

Laleham Gap News

Spring 2026

Year 8 PGL Trip

Around 20 brave (and slightly nervous) Year 8 students recently set off on a PGL trip—and somehow all returned in one piece! What followed was a few days packed with laughter, teamwork, and just the right amount of mild panic at great heights. From the moment they arrived, it was clear this wasn't going

to be an ordinary trip. Whether it was attempting the triple zip wire (featuring a mix of excitement, screaming, and last-minute "I've changed my mind!"), tackling the climbing wall like future Olympians (or

clinging on for dear life), or stepping backwards off a platform for abseiling (definitely a trust exercise in more ways than one), every student gave it their all.



Year 8 PGL Trip

There were plenty of unforgettable moments—some impressive displays of bravery, some creative interpretations of instructions, and a lot of encouragement shouted from below (and occasionally above). It was amazing to see everyone stepping out of their comfort zones, supporting each other, and celebrating every achievement, big or small.

By the end of the trip, students returned not only with tired legs, but also with huge smiles, stronger friendships, and stories that will definitely be retold (and slightly exaggerated) for years to come.

All in all, it was a fantastic experience—and a well-earned rest was probably needed by both students and staff afterwards!



Year 8 PGL Pictures



TOPS Football Match

Recently, Laleham Gap School welcomed The Old Priory School for a friendly football match—and what a fantastic event it turned out to be!

Open to all year groups, the match quickly became a whole-school celebration. Before kick-off, all eyes were on our students proudly sporting their brand-new football kits—bright, bold, and bringing plenty of colour to a chilly March afternoon.

And we're off! The whistle blows, and despite the cold, both teams burst into action with energy and enthusiasm. Early on, it's clear this is no ordinary friendly—there's determination, teamwork, and just a hint of "I'm definitely scoring today" in the air.

The sun may have been shining, but the temperature suggested otherwise. Not that you'd know it from the players, who ran



TOPS Football Match

tirelessly up and down the pitch. A fantastic tackle here, a brilliant pass there—and yes, the occasional dramatic tumble (perfectly executed, of course!).

From the sidelines, staff and supporters cheered loudly, creating an atmosphere worthy of a cup final. Every near miss was met with gasps, every goal with cheers, and every effort with well-deserved applause.

As the game went on, what stood out most wasn't just the football skills on display, but the incredible sportsmanship shown by all. Players encouraged one another, celebrated successes together, and showed great respect throughout. And that's the final whistle! A fantastic match comes to an end, with both teams having given their absolute best.

Every student involved was a credit to their school, and it was truly lovely to see such enthusiasm, teamwork, and school spirit on display.

A brilliant afternoon of football, fun, and fresh air—roll on the next match!



Eco Warriors Get New Bins

The Eco-Warriors are leading the charge in helping our school become more environmentally aware and encouraging everyone to recycle. They even played a key role in choosing our brand-new recycling bins—how cool is that?

Here they are pictured with the new bins by the English Hub, already making a difference! ♻️
A huge thank you also goes to Ms Chaudhry and Ms Tomlinson for all their support. They truly are two of our "behind the scenes" LGS heroes, helping make positive change happen every day!



World Book Day and Career Dress-Up Day

This year, we decided to combine World Book Day with Career Dress-Up Day—and what a brilliant mix it turned out to be! Our students embraced the opportunity to come dressed as either their favourite book character or their dream career role, and the creativity on display did not disappoint. From imaginative literary icons to future professionals in the making, it was fantastic to see so many personalities (and ambitions!) come to life around the school. A special mention goes to our wonderful Strive class,



World Book Day and Career Dress-Up Day



who brought plenty of smiles by dressing up as the Mr Men—colourful, cheerful, and instantly recognisable! Meanwhile, the English department fully committed to the theme by stepping straight out of *The Hunger Games*, proving that staff are just as competitive when it comes to dressing up (fortunately, no actual games were required...).



It was a joyful celebration of reading, aspiration, and a lot of fun—reminding us all that whether through books or future careers, imagination can take you anywhere!

Chinese Day (中国日 Zhōngguó rì)

Chinese Culture and Community Day was an immersive day exploring Chinese culture and celebrating the lunar new year - year of the horse!

Dr Choo and Ms Schroepfer worked together to plan a special event with Taiwan Centre for Mandarin Learning- Chinese Learning Paradise who are based in Canterbury.

The Headteacher Crystal Tseng spent the day in Primary and the wider team visited Secondary and Post-16 to deliver Kung Fu, Language, Art and Bubble Tea sessions.



