

2015 marks 500 years since Hampton Court Palace was built. A lot has happened during those five centuries - the original resident, Thomas Wolsey, fell out of favour with the King, who then took the palace for his own. Henry VIII, the infamous monarch who had six wives, rebuilt and expanded Hampton Court, which became the site of many important events in his life, including the birth of his son, Edward VI, and the death of Edward's mother Jane Seymour. His successors - Edward, Mary and Elizabeth - all used Hampton Court, and the current tea rooms are housed in the kitchens that Queen Elizabeth I had built. In fact, it hosted many of the monarchs that followed, including the ill-fated Charles I; George II was the last to reside there. Whilst the royal family may no longer live there, there are still strong links with the palace - the stunning lace in the Duchess of Cambridge's 2011 wedding dress was created by the Royal School Needlework based in Hampton Court.

So with hundreds of years of this varied and interesting history, Hampton Court Palace was an ideal location to begin our Global Leaders Program. Students learnt more about the Tudor period and King Henry VIII's leadership, visiting everything the building and grounds had to offer, from the medieval Great Hall, to the Chapel Royal, via the wonderful maze. The group was joined by 'Tricia, a Blue Badge Guide with endless knowledge about the palace which enhanced everyone's enjoyment of the day.

Back in Cambridge in the evening, the students attended their first lecture looking at the skills necessary to being a good leader, using examples of role models. The evening's activities were an art class - a large group of students drew images of Cambridge sites like King's College - and games. A jam-packed but very fun first day of the course!

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