
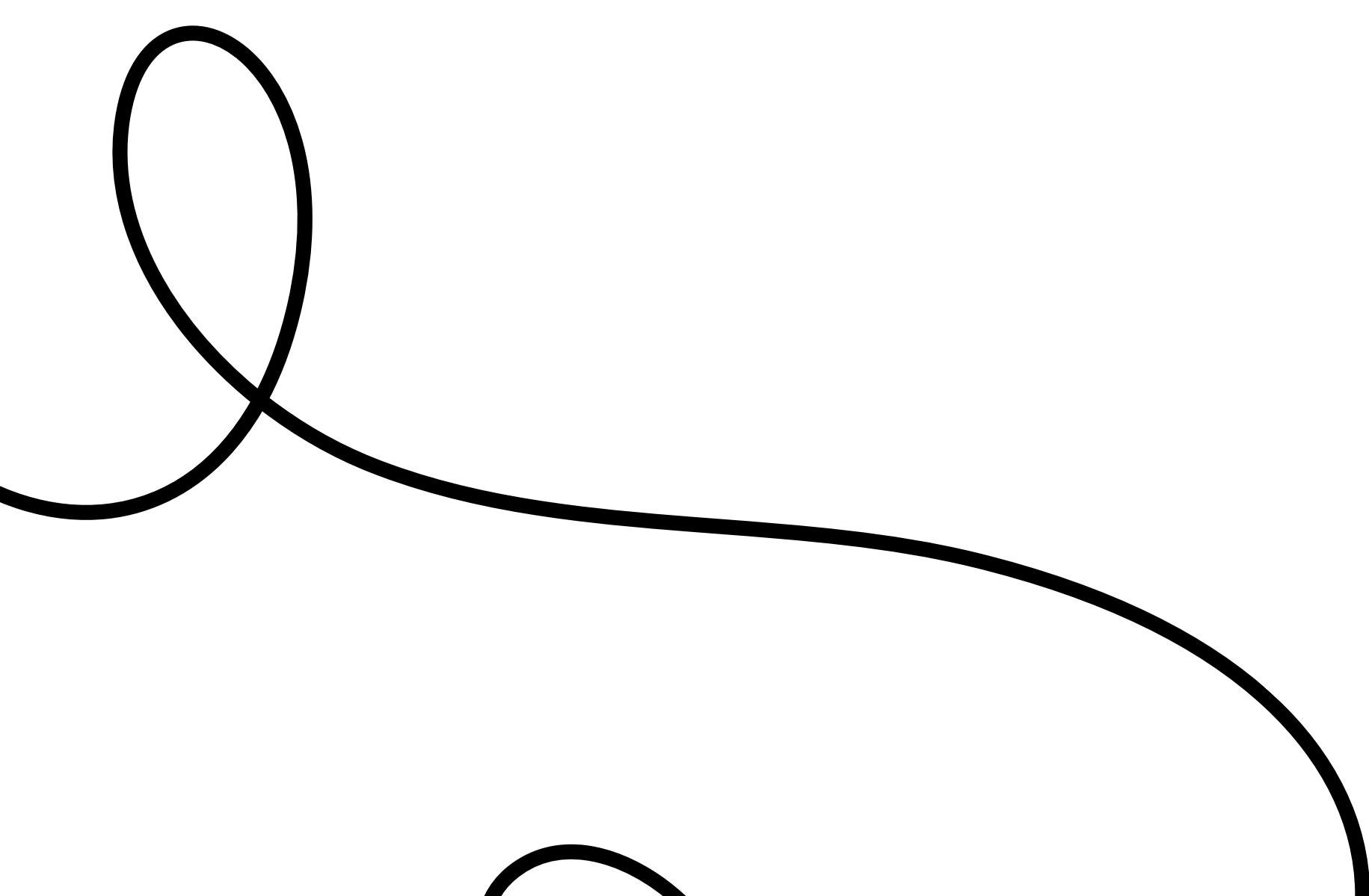


Lenora

B E Y O N D
B O A R D E R S



Donations are welcome to support our ambitious girls who work hard every day to perform at their best and ultimately earn university scholarships. Please see www.lift-the-lid.org, a 501c3 nonprofit organization, or contact Sara Goff at saragoff@saragoff.com



