



Senior High Notes Friday 12th December 2025

Dear Parents

As we come to the end of the Autumn Term, I want to reflect on one of the standout moments of the year so far, our Carol Service at Derby Cathedral on Wednesday evening.

It was a genuine privilege to see our whole school community, students, staff, families, come together in such a historic and atmospheric setting. The service opened with a beautifully played trumpet duo, setting the tone for what followed, thoughtful readings, confident performances, and music that showcased the full breadth of talent across the school. From our youngest performers through to our Year 13 soloist leading Once in Royal David's City, it was an occasion that captured the strength, spirit, and cohesion of Derby High.

As we step back and look at the term, it has been both busy and immensely rewarding. Students and staff alike have given their all, whether in the classroom, on the sports field, in rehearsals, or through the many events and opportunities that shape our school life.

For our Year 11 and Year 13 students, the Christmas break marks an important point in their academic journey, with mock examinations awaiting them in January. These assessments are not about the grades, their real value lies in the revision process, working out what they know, identifying the areas they need to strengthen, and learning how to prepare effectively. This reflection and refinement are essential steps towards achieving their potential in the summer, and we will be supporting them closely through the months ahead.

This week we have been delighted to share our annual yearbook, Highlights, with our students, parents and staff. We hope you enjoy reflecting on the last year and sense the heart of Derby High in each event and story.

As we head into the holiday, I hope all our families enjoy a well-deserved and restful Christmas break. Thank you for your ongoing support this term, it is felt and appreciated. We look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school on Tuesday 6th January.

Best wishes,

Amy Chapman

Christmas Carol Service

Wednesday night's Carol Service at Derby Cathedral was a truly special evening that brought together our school community in a festive celebration. The Cathedral echoed with the harmonious sounds of our students' musical talents, marking the perfect culmination for our exceptional music department. The performances were nothing short of incredible, showcasing the dedication and hard work that our students have put into their musical pursuits throughout the term.

Thank you to all our young musicians, readers and the congregation for such a magical event. For more photographs from our Carol Service please [click here](#) to visit our website gallery. The password to view the gallery is: CarolBells



Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch

Yesterday was Christmas Jumper Day, and our school was teeming with festive spirit as we raised money for Save the Children. From bright knits to sparkling hats, it was fantastic to see our community celebrating for a great cause. Thank you to everyone who donated so generously.

We also came together for a traditional Christmas lunch in our refectory, where students and staff enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by our wonderful catering team. Thank you to all our catering team for a fantastic lunch.



Harry Potter Studios – Report from Rosie, Year 11

On Tuesday, Year 11 Drama students and Year 8 visited the Harry Potter Studios. The trip included the full studio tour, with sets such as Diagon Alley, Gringotts Bank, and even a model of Hogwarts (which was particularly beautiful as it was covered in snow for Christmas!). We also took part in a short lesson on costume and design on the Harry Potter set, where we got to see the real costumes of some of the most iconic characters, including Luna Lovegood, Lord Voldemort and even Harry Potter himself. The detail in the sets and costumes was incredible, and the whole trip was amazingly fun!



Year 10 & Year 12 Christmas Market

On Tuesday and Wednesday our enterprising students set up their stalls to sell the product of this term's hard work and planning. On offer to all students and staff were stylish tote bags and bulbs, beautiful artificial flowers, detailed hand-crafted charms and bracelets and assorted festive gifts and toys. Thank you to all the valued customers for their support and business and well done to all the entrepreneurs for their hard work, superb customer service and enthusiasm. The next business market will be just before the Easter break.



Highlights Yearbook 2024 – 2025

Our annual yearbook, Highlights, is now available. Your child should have brought a printed copy home yesterday or today as a keepsake of last academic year at Derby High. A digital copy is also available to read on our website. To read online please click the following link: [Highlights 2024/2025 - Derby High School](#)

We hope you enjoy reading our latest edition. Thanks to all our students and staff for their contributions.



