



Senior High Notes Friday 21st November 2025

Dear Parents

We began the week with an uplifting and thought-provoking Senior School assembly led by Miss Lomas on Monday. As all of you know, her enthusiasm for mathematics is infectious, but what really stood out this week was her message about the power of both passion and enthusiasm, and how they shape not just what we enjoy, but who we become.

Miss Lomas explored the subtle but important distinction between the two: enthusiasm is that bright spark of excitement we feel in the moment, while passion is the deeper, long-lasting drive that keeps us going even when things become challenging. Using the late Steve Irwin as an example, she showed how the combination of the two can create a life filled with purpose, joy, and impact.

Her assembly touched on something central to school life. At Derby High, school is not only about academic achievement; it is equally about helping each young person discover what truly excites them, what ignites that spark, and what might grow into passion. Whether it's maths, sport, music, debating, coding, literature, leadership, art, volunteering, or something entirely different, those interests shape confidence, resilience, and character. When students find something, they love, it lifts everything else: motivation increases, wellbeing improves, and even the toughest days feel a little easier.

This idea links closely to the philosophy of Kurt Hahn, the educational innovator. Hahn believed deeply that young people flourish when they are challenged, supported, and encouraged to discover their inner strengths. He argued that education should kindle passion, because passion leads to responsibility, service, courage and compassion. Kurt Hahn said, *"There is more in you than you think."* That "more" often reveals itself when a student finds something they care about deeply.

Miss Lomas's message was a timely reminder: enthusiasm may start the journey, but passion sustains it. Our job as a school is to give students the opportunities, the encouragement and the space to explore, to try, to fail, to try again, and ultimately to find that thing that lights them up.

As we move through the term, I hope every student continues to be curious, to say yes to new experiences, and to notice when something makes them come alive. That spark might just grow into the passion that shapes their future.

Best wishes,

Amy Chapman

Head

A Level Textiles Trip to Harrogate

Yesterday, the A Level Textiles students had the opportunity to visit the international Textiles exhibition in Harrogate. The students spent the day viewing exhibitions of contemporary textile artists, talking with graduates about their work and exploring different techniques and processes.

A fantastic day with a very festive feel at the end!



Philosophy Success!

On World Philosophy Day (Thursday 20th November 2025) we went to Repton school to take part in an inter-school philosophy competition, judged by Neil Sinclair, Professor of Philosophy at Nottingham University.

The day started with a warmup where we joined forces with the other schools to work together to consider philosophical questions such as 'what is a number?' and 'is violence ever morally right?' We enjoyed taking time to reflect on our philosophical skills before getting into our teams to explore different ethical dilemmas.

The main competition required us to discuss an unseen philosophical case study, requiring quick-thinking, teamwork and oracy skills. We had to explore the issue of property and whether we have a moral obligation to share property with others.

All teams philosophised to a high standard, but the Derby High team managed to secure first place in a tough competition.

A special mention to Eve, who also won a prize for being one of the highest scoring individual senior students.

Thank you to Mrs Saunders for organising the event, and to Repton School for hosting!

By Pippy, River, Eve, and Roshni



Year 12 Truly Educated First Aid training

In Truly Educated this week Year 12 were joined by Rupesh from the British Red Cross for a First Aid training session. Working in groups the students learned the basics of CPR, treating burns, managing seizures and dealing with broken bones. We were also taught about how to access and use defibrillators. Hopefully students won't often need to put these skills to use but they should now feel a lot more ready to if they must.



Year 9 Basketball – Derby City Tournament

The Year 9 boys had their first Derby City basketball tournament with an afternoon of determination, teamwork and steady improvement. Although it took a little while for the team to find their rhythm, the players grew stronger with each game and finished the event strongly.

The opening fixture against a well-organised John Port side proved a slow start, with the boys narrowly losing 9–6 despite creating several good chances. However, the response was immediate. In the second match, the team showed far greater confidence and attacking intent, securing a well-earned 10–6 victory over Woodlands.

The third game against Derby Moor saw the boys dominate from start to finish, controlling possession and creating numerous opportunities. Unfortunately, the points didn't quite follow, and the match ended in a frustrating 2–2 draw.

The team finished the tournament well, defeating St Benedict's 4–2 with composed defending and sharp finishing.

There were strong performances across the court: Jakey and Arjun drove the team forward with energy and skill, while Tom and Finley were solid and dependable in disrupting opposition attacks. Noah stood out throughout the afternoon, demonstrating control in both attack and defence.

Year 7 Boys Football – Repton Prep

The Year 7 boys produced a superb all-round performance as they ran out 7-0 winners against one of the Repton Prep teams. From the first whistle, the team showed confidence on the ball, great movement off it, and a real willingness to play positive, attacking football.

The goals were spread impressively across the team. Noah and Seth each grabbed well-deserved braces, finishing clinically after some excellent build-up play. Jack added another with a composed strike, while Freddie capped off a strong display with a cool finish of his own. The other goal came in unusual fashion with Sarvan's thunderous effort crashing off the woodwork before deflecting in off a defender for an unfortunate own goal – though the stunning strike deserved one of its own.

Beyond the scoreline, the quality of the performance stood out. The boys made excellent use of space, passed with purpose and intelligence, and controlled the tempo throughout. Several players operated out of their usual positions but adapted brilliantly, showing versatility and a strong understanding of the game.

A hugely encouraging performance and a great platform as we look ahead to the league starting next term.

Year 7 Girls Football – City League

The Year 7 girls made an excellent start to their City League campaign with two strong performances full of energy, teamwork and determination.

