

April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to share highlights from the spring term and provide updates for next term. We finish for the Easter Break on Friday at 3.05pm and return to school on Tuesday 22nd April at 8.35am.

Year 11

We are incredibly proud of all our Year 11 students have achieved this term. They took the second round of mock examinations incredibly seriously and their results indicate they are set to achieve well this summer. Thank you to all our parents/carers for their support here. Over the Easter Break we are holding intervention sessions in school, and it is important that all those invited attend. The GCSE examinations start on 5th May (just over a month away) and we expect all students to make full use of the next two weeks to really get into their revision. We would recommend a minimum of six hours each day. Students will be given their examination timetable, along with The Derby High School Exam Handbook and an examinations letter for parents on Friday 4th April. Please ensure that you read this material with your child; it will also be available on The Derby App.

When Year 11 students return after the Easter break, they will be placed in Intervention Forms as an additional step in ensuring their academic success during the GCSE examinations. These Intervention Forms have been created based on key areas of need for each student; students are aware of their new groups and Intervention Tutor. It is important to note that their existing Form Tutor will still retain their pastoral link to your child, and they will be present at key Year 11 events such as our Leavers' Assembly.

Mrs Johnston left this week to commence her maternity leave, and we all wish her well. The year group will now be led by Mr D White and Mrs S Davies supported by non-teaching staff for the remaining 2½ months of Year 11. Further details will be sent directly to Year 11 parents after the Easter Break

Recruitment

As parents/carers may be aware there is currently a national recruitment crisis for secondary schools with insufficient people training to work in education. We at The Derby are not immune to this and it is currently impacting our ability to recruit in key areas (at present computing, design and technology/ engineering and science). As you would expect we are being as creative as possible to manage this, but it is hugely challenging at present, and I felt you should be fully aware of this situation. We value the contacts that parents/carers may have, and you may be able to share links of professionals you know with us.

Parent Survey

Thank you to all those who took part in our recent Parent Survey. Responses were even more positive than last year including 88% 'I would recommend The Derby High School to another parent', 89% 'My child feels safe', 91% 'The school has high expectations' and 89% 'My child does well at The Derby High School'. You were overwhelmingly positive about our curriculum and the immense offer within and beyond the school day. We were really pleased that you have recognised improvements we have made to the information we provide about the curriculum. This term all Year 9 students had a full day exploring future career paths and the best options to support their ambitions and over 90% of our parents/carers attended the Year 9 Options Evening.

We know there is more work we can do around communication and we are currently researching a new package to replace our current system, Weduc, which has not met our expectations. This will be launched in the autumn



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term. We are also in consultation with website providers as we believe this could be more dynamic and be a better platform for you to access key information.

SEND is another area we continue to focus on and we were delighted that parents could also see developments here. We would warmly encourage all parents/carers of students with an identified SEND need to join our SEND parent/carer group. Please contact Miss Jackson, our SENDCo if you would like to be a part of this (hjackson@thederbyhighschool.co.uk)

School Recognition

We are thrilled to have received the news that one of our Year 10 teams is through to the finals of the King's Trust Business and Enterprise Challenge. The students will be participating in the finals at Anfield on Wednesday. They will be working hard over the break to prepare for this incredible opportunity.

The Expressive Arts team and the cast of *The Addams Family* are eagerly awaiting the National Schools' Theatre Awards on the 23rd of June. The cast is nominated for five awards: Best Musical, Best Ensemble, Lillie has been nominated for Best Actress, Alex for Best Supporting Actor and Freya for Best Supporting Actress.

Dropping off and collecting by car

A reminder that the school drive cannot be used to drop off or pick up your child. Drive Passes have been given to a limited number of parents/carers who need this access. We have different coloured passes for each term, this term the drive passes are green. Green drive passes must be always displayed clearly on the dashboard. This is to ensure the safety of students and staff.

A plea to parents/carers for consideration when dropping off and collecting their child. We have a small number who are putting their own and other children at risk by parking at the front of school – often blocking the sight of vision for the school crossing patrol and neighbouring driveways.

Standards and Expectations

We expect all our students to wear their uniform to and from school according to our expectations. The new term will once again begin with standards checks. Recently we have had some issues with school trousers for some students and so I would like to remind you of the uniform policy on trousers below: -

Trousers Uniform Regulations

- Plain black trousers only
- Must be full-length, reaching the ankle
- Cropped, ankle-length, or flared styles are not permitted
- Must not be skin-tight or form-fitting
- Material must be non-denim, non-Lycra, and non-jogger style
- No visible textures, patterns, or lines
- Leggings are strictly prohibited

We really do value the support of parents in ensuring our uniform is to the highest standard.



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Curriculum and Assessment

Please continue to support your child with their homework as this out-of-class learning is vitally important in ensuring that students commit their learning to their long-term memory. To secure further consistency across subjects, we have moved to a whole school approach of 'Quiz/Show' around homework. This means that your child will receive pieces of homework which 'Quiz' their memory of powerful knowledge (typically through an online platform like Satchel) and others where they 'Show' their work to their teacher in their exercise book or homework booklet. Typically, the 'Show' tasks are about applying the powerful knowledge they need to remember in order to guarantee success.

As we approach the end of the academic year, all students in Years 7 to 10 will undertake their end of year assessments. Students should be fully equipped for their assessments, this includes; a pen, pencil, ruler, rubber and a calculator. Students should bring these each day. Examination timetables will be published ahead of the relevant assessment week, so students and parents are aware of expectations.

The curriculum area of the school website outlines topics taught to students and will provide a base from which you can support your child with the content they need to revise. This area can be found by following this link: <https://thederbyhighschool.co.uk/about-us/curriculum/>

This year, students will receive a 'Study Week' (see below) in school where they will be explicitly taught study skills that are most relevant to specific subject areas. Please discuss these study skills with your child and ensure that they are making use of these revision approaches in the gap between Study Week and Assessment Week.

