student-facing sessions, with most webinars attracting at least 100 attendees and a peak attendance of 297 for a session on personal statements.

Around 50 students attended 5 Interview Preparation seminars in November and December. A separate strand of three webinar sessions was hosted for parents, carers and supporters, attracting 263 sign-ups in total and a peak attendance of 70. Keble also continues to participate in University-wide virtual initiatives, supporting the Opportunity Oxford virtual Welcome Day event.

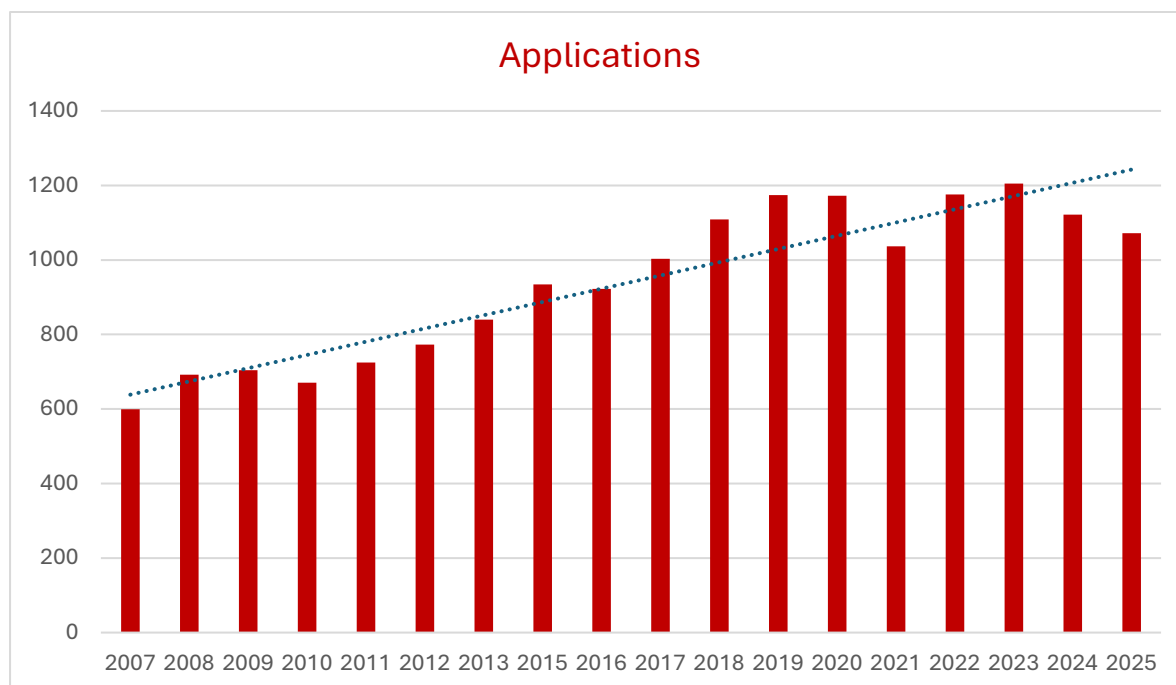
The Ambassador Platform

The Ambassador Platform is an online forum where prospective students can speak confidentially to current Keble students from similar backgrounds, moderated by members of the access and outreach team. Between 1 January 2024 and 1 January 2025, 72 new accounts were created on the platform (down from 102 the previous year), 47% of them UK-domiciled, with conversations evenly split between application process tips and interview advice. Of those prospects, 24 went on to apply to Oxford for 2025-26 entry (16 UK-domiciled), of whom 6 made Keble their first-choice college. Five applicants were in the most disadvantaged band of applicants (Band A) and four were in the second most disadvantaged (Band B); two were from state schools in our link region. Ten of the 24 applicants were made offers, a higher rate than the University average: three offers went to Band A candidates and two to Band B candidates. While use of the platform by applicants from our link region remains relatively low, the overall conversion from application to offer is relatively strong for groups that matter most to our access work.

Applications

The admissions process at the University of Oxford is run according to the [Common Framework for Admissions](#). This sets out the principles and procedures for undergraduate admissions agreed and shared in common by all the colleges. The aim of the framework is to attract the most academically able applicants, apply agreed shortlisting, interview and offer criteria, and promote fairness so that admissions outcomes are not influenced by the college an applicant chooses or is assigned to.

