



LeysLife

Issue 16 - Autumn Term 2024



A Message from the Head

As we reach the end of the first term of this new academic year there has been much to celebrate, with pupils achieving success in all areas of school life.

This term, we have been pleased to welcome new members of senior staff. Our new Senior Deputy Head, Catherine Stevens, joined us in September, and we are already benefitting from her wealth of experience. We have also been joined by new HsMs: James Nicholl (West), Lynsey Cleaves (Fen), Jo Clifton (Granta), and Christopher West-Sadler (Moulton), all of whom have had a very positive impact on our community already.

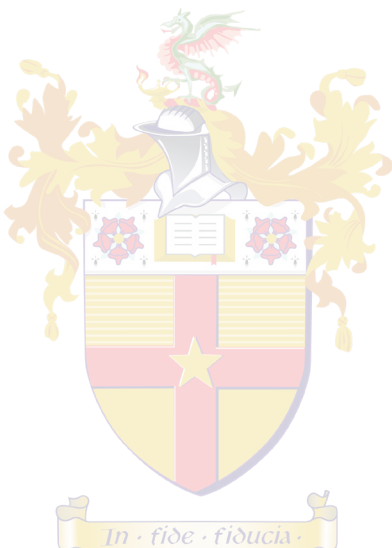
It has been wonderful to see so many trips in the programme, with pupils travelling to Greece, Japan, Snowdonia, and London this term. We have also been able to invite guests to The Leys, and we have very much enjoyed welcoming students from across Cambridge and further afield to a number of events, including a Surgical Skills workshop for our aspiring medics and a series of academic lectures given by eminent speakers.

The cultural life of the School has, as always, flourished over the term. Our Senior play, *Shakespeare in Love*, the annual Autumn Concert, and *Unplugged* were all well attended, and more informal events such as Lunchtime Live and Live at Bally G's continue to thrive.

I also want to highlight the efforts of a group of eight pupils who led this year's Movember campaign. Not only did they successfully raise more than £1400 for the Movember charity, but they also raised awareness about men's mental health across the school community with talks in the Houses and in assemblies, and with a popular Instagram account.

We look forward to celebrating our 150th anniversary in 2025. A programme of events and other initiatives is now live on the school website.

I hope you enjoy this insight into life here at The Leys.



SCHOOL LIFE

The Leys Welcomes a New Senior Deputy Head

At the start of the Autumn Term we announced the arrival of Mrs Catherine Stevens as the new Senior Deputy Head.

Mrs Stevens joins us from The Royal Hospital School, Suffolk, where she spent eight successful years as Deputy Head (Academic). With her extensive experience in both independent boarding and state education, Mrs Stevens brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership to her new role.

With 13 years in Independent Boarding and seven years in state education, Mrs Stevens has held key positions such as Head of Science, and Head of Careers and PHSE. Her dedication to education extends beyond the classroom, having coached first team sport and led several international trips: she is looking forward to being involved in The Leys' netball programme. She has served as a Governor of an independent primary school and is an ISI inspector. She is passionate about fostering a supportive and inspiring learning environment at The Leys, that stretches and supports all pupils across all of their interests.

Mrs Stevens gained a First Class Honours degree from the University of Birmingham before completing her teacher training at the University of Leeds. A dedicated biology teacher, she is particularly fascinated by human physiology and epigenetics. In her free time, she enjoys travelling and hiking in remote regions, with recent adventures taking her to Kyrgyzstan and Svalbard, and continues to play competitive netball.

Reflecting on her new role, Mrs Stevens said: "I am thrilled to be joining The Leys School community and to contribute to the development of such a well-respected institution at such an exciting point in its history. The warmth of the school community has already made me feel truly welcomed I look forward to working with the dedicated staff and enthusiastic pupils to continue building on the School's strong foundations."



SCHOOL LIFE

Success at Rotary Peace Debates

On the evening of Monday 7 October, a three-person team from The Leys emerged victorious in the Rotary Peace Debates held at Impington Village College. Sofia P, Tife Y and Sophia J delivered an outstanding performance proposing the motion: “THBT migration will bring about long-lasting peace and economic success in the country of destination”.

