



LeysLife

A Message from the Head

Click to watch the [end of term message](#), with Head Girl Sofi P and Head Boy Archie N.



FEATURED NEWS

BSA Award Finalists 2026

The Leys is proud to have been named as a finalist in the BSA Supporting Excellence Awards, in the category of 'Supporting International Boarders'. This follows our ISI 2025 'Significant Strength' judgement for the School's exceptionally supportive community.

A key part of the nomination is the International Induction, now in its second year and created in response to pupil feedback. The programme gives new international boarders a range of fun activities on site, opportunities for parents to meet House teams, and support from senior pupils and former international Leysians. Pupils also receive a handbook written by an international boarder to help them navigate Cambridge.

Other initiatives celebrated in the nomination include our Lunar New Year Celebration, the World Cultural Evening, counselling available in Mandarin and Cantonese, and ongoing staff training on international perspectives. The International Boarders' Committee also plays a central role, meeting weekly to help shape improvements across school life.

Head of The Leys, Clare Ives, said: "We are delighted to be recognised for our work supporting international boarders. Their contribution enriches our community, and this nomination reflects the dedication of staff and pupils who ensure every boarder feels at home from the very start of their journey."

The winners will be announced in May.



FEATURED NEWS

A Spirited Hockey Final at Lee Valley

The U16A Girls' Hockey team travelled to Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre on Tuesday 10 March, for the national cup final against King's Worcester. The occasion itself was a significant achievement, following months of hard work, dedication and meticulous planning. The girls approached the final with some impressive wins under their belt, beating Stamford, Oundle and Rugby without conceding a goal, before dispatching Headington Rye in the quarter-finals and Hill House School (Doncaster) in the semi-finals.

There were understandable nerves in the early exchanges, with King's Worcester taking a deserved lead after 15 minutes. As the half progressed, however, the team began to settle. Confidence grew, passes started to stick, enjoying more possession as we worked into the game. King's doubled their lead early in the second half with a moment of individual brilliance – an effort that would have knocked the spirit of many teams. Not this one.

The girls responded brilliantly, digging deep and raising the intensity. They dominated possession, were first to every challenge and showed tremendous determination with a fighting spirit. Their efforts were rewarded when Alia M produced a neat finish, to pull the score back to 2 – 1. Suddenly the momentum shifted. Our confidence grew, while the opposition began to feel the pressure. We continued to control the ball and push forward, but sport can be cruel. A brief lapse allowed King's to break quickly on the counterattack and finish clinically, stretching the lead to 3 – 1. The scoreline ultimately flatters the opposition, at 4 – 1 to King's.



ENGLAND HOCKEY

FEATURED NEWS



Despite the result it was an excellent display of character from a team competing at the highest level of school hockey. The girls displayed admirable resilience, for long periods the game was finely balanced and they should be extremely proud of their efforts.

The coaching staff were full of praise for the squad's attitude and technical development throughout the season. Director of Sport, Ben Elston, commented: "First of all, we are so lucky to have such a dedicated coaching team, in Mr Rigden, Miss Anthony and Mr Coe. They have gone above and beyond in their preparations this season and their attention to detail and ability to motivate players is exceptional. Reaching a national final and finishing 2nd in the country is an incredible achievement. This group of girls are extremely talented, but what is most impressive is the togetherness that they show during the good times and the tough times.

"They always get it right, on and off the pitch, winning with dignity and losing with grace. To me, the smiles after the game and the warm embraces with friends and family in the stands tell the real story. Days like this remind us that sport at The Leys is about far more than the final score. All we ever hope to do is create opportunities for our pupils to enjoy sport and make memories with their teammates, and yesterday's final showed exactly why school sport matters so much."

The girls return to Cambridge with their heads held high and with their own piece of Leysian history. They should be proud of what they have achieved and should look forward with excitement.



