



THE **Leys**  
CAMBRIDGE

**HEAD OF LEARNING  
SUPPORT & SENCO**

*candidate information*

# Head's *introduction*

At The Leys, we believe that school is not simply a preparation for life – it is life. That's why we aim to make every pupil's experience here rich with challenge, choice and opportunity. School should be a place of growth and discovery, where young people are encouraged to flourish emotionally, intellectually and socially. It's not a rehearsal for the future – it's a vital and vibrant part of the journey.

Founded in 1875 by the Methodist Conference, The Leys is the only co-educational boarding and day school in Cambridge. We are proud of our heritage, and we continue to uphold values such as kindness, courtesy, respect and integrity. But we are also a forward-thinking school, preparing young people for a world that is constantly evolving. Our location in the heart of one of the world's most dynamic academic and cultural cities gives us a unique advantage – Cambridge is not just where we are, it's part of who we are.

With around 570 pupils, The Leys offers an exceptional breadth of opportunity – from academic excellence to creative, sporting and leadership pursuits. At the same time, our scale allows us to know each pupil as an individual. This strong sense of community and personal attention is central to our ethos. It builds confidence – not just in the classroom, but in every aspect of school life. And that confidence, nurtured in a supportive and ambitious environment, is one of the most powerful gifts we can give our pupils.

I hope this pack gives you a sense of what makes The Leys so special, and we look forward to receiving your application.



Clare Ives  
**Head**

# Head of Learning Support & SENCO

Emploment Status	Permanent, Full Time starting September 2026 or January 2027
Salary	Competitive
Closing Date for Applications	6 May 2026
Interview Date(s)	12/13 May 2026



## Head of Learning Support & SENCO

This is an exciting opportunity for a dynamic, capable and forward-thinking individual to lead our Learning Support Department.

The Head of Learning Support will be an experienced learning support practitioner with a proven track record of delivering effective additional support to pupils in either small groups or one-to-one sessions.

They will be able to effectively assess pupils' learning needs, and design personalised learning programmes that support high levels of progress. The successful candidate will be able to lead high quality training for teaching staff, supporting them in implementing strategies for support within their classrooms.

Successful candidates will be self-reliant and adaptable, with high levels of initiative and excellent organisation and administration skills.

They will possess the leadership, communication and people management skills to support and bring the best out of colleagues in their team, and will demonstrate an ability, and genuine desire, to develop pupils to their fullest potential.

This role would suit an experienced SENDCO, or an experienced learning support practitioner who is ready to lead a team and willing to undertake training whilst in post. The successful applicant will be expected to participate fully in the School's extensive pastoral and wider-curricular programme.



# Welcome to *The Leys*



*Life at The Leys*

The Leys is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged between 11 and 18. Set in the heart of the beautiful and stimulating city of Cambridge, one of the world's leading cultural and academic centres, The Leys' unique location allows pupils unrivalled access to the vast array of cultural and educational opportunities that Cambridge has to offer.

Established in 1875, The Leys values its history, yet it blends traditional values – courtesy, tolerance, respect, decency – with a forward and outward-looking approach to education. Dedicated staff and superb facilities combine powerfully to prepare young people for the challenges which lie ahead at university and beyond.

The Leys is a close-knit, engaged, friendly community of around 550 pupils in which pastoral care is seen as the top priority. Indeed, our [2025 ISI report](#) identified our school culture and the strength of our community as a **significant strength**. Academic value-added is impressive and the breadth of the wider curriculum is renowned. The School caters for Boarding, Home Boarding and Day pupils but, with 70% of pupils accommodated in boarding houses, boarding is absolutely central to the ethos of the School and all pupils benefit from the vibrancy and structure which this provides.

# Purpose

**The Purpose of The Leys is to play our part in changing the world for the better.**

We do this by making a positive difference to the lives, values and prospects of Leysians, by being professional, caring and rewarding in developing and managing our staff, by being a responsive and trusted partner to our parents, and by making a beneficial and sustainable contribution to the wider community

By foundation and structure, The Leys is a boarding community. We also place great value on being a “big, small school” embedded in the heart of Cambridge, and on giving Leysians a rich and rewarding academic and wider school experience – one they find valuable both intrinsically and in preparing for their futures. We seek, in the spirit of our Methodist founders and our Christian values, to send Leysians out into the world ready – academically, culturally, morally, physically, spiritually and socially – to live fulfilling lives which will make a positive contribution to society.