Staff



Editor and Chief/Founder: Ella Turner

Advisor: Sara Goff

Advisor: Joshua Machinga

Advisor: Sydney Van Pelt

Title Design: Evelyn Dolan

Graphics: Contributed by Canva

Photos: Contributed by Lenana Girls School
and Sara Goff

Writers:

Blessine Nafuna Wandabwa

Cheryl Nafula Simiyu

Holly Kotoske

Halima Abdiweli

Michelle Baraka

Shallete Imai

Joyline Chelimo

Ebby Angesa

Abigael Cherotich

Table of Contents

Editors Note.....	4
A Sanctuary in a Modern World.....	5
Soaring Beyond Boundaries.....	6
Champions in Motion.....	7
Finding My Place at Lenana.....	8
My Life in School.....	9
The Pride of Grade 8.....	10
Cultural Day Celebration.....	11
A Moment of Pride.....	12
A Transformative Visit.....	13

Editor's Note

When I approached Sara Goff during the end of my freshman year with the idea to start a newsletter at Lenana Girls' School, I could have never imagined that my passion for words would turn into something so special to me and the community of writers I have been graced to partner with. As a highschooler with a love for journalism, I wished that I could find a way to spread the joy of writing beyond Westport. After being introduced to Sara Goff through my work with her organization Lift the Lid, I knew that this would be my opportunity to share the hobby that I value so greatly. Rather than dismissively waving off my idea, Sara was more than excited to create this opportunity for the Lenana Girls' School. She expressed to me that many students there were interested in having more writing opportunities. Sara was by my side from the beginning, organizing meetings and being the connection between Westport and Kenya that was necessary to grow my idea into a tangible product. Without her, I still would have been a girl in high school stuck with the passion but without direction. Thank you so much for making this possible Sara. There are many others who helped the process move smoothly. Joshua Machinga from Kenya helped gather a passionate group of girls. His daughter, Sydney Van Pelt, took charge as an inspiration for the girls, being the role model they needed close by, rather than an ocean away. Without these dedicated partners, the creation of this newsletter would not have been possible. Most importantly, I want to thank the girls. The newsletter would have never come to fruition if not for a group of passionate girls dedicating their time and learning to adapt and build their words to create stories for others to hear. Hearing their unique voices through each and every piece was truly the most enjoyable part of this process. It stands as the reason that Lenana Beyond Borders brings together one of the most unique sets of articles I have ever read. Thank you for pouring your time and energy into building not only a product, but a community that supports and builds each other up through writing.

The name Lenana Beyond Borders, created by its contributors, expresses not only the unique sides of these boarding school students that you will notice throughout the pieces, but also breaks the barriers that confine their writing to just their classes. Being able to share their writing not only in Kenya, but across the world is what makes our newsletter that much more special. We hope that through these pieces you will learn about a strong, dedicated, and joyous community, and about girls who decided to take steps to make sharing their voice possible. Most importantly, I hope that you will be able to learn and respect these wonderful writers as much as I do, and see that the world has so much to offer simply through the power of words.

Please Enjoy!



Ella Turner



A Sanctuary in a Modern World

Blessine Nafuna Wandabwa

The world has developed rapidly, especially through technology. While technology has brought many benefits, it has also contributed to environmental challenges. Today, buildings and factories rise everywhere, and pollution has become common.

In the midst of all this development, many people have forgotten about the one place that gives peace to the heart, mind, and soul nature.

At Lenana Girls' High School and Pathfinder Academy Junior Secondary School, our school garden is that peaceful place.