FEATURED NEWS

The Leys Trials AI Inking Tutor

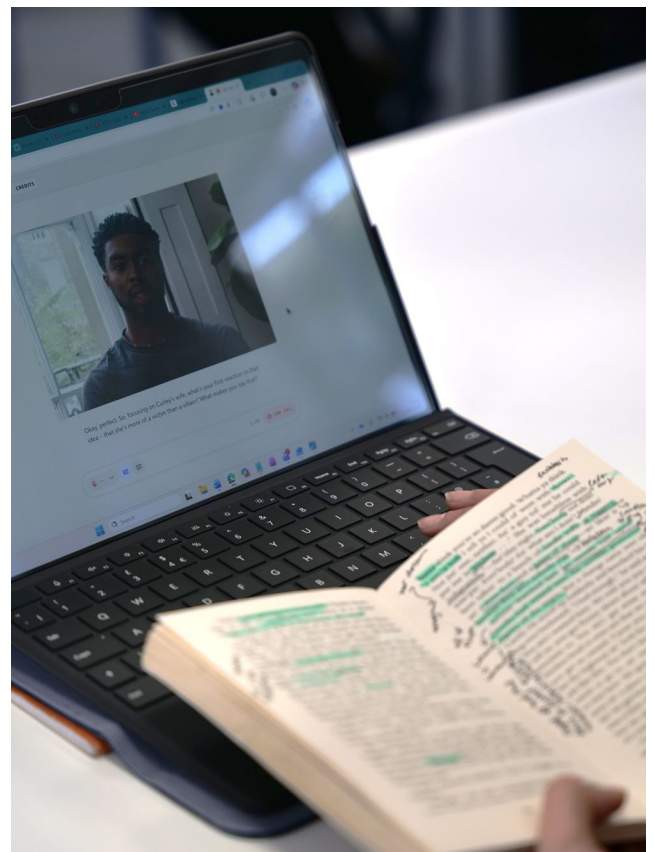
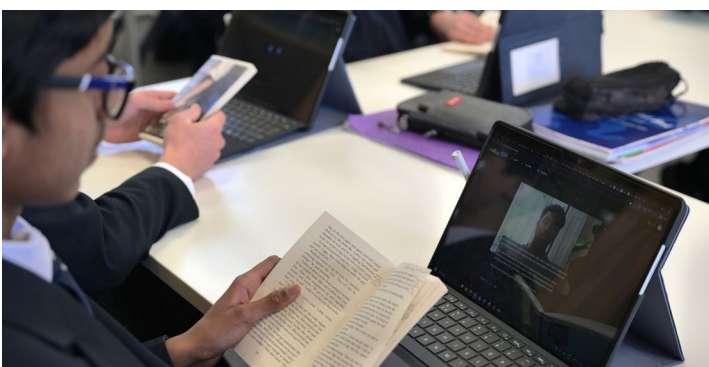
The Leys is undertaking a term-long trial of the Inking AI Avatar Tutor, (founded by George Greenbury and Tom Waszkowycz) with a Year 10 English set, studying *Of Mice and Men*. The initiative, led by the Head of Digital Learning, Peter Hicks, and Head of English, Paula Stones, forms part of the School's broader, pedagogy-driven exploration of how artificial intelligence can enhance teaching and learning, in meaningful ways.

The Leys is one of only 10 schools initially involved in the national pilot, which has since opened to schools across the UK, marking an exciting step forward for this innovative piece of educational technology. Peter Hicks praised the trials progress commenting, "Our trial of Inking is enabling us to explore how and where AI can be used to best effect within the curriculum to support pupils' learning. It's been fantastic to see how pupils have engaged positively with using AI in this truly innovative way and how it's been leading them to develop their own understanding of the text. With AI tutors like this I think we're going to see greater opportunity for pupils to maximise their learning outside of the classroom."

Pupils use Inking once a week during prep, spending 15 minutes in conversation with an AI avatar tutor. Guided by teacher-designed prompts around the text, the avatar questions, challenges and offers hints – supporting pupils to refine their ideas without providing answers. Teachers later review the interactions against GCSE assessment objectives, giving valuable formative insight. The aim is to deepen textual understanding, strengthen analysis, and support progress towards exam-style writing.

Alex L, one of the pupils taking part in the trial, reflected positively on the experience: "I believe that Inking is a very useful tool for learning, especially when tailored to the text specifically. The useful part about the AI is that it does not always agree with what you say – it responds in a useful way which develops your answers further. It tells you when a quote or fact about the text is wrong without being forceful, then gives the correct answer."

