



**Senior High Notes Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026**

*Dear Parents*

This week we welcomed an ISI inspection team into school. We had been expecting the call and were ready for it when it came. Over the course of the week, six inspectors spent time in lessons and activities, spoke with pupils, met with senior leaders, Heads of Department, subject leaders, pastoral staff, and held discussions with governors. They also reviewed a wide range of documentation and evidence, enabling them to see clearly what we do each day and the outcomes for our pupils.

I would like to thank all parents who completed the survey at the beginning of the week. Your engagement and feedback are an important part of the inspection process and are very much appreciated.

Whilst I received initial verbal feedback from the Lead Inspector last night, the report will now go through ISI's editing and quality assurance processes. The findings therefore remain confidential until the final report is published, which we expect to be next half term.

Finally, my thanks go to our pupils. As always, they were truly wonderful. Every member of the inspection team commented on how polite, thoughtful, and well-behaved our pupils are, and how confidently they spoke about their experiences at Derby High. They continue to be our very best ambassadors, and we are incredibly proud of them.

Best wishes,

*Amy Chapman*

*Head*

#### **Derbyshire Schools' Cross Country Championships**

A group of students travelled to West Park, Long Eaton, to compete in the Derbyshire Schools' Cross Country Championships, representing Derby City after strong performances at the city event. Wet conditions made the course extremely muddy, providing a tough challenge for all runners. A top six finish in any race secured qualification for the National Schools' Cross Country Championships in Liverpool.

Tabitha competed in the Year 7 Girls' race over 2.5km, showing great determination to finish 27th out of 100 runners. In the Junior Boys' race, Zach handled the difficult conditions well to finish 45th over 3.1km.

In the Intermediate Boys' race, Joel (20th), Mason (42nd), Tom (52nd) and Ned (63rd) competed over a demanding 5.1km course. In the Senior Boys' category, Sam produced an outstanding performance to finish 2nd, securing automatic qualification for the National Championships.

The Intermediate Girls' team saw Indi finish an excellent 4th to qualify for nationals, with Charlie (9th) and Millie (12th) narrowly missing out. Phoebe finished a strong 30th. In the Senior Girls' race, Connie placed 8th and will hope for a call-up.

Overall, it was a fantastic afternoon of racing, with all students showing resilience and commitment in very challenging conditions. Well done to everyone who competed.



### **U13 Basketball Tournament**

Derby High produced an outstanding performance at the U13 Basketball Tournament this week, finishing the event undefeated after a series of impressive victories against strong opposition.

The team faced a challenging schedule but rose to the occasion, securing well-earned wins against West Park School, Noel-Baker Academy and Lees Brook Academy. Each game tested the players in different ways, yet Derby High showed great composure, teamwork and resilience throughout the evening.

What stood out most was the clear progress the squad has made. The players are beginning to really understand and apply a range of strategies and tactics, moving the ball well, defending with purpose and making smarter decisions under pressure. This growing basketball intelligence was key to overcoming such competitive teams.

There were strong contributions across the squad, with every player playing their part. A special mention must go to Zi Chen, who was dominant throughout the evening. Zi Chen's all-round performance, confidence on the ball and impact at both ends of the court set the tone and inspired the team.

Overall, it was an excellent tournament for Derby High U13s and a performance to be proud of. The undefeated record reflects not only talent, but also hard work, teamwork and a developing understanding of the game.



### Year 9 Netball

On Tuesday after school, our Year 9 netball team welcomed Littleover Community School for a home fixture against a very strong side. The girls showed great determination, focusing on developing the power of their passes and moving into effective spaces rather than crowding the ball. Their hard work paid off with some well-earned goals, and although Littleover proved too strong on the day, the team's effort and energy never dampened throughout the match. The final score was 18 - 3, with Simren awarded Players' Player for an excellent performance. Well done to everyone who played for their commitment and hard work!