The Rotary Club Peace Debates is an annual competition organised by Rotary Clubs worldwide. The primary objective of these debates is to promote dialogue, critical thinking, and awareness about peace and conflict resolution among young individuals. The theme of this year’s competition was ‘Peace – one day’ and our local competition was organised by the Rotary Club of Cambridge South.

The Leys were up against Bishop Laney Sixth Form for their individual debate, but the whole competition included teams from Chesterton Community College, King’s Ely, Netherhall School and Impington. The judges commended our team on their clarity, research, pace and volume.

Debating Coordinator, Mrs Divito, commented: “I am incredibly proud of the team. They were passionate in their delivery, diligent in their research and demonstrated fantastic teamwork in preparing for the event. I greatly enjoyed working with them during the past three weeks and they should be very proud of their achievements.”



The Leys Triumphs at Rotary Youth Speaks Competition

The Leys School secured first place in the Rotary Youth Speaks Competition held at Queens College on the evening of 28 November. Competing against six other formidable teams from the local area, our team delivered an outstanding performance that earned them the top spot.

The three-person team, consisting of Somi M (Chairperson), Jonathan S (Proposer), and Tife Y (Opposer), captivated the audience with their well-

researched and polished speech on the motion: “This House would be prepared to break the law”. Their dedication to the topic was evident, as they had been meeting in the library for evening rehearsals, honing their arguments and delivery.

The competition, which requires participants to argue both sides of a chosen topic, saw The Leys team speaking last out of the seven teams. Despite the extended duration of the event, which ran over an hour longer than initially advertised, the team chose to forgo the use of a microphone and lectern, relying instead on their own vocal strength and minimal cue cards. This decision paid off, as they commanded the attention of the entire audience.

Mrs Divito, Debating Coordinator at The Leys, expressed her pride in the team, stating: “Their speech was well-researched, well-paced, polished, and very informative. They were friendly, sociable, kind, and incredibly mature. When announced as winners, they accepted the prize with real grace, and I was very proud of them.”

The Leys team will now advance to the District Final, scheduled to take place on 8 February at the Norfolk County Council Chamber in Norwich. The school community eagerly anticipates their continued success in the upcoming rounds of the competition.

SCHOOL LIFE

Richard Hill Celebrates 100th Term

This term we were delighted to celebrate Richard Hill's remarkable milestone as he completes his 100th term at the School. Richard joined The Leys in September 1991 and has since made significant contributions across various roles.

Over the years, Mr Hill has held numerous positions, including Head of PE, Tennis and Volleyball, has coached a variety of sports, and contributed to the Army and Navy CCF Sections.

Mr Hill's dedication extends beyond sports. He has served as Assistant Housemaster in Fen and North B when both were boys' boarding houses, lived in 6 Brookside for three years before it became Moulton and also resided in School House as well as Dale House when his wife Rachel was Assistant Housemistress then Housemistress.

Reflecting on his time at The Leys, Richard Hill said: "It has been an incredible journey. The Leys has been a second home to me, and I am grateful for the opportunities to contribute to the School's vibrant community. I have derived immense satisfaction and enjoyment from seeing so many pupils over the years develop skills and a passion for so many different sports which they have taken with them into adult life."



Fundraising for Action Cerebral Palsy

Congratulations to the pupils of Barker House for raising an impressive £632.57 for Action Cerebral Palsy through their Lemonade Stand last term. The initiative, spearheaded by last year's Lower Sixth pupils, received heartfelt thanks from the charity in a letter this week. The funds will now help provide vital intervention, care, education, and support to children with cerebral palsy.

Fundraising for Leukaemia Care

Well done to the girls of Fen House who have raised an impressive £1526.16 for Leukaemia Care, last year's House charity. They achieved this through a number of different initiatives including performances, non-uniform day and raffles. Thank you to everyone who supported them.



Sixth Form Leadership Day

Pupils in our Lower Sixth took a day off timetable to take part in a number of activities designed to test their teamwork and leadership skills. They built bridges over at Latham Road in teams, solved problems, and navigated through wooded areas while blindfolded. It was great to see them working together as a year group with new friendships blossoming.



SCHOOL LIFE



Physics at Work

At the end of September more than 40 of our Year 10 pupils visited the Physics at Work Exhibition at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge. The group collectively experienced 18 unique exhibits that showcased the wonders and real-world applications of physics. Pupils from The Leys have been attending this annual exhibition for around 30 years, and a huge thank you goes to the Physics department for making this happen.

