



What have the
Performing
Arts students
been up to?

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Who did well
at our Student
Awards this
year?

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What sports
did we
succeed in at
the nationals?

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A termly round-up
from Hills Road
Sixth Form College.

Hills news

Summer 2025 hillsroad.ac.uk

Amy, Ashani and Daisy
raised almost £600 for
Pancreatic Cancer UK.



***“Social Action Week
is our commitment to
a week of curriculum
time for all Y12
students to engage in
a social action project
of their own. This
way, all our students
have the opportunity
to experience how
they can make a
positive difference
to the world both
individually and
collectively.”***

JO TRUMP, PRINCIPAL

Social Action Week 2025

Students at Hills Road once again showed their passion for social change during Social Action Week 2025, from 19 to 23 May. Go to pages 4 & 5 to read more.





From left: Gary, Kate, Mary, Natalie and Jill.

Royally Honoured: Hills Road at the Palace

Five long-serving staff members from Hills Road were invited to attend honour of attending a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday 14th May. The event, celebrating contributions to education and skills, welcomed around 7,000 guests to enjoy afternoon tea in the Palace gardens.

Representing Hills Road were Gary Wing (Teacher of Mathematics), Kate Murdoch (Director of Music), Mary Scott (Teacher of English), Natalie Moss (Sports & Tennis Centre Manager), and Jill Phelps (Head of German), with an awe-inspiring combined 151 years of service. Kate called the day "a real treat", while Natalie said she felt "humbled" to share it with colleagues.

And yes – they did see the King!

College rated Outstanding in 2025 Ofsted inspection

Hills Road Sixth Form College is delighted to announce the College has received an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating in its 2025 inspection, continuing the College's record of Outstanding outcomes in all frameworks and judgement areas since Ofsted began.

Coinciding with our fiftieth academic year, the College is proud that the 2025 report highlights Hills Road's exceptional teaching, inclusive ethos and outstanding provision for academic and pastoral support.

“College staff champion student wellbeing, they care deeply and place student support at the heart of their actions. Students recognise this and appreciate it greatly.”

OFSTED, 2025



Students' charity fundraising efforts awarded with prize

Two students have been awarded a prize each by The Cambridge Virtute et Fide Lodge. Josh O'Neill raised money for Jimmy's Food Bank by organising a music concert and Izzie Allanson raised money for Addenbrooke's Charity Trust by participating in a charity run in memory of her mum.

The students have their names engraved on a shield, which is displayed in the College. They also received a certificate and a small cash award. The Lodge was started in 1964 by a group of teachers and students from the College's predecessor, the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys.



Master, Peter Morrison presenting the shield to Josh and Izzie with Secretary, Keith Poulson and Treasurer, Tony Hore.



Shield success for University Challenge Society

Hills Road's University Challenge Society made a stellar debut at the National Schools' General Knowledge Competition – Britain's largest general knowledge quiz for schools. Alex Greenham, Magnus Burt, Cara Davies and captain Djia Sanath-Vijay powered through knockout rounds to reach the finals at Winchester College in April. After a close quarter-final loss, they bounced back and went on to

triumph 660-420 over Exeter School in the Shield Final, placing third overall in the competition. As for highlights, Alex points to his final round answer, "Oology – the study of eggs," which led to a bonus question on shakshuka – correctly answered by Djia. One of only two state schools in the finals, the team impressed with both knowledge and teamwork. A fantastic achievement – well done!

New swift boxes installed around College

The College now plays proud host to 10 swift nest boxes on campus to support this endangered species.

The initiative, led by a group of Year 13 students from the College's Bird Society, aims to provide much-needed nesting sites for swifts – a species now on the UK Red List for Birds and which highlights the College's commitment to biodiversity and sustainability. The team of students worked in consultation with the Action for Swifts organisation in order to determine optimal placement and box design.

The idea for the project came from students Ieva Alikovaite, Arthur Wells, Molly Shaw and Jay Wilkinson. One of the boxes has a special feature – a swift attraction system, which is a small speaker that plays swift calls



Dick Newell of Action for Swifts and Chris Graham holding two of the boxes.

in the early morning and evening to encourage young, non-nesting swifts to investigate the site.

Ieva has also designed a custom nest camera, which the College hopes to install in one of the used boxes next year, once nesting activity is confirmed.

In brief

Hills Education Trust: In April, the College announced its plans to establish a new Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) initially comprising Hills Road Sixth Form College as a standalone 16-19 Academy. We are pleased to report that the results of the public consultation supported this change, and the Trust will launch on 1 September 2025. Please visit our website for details.