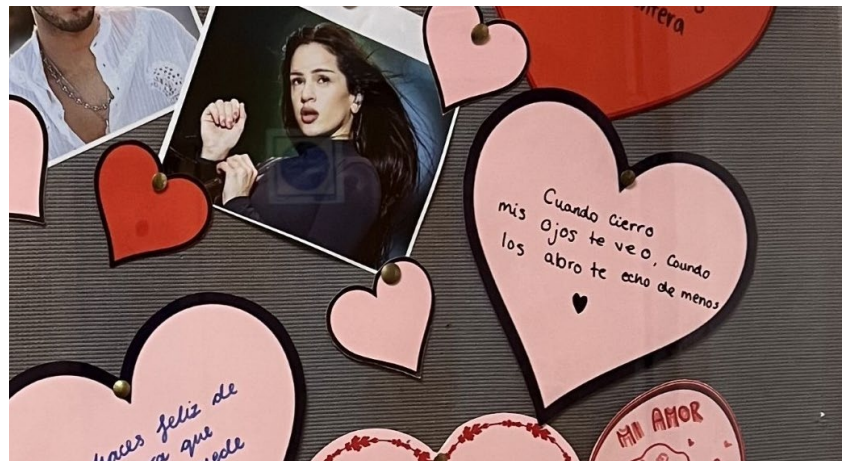
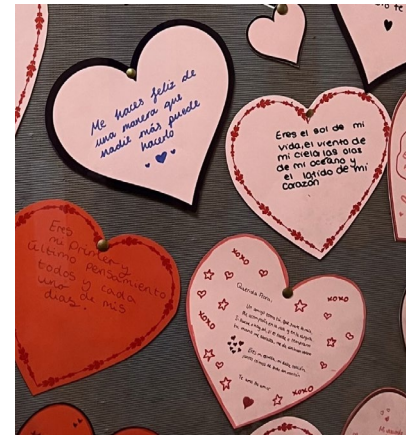
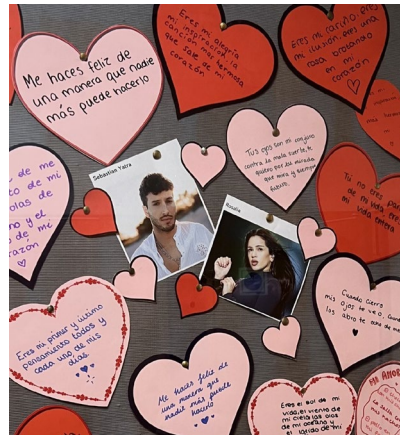
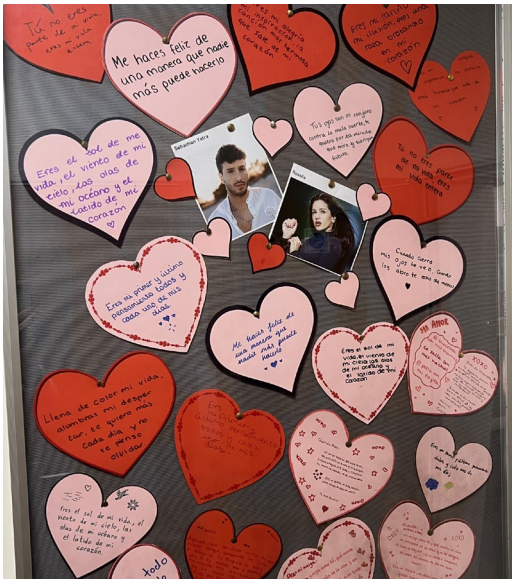
The trial will continue to gather data and pupil feedback. Insights from the trial will inform future decisions about how AI might be used across the curriculum in carefully considered, academically rigorous ways. As The Leys looks ahead, the School remains committed to fostering an innovative environment, supported by curiosity, while ensuring that expert teaching remains at the heart of every classroom.



SCHOOL LIFE

Feliz día de San Valentín

This year, to celebrate “El Día de San Valentín,” the Spanish Department organised a range of activities for pupils to enjoy this special occasion. Some pupils worked with a song by Sebastián Yatra and Rosalía. They completed quizzes to build on vocabulary and learn cultural facts, finishing off with handwritten messages in Spanish.



Gold Achieved, in Senior Physics Challenge

In this year’s Senior Physics Challenge four of The Leys’ pupils; Tony G, Benjamin B-J, Abby L and Joseph O, achieved Gold, placing them amongst the top performers in the country.

This national competition tests advanced problem solving, creativity and expects a deeper understanding of physics. Mr Harmsworth, Head of Physics, said: “These pupils had shown a tenacious appetite for applying their knowledge and understanding to unseen challenges. A wonderful accolade, we look forward to seeing where their curiosity takes them next.”

SCHOOL LIFE

Celebrating Lunar New Year

As the Year of the Horse begins - a symbol of energy, kindness, and progress - our pupils have enjoyed celebrating together, from House breakfast to evening Hot Pot.

Take a [look at the video](#) to see how the Hot Pot evening went and discover the thoughtful ways they plan to mark the occasion today, embracing a celebration that is joyful, inclusive, and shared by many around the world.



Exploring Philosophical Questions

As part of our Wider Curriculum, pupils take part in Head Society. One of our more recent sessions was a pupil led activity, exploring philosophical questions from notable thinkers such as Nietzsche. Prompts included, "Was God lonely and created Man, or was Man lonely and created God?" and, "Has religion held back or aided science?"