Harvest

On 11 October, Sixth Form pupils and Prefects helped to load a van with food, toiletries and other essentials donated to this year's Harvest. They were taken to the Cambridge City Foodbank who will use the donations to support local people in crisis. Thank you to our Chapel Prefect, Dominik S, for organising this and to all the Houses who collected the donations.



Peter Higgins

In October, we were pleased to welcome serial entrepreneur and co-founder of Charles Tyrwhitt, Peter Higgins, to speak with pupils from The Leys, The Perse and St Mary's about 'How to build a business.' He spoke to the whole school about Mary's Meals, a charity working to feed the poorest children in the world, highlighting that in some parts of the world it only costs £12 to feed a child for a year. We have accepted Peter's challenge to help raise funds for this wonderful cause.

Japanese Exchange

At the end of October, five of our pupils had the incredible opportunity to visit Japan as part of our annual exchange programme with Aoyama Gakuin Senior High School. Each pupil was placed with a host family and attended school with their buddy as well as getting to see the sights of Tokyo. Schedules included: a visit to Disney Sea, the onsen baths, Tokyo Tower, Meiji Jingu Shrine, and an experience of a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. The pupils threw themselves into as much of Japanese culture as they could in the two weeks they were there, and especially enjoyed a whole host of new meals, snacks, and other delicious treats. We very much look forward to hosting the pupils of Aoyama Gakuin and their teacher in January of next year.



SCHOOL LIFE



Trump vs Harris

On 24 October, our Senior Prefects hosted a Trump vs Harris debate in Great Hall with almost 300 pupils in attendance. There were some strong arguments from both sides and pupils were encouraged to vote for the side which made the most convincing arguments rather than with in line with their own political beliefs. Congratulations to the Republicans who emerged victorious.

Affixius Films

This term we welcomed Affixius Films who have been working with pupils from across the School to create a new promotional film for The Leys. There have been some exceptional performances from pupils taking the leading roles and thank you to all pupils and staff who have been involved. The finished film will be premiered at the launch event for our 150 Anniversary on 31 January.



Remembrance

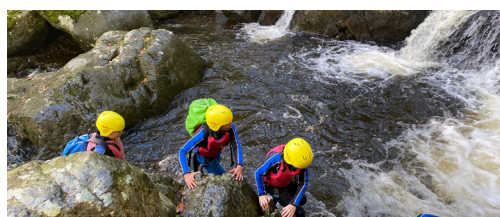
On the morning of 11 November at 11am, the whole school community gathered in the Upper Quad to observe the annual Act of Remembrance. Our Chaplain, the Reverend Simon Coleman, conducted a brief service of prayer, which was followed a two-minute silence and the sounding of the Last Post and Reveille played by Upper Sixth pupil Lucie W.



SCHOOL LIFE

Classics Trip

During half term pupils took part in an incredible trip to Greece, where they explored the rich history and culture of Athens, Delphi, and Olympia. They visited ancient sites and museums, savoured the local cuisine, and immersed themselves in the vibrant surroundings. This wonderful experience provided them with valuable insights and memories that will greatly enhance their studies back in Cambridge.



Year 8 Outdoor Education

In the week before half term, pupils in Year 8 travelled to Snowdonia for a combined Outdoor Education and Geography residential. Despite the wet weather and poor visibility they had a really enjoyable experience, including climbing, gorge walking and plenty of fieldwork.

SCHOOL LIFE

Ed Coats

On 6 November, we had the privilege of hosting Dr Ed Coats for an inspiring talk on 'Performance under Extreme Pressure.' Dr Coats, known for his incredible journey to the South Pole with Ben Fogle and James Cracknell, shared his experiences of overcoming extreme challenges and the importance of teamwork. His insights into resilience and collaboration left a lasting impression, reminding us all of the power of perseverance and unity.



