



Ardingly College Giving Report 2025



“A chance for us to remember that the College was founded by philanthropy, and it continues to put wind in our sails.”

Ben Figgis, Head of College

Message from the Head

Philanthropy has been at the heart of the College's growth and success since its inception. Our founder, Nathaniel Woodard, financed his new schools from donations and subscriptions, inspiring others with his vision for education. Today, that same spirit of generosity remains the lifeblood of Ardingly. The school continues to flourish thanks to the commitment of our community – parents, alumni, staff and friends – whose collective support enhances every aspect of school life.

In June we held Ardingly's first Giving Day – in fact two days – during which the College community came together to raise funds for bursaries and the Activity Centre at Ardingly Reservoir. The latter will be used by our own students, as well as the local community, for an enhanced programme of water-based activities. The former – the provision of bursaries – goes to the heart of our foundation and charitable purpose.

The Giving Day total of £194,000 from over 300 donors was beyond our expectations and underlines the support from our community for which we are so grateful. It was even more special that contributions came from supporters of all ages and financial means, as the number and range of donors was as important to us as the total amount raised.

I want to record my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported the College this year. This Giving Report captures just a few examples of how that generosity has made a difference and will continue to shape our future.



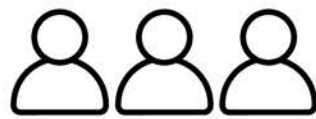
Ben Figgis, Head of College

Giving in numbers



Total donations

£223,000



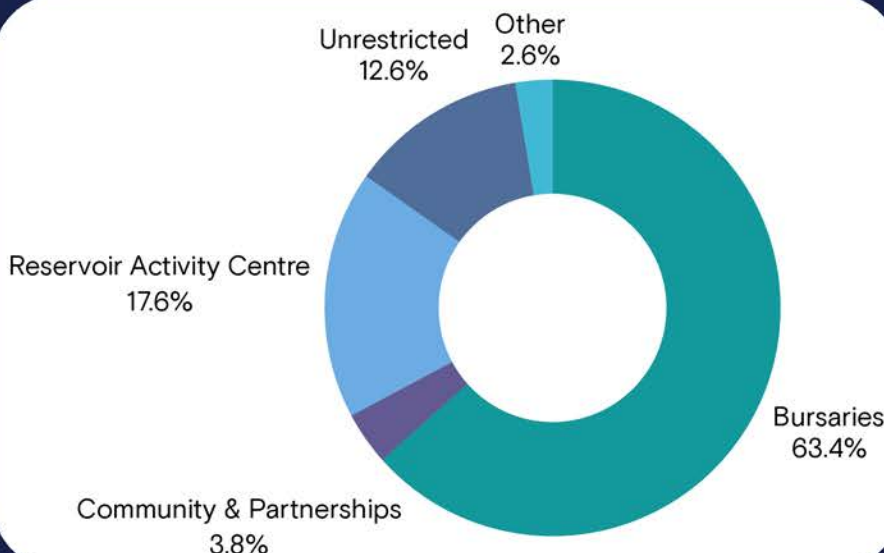
Number of donors

335



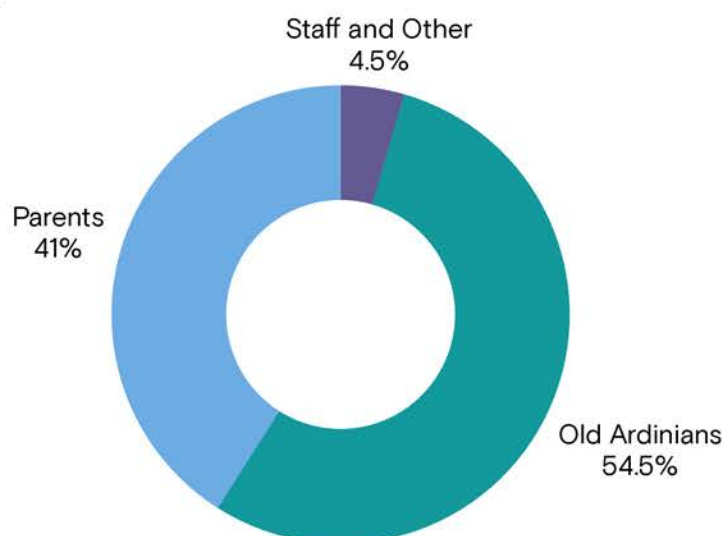
New donors

261



Friends of Ardingly raised £8700 for the College this year

“A small token to help a place that gave me so much so many years ago.”



Smiling faces at the new reading wagon installed in the Farmhouse playground, funded by donations from the Friends of Ardingly this year.



Giving Day

In June the College held its first Giving Day, a fun-packed, challenge-fuelled 36-hour fundraising effort, bringing the Ardingly community together to raise funds for the Reservoir Activity Centre and transformational bursaries.