Working in small groups, pupils discussed their interpretations. The floor was then opened for response and debate. The conversation was lively and respectful, with pupils comparing viewpoints and considering the strengths of different perspectives. This engaging session supported pupils to develop their thinking and broaden their understanding of the world around them.



SCHOOL LIFE

Cards Round the Table

There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to connect with their peers. One option is Card Game Society, led by Mr Himsworth. A small group gathers each week to explore and play a range of card games. This welcoming, informal setting gives pupils the chance to socialise outside of lessons and further develop valuable skills in a calm and supportive environment.



The TLC Funds New Blankets

Pupil voice is highly valued at The Leys, and during recent Medical Centre Committee meetings, pupils shared that they would like the centre to feel even more homely. While maintaining high hygiene standards remains essential, it was suggested blankets as a suitable addition - these can be washed at high temperatures to ensure cleanliness. A selection of colours has also been chosen to help create a warmer, more comforting environment.

A big thank you to The Leys Connection (TLC) for approving funding for the new blankets in the Medical Centre, and to staff members Sally Paterson and Skyler Moulder for bringing this idea forward and helping to make it a reality. Their efforts mean that pupils feel heard and supported.



SCHOOL LIFE

Creating Canvases for Rowan Charity

This term, pupils at The Leys created a canvas for the Rowan Charity Exhibition 2026 that ran from Saturday 28 February - Sunday 1 March. A much-loved community art event held at The Guildhall in Cambridge, visitors can walk away with their own “mini masterpiece”, be it from local or professional artists.

Our central Cambridge location gives pupils access to opportunities such as this - being able to utilise the cultural venues, creative networks, and city-wide arts initiatives that enrich their learning outside the classroom.



Medicine Uncovered

Pupils aspiring to study medicine attended ‘Medicine Uncovered’ organised by Abbey College. They heard from eminent speakers on topics including drug delivery, how the microbiome shapes pregnancy physiology, and cardiac electrophysiology.

In the afternoon, pupils gained hands-on experience with medical equipment, practised interview skills through MMI tasks and debated medical ethics scenarios. The event provided great insight for those interested in a career in medicine and practical skills that will support them as they progress.



SCHOOL LIFE

World Culture Evening

On Friday 27 February we hosted our annual World Culture Evening, one of the most vibrant and uplifting events of the year.

The celebration began with inspiring presentations and performances in the Great Hall, followed by an engaging showcase of cultures led by our pupil representatives.

Guests had the chance to explore traditions from around the world and sample a variety of authentic food and drink. A truly wonderful celebration of the international diversity that enriches our school community every day.



Success at Intermediate Maths Challenge

This year we had 89 pupils from Years 9 – 11 enter the Intermediate Maths Challenge, with the following results:

26 Bronze
 27 Silver
 14 Gold (top 8.5% nationally)

Congratulations to Thomas H, Isaac L, George M along with Rex M and Roxanne C who qualified for the Grey Kangaroo, and to Jishnu P, Yizhe L, Ollie W, Lucy H, Alex B, Arabella M and Hugh L for qualifying for the Pink Kangaroo - follow on rounds that take place at a later date.

A special mention goes to Ayden L and Nori Z, who placed among the top 500 Year 10 pupils in the UK, earning a place in the Hamilton Mathematical Olympiad. Nori also received the school trophy, for best overall performance.

Well done to all who took part - an impressive achievement across the board.



SCHOOL LIFE

East House Fundraise for Jimmy's

Through Thursday 5 and Friday 6 March, East House sold Krispy Kreme doughnuts, for their fundraising efforts. Raising money for their chosen charity of Jimmy's Cambridge, they completed their pre-orders, then continued their fundraising, selling doughnuts to staff and pupils under the Queen's building.



Celebrating World Book Day

This World Book Day, the theme was "Read Your Way." To celebrate, [we spoke to pupils and staff around the School](#) about what they're currently reading and why reading matters to them.

Across the campus, a range of activities helped bring the day to life. Pupils in Years 7–9 took part in a scavenger hunt, while teachers shared their favourite books or led reading-based activities, during lessons.

On the day itself, staff also took their books outside to read, giving pupils the chance to see adults reading for leisure and highlighting the importance of reading in everyday life.

**World
Book Day
2026**
at The Leys



SCHOOL LIFE

Junior Latin and Greek Reading Competition

The Leys welcomed special guests Dr Rosanna Omitowaju from the University of Cambridge Classics Faculty and Natasha Kosanovic from Hills Road Sixth Form College for the Cambridge Classical Association's Junior Latin and Greek Reading Competition.

