



Senior High Notes Friday 27th March

Dear Parents

What a term it has been.

A truly fabulous, full, and busy Spring Term, but one that has captured so much of what makes our school such a special place to learn and to grow.

We began, as ever, with focus and determination. Our Year 11 and Year 13 students approached their mock examinations with real maturity and commitment. They worked hard, performed impressively, and, most importantly, now have a clear understanding of what they need to do next to fulfil their potential. For our Year 13 students, this sits alongside the excitement of university offers and degree apprenticeships beginning to take shape, as futures become ever more tangible.

January also brought with it our Year 7 Entrance Examination. We were delighted not only by the number of applicants, but by the quality and character of those who wish to join our community. The continuation of three-form entry is something we should all see as a real strength. It allows us to maintain what we value most: small class sizes, strong relationships, and the ability to truly know each child as an individual.

Of course, a significant moment in the term was our ISI inspection. We are absolutely delighted with the outcome, but more than that, we are proud that the inspectors saw what we see every day, an environment where pupils are known, supported, challenged, and encouraged to flourish. The report reflects the lived experience of our school, and that is something in which we can all take great confidence. To read a summary of the report, please [click here](#).

Beyond the classroom, the term has been alive with opportunity. Concerts, recitals, drama productions, House Music, House Art, House Challenge, photography competition, sports fixtures and tournaments, each providing a different stage on which our students have given their very best. What has stood out, time and again, is not simply the level of achievement, but the willingness to participate, to commit, and to strive. These moments matter. They build confidence, resilience, teamwork, and joy, qualities that will stay with our students far beyond their time here.

The weather, particularly in January and February, did its best to challenge us, but it never deterred us. And just as we have grown accustomed to resilience, we have recently been rewarded with

glimpses of spring sunshine, albeit with a reminder this week of just how unpredictable things can be, as we experienced sunshine, rain, hail, and even snow, all within a single school day!

This final week has, in many ways, encapsulated the richness of school life. Nine of our Year 12 students have been out on their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award practice expedition in Edale and Kinder Scout, developing independence, perseverance, and teamwork in equal measure. On Tuesday evening, over 100 of our Primary pupils took part in a wonderful concert, a joyful celebration of confidence and collaboration from Year 1 through to Year 6. Our Year 3 pupils embarked on their very first residential, an important milestone, filled with excitement, challenge, and growth. And on Thursday a superb concert from our senior musicians, showcasing both talent and dedication.

When we step back and look at the term as a whole, what is most striking is the breadth of experience our pupils are immersed in every day. This is education in its fullest sense, not just academic success, but the development of character, curiosity, creativity, and community.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. It is a privilege to work in partnership with you and to share in the journey of your children.

I wish you all a restful and happy Easter break. We look forward to welcoming our students back to school on Tuesday 21st April.

Best wishes,

Amy Chapman

Head

Gold Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition

Eight intrepid Year 12 students took part in the Gold Practice Expedition on a glorious weekend in the Dark Peak. For once, sun was more of an issue than wind, rain, fog or snow! It was one of the group's birthday and home-made cake (no we didn't make them carry it with them on the walk) was a great reward after a hard day's climbing Losehill and Mam Tor. Thanks to top baker Sophie! The teams enjoyed the sunshine and successfully navigated their way across Kinder Scout in preparation for the qualifier in July.

Thanks to Mr Maddox, Mr King, Mrs Davies and Miss Lomas who supported the expedition.





A Midsummer Night's Dream

Our students performed a wonderful, abridged version of *A midsummer Night's Dream* last week, delivering the Shakespearean lines with natural ease. Our narrator Puck guided us through this enchanted tangled web of misunderstandings and magic. Our lovers amused us with their humorous passion. Our fairies blessed us with their sparkling fairy dust. The mechanicals graced us with their individual take on Pyramus and Thisbe, and live music. Our make-up artists did a wonderful job creating the individual look of the characters.