It is a space where students can relax and clear their minds of worries. A place that inspires creativity and new ideas. With every breath of fresh air and every step taken among the flowers, one feels transported into a different world calm, beautiful, and refreshing.

Caring for Our Green Space

Our garden is the heart of our school community. It is home to living creatures and a safe haven for students seeking peace and inspiration. It reminds us that even in a fast-changing world, nature remains essential.

As students of Lenana, we understand that this beautiful space must be cared for and preserved. Protecting our garden means protecting our environment and our future.



A World of Color and Inspiration
The garden is surrounded by vibrant flowers glowing with colors as beautiful as a rainbow.
Their sweet fragrances fill the air, creating an atmosphere that feels magical and uplifting.
It is a place where: Students can have picnics and play games
Young artists can draw and paint
Stories and laughter can be shared
Friendships can grow
The garden is not just soil and plants it is a living classroom. It teaches us about responsibility, environmental conservation, and the importance of protecting nature.



Soaring Beyond Boundaries: A Transformative Educational Trip to the United Kingdom

Cheryl Nafula Simiyu

This was the day I had eagerly waited for.

My very first time boarding an airplane! Flying above the clouds felt magical and unforgettable. It was an amazing experience that marked the beginning of a journey I will always treasure.

Upon arriving in the United Kingdom, we visited Mulberry School Trust for Girls, where we were warmly welcomed by friendly and well-disciplined students. I admired how confident and social they were. They openly shared insights about their school life, and I even made a new friend named Arafa. The interaction reminded me how powerful global sisterhood can be.

A World of Art and Expression

One of the highlights of our visit was watching *The Lion King* at the National Theatre. The performers were energetic, expressive, and incredibly talented. Their stunning costumes and graceful movements brought the story to life. It was inspiring to witness such excellence in performance and teamwork.

The most memorable moment at Mulberry School was during a poetry presentation about our mothers. The girls delivered their poems with confidence, expressive gestures, and powerful facial expressions. Their courage and creativity inspired me deeply and encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone.

Exploring History and Innovation

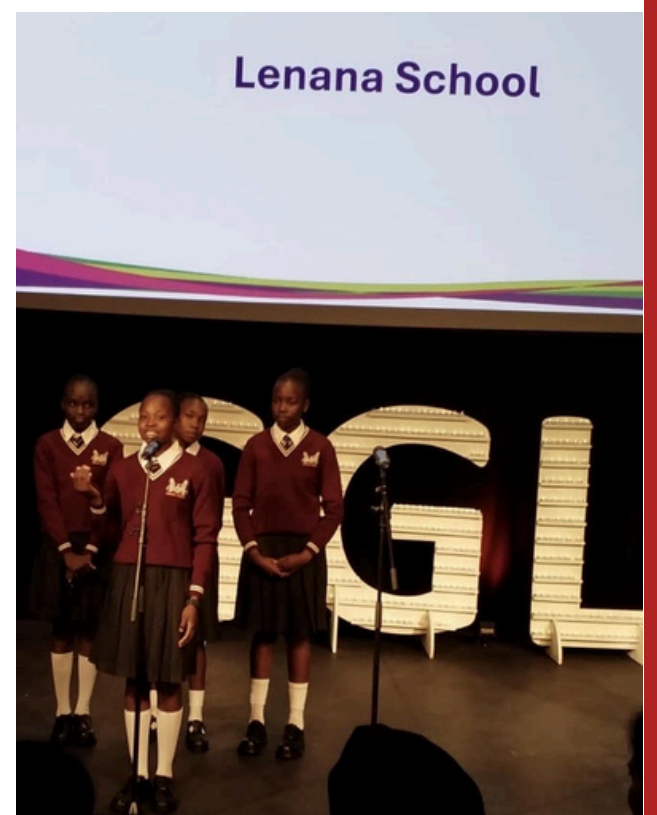
Our journey also took us to several iconic landmarks. We visited Buckingham Palace, the former residence of Queen Elizabeth II. The environment was calm, majestic, and rich in history.