Surgical Skills

On Sunday 10 November we held our Surgical Skills workshop, involving 95 pupils from across Cambridgeshire. As well as a series of hands-on workshops (including suturing, ultrasound, laparoscopy and interview practice) run by a team of clinical medical students from the Cambridge University Surgical Society, there were fantastic talks by Ms Eve Robertson-Waters, an NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow in Trauma and Orthopaedics, and Mr Thomas Mathew, a plastic surgeon about to start a degree in dentistry to then move into Oral and Maxillofacial surgery. Both keynote speakers offered a valuable insight into life as a surgeon as well as the importance of work life balance. The event was enjoyable and inspiring for those interested in medicine and learning more about surgery as a career choice.



November

Throughout November, seven pupils in our Upper Sixth grew moustaches in order to raise money for the Movember charity. Together they have helped raise awareness for men's cancer, mental health services and suicide prevention. In total they raised £1400.64.



House Shout!

To end the term, the whole school took part in the annual 'House Shout!' Each House was allocated a song to rehearse in the morning which they performed in the afternoon. This year's theme was 'From the Movies' and Houses did a fantastic job bringing the song choices to life. Congratulations to Fen House who were declared overall winners with their rendition of *Gimme, Gimme, Gimme* from the film *Mamma Mia!*

SPORT



Girls' Cricket

Well done to the U15 Girls who finished fourth in the country in the School Sport Magazine National Cricket Competition. They were involved in two very close matches on 4 September which were of a very high standard and should be very proud of their achievements.

Reuben Selected for Essex CC

Congratulations to Reuben T who has been officially selected for The Essex Cricket Academy. Academy training officially started on Sunday 17 November and will continue throughout the academic year. Reuben follows in the footsteps of his older brother Noah who went through the Academy and currently plays for Essex County CC. We wish him the best of luck and look forward to following his progress.



Rowing

Well done to the boys' junior 18 coxless quad and boys' junior 18 coxed quad who both finished in first place at the recent Cambridge Autumn Head. Well done also to our girls' coxless and coxed quads who finished in second and third places in their respective races.

Hockey

Our U14 Girls' team have reached the semi-finals of the T1 National Cup, the highest level competition it's possible for them to enter. They will play their semi-final match in the New Year, and we wish them all the best.



James Called Up for England U18 Squad

Congratulations to James P who has been selected for the England Rugby U18 Development Squad this term. This comes off the back of his call up to the England Rugby U17 Development Camp last term. We wish him all the best and look forward to following his progress.

Rugby Masterclass

On 24 October we were pleased to welcome Josh Barton, scrum half for Coventry Rugby, to give a masterclass to our boys in Years 9-13. It was a really enjoyable afternoon for everyone involved and they went away with some top tips to apply to their forthcoming matches after half term.



MUSIC AND DRAMA

Unplugged!

Well done to all our pupils who performed at 'Unplugged' on Tuesday 24 September. It was an eclectic programme which included a wide variety of solo and ensemble performances, all enjoyed by a packed audience of staff and pupils.



Head Choristers

Well done to Upper Sixth pupils Annabel L and Theo G who have been appointed as Head Choristers. We wish them the best for the year ahead.



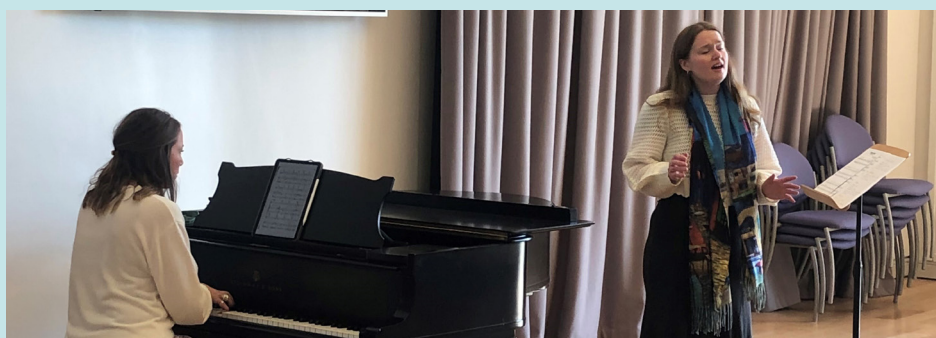
Live at Bally G's

This term we welcomed the return of our informal breaktime concerts in Ballygarnies. This pupil-led event happens bi-weekly during term time and provides a great platform for our musicians to get experience in front of an audience of their peers.