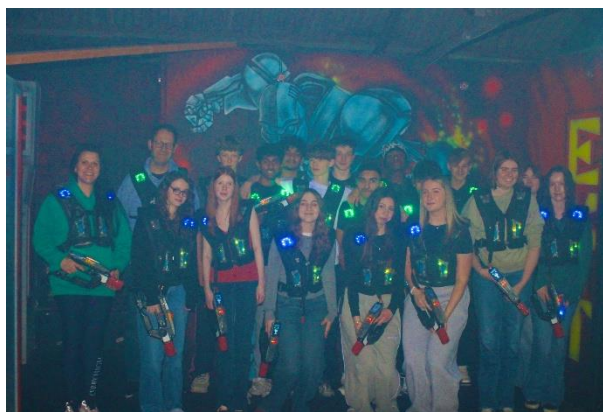
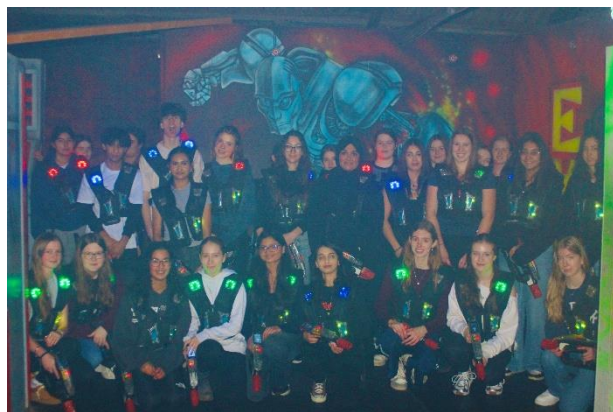


### End of Year 11 Mock Celebration

Since we returned from the Christmas break, Year 11 have been working extremely hard on their mock examinations to prepare them for their GCSEs. To reward their hard work and their efforts, on Wednesday our 79 Year 11 pupils celebrated with an exciting trip to the Megazone in Derby for a laser-tag competition.

Eight teams battled it out in the arena and even the staff showed off their target skills.

Well Done to Year 11 for all your hard work.



### JCB Challenge

As the JCB challenge has been running since September, the teams had all their plans and designs ready for their trip to JCB Academy where their prototype gets built and their project really starts to come to life.

This year the team are working on the exciting and multi layered task of designing a JCB cab with sustainability ever in mind.

The team spent 2 full days working really hard on their prototype and when things didn't quite go to plan showed great resilience, flexibility and problem-solving skills- there was a lot of real engineering in action.

It was a highly successful day and a huge well done to the teams and our thanks to the teachers at JCB Academy for their warm welcome and terrific support over the 2 days.



## House Chess Final

Wednesday saw a thrilling House Chess Final between St. Andrew and St. George. Representing St. George was last year's champion, Aarav (Year 9), while Santhosh (Year 7) played for St. Andrew. St. George had the white pieces.

The game opened with the Four Knights Game, arising from White's king's pawn advance with both players developing pieces rapidly and contesting the centre, leading to an early series of exchanges as both players sought central control. From a material perspective, the position was finely balanced: St. George captured a rook and a pawn, while St. Andrew claimed a bishop and a knight in return. However, this sequence of trades favoured St. Andrew positionally, allowing him to seize the initiative in the middlegame.

St. Andrew began to dominate the board, exerting sustained pressure on the white queen and exploiting tactical opportunities. This culminated in a well-timed fork, attacking both the queen and a rook, forcing St. George to concede a rook. From there, St. Andrew played with real composure, simplifying the position through accurate trades, maintaining the initiative, and launching decisive threats against the now-exposed back rank.

The game concluded with a clean and efficient checkmate from St. Andrew, sealing a deserved victory.

It was a fantastic and hard-fought match, played in excellent spirit by both Santhosh and Aarav. Congratulations to St. Andrew House on winning this year's House Chess Final.



## Senior House Music

House Music 2026 is fast approaching, and we are delighted to launch this much-loved annual event. We are always incredibly excited to hear the talent and creativity our students bring to the stage each year.

There are two ways to enter: collect an entry form from the Music Office and return it to the box there, or complete the digital form and email it to Mrs Lesley - [rlsley@derbyhigh.derby.sch.uk](mailto:rlsley@derbyhigh.derby.sch.uk).

Intermediate entries (Years 7–9) deadline was Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January. Senior entries (Years 10–13) must be submitted by next Friday - Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January.

