



Senior High Notes Friday 17th October 2025

Dear Parents

As we reach the end of this first half term, I have found myself reflecting on what makes our school community so special, that strong sense of belonging that we see every day in so many different ways.

Last week's celebration of World Mental Health Day was a perfect example. Our form groups embraced their themes with such enthusiasm and creativity. From coordinated colour schemes to imaginative costumes, every form found their own way to come together. It was joyful to see students and staff alike celebrating individuality while also strengthening the sense of unity within their groups.



That same spirit of togetherness has been shining through in our House competitions this term. Whether on the netball court, in a fast-paced game of bench ball, or in rehearsals for House Dance, the camaraderie and healthy competition between Houses continues to bring everyone together.



Our recent Open Morning was another wonderful reminder of the strength of our community. The feedback we received from visiting families was extremely positive, so many commented on the genuine warmth, enthusiasm and professionalism of both our students and staff. They spoke of the welcoming atmosphere that could be felt throughout the school, the evident pride students take in their learning, and the positive relationships that underpin every interaction.



And of course, no reflection on this half term would be complete without mentioning last night's magnificent Lower School production of Peter Pan. Every student on stage gave their all, bringing J.M. Barrie's timeless story to life with confidence, humour, and a wonderful sense of teamwork. My thanks go to the staff who supported the students so brilliantly, and to the families who encouraged them along the way.

Finally, I want to commend our new students across all year groups, who have settled in remarkably well. They have embraced new routines, formed friendships, and contributed to the life of the school with confidence and kindness. Their smooth transition speaks volumes about the welcoming nature of our community and the support shown by their peers.

Belonging sits at the heart of life at Derby High. When students feel truly known, valued, and connected, they flourish, both academically and personally. It gives them the confidence to take risks in their learning, to show kindness and empathy, and to contribute meaningfully to the life of the school. This sense of belonging is not accidental; it grows from the daily acts of care, encouragement, and respect that define our community. It is what enables every student, whatever their starting point or stage, to thrive and to feel proud of the part they play in our shared story.

As we come to the end of a busy and vibrant half term, I would like to thank everyone, students, staff, and families, for their energy, positivity, and support. I wish you all a restful and refreshing half term break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 3rd November.

Best wishes,

Amy Chapman

Head

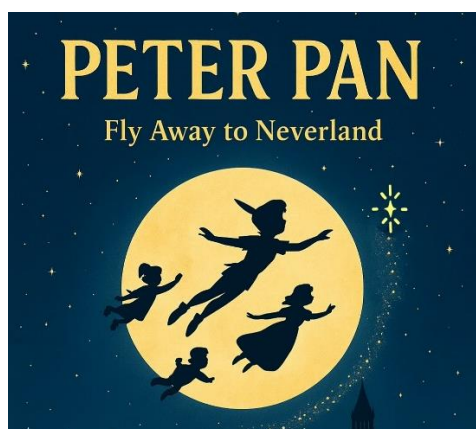
Lower School Production – A Magical Evening in Neverland

Last night's Lower School production was a truly wonderful occasion, bringing together students from across the school. It was especially lovely to see so many of our Year 7 pupils performing alongside older students on stage.

Based on the original works of J. M. Barrie, this enchanting adaptation by L. Henry Dowell—beautifully directed by our own Jenny and Alana (Year 13)—transported the audience to Neverland, where children never grow up.

A huge thank you to all the students who performed and to those who worked tirelessly behind the scenes. You were all fantastic!

Photographs from the evening will be available in the school website gallery next week.



House Dance

Over the past week, our Senior School students have been working extremely hard on their dance routines in preparation for House Dance, which took place on Wednesday. All houses demonstrated outstanding teamwork, dedication, and creativity. A big well done to all the students for their enthusiasm and effort, and special thanks to the House Captains for leading and choreographing such impressive performances. Congratulations to the winning house — St Patrick!





Derby Cathedral Lunchtime Concert

Congratulations to Manroop (Year 13), Anabelle (Year 13), George (Year 13), Jessica (Year 12), Sam (Year 12) and Sophie (Year 10) on their accomplished solo performances at the lunchtime recital at Derby Cathedral today. The programme included performances on the piano, flute, cello and voice and ranged in style from Baroque, Classical and Romantic music to Impressionist, Neoclassical and Jazz music. The audience and cathedral staff were very welcoming and appreciative. Thank you to our talented musicians for a wonderful musical occasion.



Year 7 and 8 Netball

Our Year 7 and 8 netball team took part in the Derby City Schools' Inspire Netball Festival held at Allestree Woodlands School on Thursday. The event was a brilliant opportunity for students to grow in confidence, develop their game play, and enjoy non-competitive, friendly matches against other schools.

Throughout the afternoon, the team played four games against Murray Park, Derby Cathedral, Derby Moor, and Landau Forte. Every student showed fantastic progress and teamwork: Maryam and Jasmine improved their marking, especially in the defensive circle; Amal worked well to get free and create opportunities as a playmaker; Ishika strengthened her marking of her player; and Chloe, Riti, and Aisha demonstrated great improvement in their shooting technique and accuracy — with the team securing an impressive four goals across the matches!

A huge well done to all who took part. It was wonderful to see such teamwork, enthusiasm, and progress on display. You represented the school brilliantly!



Harvest Donations for The Padley Centre

On Thursday, representatives from The Padley Centre visited Derby High School to collect the generous Harvest donations from our school community. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed — The Padley Centre team were overwhelmed by the incredible amount of food, toiletries, and household essentials we were able to provide. Your kindness will make a real difference to so many individuals and families in need.



A Flavourful Visit from Chef Dipna Anand

On Monday 13th October, we were delighted to welcome chef and author Dipna Anand back to Derby High! Dipna first visited us in July 2024 as our special guest to officially open the refectory, and it was a pleasure to have her return once again.