In their opening fixture, the girls set the tone with an impressive 4-0 victory over Murray Park. Racil was in outstanding form, completing a brilliant hat-trick with confident finishing, while Bea added a well-taken goal to round off a dominant display. The team moved the ball well, pressed with real intent and showed great organisation at the back to secure a clean sheet.

The second match against a very strong Chellaston A side proved a tougher test, and despite a 3-0 defeat, the girls played some excellent football. They worked hard throughout, created chances of their own, and showed real resilience and character against high-quality opposition.

There were many positives across both games, but Lily stood out for her composure, work rate and all-round contribution, earning player of the evening.

A promising start to the league with plenty to build on.



KS3 Badminton

On Thursday, our KS3 boys' and girls' badminton teams took part in the Derby City Schools' Badminton Competition at Noel Baker. Each team of four players rotated through a series of short, high-intensity singles and doubles matches, with five games played against every opposing school.

The boys battled through a competitive pool featuring Murray Park, Lees Brook, and Littleover. Against Murray Park, Jack impressed with a well-earned singles win. Their momentum continued into the fixture with Lees Brook, where Jayan secured another strong singles victory for the team. Despite their best efforts, the boys were unable to claim any wins in their final match against a strong Littleover side. Throughout all three fixtures, the team showed excellent teamwork, commitment and resilience.

The girls faced a demanding round-robin format, taking on Littleover, Murray Park, Derby Moor and St Benedict's. Although they were unable to secure wins against Littleover or Murray Park, they continued to push themselves and show admirable perseverance. Their hard work paid off in their match against Derby Moor, where Amy claimed a singles victory before joining Isla to earn a fantastic doubles win. The girls finished their final fixture against St Benedict's without further wins, but their determination never wavered. Their spirit and attitude throughout were a real credit to the school.

A huge well done to all who played: Jack, Jayan, Zach and Adam for the boys, and Mahi, Amy, Kieranraj and Isla for the girls!



Scholars Event

The Year 7 and Year 8 Academic and Drama scholars took part in DHS's first ever mock trial on Monday this week, led by Ms Kanellis. Designed to encourage critical thinking, collaboration and develop confidence, the 2-hour session led students through an introduction to the criminal justice system in the UK and saw them work on presenting cases for both the prosecution and defence, having evaluated evidence from a range of sources. Following this, everyone was assigned a specific role to play in the trial, where our magistrates had the difficult task of reaching a verdict. Although found guilty, it wasn't unanimous, and we discovered a different set of students being magistrates might have led to a different verdict. It certainly gave us all some food for thought and maybe planted some seeds for future lawyers! Well done to the students involved who fully embraced the opportunity and rose to the challenge of stepping out of their comfort zone.

Taekwondo Success for Sargunpreet

Congratulations to Sargunpreet in Year 7 on her outstanding performance at her first Taekwondo competition. She was thrilled with her results, earning a gold medal in patterns and a silver medal in sparring. Sargunpreet won both of her pattern rounds and delivered a strong effort in sparring, winning one round and narrowly missing the other. Well done, Sargunpreet!



Safeguarding Corner

Safeguarding Podcast - Episode 50, Group Chats and Online Communication

While social media can help students stay connected, it can also be challenging, and although these platforms operate outside school hours, we feel it is important to address how online communication affects relationships and wellbeing within our community.

In this week's podcast Mrs Bellman (Deputy Head - Pastoral) and Mrs Balfour (Head of Year 7) discuss group chats and online communication. To list to the podcast please [click here](#).



At Derby High School, we promote curiosity, kindness, and courage in students' online interactions by encouraging them to consider others' perspectives, communicate respectfully, and stand up against unkind behaviour. We would like to remind our students of the following key points:

WhatsApp's age recommendation of 13, the importance of managing screen time—especially avoiding late-night messaging—awareness of the “online disinhibition effect,” and the need to prioritise kindness in all digital communications.

Group chats can become overwhelming or lead to gossip, its important students understand how crucial it is to seek help rather than pass on unkindness, and the value of face-to-face conversations in reducing misunderstandings.

Students should pause before sending messages and consider whether they are kind, true, necessary, and appropriate. Parents support at home in reinforcing these messages, encouraging open conversations, and guiding children to seek help or report concerns when needed is greatly appreciated.

For Parents - Discord Family Center

Discord, the app, is still very popular particularly with gamers and like many apps it has safety features, including features for parents/guardians. The Discord Family Center is *“a tool built to help parents and guardians stay informed and involved in your teen's Discord experience while respecting their privacy and autonomy”*. The safety features have recently been updated and now include:

- Ability to view the activity feed.

- Get weekly email summaries,
- Manage safety and privacy settings.

To find out more about these features and more, and how to set up Family Center you can view the Discord Family Center [HERE](#). There is also a parent hub which has lots of information and resources for parents such as user controls, moderation, reporting and more. You can find the parent hub [HERE](#).

Dates For Your Diary

Monday 24th November – Model UN day

Wednesday 26th November – Year 7 Learning Review meetings

Thursday 27th November – Senior Flu Vaccinations

Friday 28th November – House Drama Final

Tuesday 2nd December – Senior Christmas Concert 6pm to 7pm

Wednesday 3rd December – LAMDA Examinations

Monday 8th December – Scholarship Awards Letters sent to Year 11 for Year 12

Wednesday 10th December – Carol Service at Derby Cathedral 7pm to 8pm

Thursday 11th December – Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day

Friday 12th December – end of term 3:45pm – no late waiting