The event provided a wonderful opportunity for pupils from several schools to showcase their classical language skills, with Lawrence H and Jessica P representing The Leys in the Latin Prose Reading category. The afternoon concluded on a high note, with Jessica being awarded second place for her performance.

Congratulations to all entrants for their excellent efforts.



National Careers Week

Coinciding with National Careers Week, Saturday 10 March saw the annual Careers Forum. It provided an opportunity to learn about career pathways, study options, apprenticeships and gap year adventures.

From careers in law, engineering, agriculture and finance to working for the police, in defence and in property, a range of organisations and individuals filled a packed Great Hall to inspire both our own pupils and those from neighbouring schools invited to attend. A real highlight during the event were the Nokia Bell Labs Robot, CMR Surgical's Versius Surgical Robot and the VR headsets, proving popular with budding STEM innovators throughout the event.

Our appreciation to those who travelled far, including Newcastle, Lancaster and Exeter Universities and Gap Year experts from Cornwall, as well as a host of representatives from much closer to home; the University of Cambridge, Scudamore's, AZ and the Corn Exchange.

It was a truly fantastic and inspiring morning at The Leys.



SCHOOL LIFE

Plaque Honour For Graham Chapman

On Thursday 12 March, we marked the anniversary of Graham Chapman's passing by planting a Red Maple in his memory.

A plaque crafted from the fallen Lebanese Cedar now rests beneath it, with our community gathering to scatter wildflower seeds around the tree. We were honoured to have Graham's widow, Freda, with us as we celebrated his warmth, kindness, and lasting impact on The Leys.



The Interhouse Debate Final - Are Books An Outdated Technology?

The School gathered in Great Hall on Wednesday 18 March, to hear the Interhouse Debate Final under the motion: "This House believes that books are an outdated technology." The competition ended with Bisseker vs Barrett.

Both teams delivered articulated speeches and compelling arguments, with members of the panel offering incisive Points of Information and thoughtful audience questions - adding to the lively atmosphere.

Guest adjudicator Nick Weaver, former Head of Ipswich and Physics teacher here at The Leys, announced the result: a big congratulations to the Opposition, who emerged victorious!



SCHOOL LIFE

View From the Top

Our Head, Clare Ives, recently wrote for Talk Education. In 'View from the Top: Dr Clare Ives on the importance of nurturing a school's culture', we hear her reflections on how leadership, stewardship, and attention to community values shape and sustain a school's culture.

Read her article on the [Talk Education website](#)



Ballard-Lowry Competition Winner Announced

Many congratulations to Lower Sixth pupil Lucas M, who earlier this term won the inaugural Ballard-Lowry Short Story Competition here at The Leys. Dr Himsworth and Mr Redpath devised the competition in memory of two Old Leysians who were also two of Britain's most acclaimed post-war novelists, J. G. Ballard and Malcolm Lowry.

English teacher and published novelist Mr Beeching - who determined the six-pupil shortlist (announced at the end of the Autumn term) and the overall winner - commented on the fantastic quality of all the entries.

[Read the entries and the winning story here](#)



Top of the Bench Competition

On Tuesday 24 March, pupils spent the afternoon representing their Houses in the annual 'Top of the Bench' competition, run by the Chemistry Department.

The event featured a practical task followed by a quiz round, creating a lively yet focused atmosphere in the labs. The Houses worked brilliantly together at their stations, demonstrating enthusiasm and teamwork from start to finish.

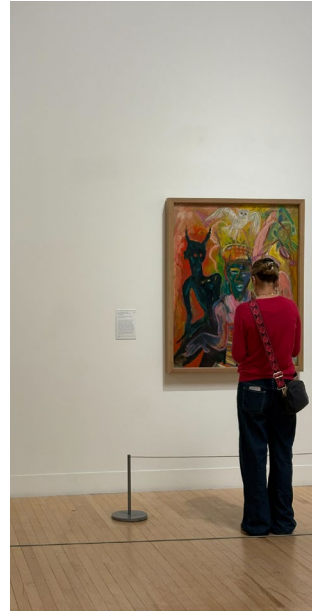


TRIPS

Tate Britain Visit

Our Year 11 GCSE artists took advantage of Cambridge's easy access to London, with a visit to Tate Britain. They immersed themselves in historic and contemporary works throughout the gallery, exploring the different styles and techniques first hand.

The experience provided a chance to spark new ideas and broaden their artistic perspectives. A brilliant opportunity to learn beyond the classroom.