RoboCon 2025: Hosted by Hills students, the Dragon's Lair-themed competition brought together twelve teams of young engineers from secondary schools across Cambridge. Congratulations to our organisers – your innovation made it unforgettable for all involved.

Thanks to our guest speakers:

This year's Guest Speaker Programme featured engaging talks from bestselling author Sarah Vaughan, Circuit Judge Helen Arthur on legal careers, and Professor Andrew Balmford FRS on conservation. Their insights helped students explore real-world issues beyond the classroom.

“Swifts are social nesters. This system helps them find us, especially those that haven't nested before or whose previous sites have been lost.”

DR CHRIS GRAHAM,
HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY





Fundraising with heart

The College campus was transformed into a vibrant hub of creativity, and passers-by on Parker's Piece marvelled as students hosted everything from bake sales and coffee stalls to games, craft activities and even paint-throwing challenges.

Some groups added a personal cultural touch, such as serving traditional Ukrainian food.

This annual initiative saw Year 12s raising funds for a wide range of causes – from Médecins Sans Frontières and Medical Aid for Palestinians to local groups such as Cambridge Women's Aid.

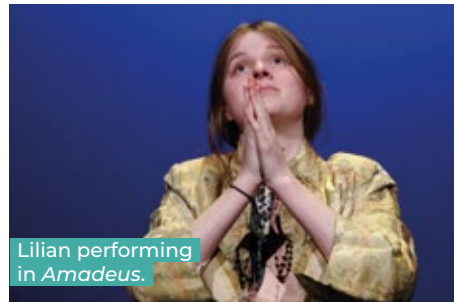
All activities were student-led, reflecting the planning and teamwork that define Hills Road's Future Ready programme. As of publication, Year 12s have raised over £40,000 through their efforts. A huge well done to everyone involved for their energy, compassion and imagination!



Total raised so far: £40,962.43

Drama & Theatre: Year 13 practical exams

April ended with powerful final performances from our Year 13 Drama and Theatre students. In front of a supportive audience, they presented a diverse range of scripted extracts — from Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* to the raw emotion of *Poison* and a bold 'In Yer Face' *Medea*.



Lilian performing in *Amadeus*.



Jonas and Charlie performing in *Waiting for Godot*.



Edie and Im performing in *Blood Wedding*.

“Whether performing in groups, duologues, or solo pieces like *The Unreturning*, every student showcased remarkable talent and creativity.”

JONATHAN BONNETT,
DRAMA SPECIALIST
TEACHER

American Psycho: Flawless choreography

A cast of Year 13 Drama and Theatre students, directed by Head of Performing Arts, Lydia Aers, performed this musical with biting humour and swept the audiences into a darkly comic fever where capitalism is the true villain.

“Wall Street meets Broadway... with biting humour and choreography that is as sharp as the suits!”

JULIE JAMES,
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT



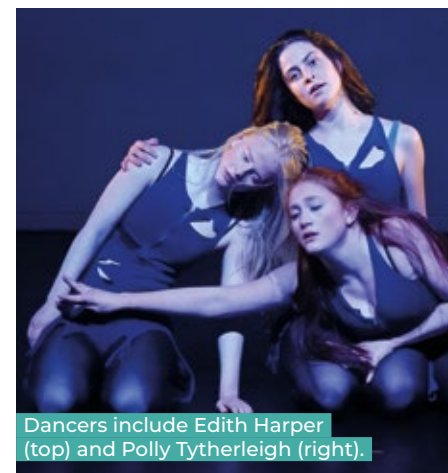
American Psycho: The Musical.

Book by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa. Music & Lyrics by Duncan Sheik. Based on the novel by Bret Easton Ellis.



Students perform for their exams.

Dance A level: final practical exams



Dancers include Edith Harper (top) and Polly Tytherleigh (right).

Our A level Dance students completed their final practical exams last term, worth fifty percent of their overall grade. The standard was exceptional. Thank you to the non-examined students who contributed to the group and choreography pieces. Hills Road remains the only centre in Cambridgeshire offering A level Dance – we are proud of our students' achievements.

Find our more: hillsroad.ac.uk/dance

Christmas musical

This year's musical will be the incredibly silly *Young Frankenstein*. Auditions take place in June straight after Y11 GCSEs, with rehearsals starting the moment students join Hills in September. With five sold-out performances in our professional theatre in early December, the fifty-strong cast, crew and Y13 band, always find that it's the BEST way to make new and lasting friendships here.



Many talented students choose to create, direct or produce their own performances for their Extended Project Qualifications (EPQ). Audience members consistently remark on how blown away they are at the sheer talent and creativity on show at these special productions.