Year 10 Netball

On Tuesday after school, our Year 10 netball team welcomed Woodlands for a friendly fixture. From the first whistle, the team set a high standard, showing confidence in possession and real sharpness in their movement. Their dominance was clear across all areas of the court, with players working hard to maintain intensity and control throughout the game.

The attacking unit displayed excellent, fast-paced play, moving the ball swiftly through the centre third and creating numerous scoring opportunities. There were some outstanding links between players, demonstrating great awareness and communication. A range of shooters contributed to the final tally, showcasing accuracy, composure, and impressive long-range efforts.

Defensively, the team were just as strong, applying consistent pressure, making interceptions, and preventing Woodlands from finding any sustained rhythm with their shooting.

At full time, the team secured a superb 38–11 victory - a result that reflected both their skill and their teamwork. A fantastic performance from everyone involved - well done to all who played!



Year 9 Netball

Last week, our Year 9 team hosted Woodlands for a friendly fixture, with the visitors bringing a large squad that allowed them to field two different teams across the four quarters. This meant the first half was played against their B team, with the final two quarters against their A team.

In the opening quarters, our players settled quickly and worked superbly together. Strong movement through the court, confident passing, and excellent defensive pressure allowed the team to dominate play. Their efforts were rewarded with several well-crafted goals, while Woodlands' opportunities were effectively shut down by determined defending.

As the game moved into the final quarters, the intensity increased. Woodlands' A team posed a tougher challenge, showing greater speed and accuracy. Although they began to take more control in the final stages, our players continued to compete with real grit, maintaining their focus and fighting for every ball.

At full time, the match finished 16 - 8, a well-deserved result that reflected the team's hard work, adaptability, and determination throughout the game. Well done to everyone who played!



Year 8 Girls Football Report

The Year 8 girls showed outstanding determination during their recent fixtures, playing all three matches with only five players due to illness and absences. With no substitutes and little chance to rest, they worked tirelessly for each other, communicating well and staying organised throughout.

Although they didn't secure a win, their teamwork, positive attitude and resilience were clear in every game. They defended bravely, created attacking chances when they could, and never allowed fatigue to affect their effort.

A huge well done to the whole team for representing the school with such character and commitment.



Year 7 Basketball Tournament

The Year 7 basketball team produced a determined and energetic display throughout a busy tournament, showing excellent teamwork, resilience, and skill across all seven fixtures.

The tournament began with a tough opening match against St Benedict's, where Derby High worked hard but were beaten 12–3. Despite the setback, the team regrouped brilliantly and responded with a narrow and hard-fought 8–7 victory over Noel Baker. Confidence grew from there, and this was evident in the third fixture, a composed 4–0 win against Woodlands, where the defence stood strong throughout.

The fourth match against West Park was another close contest. Derby High battled well but were edged out 8–6 despite strong pressure late on. The team bounced back superbly once again, producing a convincing 12–4 win over Landau Forte, followed by a thrilling 6–5 victory against AMA that showcased real determination in the closing moments.

The final match saw Derby High finish in style with a commanding 10–4 win over John Port, rounding off a very positive set of performances.

Throughout the tournament, Seth and Freddie worked tirelessly, especially with their movement off the ball and their commitment to winning rebounds. Jasper and Julian also made important contributions at both ends of the court, supporting attacks while maintaining solid defensive shape.

The Players of the Tournament were jointly awarded to Benjamin, who once again led the team with his consistent scoring and calm control across every match, and Connor, whose outstanding steals repeatedly turned defence into attack and were crucial in several victories.

Overall, it was an excellent tournament for the Year 7 team, full of effort, teamwork and improvement in every game.

Library Rewards

Molly Year 11 has earned her library Badge this week. As one of our returning librarians she has worked consistently, even bringing library display tasks home on days she was unable to volunteer!

Well done to Emily and Sophie Year 9 for earning their badges too. Emily and Sophie are fantastic librarians, and I am so happy they chose to return to the team this year. They have been very driven to complete their tasks and earn their badge this term.