Chinese Day (中国日 Zhōngguó rì)

Lydia and Tom from 1927 also supported the day with Dragon animation and an intercultural comparison session with Dr Choo.

Our kitchen team provided a delicious chicken/vegetarian Chinese style meal with rice, prawn crackers and a mango sorbet dessert.

"I learnt a lot" Ms Moore. "The Kung Fu was probably the best thing we've ever had and I'd like to do it again!" Alfie Yr9 "I loved the calligraphy and was impressed how quickly the pupils picked up keywords and pronunciation in the language session."



Chinese Day Pictures



Chinese Day Pictures



Nico

Nico in Year 8 continues to impress us with his many talents. Already well known as our resident DJ at the Laleham Gap Summer Fair, Nico has recently added another skill to his repertoire—learning to play the drums at Mr Dunson's popular lunchtime music club.

A huge well done to Nico for his enthusiasm and dedication!

We are also thrilled that he has agreed to return as our school DJ for the Summer 2026 School Fair. We can't wait to hear the fantastic selection of music he will bring, and we're sure there will be plenty of excitement as everyone looks forward to requesting their favourite songs in the lead-up to the event.



Music Performance

A Short - 8 KS4 students attended a performance on Wednesday at the Westgate Hall in Canterbury. There were other KSENT schools in attendance and it was a live performance of "Intergalactic Emergency". LGS were invited to be part of the Galactic Orchestra.

3 Y11s had fanfares they composed included in the performance!

All of them will be able to use this as evidence towards their coursework..

They were resilient, respectful and recognised their ability in comparison with many of the other settings in the county.

I am so proud of them and thank you to James and Louise for supporting.



Sheep Ahoy



Last term, some of our Year 9 students had a baa-rilant time visiting Sheep Ahoy on an educational trip!

The sanctuary, dedicated to rescuing and caring for sheep, gave students the chance to roll up their sleeves and get involved in real farm life. From topping up hay in the shelters and tackling the less glamorous (but very important!) job of poop scooping, to helping feed the flock, everyone played their part.



Of course, the highlight for many was spending time getting to know the sheep themselves—with plenty of cuddles along the way! 🐑

Willowbanks

Our Year 8 students recently returned to Willowbanks for another memorable fishing experience. Despite the challenging weather, spirits remained high as students successfully caught some impressively large carp.



Everyone had the opportunity to carefully hold their catch before safely returning the fish to the water, demonstrating both confidence and respect for the environment.



It has been a wonderful few weeks of learning and enjoyment, and we would like to extend a sincere thank you to the team at Willowbanks for their expert guidance in teaching our students how to fish responsibly and handle their catches with care.



Oliver

In February, the cast of Laleham Gap School delivered a groundbreaking performance of **Oliver Twist** by **Charles Dickens**. Students from all year groups contributed to this mighty production, led by Mr Clements, with greatly appreciated assistance from Mrs Chaplin, Mrs Mason-Smith and Miss Saunders. The show was performed over two evenings and was a complete sell-out. From the moment the curtains opened, the audience was captivated by the pupils' energy, confidence and professionalism. The talented cast brought the much-loved characters to life with powerful acting, expressive singing and enthusiastic choreography. The memorable musical numbers and dramatic scenes were performed with passion and maturity beyond their years.

Behind the scenes, students and staff worked tirelessly on costumes, props, staging and technical elements to ensure every detail enhanced the performance. Their teamwork and dedication were evident throughout, creating a truly polished and engaging production. Well done to everyone involved for a knockout performance that was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Laleham Gap School should be incredibly proud of such a remarkable achievement — we look forward to the next spectacular show!



8BC Sailing

Class 8BC were lucky enough to travel to Dover for an exciting sailing trip on the *Miles of Smiles* speedboat. During their journey, they passed St Margaret's, Deal, and ventured close to the famous Goodwin Sands. The coastline looked absolutely stunning from the water, offering breathtaking views of the white cliffs, rolling waves, and picturesque shoreline throughout the trip.

As the boat picked up speed, the wind rushed past and the spray of the sea added to the excitement, making the experience even more thrilling. Students had the chance to learn more about the local area, including its maritime history and the significance of the landmarks they passed along the way. There were plenty of smiles and laughter as everyone took in the sights and enjoyed the unique perspective from the sea.

The speedboat itself was incredibly fast, adding to the adrenaline-filled adventure, and everyone on board thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It was a memorable trip that combined fun, learning, and spectacular scenery—one that Class 8BC will not forget anytime soon.