Book your ticket: enjoy a night at the theatre featuring a truly unique show. Not only will you witness a great performance, but you'll also be celebrating the incredible effort our students have put into their projects.

Book
here



An outstanding performance of Wuthering Heights

Year 12 students wowed audiences in June with their performances of Emily Brontë's masterpiece, transforming it into a powerful and uniquely theatrical experience. With expert musical direction by Year 13 student Zach Chung.



Jennie Youngs and Tom James.



Class of 2025 celebrated at Student Awards

Hills Road Sixth Form College honoured the achievements of Year 13 students on Wednesday 7th May at the annual Student Awards Ceremony. Held during their final week of teaching, the event celebrated those who made outstanding contributions to College life across two years of study.

Awards were presented in categories based on the College's core values: Creative and Confident Learners, Resourceful and Resilient Individuals, and Responsible and Active Citizens. Nominations came from both staff and students, reflecting personal development, resilience, creativity and community impact.

Winners were announced with video messages from staff who nominated

the students – a heartfelt touch that added warmth and humour to the occasion and allowed the wider community to share in the celebration. View the videos on the College Youtube: [@hillsroadsixthformcollege](https://www.youtube.com/@hillsroadsixthformcollege)

A particularly poignant award is the Jack Merritt Award, named in honour of the Hills Road alumnus tragically killed in the 2019 London Bridge attack. This special award, recognising integrity, justice and service to others was presented to Barney Jones.

Principal Jo Trump praised Year 13s for their focus, community involvement, and unwavering spirit and extended best wishes for their upcoming A Level exams. The College looks forward to celebrating the Class of 2025 again at their Leavers' Event in June.



Sporting stars shine at Sports Awards

On Friday 9 May, students enjoyed the annual Sports Awards at The Graduate Hotel, Cambridge. The evening recognised exceptional student athletes, including Ella Risby (Sportswoman of the Year), Zach Chung (Sportsman of the Year), and Paloma Bacon-Perez (Anne Hemming Award). The Netball 1st Team was named Team of the Year after a stellar season. Coach of the Year went to Paul Martell for leading the badminton team to near-total success.



A rare glimpse: Performing at King's

The College marked a major moment in its 50th anniversary celebrations with a sold-out concert at the iconic King's College Chapel, Cambridge, in April 2025.

Showcasing the College's vibrant music department, the evening featured current students and guest performers, including distinguished alumni Tess Jackson (Classic FM 'Rising Star', Associate Conductor, National Youth Orchestra) and Annemarie Federle (Principal Horn, London Philharmonic Orchestra).

Set within the stunning Chapel – renowned for its soaring fan vaults and superb acoustics – the concert provided a rich musical contrast to the College's celebratory variety show at the Corn Exchange in March.



Photography of the dress rehearsal by Mark Dalton. With kind permission of the Master and Fellows, King's College, Cambridge.



"It was a real privilege to hear our students perform in such an iconic space. King's College Chapel offers a level of atmosphere and acoustic quality that few venues can match, and it was wonderful to see our current students sharing the stage with alumni who are now forging careers at the highest level in classical music."

JO TRUMP, PRINCIPAL

This memorable event, met with overwhelming demand, was one of several special occasions planned to mark Hills Road's golden anniversary.

Read more: hillsroad.ac.uk/latest-news/50th-kings-college



Discover more of our celebrations through Hills@50 – a seven-part film series celebrating five decades of people, progress, and purpose. From our founding in 1974 to future ambitions, each chapter brings the College to life. Following their 'premiere' at the Corn Exchange, you can watch the films now on our website!

Watch
here



Aarnavh Trivedi,
Cricket.Maria Amojó,
Women's Basketball.

Hills Road triumphs at AoC Nationals 2025

Hills Road students delivered outstanding performances at the 2025 AoC Sport National Championships, held from 4-6 April at the University of Nottingham. Representing the East Region in five disciplines – badminton, cricket, cross country, table tennis, and women's basketball – our athletes showcased exceptional talent and

determination. Highlights included a silver medal in cricket, a bronze for Cerys Bithell in cross country and double silver for Rachel Li in table tennis. The women's basketball team achieved a commendable fifth-place finish. These achievements underscore the dedication and skill of our students on the national stage.

“I’ve never been on a school trip with everyone competing in such a diverse array of sports. From the beautiful university campus to the heartfelt support from fellow students and staff, it was truly a memorable experience.”

RACHEL (TABLE TENNIS)

Boaz Au,
Badminton.Rachel Li,
Table Tennis.