Year 9 Pay Visit to Battlefields

Year 9 spent four days travelling through France and Belgium at the end of term, visiting key sites linked to the Battle of the Somme, including Newfoundland Park, Thiepval and the historic town of Ypres.



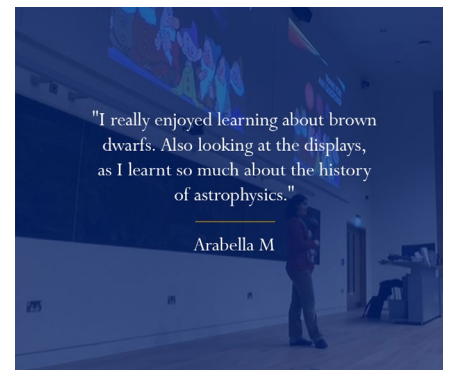
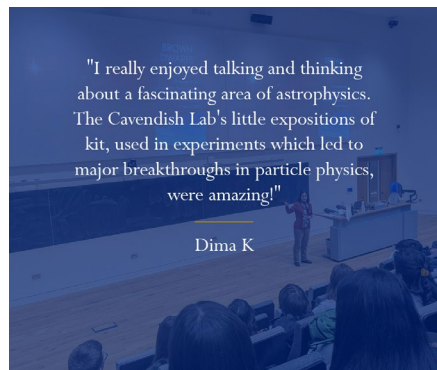
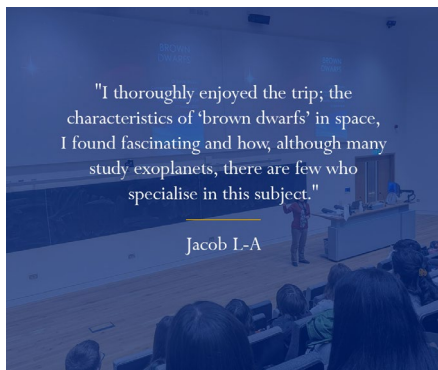
A journey of learning and quiet reflection, it offered pupils the opportunity to understand the stories, landscapes, and lives shaped by the First World War. Whilst away the group were also joined by our Head, Clare Ives, to take part in a lovely service to unveil a plaque, commemorating Old Leysians lost in the conflict.

TRIPS

Brown Dwarf Lecture by Dr Sonali Shukla

One of the many privileges for The Leys community is our proximity to the University of Cambridge University, something our physicists and astrophysicists benefit from.

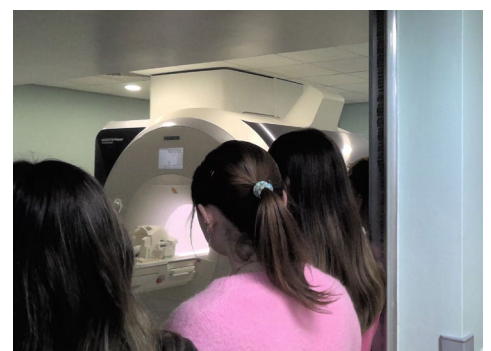
Pupils in Years 10 and 12 attended 'physics HQ' at the New Cavendish Laboratory. Astrophysics is an ever-evolving field and so here they listened to the engaging lecture from Dr Sonali Shukla, on Brown Dwarfs. Our pupils asked considered questions and had great discussions, on the walk back to school.



Visiting MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit

Psychology pupils spent an afternoon at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, hosted by Marta Correia, who delivered a fascinating talk entitled "From Magnets to Mind Reading – 50 Years of MRI."

Pupils were shown the MRI scanner, observed the strength of the magnetic fields and discussed how MRI is used both with patients and in research. They were also shown the MEG scanner, learning its uses to investigate brain activity. Our thanks go to the staff at the unit for an engaging and informative visit, helping enhance pupils' understanding of brain scanning.



SPORT

Winter Sports Photos Session

With our winter sports photos complete, it's a fantastic moment of reflection for pupils. The occasion allows them to celebrate the strong sporting spirit that runs throughout the community, with the photos commemorating their time spent growing, competing and supporting each other. We look forward to seeing the final images.



Celebrating Women in Sport at Shelford Rugby Club

Our Head, Dr Ives, was the guest speaker today at Shelford Rugby Club. She is pictured here alongside our first team rugby coach Mr Messenger, who is also the Shelford Women's Head Coach.

It was a great day to celebrate International Women's Day, supporting local women's sport. Even better, Shelford Women won!

Well done to everyone who took part in the Cambridge Half Marathon too, it was a brilliant event. Plenty of Leysian past and present seen out on the course!