In order to achieve our Purpose, we aim to deliver an education which is built on three foundation stones: pastoral, academic and wider curricular. Whilst interconnected, ‘pastoral’ is accepted as pre-eminent, because pupils who feel supported and confident are able to flourish in all areas of the life of the school. Our teaching staff body all contribute to all three pillars of Leys School life, thus we all work together to ensure our pupils develop into happy, confident and well-rounded individuals ready to leave school and find their place in the world.

# Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is at the heart of what we do. We know that wellbeing is crucial to success in wider school life, and we all work together as a community to ensure that each pupil flourishes in school, feeling nurtured, supported and happy. Our House structure is central to this: all pupils are a member of a House throughout their time in school. Year 7 and 8 pupils are members of our junior house, Moulton, and then pupils in Year 9 and above join one of the eight boarding or three day houses. The vertical arrangement in the senior houses creates opportunity for pupils to support each other, and the houses are staffed with a Housemaster or Housemistress (HSM), an Assistant HSM, a Matron and a team of teaching staff. Pupils also have a tutor, who supports them with their wellbeing, academic progress and wider curricular involvement as they progress through the school. All staff are expected to contribute to our pastoral support of pupils, through tutoring, supporting the teaching of PHSE and undertaking weekly house duties.



# Wider Curriculum

The Wider Curriculum is an integral part of the school week for all pupils and staff, with a significant amount of time in the afternoons and early evenings devoted to it. In their time at The Leys, pupils are actively encouraged to experience a broad range of activities that will bring them a wide range of benefits; activities in which they find enjoyment and fun whilst developing skills, personal qualities and attitudes that are transferable to other areas of their life at school and beyond.

The Leys' Personal Development and Leadership programme (PDL) for pupils in Year 10 and above ensures that all pupils develop leadership, broaden their horizons and collaborate with their peers on projects, often trying to solve contemporary problems. Through our outstanding sporting, music and drama provision, pupils develop as confident and well-rounded young men and women, ready for life beyond school. Our broad and varied after school activities programme enables pupils to develop their interests, skills and strengths. Through this we aim to complement the pastoral and academic pillars of an all-round Leysian education alongside boosting the physical and mental well-being of all involved in the wider curriculum. All staff contribute to our extensive wider curriculum programme through involvement in games, PDL, outdoor education, and a wide range of clubs and activities.

## Teaching and Learning

Education is about so much more than passing exams, and at The Leys pupils are encouraged to develop an understanding of their own learning, find their passions, curiosity, and develop a lifelong appetite for knowledge.

Pupils are supported in their learning by excellent teaching both inside and outside of the classroom, with academic enrichment and extension embedded into the culture of the school. We understand that teachers are individuals and that they will have their own ways of expressing their passion and interest in their subjects. The 2025 ISI comment that we have a "highly inclusive environment, which supports pupils to become exceptionally thoughtful and considerate citizens." sums up the impact of that individuality. That said, we know that aspects change within education, and we just completed an exciting transition from Google Classroom to Microsoft Teams and OneNote. Pupils and staff all have a digital device, and pupils are used to working digitally as well as on paper.

Academic Attainment at The Leys is outstanding. This summer, the school achieved its best academic results on record at GCSE and close to best at A Level, placing us 67th in the Times Parent Power Rankings for independent schools nationally, and 84th for all schools. At GCSE 86% of all grades awarded were 9, 8 or 7, and 38% were graded 9, and at A Level 85% of results were grade A\*-B. The School uses value added as an important measure of success and we are delighted that all our 2025 public examination results demonstrate that we added significant value to our pupils' academic attainment compared to similar schools: a testament to the hard work and dedication of both staff and pupils.





## General Teacher Expectations

The Leys is a traditional boarding school, and we have lessons running across 6 days each week. Lessons happen on a Saturday morning until 11:50am, and the afternoon is filled with sporting activity including fixtures.

Teachers at the Leys are expected to contribute to all three of the School's Pillars: Pastoral, Academic and Wider Curriculum. Pastoral contributions take the form of tutoring, house duties and teaching PHSE whilst the wider curriculum includes games, PDL, outdoor education and clubs and activities. House duties vary depending on the type of house: day house duties involve breaktime, lunchtime and afternoon/after school supervision whilst boarding house duties involve working with pupils in the evenings. Staff also support the day to day running of the School through involvement in school duties, on a rota basis.