Study Weeks:

Monday 28th April – Friday 2nd May: Year 7 and Year 9

Monday 5th May – Friday 9th May: Year 8 and Year 10

Assessment Weeks:

Monday 12th May – Friday 16th May: Year 7 and Year 9

Monday 2nd June – Friday 6th June: Year 8 and Year 10

Our focus Study Skills are shown below – more information on each skill is widely available online:

- Mind Mapping
- Re-Reading
- Highlighting
- Summarisation
- Oracy - Learning Through Talk
- The Pomodoro Technique
- The Illusion of Learning
- Revision Clocks
- Memory Palaces
- The Leitner Strategy



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Student Achievements

Stephen Wood recently won the CENTURY Changemakers Global Winner award in the "Most Inspiring" category. The award was given to him for his work on an app designed to contribute to environmental sustainability, social justice, or technological advancements. The judges were so impressed by our students' submissions that they also extended invitations to students Francesca Wood, Freya Lomax and Scarlett Poxton who were "highly commended" for their ideas. The awards were presented in London at the Houses of Parliament by Baroness Floella Benjamin and Priya Lakhani OBE, CEO of CENTURY. The students were "inspired" by Baroness Benjamin's achievements and Ms Lakhani's entrepreneurial journey, which began at Bury Market.

Performance at The Royal Exchange

Year 10 students worked with a poet in residence for six weeks to create incredible poetry. It was a privilege for staff to watch them perform at the Royal Exchange Theatre. They were inspired by the opportunity to present their work in such a prestigious, historically rich venue.

From School Life to Public Life

Working with Cllr Nikki Frith, our Year 8 The Derby Challenge students have designed a campaign combining Public and School Life principles as a call to action. The Councillor delivered a masterclass and then asked students to write a short speech supporting the principles of Public Life, which they identified as central to school life. Three students joined MP James Frith in Westminster to question him about his role as a politician.

For more information about our students' experiences visit our website: [The Derby Inspires |](https://www.thederbyhighschool.co.uk/the-derby-inspires)

Rewards

Letters will be going out after the Easter Break for our end of year reward trips. These will be given to those students who have met our expectations around 'Attitude to Learning', behaviour and punctuality. We will be offering a range of reward trips to our KS3 cohort this year. We celebrated our student achievements for this term in our Achievement Assemblies last week and we also took 40 students on a bowling rewards trip.

Letters have gone out to our Year 11 students who are eligible to attend the Blackpool rewards trip and the Leavers' Prom. We ask that any student who would like to reserve a spot on either of these rewards ensure they do so as soon as possible.

Attendance

We would like to remind our parents of the importance of their statutory duty to ensure their child attends school each day. As a school we recognise the positive impact good attendance has on academic progress and a child's mental health and wellbeing. This is why we have such high expectations and strive to achieve a target of 97% attendance. Research by the Department for Education show that pupils with poor attendance are likely to experience: Loss of learning – gaps in knowledge and skills, and a sense of 'not understanding'.

95% attendance is the equivalent of missing two full weeks of school in a year and 92% attendance is the equivalent of missing three full weeks of school in a year. Your child records their attendance in their planner every week. Please check this and contact the school for support if you feel your child is struggling to attend regularly.

Friends of The Derby

The next Friends of The Derby Meeting will be on **Tuesday 11th May 2025 6-7pm in the Inspire building.** You are all warmly invited to join us to support current and future developments of our school.



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Future Events

Thursday 1st May 2025 6.00pm - Year 7 Parents' Evening
Monday 18th May 2025 6.00pm - Parent Meeting for Thailand Trip
Monday 26th May 2025 to Friday 30th May 2025 - Half-term
Thursday 26th June 2025 6.30pm - Year 6 Parents' Transition Meeting
Monday 30th June - Friday 4th July - Experience Week
Friday 4th July 2025 - Year 11 Prom
Thursday 10th July 2025 – 4.00pm - Year 9 Parents' Evening
Friday 11th July 2025 1.00pm - Sports Day
Thursday 17th July 2025 5.00pm - Garden Party
Friday 18th July 2025 - Prize Giving
Tuesday 22nd July 2025 - END OF TERM

Three Tower Endurance Challenge

The PE team will embark on the Three Towers Challenge on Saturday, April 26th. Staff and students will walk from Rivington Barn to Peel Tower - a 21-mile endurance hike expected to take 7–8 hours.

Support our team in raising funds for much-needed sports equipment by joining us for the entire challenge, tackling part of the route, or cheering us on at Peel Tower. Alternatively, donate here: <https://gofund.me/f9b61edf>



THREE TOWERS FUNDRAISER

Join us on an endurance hike to raise funds for the PE Department!

Date: Saturday, 26 April 2025

Start Location: The Shoulder of Mutton pub car park, Holcombe Village

Route: A 21-mile challenge via Peel Tower, Darwen Tower, and Rivington Pike, finishing at Rivington Barn

Duration: 7 - 8 hours

Fundraising Goal: Raising money for new trampolines for the department

WHO CAN JOIN?

Year 9 & 10 students can count hours towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Friends, family, and all members of our school community are welcome! Walk the full route or join for part of the way.

HOW TO SIGN UP:

Return the reply slip to Miss Leng by Friday, 21 March 2025. Further details on the route, timings, and sponsorship will be provided upon sign-up.

For more information or to sign up, contact Miss Leng.

sleng@thederbyhighschool.co.uk

THE DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
Inspired to make a difference

Thank you for your continued support – it really does make a difference.
With kind regards.



MS C H HUBERT
Headteacher



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