We toured museums and even experienced something completely unexpected, traveling in a bus that moves underwater! Using the underground train system was another fascinating experience that showed how advanced and efficient public transport can be.

Additionally, we traveled by boat to the House of Commons, blending adventure with civic learning. Each site we visited expanded our understanding of global culture, governance, and history.

Our hotel stay was equally enjoyable. From delicious breakfasts to using a lift to access my room. Every experience felt special. My favorite meal was beef and fried rice, which made me feel right at home even while abroad.

Although I did not want to leave the United Kingdom, I was reminded that “East or West, home is best.” I returned to Kenya grateful, inspired, and proud to represent Lenana Girls High School on an international stage.



Champions in Motion: Celebrating the Spirit of Athletics, Running Toward Excellence

Holly Kotoske

My name is Holly Kotoske, and I am 14 years old. Athletics is my favorite sport, and I always look forward to participating whenever we have competitions at school. One day, our head teacher, Madam Cynthia Khalayi, announced that we would be holding an athletics competition. The fastest runners would be selected to represent the school. From that moment, we began preparing seriously. Every day, we trained on the field running laps, practicing sprints, and competing with one another as our teachers carefully observed our progress. The day before the competition, the sports teacher selected the final team to represent the school. I was excited and proud to be among those chosen.

The Big Day

On the competition day, all competitors gathered early. We were given our sports attire, which made us feel united and ready to compete. After a quick cup of tea, the entire school assembled as we prepared to travel to the competition venue. Upon arrival, the announcer declared that the events would begin. Schools from different areas lined up their athletes, ready to showcase their speed and endurance. The races began with the 100 meters, followed by the 200 meters and 400 meters. The excitement in the air was electric. Finally, it was time for the relay race. A true test of teamwork and coordination.

A Victory of Determination

After several intense hours of competition, the results were announced. Our school proudly secured third place overall! We celebrated our achievement with joy and gratitude. Though we aimed for first place, we were proud of our effort, teamwork, and determination. To mark the occasion, we shared lunch together by enjoying soda and bread as we reflected on the day's success. Afterwards, we returned to school feeling accomplished and motivated to train even harder for the next competition.



Finding My Place at Lenana

Halima Abdiweli

I arrived at Lenana Girls' High School at 3 p.m. on a Tuesday my very first day at the school. It was also my first time being in Kitale. I felt nervous because I had never been in such a big school before, and I was also the only Muslim student at the time. I imagined that my one-year journey at Lenana would be difficult and stressful. However, things turned out very differently.

From the moment I arrived, the teachers in charge of administration and admission were warm, kind, and welcoming. Their friendliness helped me relax and feel at home almost immediately. Soon after, several students warmly received me and escorted me to the dormitory. Their kindness reassured me that I was not alone.

A few days later, something unexpected happened. I was chosen as the Dormitory President because of my discipline. This opportunity strengthened my confidence and reminded me that leadership is about character and responsibility. Academically, I was determined to give my best. In my first examination, I achieved position 8 out of 51 students. This accomplishment motivated me to work even harder.

A School That Respects Diversity

One of the most memorable moments came on a Saturday the day students usually attend church. As a Muslim, I was worried because I am not permitted to attend church services. However, I spoke with Mr. Joshua Amwai, the School Director, who kindly assured me that Lenana respects all religions, including mine. His reassurance meant so much to me.

Currently, during the holy month of Ramadan, the school continues to support me by ensuring my religious needs are accommodated. Special meal arrangements are made, and my faith is fully respected.