We know that working in a boarding school is busy! Our staff feel this is undoubtedly worth it for the reward gained from the wider interactions they have with pupils, coming to know each child as an individual, not just as a pupil in the classroom. We work with our teachers to harness their strengths and passions both inside and outside of the classroom, so that there is joy for all of us in what we do. In addition, class sizes at The Leys are typically no larger than 24, and are often much smaller, particularly in Years 7 and 8 and the Sixth Form. Teaching allocations are lower than in state and day schools, to account for the involvement in the wider life of the school. Saturday lesson time is 'paid back' through shorter term lengths, and thus longer school holidays. Finally, four Leave Weekends spaced throughout the year provide the entire school community with some additional rest and relaxation.



# The Post

We are seeking to appoint a highly effective colleague to the post of Head of Learning Support (SENCo) with effect from September 2026 or January 2027.

The Head of Learning Support will work with the Senior Management Team to establish a clear vision for an outstanding Learning Support provision at The Leys. They are expected to be an experienced practitioner with a proven track record of delivering effective additional support to pupils in either small groups or one-to-one sessions. The Head of Learning support will be able to effectively assess pupils' learning needs and be skilled in designing personalised learning programmes that support high levels of progress. This is an exciting opportunity for to have a significant impact and influence on the shape of learning support within our school, working to implement a gold standard of support and care for our pupils.

The new Head of Learning Support is expected to give this important department dynamic, and creative leadership. The successful candidate will be confident in their ability to manage a team of experienced practitioners, be able to lead high quality training for teaching staff, and have the communication, leadership and management skills to articulate and implement their vision for learning support across the school.

The Head of Learning support works closely with the Deputy Heads (Academic and Pastoral), Access Arrangements Co-ordinator, the Learning Support teaching team and subject teachers to support pupils with learning barriers and SEND. They also work closely with the Exams officer, members of the pastoral, safeguarding and medical teams as well as liaising closely with the Admissions Team regarding prospective and new pupils.

Successful candidates will be self-reliant and adaptable, with high levels of initiative. They will possess the people management skills to support and bring the best out of colleagues in their team, and will demonstrate an ability and genuine desire to develop pupils to their fullest potential.

The Head of Learning Support reports to the Deputy Head (Academic).

## **The Department**

The School recognises that all pupils within its care are individuals, and a portion of our pupil body will benefit from some additional support of some kind. The School sees it as its responsibility to attempt to respond to these individuals' needs to ensure all pupils reach their potential.

The Learning Support (LS) Department supports intellectually capable pupils who have a range of specific learning difficulties to achieve their best across the school curriculum. The ultimate goal is to develop successful independent learners who can take an active, and confident role in the school – both academically and socially. We aim to achieve this by working with individuals to overcome their difficulties through taking a genuine interest in them, understanding their problems, and providing them with strategies and skills to ensure they make the most of their strengths and their own personal learning styles. All our teaching is one to one, or in small groups, as it is felt to be in the best interest of the pupil at this stage in their education.

The LS team is made up of four teachers, one of whom is the Head of Department and three whom are part time teachers, all of whom have recognised qualifications to support those pupils with specific learning difficulties. There is administrative support in the form of an Access Arrangements Coordinator.

The school supports pupils with a range of additional learning needs and at present approximately 40 pupils have one to one, or small group lessons within the learning support department. A larger number of pupils do not receive learning support lessons but require in class support from subject teachers, and/or have access arrangements.

For those receiving learning support lessons, each teacher is responsible for liaising with the staff and parents of their individual pupils and, although lesson times are fixed, a certain amount of flexibility is necessary. The time Learning Support teachers have with pupils is limited, so an important part of our work is to liaise closely with other members of staff and to provide them with relevant advice and information to support pupils in their classes. This is achieved through providing comprehensive information on the learning support register, open and regular communication with class teachers, and by providing high quality CPD for teaching staff. Liaising with parents is also of prime importance, both through the formal reporting and parents meeting channels but also through more regular informal communication. On occasion the Head of Department may also be required to attend a more formal meeting with other members of staff present.

Most of those pupils who have individual support receive 2 lessons per week. The teaching programme for a pupil relies on the nature of their specific difficulty, and is compiled by the support teacher based on their assessment of the needs of that individual. Sometimes this requires following specific programmes or help with time management and other organisational strategies. As the long-term aim is to develop relevant study skill strategies for independent learning, often the subject schemes of work followed in the classroom provide material which can be used to further develop specific techniques. It is therefore important for support teachers to be cognizant with the curriculum and the subject courses followed in the various public examination series, as well as confident in teaching study skills.