Lunchtime Live

Our programme of Lunchtime Live concerts kicked off in September, with a selection of musical theatre songs performed by Miss McGirr, our new music teacher. It was great to see the event so well supported and we hope the pupils left with some inspiration.



Punchdrunk

In September, pupils from the new A Level Drama and Theatre course attended 'Viola's Room' by world renowned immersive theatre company, 'Punchdrunk' at One Cartridge Place in Woolwich, London. The production involved the audience exploring the spaces in groups of six in a totally original and unforgettable theatrical experience.

Shakespeare at Great Abington

A huge thank you to Cory Pulman-Jones and Sophia J (Lower Sixth) for the incredible work they have been doing teaching Shakespeare to pupils at Great Abington Primary School this term. The Year 6s they were working with put on a brilliant performance of Romeo and Juliet, and they had the opportunity to see Sophia in action on The Leys stage when they attended this year's Senior Production, Shakespeare in Love, in December.



MUSIC AND DRAMA



Autumn Concert

On Friday 22 November, we held our annual Autumn Concert in Great Hall, featuring pupils from across the School. The diverse programme included works by Handel, Bach, and Mozart, as well as The Beatles and Coldplay. The performances were fantastic, and it was great to see such strong support from parents, staff, and pupils alike. Thank you to everyone who made this event a success!

Shakespeare in Love

Well done to the cast and crew of Shakespeare in Love who took to the stage for a three-night run in December. Based on the 1998 film of the same name, this well-loved romantic comedy tells the story of a young William Shakespeare and his inspiration for one of his most famous plays.



Follow Us

We are active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, and aim to post content about daily life at The Leys several times each week during term time. To receive our news stories in a timely way, and to be part of the conversation, please like our pages and follow our story using the links below.



@theleysschoolcambridge



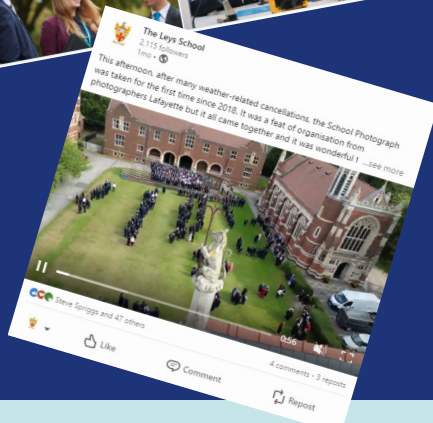
@leyscambridge



@LeysCambridge



The Leys School



COMMUNITY LIFE

It's been another busy term for the Development team, including an enjoyable gourmet and wine tasting evening for parents which raised over £1000 for bursary places at the School. Our thanks to everyone who attended.

As the sesquicentenary approaches with a whole host of exciting events lined up, the team is now busy planning the 150 anniversary ball for parents in March and are thrilled that this sold out within days.

Your child's connection with The Leys doesn't end when they leave the School, and next term OLS Vice President Karen Sears and Alumni Relations Coordinator Liz Walden will be visiting all the Houses to chat with Upper Sixth pupils about becoming Old Leysians, detailing the many benefits and opportunities of joining the OL family.

Wine Tasting

Chef Alan entertaining and educating at the gourmet evening.



London Drinks

Members of the Development team with young OLs at the recent London Drinks event.



What's On?

Drama Scholars' Showcase

Tuesday 21 January 7.00pm

Wednesday 22 January 7.00pm

Various Venues

150 Anniversary Launch

Friday 31 January 7.30pm

Great Hall

Symphonia Showcase Concert

Friday 7 February 7.30pm

Winton Thomas Recital Hall

Macbeth - Year 10 Play

Wednesday 12 February 7.15pm

Thursday 13 February 7.15pm

Great Hall

The Julian Bliss Septet

Saturday 1 March 7.30pm

Great Hall

Music Scholars' Concert

Monday 3 March 7.00pm

Great Hall

Choral Society Concert

Saturday 15 March 7.30pm

Chapel

Dance Show

Wednesday 26 March 7.15pm

Great Hall

150

1875 - 2025

ACHIEVING THE EXCEPTIONAL



Tickets for all events in Great Hall can be booked [here](#).

The Leys School, Cambridge CB2 7AD

The Leys & St Faith's Foundation, Registered Charity No. 1144035

© The Leys School. All rights reserved.