This time, Dipna shared her passion for authentic Punjabi flavours with a modern twist, inspiring both students and staff throughout the day. Her morning assembly for Pre-School to Year 6 set the tone perfectly, encouraging our younger pupils to explore and enjoy the exciting variety of dishes that would be served at lunchtime.

By lunch time, the refectory was alive with the aroma of spices and the sizzle of fresh ingredients from the central Theatre Kitchen. Students and staff eagerly sampled the dishes from Dipna's special menu, with many commenting on just how delicious everything tasted.

In the afternoon, our A Level Business Studies students had the opportunity to take part in a Q&A session with Dipna, gaining valuable insights into the challenges of running a successful restaurant and launching a new gastropub. This session offered an excellent chance for students to apply their classroom learning to a real-world business case.

It was a wonderful celebration of food, culture, and learning, and we look forward to welcoming Dipna back to Derby High again soon.



'The Great Gatsby' Theatre Trip

Last Thursday evening, English and Drama students visited Derby Theatre to watch 'The Great Gatsby'.

We were entranced by an imaginative set and magical lighting, which brought the 1920s glamour of the novel to life. The production's evocative use of song and dance added to the sensitive interpretation of the text.

The tragic ending of the production was equally striking - a real jump-scare moment.

This memorable production will, hopefully, illuminate the students' reading of the text and inspire their writing.



Library News

We have had an incredible start to the year in the library, the new and existing student librarian team have been incredible and have worked diligently towards earning their new student librarian badge.

A huge well done to Summer B (in year 8) who was the first to earn their library badge this term! She has completed a row and column on her Student Librarian Bingo chart. There are many others who are part of the team that are also well on their way to earning their badges at the start of next half term. There will be lots of sparkling blazer lapels around the school soon.

Osberton International Horse Trials

Congratulations to Daisy (Year 11) who competed at Osberton International Horse Trials in Nottingham last week. Here's Daisy account of the competition;

"I competed in the CCIP2-L (top level for ponies). Started with a pb dressage of 30.2 to sit in 6th after the first day of competition. Then went clear inside the time xc to stay in 6th overnight. Then on the last day did a nice showjumping round just to have 2 poles in a course with only 2 clears moving up to finish in 5th. I was really pleased with the result, and it also means I have gotten into the GB u16 talent pathway for the 2026 season."*

I also took my young horse to the event for her international debut. She did a pb dressage of 34, had a few poles showjumping but finished the week amazingly with a great clear cross country to finish in the top half of a big section."

Well done Daisy, this is fantastic news. We look forward to hearing how next season goes!



Year 9 Football match report

The Year 9 boys' football team welcomed UTC to Derby High for their first fixture of the year.

From the whistle it was clear it was going to be a fast-paced game with lots of action. Captain Noah led the way with his performance in centre midfield, strong in defence and constantly involved in attacks with strong ball carrying. Those around him worked well in attack with Arjun, Jakey and Jack working particularly well to create opportunities. This platform was given by the solid defensive unit throughout the match. George, Leo, Ben and Zach were excellent, staying strong in the tackle and feeding the ball to the Derby midfield, Aiden's introduction into the defence from the bench saw no drop in the standard set from the back line for the rest of the team. Whilst Derby High dominated possession and territory they could not find the breakthrough.

In the second half Derby continued to control the game. When UTC did break forward, the defensive unit saw off their attacks, with keeper George making a good save when called upon. As Derby pressed forward for the much-deserved goal they won a corner, so had one final chance with the last play of the game. An excellent delivery from captain and man of the match Noah led to a fantastic header from his centre midfield partner Arjun to give the boys a much deserved 1-0 win.

A fantastic team performance.



Year 11 Netball Match Report v Woodlands

The Year 11 team — Emma, Liz, Layla, Millie, Charlie, Mollie, Alex, Summar, and Hannah — faced a very strong opposition in what proved to be a tough, fast-paced game. Despite the strength and skill of the other team, our players showed fantastic determination and resilience from start to finish.

Every player worked hard defensively and kept fighting for every ball, showing brilliant team spirit and support for one another. There were some excellent passages of play through the court and determined shooting under pressure.

Although the result didn't go our way, the team can be really proud of how hard they battled throughout. A great effort from everyone!

Safeguarding Corner

Podcast Episode 49: Vapes and Snus

Today on the podcast, Mrs. Bellman takes another look at the growing issue of vapes and snus. She's joined by Mr. Wood, Head of PSHEE, to unpack the latest trends and talk about what every parent should be aware of.

To listen to the podcast please [click here](#).



Safeguarding Corner Podcast

Episode 49

In 2

Vapes and Snus



Claire Bellman
Deputy Head - Pastoral



Simon Wood
Head of PSHEE—Seniors

For further information please visit the following links:

[The rising use of nicotine pouches snus - and risk to gums and teeth - BBC News](#)

[Nicotine pouches - ASH Scotland](#)

[Young people and vaping - Better Health - NHS](#)

Medical Notice

Parents of children with allergies who use a Jext pen may find this useful.

A new Jext App is available to help with administering the pen — [click here for more information](#).

Dates For Your Diary

Wednesday 22nd October – Iceland Trip Departs

Sunday 26th October – Iceland Trip Returns

Monday 3rd November – Start of Term

Thursday 6th November – Sixth Form Open Evening for Year 11, refreshments 5:45pm for a 6pm start.

Saturday 8th November - Gold Duke of Edinburgh Navigation weekend

Tuesday 11th November - Remembrance Day

Tuesday 11th November – Year 11 Sixth Form Scholarship applications deadline

Wednesday 12th November – Year 10 Learning Review meetings (Online)

Thursday 13th November – Year 10 Learning Review Meetings (Online)