Time on the River Cam

On a delightful stretch of the River Cam, between the city and Grantchester, pupils take part in open canoeing and kayaking, as part of The Leys Canoe & Kayak Club (LCKC). In weekly sessions, to build skillset, pupils are supported from BCU-qualified staff, where they can work towards qualifications such as 'Paddle Discover.'



MUSIC AND DRAMA

Live At Balgarnies

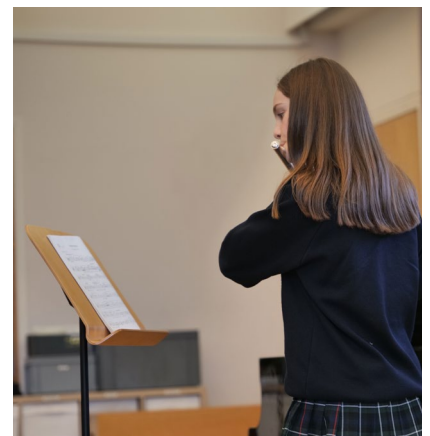
One of our recent 'Live at Balgarnies' sessions involved North A taking their turn.

Pupils stepped confidently into the spotlight, supported by their fellow housemates and the wider School, highlighting the talent, teamwork and positive spirit within the North A community.



Year 10 Perform at Lunchtime Live

A selection of Year 10 pupils shared their performance pieces in the Recital Hall in our latest Lunchtime Live. Playing to a supportive audience of fellow pupils and staff, instruments included flute, piano and drums. With works from Beethoven, Mascagni, Beale and MacGregor, the session finished with a lively drum performance that set an upbeat tone for the afternoon ahead.



MUSIC AND DRAMA

Evensong at Lincoln Cathedral

The Chapel Choir enjoyed a very successful visit to Lincoln Cathedral, to sing joint evensong with the cathedral choir. The combined choirs made a terrific sound, with the music creating a wonderful atmosphere in the magnificent space.

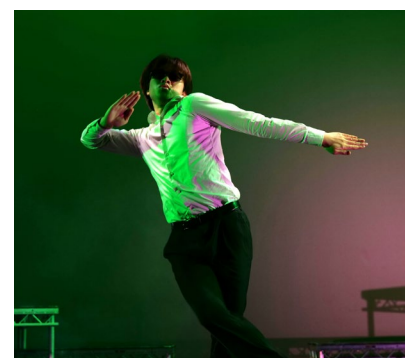
Music included canticles by Thomas Walmisley, preces and responses by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, and the anthem 'Cantique de Jean Racine' by Gariel Fauré.



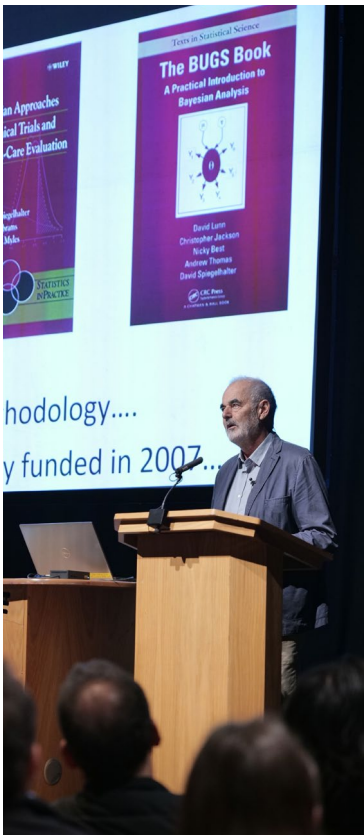
Decades

'Decades' is our sold out dance show featuring talented performers from Year 7 to the Upper Sixth. Those lucky enough to have had tickets were in for a real treat!

From the 1950s right through to today, pupils brought each era to life, through a stunning range of styles from hip-hop and street to aerial hoop and ballet.



VISITING GUESTS & WORKSHOPS



Professor David Spiegelhalter FRS OBE with 'The Art of Uncertainty'

Last week, we were delighted to welcome Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter FRS OBE for a guest lecture. As one of the UK's most respected statisticians, he has spent his career using data and statistical insight to help people. The lecture captivated those in attendance and highlighted the powerful role of data in the wider community.

Drawing on a distinguished career, including advising governments and the recipient of many accolades, such as his knighthood for services to medical statistics, he spoke about his recent book 'The Art of Uncertainty: How to Navigate Chance, Ignorance, Risk and Luck.' He demonstrated how numbers can reveal hidden truths, reflecting on his role in supporting the investigation into the Harold Shipman murders, and invited the audience to take part in an activity, to illustrate how risk and uncertainty underpin the interpretation of data.