Working in the Learning Support Department is rewarding, challenging, and very much an integral part of our curriculum. Whilst the support teachers are allowed a certain amount of autonomy to work with individuals, they must be prepared to liaise closely with subject teachers as well as to demonstrate an understanding of and an interest in the wider curriculum; this is an important element in the life of a Leysian pupil and often an area where our pupils excel and where they are able to develop self-confidence.

## The Post

The term Head of Department applies to appointed postholders who have responsibility for an academic department. The Head of Head of Learning Support is responsible to the Deputy Head (Academic).

The primary role of the Head of an Academic Department is to provide strong academic leadership and management of the department. All Heads of Department are expected to perform the duties of a teacher in addition to managing their department.

The Head of Department is required to lead, manage, and develop the department to ensure it achieves the highest possible standards of excellence in all its activities. They will be supported by SMT, by colleagues from within the department, and support departments.

All Heads of Department are required to exercise leadership, demonstrate vision, and empower others in order to deliver the agreed departmental strategy. It is recognised that the methods by which Heads of Department carry out their duties and the extent of delegation, will depend on such factors as the size and nature of the Departments and the personal approach of the individual Head of Department.

### Specific Key Responsibilities for a Head of Learning Support:

- Responsible to the Deputy Head (Academic) for all Learning Support provision.
- Serve as the school's SENDCo, developing and maintaining a whole-school Learning Support policy and devising and delivering on a vision for Learning Support that reflects the School ethos.
- Continue to develop a screening process for new students to identify potential SEND needs.
- Work with external bodies and educational psychologists, as needed, to support pupils, and help diagnose learning needs.
- Create and monitor Learning Support Profiles and EHCPs for identified students, working with relevant stakeholders
- Lead on all aspects of record keeping for the Learning Support department, to ensure that pupil registers and Learning Support Profiles are kept up-to-date and communicated to staff.
- Ensure that all relevant school policies are communicated to staff and are regularly updated in line with best practice and regulatory requirements.
- Remain abreast of curriculum and pedagogical developments, in order to lead on best practice for supporting pupils with additional learning needs.
- Devise and implement an appropriate range of support and intervention mechanisms for pupils with additional learning needs.
- Plan and implement rigorous self-evaluation processes for all learning support strategies, using data to inform planning processes.
- Work with Heads of Departments to implement an inclusive academic approach and support teachers with SEND students.
- Lead staff training on strategies to support pupils with learning needs and help the Common Room to embed these practices within their own classrooms.
- Monitor academic inclusion in classrooms, supporting teachers with accessibility.
- Proactively work with the Examinations Officer and Admissions Department to manage examination access arrangements.
- Keep one's self, the department, and Deputy Heads (Academic) up-to-date with the latest requirements of the Ofqual in relation to access arrangements.
- Work with the parents, pupils, and previous schools to manage a smooth transition for pupils with learning needs, as they move into The Leys.
- Work closely with the families of pupils with Learning Support needs to ensure they understand their child's needs, and how the School will best support them.
- Develop the required curriculum and department documentation, both for current and prospective parents.
- Plan and deliver high quality lessons which support pupils with learning needs in whole-class, small group, and one-to-one teaching scenarios.
- Report, and present to the Accessibility Committee on matters relating to Learning Support

In addition, every HoD has the following responsibilities to the Headmaster (or delegated members of the SMT):

- Ensure high quality teaching and learning within the department including undertaking regular learning observations.
- Organisation, promotion, efficiency, and success of the department in line with school strategic plans and direction.
- Planning the curriculum, maintaining up-to-date Schemes of Work, and selecting appropriate syllabuses and specifications.
- Advising on staff needs and teacher allocation.
- Advising on staff appointments into the department.
- Inducting new members of staff into the department.
- Advising on teaching objectives, and supporting, performance and development of departmental colleagues. This may include CPD recommendations.
- Complete regular book and marking audits within the department.
- Advising on expenditure, especially regarding new development.
- Ensure a safe and healthy environment for both staff and pupils, and full compliance with health and safety requirements.
- Ensure department documentation is up to date.
- To bear in mind the Christian ethos that underpins the life of the school community and bring its values into the classroom.