The Love Booth

Photography students from Laleham Gap School took part in the Love Booth project as part of their GCSE studies. They learnt about and visited an analogue photobooth and explored how it works as both a creative and historical photographic process, there are now only 17 of these booths operating in the country. The students later visited the exhibition, where they were excited to see their photographs displayed publicly and to experience the work as part of a wider community arts project. Each student received gifted photo prints from the booth, as well as larger display-size images to take back to school, giving them a lasting record of their involvement and something to share with their peers.



8CK Bowling Trip

Class 8CK recently enjoyed a fantastic reward trip to Hollywood Bowl in recognition of their outstanding behaviour and exceptional teamwork. Since joining us in Year 7, they have consistently impressed us with their positive attitude, support for one another, and commitment to our school values.

It has been a real privilege to watch them grow as a group, and this trip was a well-deserved celebration of their continued hard work and unity. Well done, 8CK — we are incredibly proud of you!



Work Experience

Not long after the start of the new term, our amazing Year 11 students headed off into the *real world* for a week of work experience—and what a week it was!

Placements ranged from retail to rope making (yes, rope making is very much still a thing—and now we have experts among us). Some students mastered the art of customer service, perfecting the classic “polite smile no matter what,” while others got stuck into more hands-on roles that were a little less predictable.

A few particularly brave individuals even worked with animals—some of which were clearly not thrilled about the arrangement. Facing down an unimpressed dog, a grumpy goat, or anything with claws definitely added an extra layer of excitement to the week! Across the board, students threw themselves into their placements, learning new skills, gaining confidence, and discovering what the world of work is really like (including the early mornings—possibly the biggest challenge of all).



Work Experience

- As one student put it, *"I didn't realise how tiring standing up all day would be... I have a new respect for shop workers!"* Another reflected on their time working with animals: *"I thought it would be cute and cuddly... it was not. One of them definitely had a personal issue with me."* Meanwhile, a future entrepreneur shared, *"I actually loved it—I might not be rich yet, but I now know how to make rope, so that's a backup plan sorted."* And perhaps the most relatable comment of the week: *"Waking up early every day? I'm not sure I'm ready for adulthood just yet."* By the end of the week, everyone returned with new experiences, new stories, and maybe even a clearer idea of what they do—or definitely don't—want to do in the future. It was fantastic to see our young adults stepping up, representing themselves so well, and getting a real taste of life beyond school. All in all, a brilliant and memorable week—although we suspect a few alarms may have been enthusiastically switched off the following Monday morning!



Work Experience



Work Experience



World of Work Day Tesco

Laleham Gap's Post 16 students went on a 'World of Work Day' at Westwood Tesco.

Teacher Paul Ursell says the Post 16 curriculum is all about preparation for his students, building their confidence, exposing them to the real world and life experiences and giving them the skills to succeed. Whilst he teaches them employability and life skills in the classroom he very much believes in bringing that learning to fruition in the real world. With the support of Tesco's community Champion Vanessa Lennard Mr Ursell was able to take his students around every department of the store and into many places that customers never see - just so they could understand and discuss the real side of work with the people that do the job.

They discovered that if you work in the bakery, you might be in at 3am, that teamwork was an everyday requirement and that in clothing organisational skills were at a premium. They learnt the importance of taking training opportunities and showing initiative too.

They learnt about health and safety when standing inside the fridges and freezers at minus 25 degrees! They found out about turnover and marketing in a massive business and the key online aspects of work in 2026, and even the moves to re-cycling. The students discovered the wide variety of employment available and how to deal with customers. At the end



World of Work Day Tesco

they put their learning together with some mock interviews. Vanessa gave them some tips, discussed body language and how to answer (even tricky) questions. In pairs they demonstrated their learning.

Vanessa said: "The students were really, really engaged and they gave some wonderful and descriptive answers. Tesco's is so happy to support such great learning." Mr Ursell told his students: "As well as your increased confidence, one other thing you should take from today is that there is a path and a career for every one of you, one that can be fulfilling, make you happy and allow you to contribute to society." Mr Ursell's Post 16 team will continue to prepare students and find that path with them to help them have amazingly successful lives.

Laleham Gap is a special Communication and Interaction school for children with autism and speech and language issues.

Post 16 at Laleham Gap, alongside all its academic lessons, devotes two days a week to 'Preparing for Adulthood' learning. It has speakers in and trips out every week.