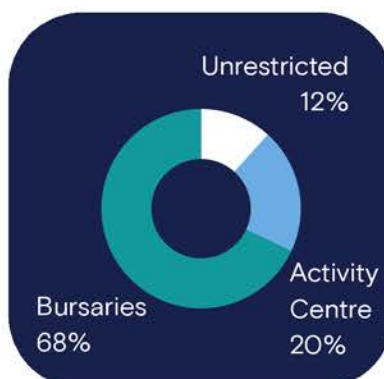
The event was launched with a challenge in Chapel: a record-breaking attempt to raise the roof with hymn singing at truly deafening levels. The highlight of day one also centred on the Chapel, but rather than raising the roof, this challenge involved climbing to the very top of the Chapel Tower and descending to North Quad on an abseiling wire!

Prep School pupils were in the spotlight at the start of day two, completing a swimathon and taking part in a multi sports festival on the Headmaster's Field. An afternoon of heady House spirit and competition followed for the Senior School, all in the name of fundraising, with Dragon Boat, kayak and paddle board races on the reservoir, and an epic Tug of War battle on Nine Acre. The fun was well and truly put in fundraising.

Students, staff, parents, Old Ardinians and friends came together on Giving Day and showed incredible support for the College. More than 300 people made donations and many left comments on the online donor wall. There were words of encouragement from all over the world, from Hong Kong to Canada, Bermuda to New Zealand.



Total donations
£194,000



Giving Day
highlights



“Some of my happiest memories are from spending time on the water and I’m delighted that other Ardingly students will get to experience all that the reservoir has to offer.”

Hope Warren (2018), Dulwich College Rowing Coach



Bursaries

By supporting bursaries, donors are giving outstanding young people the opportunity to experience an Ardingly education. We remain committed to widening access to young people whose lives could be truly transformed by this kind of opportunity.

In 2024-25, more than 30 students were supported with bursaries, including 11 students on fully-funded places. One of those students was Solomiia, who joined Ardingly as a refugee from Ukraine. With fantastic GCSE and IB results, she left Ardingly to read Economics at university in London. Her goal is to play an active part in Ukraine's post war economic recovery. Reflecting on her time at Ardingly, Solomiia commented: "Having a bursary has completely changed my life. It really showed me that people believe in me and my potential. It's not just financial support, it's investment into my future."

Ardingly is a proud partner of the Royal National Children's SpringBoard Foundation – specialists in driving social mobility through access to independent education – and we welcomed our third SpringBoarder to the College this year. By working with community organisations and local authorities, RNCSF helps schools like Ardingly target bursary funds at young people who most need the opportunities a boarding school education can provide. Giving Day bursary donations will fund our next SpringBoarder through Sixth Form.



Bursary students
32



3 SpringBoard
students

Solomiia's story





“My life was turned around when I joined Ardingly. For the first time, I was able to make the most of my ability and feel supported to thrive.”

Former bursary student (2025)

Community & Partnerships

Ardingly students and staff have worked with nine local primary schools in the last year with events and visits ranging from cricket tournaments and football festivals to maths challenges and music workshops. For Ready, Set, Dance, 60 children from seven of our partner schools visited Ardingly for an immersive day of dance.

Another highlight was Inspiring Young Minds, a day of academic enrichment workshops involving almost 300 year four and five pupils from our partner schools, planned and delivered by our LVI students. One visiting pupil commented: "I liked the art because it pushed me out of my comfort zone to try things I normally wouldn't."

Further afield, the College has a long-standing partnership with the Langalanga Trust, which provides vital education infrastructure, scholarships and school meals to children in Kenya's Great Rift Valley. Ardingly students fundraise for Langalanga throughout the year with non-uniform days, bake sales and even a 24-hour cycling challenge!

The connections with our partner schools in Kenya – Ndogo, Mwega and the Woodard Langalanga Secondary School – are strengthened each year through shared projects, lessons and cultural exchange during the annual LVI service trip to the region.



Total donations

£8385



9 local partner
primary schools



Total participants

500+

“Ardingly’s fundraising and practical support brings joy to so many young Kenyan children. Funding the food programme in particular encourages attendance and lifts performance.”

Geoff Nield OBE (1977), Langalanga Trust



Get involved

The generosity of our community helps us fund life-changing bursaries, advance capital projects, maintain historic buildings, and provide exceptional educational opportunities for current and future generations.

A regular gift is one of the simplest and most effective ways to shape the College's future – steady support that makes an immediate and visible impact across our schools.

We are deeply grateful to those who choose to remember Ardingly in their wills. Their generosity provides long-term support for bursaries and facilities, securing the College's mission for future generations.

When pledging a legacy, you can direct your support to a specific purpose or leave the decision to the school. You do not need to disclose the value, and it is not a binding commitment. Letting us know ensures we understand your wishes and can thank you properly.

Every donation received is managed with care and integrity, and used solely for the purpose for which it was given. Ardingly College is a registered charity (number 1076456) and is proud to be registered with the Fundraising Regulator, adhering fully to its Code of Fundraising Practice.

Make a gift



Elinor Wood, Development Director



development@ardingly.com



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“Having had the privilege of a bursary, enabling my son to come to this wonderful school, I cannot thank everyone enough for this gift of a lifetime.”

Current bursary family





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Registered charity number 1076456