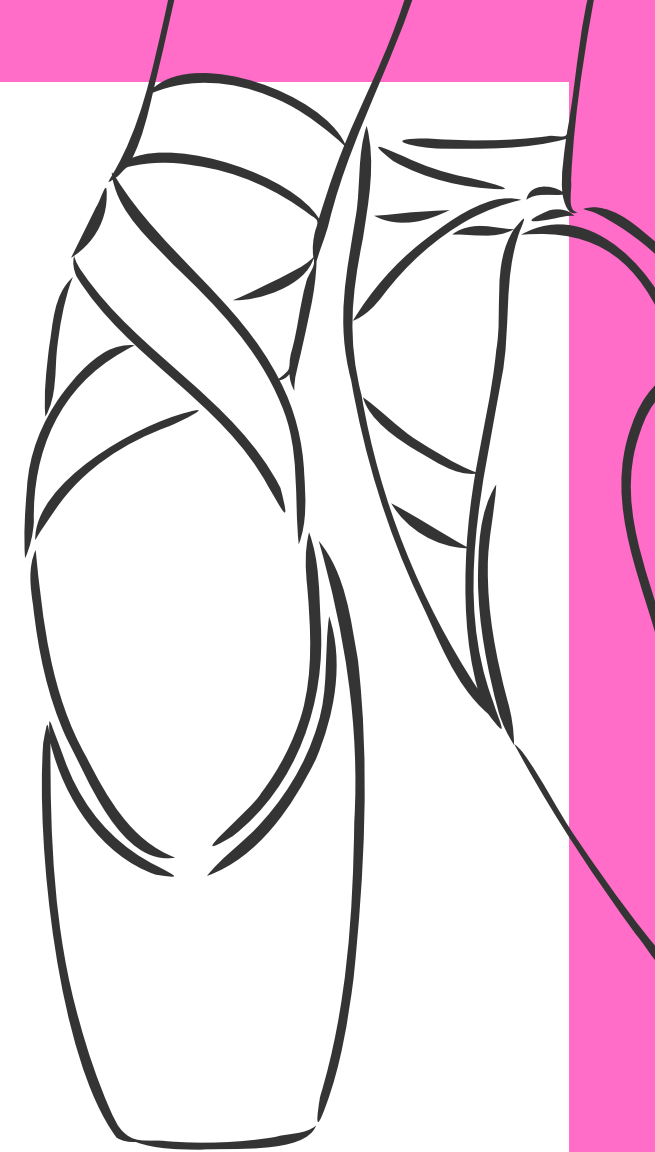
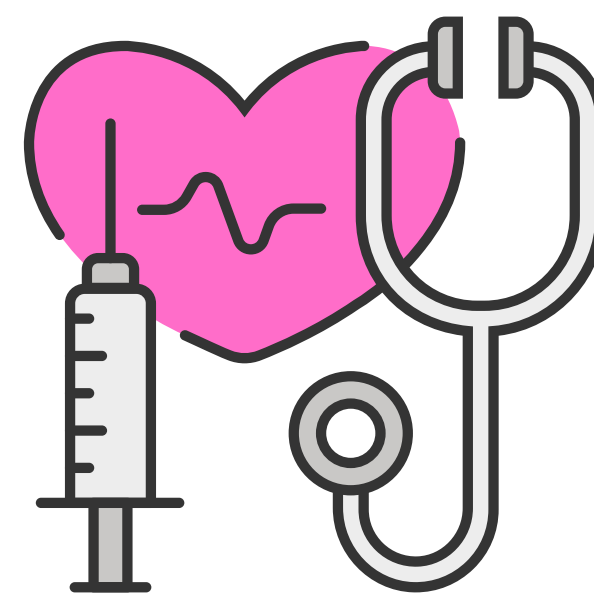
Why Lenana Feels Like Home

Today, I confidently say that Lenana Girls' High School is one of the best schools I have ever attended. What I feared would be a challenging year has become a journey filled with acceptance, opportunity, and growth.



My Life in School

Michelle Baraka



My name is Michelle Baraka. I am 15 years old and a Form 3 student at Lenana Girls' High School in Kiminini, Trans Nzoia County. I truly love my school and the opportunities it offers me every day.