Last week it also went to Monkton Nature Reserve and did bespoke bus travel training to and from college. Coming up it has workers from plumbing, sport coaches, bakers and business owners in to di



World of Work Day Natwest

Laleham Gap School Post 16 teacher Paul Ursell has taken his students to the Margate branch of NatWest Bank to learn about personal finances.

As well as being shown around by personal banker Ghazala they went behind the scenes and had a session about setting up accounts, types of accounts and how to use banking services most effectively.

Mr Ursell explained that understanding money, banking and finances compliments the work he does teaching students about tax, national insurance and pensions as crucial aspects of life.

He said: "We aim to prepare our students for all the issues they will face as an adult with our Post 16 curriculum.

Alongside teaching in the classroom and having expert visitors come in and talk to my students, going to places like a bank and learning like this makes the learning that much more real."

Mr Ursell finds when the learning is hands-on the students understand it better and deeper and retain it more effectively.



World of Work Day Natwest

They then use this in a variety of settings to embed it. Post 16 also get their students using money with their travel training on buses and trains, shopping and within their reward scheme.

Mr Ursell said: "Combining academic learning in the classroom, with practical learning in the real world and having experts involved too creates the best conditions for learning. We are always very grateful to organisations when they give their time to facilitate us doing this."

Ghazala, from NatWest, said: "It was great to have them in. It is good that students are learning about these things and Nat West is always happy to support young people on this path."

Over the next few weeks Laleham Gap Post 16 will be continuing this approach as they take part in their Young Driver and Passenger course, visit the Margate Travel Safe Centre at Margate railway station, discuss careers at the Ramsgate job centre and healthy living at the Windmill Community Gardens.



Primary Xmas Factor and Secondary Talent Show

Both Primary and Secondary put on an absolutely spectacular talent show, and what a show it was! From the very first act to the grand finale, our students proved that talent truly knows no bounds. We had singing that could rival the charts, dance moves that might just go viral, and a few surprise performances that left us all wondering where they've been hiding these skills! Every single student who took to the stage shone like a star in their own unique way. It's safe to say the audience was not only impressed but thoroughly entertained—there were cheers, laughter, and more than a few “wow” moments along the way. We may even have a few future celebrities in the making (autographs available upon request... for a limited time only!).

It's always such a pleasure to see the confidence, creativity, and courage our students bring to events like this. A huge well done to everyone who performed—you made it a show to remember and gave us all something to smile about!



Head teacher's awards 2025-2026

Each year, Mr Milton takes on the challenging task of selecting students who have gone above and beyond expectations. It is never an easy decision, especially as our Year 11 students consistently demonstrate such high levels of effort, resilience, and commitment across all areas of school life. This year, Theo Kelly has been recognised for his outstanding academic achievement, consistently producing high-quality work and showing a real dedication to his studies. Jude Hogben has been selected for his excellence in performance, showcasing impressive confidence, creativity, and a willingness to push himself in front of others. Max Miles has been awarded for his sporting achievements, reflecting his determination, teamwork, and commitment both in training and in competition. All three students have not only excelled in their respective areas but have also been positive role models for their peers, contributing to the wider school community with enthusiasm and maturity. Their achievements are a testament to their hard work and perseverance throughout the year. A huge congratulations to these students for their well-deserved recognition, and to all of Year 11 for their continued effort, positive attitude, and the way they support one another. We are incredibly proud of everything they have accomplished and look forward to seeing what they achieve next.



Secondary Student Council 2025/2026

The Secondary School Council includes representatives from Year 7 to Post-16. Each councillor was elected through a democratic vote. They formally meet once a month but regularly support the school during their Reading+ time. They discuss opportunities to help others from local and national Mental Health charities to individual campaigns such as Amelia Kolpa who is hoping to be a birthday card record breaker as she battles cancer in Rowley Regis. They support Leadership by meeting with governors, interviewing prospective staff, giving suggestions for equipment and resources, plan events and enrichment opportunities. They regularly meet with Mrs Smith



who runs the school kitchen to provide morning toast, free breaktime snack and the school lunch menu. This year they have organised suggestion boxes and supported Mr Clements sharing information through assembly announcements and updates.

New Solar Pannels

Returning for the new term in September, it was wonderful to see the positive steps Laleham Gap School has taken towards becoming more environmentally friendly. Over the summer, solar panels were installed on the flat roof—discreetly positioned and not visible from the ground—marking an important move towards a more sustainable future for our school community.