In the December 2025 admissions round there were 1072 individual applications to Keble, down on the previous two years. Application numbers to the University as a whole have remained fairly constant for four years, although the numbers applying from the UK fell by 2.9% in the last round.



The college shortlists applicants for interview according to criteria agreed across the colleges for each subject and there are marked variations in the proportion of applicants who are shortlisted. In 2025 42% of applicants were shortlisted, which is in line with previous years. A very large number of applicants, the vast majority of whom have achieved and/or are predicted to achieve top grades in their school exams, were therefore disappointed. We made 153 offers, including to 18 applicants who applied to a different college; three of these were for entry in 2027. Fifty-seven applicants to Keble were made an offer at a different college.

Information on individual subjects, including the number of applications and offers, can be found on the subject pages of our website, here: [Admissions Feedback - Keble College](#).

Because some subjects received many more applicants per place than others, and because some (now most) make use of pre-interview tests, the exact criteria for shortlisting vary. At least for UK applicants, tutors are able to make use to an increasing amount of contextual information, about individual candidates, the areas they come from, and their relative school performance, to inform their decisions. More information on how we use contextual data can be found [here](#) on the University's website. More context for this process can be found in the University's [Access and Participation Plan](#).

Although some subjects are more popular than others in terms of their applications, we always encourage prospective applicants to go for what really interests them. We think they will do best in studying that way.

Admissions

The University (and therefore by extension the colleges) have agreed an [Access and Participation Plan](#) with the Office for Students.

Part of this plan ('participation') is about improving the performance of key groups while on course, notably by reducing or eliminating gaps in attainment. Part concerns access, how Oxford is going to address its well-known inequalities in admissions. The University has published the following objective on undergraduate representation:

Objective 1: We will increase the representation of students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds at Oxford. We will increase the proportion of entrants from Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Q1 and Q2 to 23.0% by 2028, and increase the proportion of entrants to Oxford with free school meal (FSM) eligibility to 10.7% by 2028. We will achieve this by extending our collaborations with schools and the third sector to support raising pre-16 attainment, and by encouraging and supporting post-16 students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to make competitive applications to Oxford.

The University publishes an annual [Admissions Statistical Report](#) which is accessible from its website. This report contains statistics about socio-economic disadvantage, gender and ethnicity, and school type for each subject and college. These figures are retrospective and they concern 'accepts' i.e., students who take up their places at the start of the year, rather than 'offers' i.e., students to whom offers have been made. The figures are presented as three-year rolling averages, which evens out some of the normal annual variation.

In the December 2025 main admissions round Keble:

- 14.8% of entrants were from IMD quintiles 1 and 2

- 8.3% of entrants were eligible for free school meals (FSM)

This was the first admission round to which the Objective applied and, because it is based on new measures (IMD and FSM eligibility) there is no data on trends.

Although only four offers were made under the University's [Opportunity Oxford programme](#) this year, standard offers were made to eighteen applicants who were eligible under this access scheme.

In a separate admissions exercise, the college made five offers to entry into the [Astrophoria Foundation Year](#). The participating subjects were English, History, Law, and PPE. These offers are not yet fully recorded in the University's annual admissions report but they make a very significant contribution to the college's aims of widening access for under-presented groups. Keble is one of the major participants in this programme, having admitted four students a year in the first three cohorts.

School type

Although none of the University's access targets refer to the type of school applicants attend i.e., state or independent, there is, understandably, intense public scrutiny in this measure as a proxy for inequality. The greater availability of contextual data, for example on whether applicants qualify for free school meals or have been in care, makes it less and less meaningful to use such proxies.

Of offers made to applicants from the UK in the most recent round, 63 per cent were to students from state schools. Among all offers, 56% were to applicants from UK state schools, 34% to applicants from UK independent schools, and 12% to applicants from schools overseas. The three most common non-UK nationalities to receive offers were applicants from China, Singapore, and the USA. The admissions data we get do not enable us to fully distinguish between selective and non-selective UK state schools.

Other data

In the 2025 admission round: 41.3% of offers were to female applicants (compared to 43.1% of shortlisted applications); 11% were to applicants who reported some kind of disability (13% of applicants); 78% were to Home (UK) students (75% of shortlisted applications). Detailed figures by ethnicity are published in the [University's annual report on admissions data](#). In the most recent period (2023-2025) 39.6% of UK admitted undergraduates identified as BME, the highest level among all the colleges.