Finally, for badges, congratulations to Zainab, Farrah and Advika Year 13 for being exquisite role models for the library and student body. They have worked towards earning their badges with Miss Ridley and are an asset to the team.

Our Christmas tree display is made of mostly recycled materials (the green tree being made of old hang files) and the snowflakes from old books. Atop our tree is our Library's 'star' book (the Chemistry revision guide being the most borrowed book in the school).

A huge thank you goes to everyone who got stuck in (student librarians and non-librarians alike) who spent their time cutting out, adding hangers to the mini books and dressing the tree... I think we can all agree you did a great job.



Art & Design Photography



Colour

Art Photography Competition 2025/26

Theme: **Colour**

Closing date: Friday 9th January 2026

Photographs need to be emailed in

a Jpeg format to Mrs Martin-Smith

(smartin-smith@derbyhigh.derby.sch.uk)

KS3, KS4-5 and staff winner and runner up prizes

Get creative!



The Art & Design Photography Competition is an opportunity for both students and staff to get creative.

The theme this year is 'Colour' ... be creative in your thinking and composing. You could consider ideas such as, seasonal colour, monochrome, blur, artificial colour, the golden hour, etc.

Photographs can be taken on camera or phone camera as long as the resolution is of a good quality.

There will be a first place and runner up in each category: U3-U4/ L5-U6 and of course staff!

Photographic entries need to be emailed as a Jpeg file to Mrs Martin-Smith (smartin-smith@derbyhigh.derby.sch.uk) and clearly state your full name and form group.

The closing date for the competition is Friday 9th January 2026 (plenty of time to be creative over the holiday).

An exhibition of all of the photographic entries will go on a virtual display for you all to enjoy.

Any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

All entries will receive a House point.

Have fun!

DHS staff raise money for the Padley Centre

We recently sent off £150 to the Padley Centre in Derby, part of YMCA Derbyshire, offering a safe space to those facing homelessness, poverty and isolation. The money was raised through the sales of festive themed 3D printed items such as snowflake spinners and Christmas tree fidget ornaments. Find out more about the Padley Centre and how to donate at <https://ymcaderbyshire.org.uk/our-services/padley-group/>



Dan Black Belt Grading

Jacob has achieved an impressive milestone by passing his 1st Dan Black Belt grading. He has dedicated four and a half years to karate, progressing through 11 Kyu gradings before beginning his Black Belt course in January. Over the past year, Jacob has completed more than 130 hours of training, including an intensive boot camp led by Japanese instructor Sensei Sakagami, 8th Dan. The accompanying photo shows Jacob with his Sensei shortly after receiving his Black Belt on Sunday.



Activate Camps 2026 is live!

We're thrilled to host the return of Activate Camps to Derby High School next year.

Book now to secure your child's place with their launch offer!

Multi Sport Camp, for 5 to 14 year olds, Easter 30th March to 2nd April

Multi Sport Camp, for 5 to 14 year olds, Summer 27th July to 21st August

Netball Fever, for 7 to 14 year olds, Summer 4th August to 6th August

- 25% OFF until 31st December 2025 using the code **SAVE25**
- 20% OFF until 31st January 2026 using the code **EXTRA20**

[Click here to visit the booking webpage.](#)



Safeguarding Corner

Safeguarding Podcast – Winter Wellbeing

This week we are revisiting last year's podcast with Mrs. Bellman and Mr. Thornton. This week we hear how we can boost our Winter Wellbeing during the festive break from school. To listen to the podcast [please click here](#).



Beacon House have published a brilliant collection of resources specially designed by their therapists to support regulation, connection and rest during December. Take a look here: [Winter Resources](#)

Dates For Your Diary

Monday 5th January – Staff Training Day, No students

Tuesday 6th January – Start of term for all students

Tuesday 6th January – Start of Year 11 & 13 mocks

Friday 9th January – Engineering Scheme Launch

Wednesday 14th January – End of Year 13 mocks

Friday 16th January – KS3 House Chess

Useful Links