Life in school is enjoyable when you follow the rules and regulations. Discipline has guided me throughout my journey, and I am proud to say that many teachers and staff members often congratulate me for my good conduct. I believe that respect and responsibility create a positive school experience.

Beyond the Classroom

At Lenana, I actively participate in co-curricular activities. I love running, and it keeps me strong and focused. However, dancing is my greatest hobby it allows me to express myself and brings me joy.

In class, I cooperate closely with my teachers and always follow instructions carefully. Obedience, attentiveness, and teamwork have helped me excel academically. Because of my commitment and performance, I serve as a Class Prefect a role that has strengthened my leadership and communication skills.

Passion for Science, Vision for the Future

I have a strong love for science because it helps me understand how the world is constantly changing and evolving. My dream is to become a doctor in the future. I do not want my dreams to remain just wishes I want them to become reality through hard work and determination.

Friendship and Positivity

I have made many friends here at school, and I hope to build even more friendships not only within Lenana but all over the world. I believe that being kind to everyone brings warmth and happiness. I always try to stay cheerful because a positive attitude makes life brighter for both myself and those around me.

One day, I hope to become successful and well-known in my field not just for popularity, but for making a meaningful difference in people's lives.



The Pride of Grade 8

Shallete Imai

My name is Shallete Imai, and I am a Grade 8 learner.. Grade 8 is a very special and wonderful class in my life.

One of the greatest blessings in our class is our disciplined and responsible class teacher, Madam Pauline Miriam. She is caring, clean, organized, and a good advisor. She is also respectful and serves as a strong role model to all of us. Through her leadership, our class has become disciplined and focused.

Madam Pauline always advises us to follow school rules and regulations, respect teachers, and maintain good behavior throughout the school compound. She motivates us to aim high and to become the best learners we can be.

Discipline and Cleanliness

As Grade 8 learners, we take pride in keeping our classroom clean and neat. We understand that a clean environment supports better learning and reflects responsibility. Our class rules guide us to stay disciplined and united. We truly love and appreciate our class teacher, and we know she cares deeply about our success.

Big Promises, Bigger Dreams

Recently, our School Director visited our class and promised that our classroom would be painted — a gesture that made us feel valued and recognized.

Even more exciting, he announced that the best-performing learners in Grade 8 will have the opportunity to travel to the United Kingdom for a school trip this year. This news filled us with joy and determination.

Now, every Grade 8 learner is working hard, practicing discipline, and striving for academic excellence with the hope of being selected. We are proud to be role models in the school, and we are committed to setting a positive example for others.



Cultural Day Celebration at Lenana Girls High School

Joyline Chelimo



The recent Cultural Day at Lenana Girls High School was a vibrant and unforgettable celebration of diversity, unity, and heritage. Organized within just one week, the event exceeded expectations, bringing together students in a lively and colorful showcase of culture, creativity, and talent.

A variety of communities were proudly represented, including the Samburu, Luhya, Iteso, Kisii, and Kalenjin. Each group delivered captivating performances that highlighted their traditions through music, dance, and storytelling. The Turkana group stood out not only for their energetic dance performance, but also for their unique and captivating outfits, which added a striking visual element to their presentation and left a lasting impression on the audience.

The cultural experience extended to cuisine, where students prepared traditional dishes from their respective communities. The Iteso showcased their distinctive meals, while the Kalenjin and Kisii introduced mursik, a traditional fermented milk that drew curiosity and excitement from many. Blending tradition with modern entertainment, the event also featured lively contemporary dance sessions led by a DJ and guided by an engaging MC, creating an electric atmosphere that kept students energized and involved throughout the day. It was truly a fun-filled celebration enjoyed by all.