Intermediate heats will run next week, with Senior heats in the week beginning Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

The Grand Final will take place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, followed by the Winners' Recital on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March. Audition times will be displayed outside the Music Office and emailed to entrants. Please complete a separate form for each entry and refer to the information sheet for category details.



#### **Career Talk on Law – Guest Speaker from Milbank**

On Thursday, we were delighted to welcome Mr Hussain from Milbank, who spoke to our students about career pathways in Law. Mr Hussain explained the various routes into the legal profession and delivered a highly engaging and informative presentation on law careers. The talk focused on corporate law, particularly his work on large, global infrastructure and energy projects.

There was time for questions at the end, and our students asked thoughtful and insightful questions about graduate routes and recruitment into the profession. We are very grateful to Mr Hussain for taking the time to visit our school and share his expertise.

Our next lunchtime careers talk will be with Franklins Accountancy on 12<sup>th</sup> February.

If you are a parent who would be willing to visit the school to speak about your own career, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact the Head of Careers and Year 11, Miss Riley, at [criley@derbyhigh.derby.sch.uk](mailto:criley@derbyhigh.derby.sch.uk)



## Young Artists' Summer Show

Now in its eight year, the Young Artists' Summer Show is a free, open submission exhibition for students aged 4–18 studying in the UK. Artworks are judged by a panel of artists and arts professionals, with selected artworks displayed online and on-site at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Derby High School is Registered and submission for your work is open now until 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 - 5pm.

Each student can submit one artwork and there is no theme. When you enter, they will ask for an image of your artwork plus some information about the piece such as title, size, and a little text about the artwork and why you made it. Your artwork will be seen by our [panel of judges](#) and the selected pieces will be shown in our online exhibition. Some of the artworks will also be shown at the Royal Academy of Arts.

See link below for more details or pop and chat to Mrs Martin-Smith for more details or to ask any questions you have. I do have some Guidance for submissions sheets.

[Young Artists' Summer Show | Royal Academy](#)

<https://youngartists.royalacademy.org.uk/>

This is a fantastic opportunity, and we look forward to seeing your entries!

Here is a link below to last years

exhibition: <https://youngartists.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibitions/2025>



## Basketball Success for Benjamin

Congratulations to Benjamin in Year 7 and his team, the Derby Trailblazers Under 12 National League, who have been crowned Basketball England Region 1 Champions. The team secured the title with two games to spare and completed the season unbeaten — a truly outstanding achievement.



## Safeguarding Corner

### Welcome from PCSO Johnson

Hello, my name is PCSO Edd Johnson. I have worked with Derbyshire Police for the past nine years and for the last two years I have been part of the Youth Engagement Team. Alongside this role, I am also a satellite instructor, delivering personal and public safety training as well as first aid.

As part of the Youth Engagement Team, I work with all secondary schools across the Derby West area, including Mickleover, Littleover, Stockbrook, Normanton and Sunnyhill. I work closely with schools to deliver age-appropriate assemblies and workshops to students on a range of topics designed to support their safety, wellbeing and positive decision-making.

If you see me around school or hear that I am visiting to deliver sessions, please be reassured that these visits are part of our regular work with all local secondary schools and are not linked to any specific concerns. If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact me at [Edward.johnson@derbyshire.police.uk](mailto:Edward.johnson@derbyshire.police.uk).



## Safeguarding Podcast – Episode 56

This week Mrs. Bellman and Mrs. Ley discuss The Bystander Effect, a psychological analysis of how people behave in a group, and how this is relevant to young people today.

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



For more information on this topic please visit the following video:

[The Bystander Effect | The Science of Empathy](#)

[Make An Impact - Inspirational Video](#)

## Dates For Your Diary

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January – Week A

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January – Year 7 – 9 House Music Heats Begin

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January – Year 13 Learning Reviews (Online)

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January – House Football (Boys KS3, KS4 & KS5)

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – GCSE Drama Week Rehearsal Commence

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – Oxford School's Debating Competition (Year 10)

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – Year 11 Learning Reviews (Online)

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February – Year 11 Learning Reviews (Online)

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February – Drama Scholars Lunchtime Performance

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February – Senior Music Recital 5.30pm

## Useful Links