Legal Skills Workshop

With pupils from over 10 schools, the Legal Skills Workshop took place in Great Hall on Thursday 12 March. It saw barristers from Fenner's Chambers and solicitors from Tees Law, showcase a career in law. Attendees split off into smaller groups to discuss a range of legal dilemmas and issues faced in contentious and non-contentious practice, were able to try out case studies in family law and property litigation law and hear more about what barristers and solicitors do on a weekly basis.

The evening proved insightful for those considering a legal career, offering clarity and perspective.



COMMUNITY LIFE

Parent Wine Tasting & Cheese Pairing Evening

The Development Team were delighted to host a successful Parent Wine Tasting & Cheese Pairing Evening in Great Hall a couple of weeks ago. It was wonderful to see such a great turnout and to bring so many parents together to enjoy the event.



Wine merchants Corney & Barrow expertly led the tasting, with The Cambridge Cheese Company providing the delicious cheese pairings. Guests were guided through six wines, ranging from a citrus-led Sauvignon Blanc to an elegant Provence rosé, and finishing with a beautifully sweet dessert wine.



A fun 'Sip and Solve' quiz tested everyone's knowledge on the subject of wine, and the raffle proved extremely popular, with prizes including two tasting sessions for four at Corney & Barrow's store.



Thanks to everyone's generosity and support, the evening raised over £2500 for bursaries, which will make a meaningful difference to pupils at the School.

Our Community at The Career Forum

It's wonderful to have the support of our Leys community at school events including the recent Careers Forum. Our thanks to parents (old and current) who volunteered their time on the day. It was also wonderful to welcome back several Old Leysians, whose commitment to return and inspire the next generation of pupils in the school with their experiences, truly reflects the spirit of The Leys community.

This year our OLs included:

- Jemimah Fadare-Owolabi, Dale 2023-25, representing Arup
- Henry O'Farrell, North A 2012-17, founder of The Grad Job Club
- PC Jake Weldon, Moulton/School 2004-11, representing Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- Harry Lygoe, North B 1996-99 at the Rathbones stand
- Lucy Sweatman, Dale 1998-2002 showcasing Cantab Education and the support they offer pupils

A big thank you to all.



Follow Us

We are active on Facebook, 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.



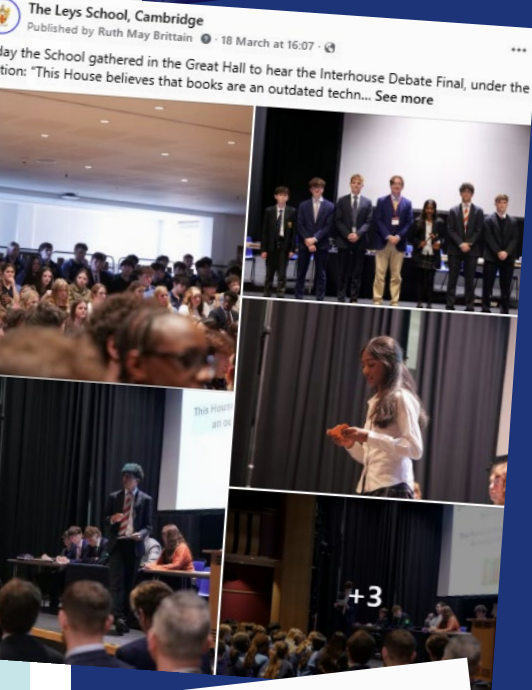
@theleyschoolcambridge



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The Leys School





THE **Leys**
CAMBRIDGE

END OF YEAR CONCERT

Thursday 30 April 2026, 7pm



BRAHMS

Hungarian Dance, no. 1

TCHAIKOVSKY

Violin Concerto, Second Movement

Themes from
**PIRATES OF THE
CARIBBEAN**

Wind Band



Tickets: £11 (under 18s free)

www.saffronhall.com

Tel. 01799 588 545

Saffron Hall, Audley End Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4UH

**Saffron
Hall**

What's On?

Bright. Young. Things (Year 9 Play)
Wednesday 13 May, Thursday 14 May
19:15
Great Hall

Saffron Hall Concert
Thursday 30 April
19:00
Saffron Hall
Tickets: [Saffron Hall](#)



Summer Showcase (Years 7 - 8)
Friday 19 June - 19:00, Saturday 20 June - 14:30
Great Hall

Summer Cabaret
Wednesday 24 - Thursday 25 June
19:30
Great Hall

This popular annual compilation of music, drama, comedy sketches & dance will sell-out quickly.

Tables available to book from 21 April.



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