A major highlight of the day was the modeling segment, which celebrated confidence, identity, and cultural pride. The winners across the categories were as follows: Favour Marcos Tsuma was crowned Mr. Pathfinder Academy, Ray Kibet took the title of Little Mr. Pathfinder, Chantel Muchiti was named Mrs. Pathfinder Academy, and Dalia Ellah Wanjiku was crowned Little Miss Pathfinder. In the Lenana category, Achol Mayol was awarded the title of Mrs. Lenana. Each participant showcased elegance and cultural expression, making the segment both competitive and inspiring.

Beyond the performances and competitions, the day was filled with joy, laughter, and connection. Students enjoyed refreshments, socialized freely, and embraced the spirit of togetherness that defined the entire celebration.

Cultural Day was more than just an event, it was a powerful reminder of the beauty of diversity and the importance of unity. It left behind lasting memories and set a remarkable standard for future celebrations at Lenana Girls High School.



A Moment of Pride for Lenana Girls High School

Ebby Angesa

As students of Lenana Girls High School, we are proud to share our 2025 KCSE results. A true reflection of our hard work, determination, and teamwork.

This year, our class achieved a mean grade of B (9.18), which is a slight improvement from last year's performance. While it may look like a small increase, to us it means progress. It shows that we are moving forward and getting better with every year.

Out of the 34 candidates who sat for the exams, 33 of us qualified for direct university entry, giving us a 97.1% pass rate. This is something we are incredibly proud of, because it shows that almost all of us reached a level that allows us to pursue higher education and continue chasing our dreams.

Looking back, the journey was not easy. We spent long hours in class, in group discussions, and in private study. There were moments of pressure and doubt, but we kept pushing each other, reminding ourselves why we started. Our teachers stood by us every step of the way, guiding and encouraging us even when things felt tough.

For us, these results are more than just grades. They represent sacrifice, discipline, and the belief that we can achieve great things. Each grade tells a story of effort, resilience, and hope for the future. As we celebrate this achievement, we also look ahead with gratitude and ambition. We are excited about the opportunities ahead of us and determined to make a difference in our communities and beyond.

The Class of 2025 will always remember this moment, not just for the results, but for the journey we shared and the strength we discovered in ourselves.

KCSE RESULTS

97.1%

33

B(9.18)

Pass Rate

**Qualified for direct
university entry**

Mean Grade

A Transformative Visit to Lenana Girls High School

Abigael Cherotich

When we first heard that visitors from Lift The Lid would be coming to our school, many of us were excited but we didn't quite know what to expect. From the moment they arrived at our school, it felt special. We welcomed them with traditional songs, and in that moment, it already felt like more than just a visit, it felt like a connection.

Over the next few days, we got to learn so much, not just from books, but from real experiences. One of the most memorable classes for me was creative writing. We were encouraged to think beyond the obvious and keep asking ourselves, "What if?" It made writing feel exciting and limitless. Others enjoyed the aerodynamics sessions (and the fun paper airplane competition!), while some of us got to try martial arts, learn about fitness and nutrition, and even build confidence through public speaking and debate.

But what really stayed with me were the conversations we had. When we were asked what we want to become in the future, many of us shared big dreams to become doctors, lawyers, pathologists, and more. What made it meaningful was that almost everyone had the same reason: we want to go back and help our communities. That moment reminded me that we are all working towards something bigger than ourselves.

Life at Lenana is not always easy, but it shapes who we are. Besides studying hard for our national exams, we also take part in daily responsibilities like working in the garden, washing our clothes, and helping around the school. It teaches us discipline, independence, and teamwork.

One of the proudest moments for us as a school is that five of our fellow students have been selected to travel to London to present their poems at the Global Girl Leading event. They are the only representatives from Africa, and honestly, that makes all of us feel proud and inspired. It shows us that our voices matter and that our dreams are valid.

This visit was more than just a learning experience, it was motivating, inspiring, and unforgettable. It reminded us that no matter where we come from, our dreams are possible. And with support from organizations like Lift The Lid, we are one step closer to achieving them.



Lift the Lid!
And See What's Inside ..