The HoD has the following responsibilities to the department and colleagues:

- To be a subject expert who regularly updates their knowledge to stay 'current' in their subject.
- Develop and maintain an academic extension and enrichment programme for the pupils in the department.
- To create a well-ordered teaching environment in which pupils can thrive and explore their academic potential
- Guiding, supporting, mentoring, and assessing colleagues with a view to their professional development.
- Take initial responsibility for the pastoral care and wellbeing of all department staff. Allocation of teaching and department duties and managing staff absences.
- Ensure that staff performance is managed in a timely and appropriate manner consistent with the expectations of The Leys School.
- Make effective use of all staffing resources, including ICT, and seek opportunities for collaboration and joint working with others beyond the department and beyond the School.
- Monitoring of marking, record-keeping, communication, and implementation of Learning Support profiles across the department.
- Chairing weekly department meetings, drawing up agendas and seeing that minutes are completed and shared with the Deputy Head Academic.
- Monitoring, implementing, and reviewing strategies to improve pupils' performance and progress across all year groups.
- To ensure the best possible pupil experience, through the fulfilment of the School's responsibilities concerning pupils in respect of their admission, instruction, progress, and external examination.
- Creation, marking, and moderation of internal and entry examinations.
- Selecting, ordering, issuing, collecting, and stock-taking of textbooks and equipment.
- Ensure that School equipment/facilities under the department's control are properly maintained by monitoring the fabric of the department and requesting improvement or repair where required.
- Budgetary control:
  - *Take responsibility for devolved budgets and comply with School financial regulations.*
  - *Manage income and expenditure in order to promote financial sustainability.*
  - *Ensure adherence by all Departmental members, with School Financial Regulations and other financial operating procedures and regulations.*
- Observe colleagues teach and engender culture of peer-observation, excellence, co-operation, and respect both within and beyond the department.
- Attendance at Heads of Department meetings and HMC/East Anglia Group meetings.
- Fostering cross-curricular relationships across the school, and between schools including feeder prep schools and local maintained sector schools.
- Support department colleagues to ensure that both compliance and GDPR guidelines are followed within the department.
- Support pupils in preparation of UCAS applications, including to the most competitive universities.

- Organise the department Collaborations (academic support sessions).
- Manage the department's tracking of pupil progress through data, including data management, understanding, interpretation, and inference of the information.

### **Teaching Responsibilities**

- To teach pupils within the school.
- To create a well-ordered teaching environment in which pupils can thrive and explore their academic potential.
- To have a clear knowledge of the individuals in their class and differentiate accordingly. This should mean both their individual learning needs as well as their individual personality
- To plan lessons clearly and within the departmental scheme of work.
- To mark work regularly and promptly, in line with departmental and school marking policies and review, monitor, and keep clear and full records of pupils' progress.
- To insist upon high levels of behaviour and respect for others in the classroom.

### **General Responsibilities**

- To contribute to the pastoral care of the pupils, including weekly duties in houses.
- To contribute to extra-curricular activities.
- To adhere to and maintain School Policies and Procedures and work with regard to the ethics of the School.
- To adhere at all times to the School's Child Protection procedures and to undertake responsibility to safeguard pupils.
- To ensure that a safe / secure environment exists for pupils / staff and customers and meet requirements under the Health & Safety at work Act 1974 and C.O.S.H.H.
- To refer to and adhere to all Health and Safety procedures and policies as appropriate and other legislative requirements as required, carrying out duties by working in a safe and organised manner.
- To uphold the provisions of data protection legislation, the School's Data Protection Policy and other related policies
- Understand and be mindful of the School Acceptable Use Policy and Staff ICT & Social Media Guidelines
- To observe / implement all relevant legislative requirements, maintain and update own knowledge as appropriate for the role
- To be aware of and adhere to at all times the School code of conduct and confidentiality.
- To carry out other associated duties as are reasonably assigned by the Head.

# Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	An excellent general level of education including an Honours degree. PGCE or equivalent Additional relevant qualifications within the field of Learning Support/ SEND e.g. NASENCO OCR Dip SpLD, Hornsby Dip SpLD and/or a willingness to complete the National Professional Qualification for SENCOs whilst in post Assessment qualification: SpLD APC	Qualified Teacher Status Further relevant academic qualifications e.g. NPQHL
Experience	Experience of providing for pupils with additional needs and disabilities. Experience of co-ordinating access arrangements for IGCSE and A-Level. Excellent knowledge of SEN and strategies to support SEN pupils. Knowledge and understanding of a variety of pedagogical approaches. Ability to form professional relationships with children. Be willing and able to exercise judgement and take risks.	
Skills	Excellent teaching skills Excellent written and oral communication Strong IT skills, broadly, and within digital learning Ability to analyse and interpret data, including sound Excel skills. Ability to motivate and manage staff & pupils Flexible, adaptable, able to prioritise effectively Strong team player with resilience and initiative Positive outlook, a high capacity for work Capacity to be efficient and organised, flexible, and adaptable to changing circumstances. Be able to develop existing skills and seek advice from a variety of sources.	Ability to adapt one's management style and approach according to the situation Knowledge of Teams and OneNote
Personal Qualities	Ambition, drive, and high expectations. Active in own development and uses personal reflection to learn from experiences. Ability to manage time, prioritise workload, and reliably meet responsibilities. The ability to work in a busy environment and meet deadlines and develop new skills.	

# How to *Apply*

## How to apply:

If you are interested in applying, please submit a completed application form including one page covering letter addressed to The Head, The Recruitment Team, The Leys School, Cambridge, CB2 7AD (recruitment@theleys.net) by 09.00 am on 6 May 2026. Interviews will be held on 12/13 May 2026.

This role has the opportunity for regular contact with pupils and therefore is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

By applying for this role, you are consenting to The Leys School storing your personal data. Please read our 'Privacy Notice for Job Applicants' for further details.



# Benefits

Join us and experience a fulfilling career in an inspiring environment where your growth, wellbeing, and sense of community are our top priorities.

## Fee Remission

Generous fee remission (The Leys School and St Faith's), subject to the normal admissions criteria (pro-rata for part-time staff).

## Remuneration

Competitive salaries and a choice in excellent pension schemes (including the Teachers' Pension Scheme for our Teaching colleagues) with generous employer contribution. We are proud to be a Living Wage employer.

## Meals

Three-course lunch from Monday to Saturday and an evening meal on duty evenings. Our meals are mainly homemade on site using locally sourced ingredients and served in the beautiful and newly renovated Dinning Hall.

## Location

Stunning city centre location with free parking, access to electric charging, secure bike parking and a Cycle to Work scheme.

## Cambridge University Botanic Gardens

Complimentary use of a visitors pass to the beautiful Botanic Gardens (a two-minute walk from the School).

## Wellbeing

Enjoy a complimentary hot lunch when working, prepared by our professional culinary team. Plus, benefit from membership of the Sports Complex including free staff swimming, and access to a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme that provides a wide array of resources and support services for staff and their immediate family (terms and conditions apply).

## Community

A supportive and friendly community, with regular social events and the chance to join in extra-curricular activities. Staff can also attend internal productions in our theatre (Great Hall) or external productions hosted by visiting companies (note that external companies may charge for these events).

## Professional Development

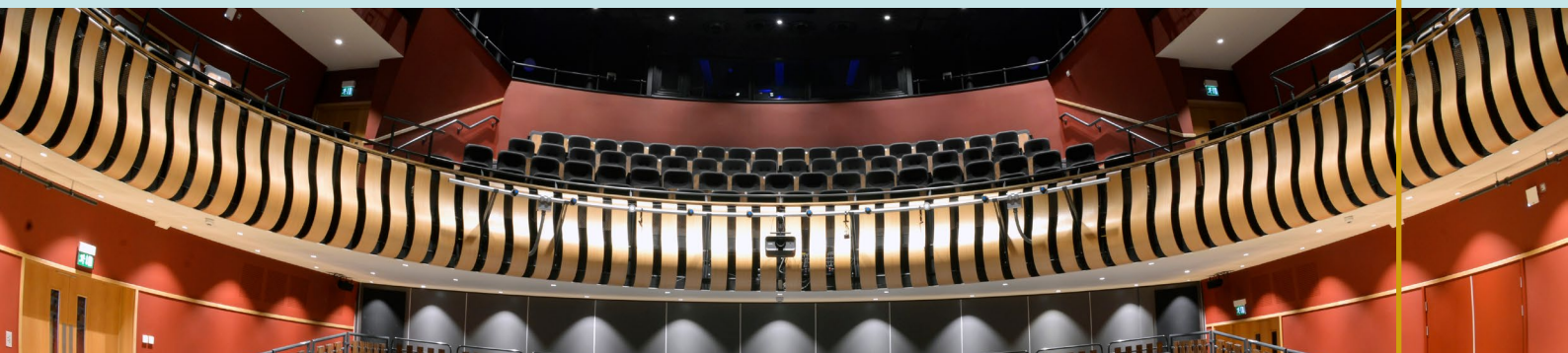
Opportunities for staff development, including regular INSET and CPD, membership of our on-site library, and funded attendance at relevant external training events.

## Extended Holidays

There are 33 weeks of term time, plus time for INSET. This means that teaching staff benefit from extended holidays compared to state education.



Please note that colleague benefits which are non-contractual may be subject to review and change at any time.





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