This was also the first student led performance night, with a student stage manager and tech team. We are very proud of how the students created the magical fairy kingdom and Athenian court, well done everyone!

A recording of the production will be sent to parents via Highpost over the Easter break.





Senior Spring Concert

Thank you to all our students who performed in last night's Senior Spring Concert. It was wonderful evening consisting of performances from our String Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, Intermediate String Orchestra, Saxphony, Adanced String Quartet, Flute Duetto, The Upbeats, Mezzo Choir, Swing Band, Cantabile, Chamber Choir and instrumentalist and our Symphony Orchestra

In particular, we would like to thank our magnificent Upper 6th musicians; Manroop, George, Anabelle, Emily and Alana, for their outstanding contributions to music over their time at Derby High School. We wish them every success in the future and hope that music continues to play an important part in their lives.

To view all the photographs from last night's concert please visit the website gallery by [clicking here](#). The password for the gallery is: SpringBloom

A recording of the concert will be sent to parents via HighPost during the Easter break.





U15 Netball

The U15 netball team competed in the Derbyshire County Tournament last Thursday afternoon, which was played in a round robin format across two pools. The team faced a challenging set of fixtures against strong opposition throughout the afternoon.

They began against Littleover Community School, showing good intent and some promising passages of play, but ultimately lost 16–5. This was followed by a tough match against Ecclesbourne, where despite continued effort and determination, they were defeated 14–3. The team continued to battle hard in their remaining games, losing 8–3 to Repton and 9–2 to Highfields.

Although the results did not go in their favour, there were plenty of positives to take from the tournament. The team produced some fantastic passages of play, linking well through the court, and scoring some well-worked goals. Every single player contributed effectively and showed great teamwork, working hard for one another in every game. While it was a difficult competition, the experience will no doubt prove valuable for future fixtures next season. Well done to everyone who took part!



Former Derby High Students Return for Oxbridge Talk

On Thursday, we were delighted to welcome back former Derby High students Anna and Esther, who left Derby High last year and are now halfway through their first year at Oxford. Anna is reading French at The Queen's College, while Esther is reading Biology at New College.

Speaking to Year 12 students, they gave a thoughtful and honest insight into the Oxbridge application process, explaining the key deadlines, admissions tests and interviews, as well as the work they put in to make themselves strong candidates. They also spoke about the college system and shared what life at Oxford is really like, both academically and beyond their studies.

Anna spoke about the importance of language immersion, wider reading and being able to discuss what you have read with confidence, while Esther reflected on the value of work experience, Olympiads, extracurricular activities and her involvement in the British Trust for Ornithology Youth Advisory Panel. Their talk gave students a clear sense of both the challenge and the excitement of applying to Oxford.

We are very grateful to Anna and Esther for giving their time so generously and for sharing their experiences with our current Year 12 students. Their visit was greatly appreciated, and we wish them both continued success and happiness in the rest of their first year at Oxford.



French Lunchtime Club

It was wonderful to see Anna again and we were very grateful that she kindly agreed to come to our 6th form French club, which takes place at lunchtime on Thursday.

In fluent French, Anna talked about her experiences at Oxford and then supported our Year 12 students with their revision for the oral examination.

Merci beaucoup d'être venue Anna et bonne continuation !

National Schools Equestrian Association

It's been a great couple of weekends for Derby High at the National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) county qualifiers. Tabitha (Year 7) and her pony, Monty, placed 2nd and best in Derbyshire to be County champions in both classes in the Dressage competition. Then last weekend, at the showjumping qualifier, they jumped a fast clear round to place 4th and best in Derbyshire to be County champions in the 70cm class. Jessica (Year 8) and her pony, Rosie, also competed in the showjumping qualifier. An unlucky knocked pole meant they weren't in the top few but were the

best in Derbyshire to be county champions in the 80cm class. Both girls and ponies have qualified to represent Derby High at the NSEA Inter-County Championships at Hickstead in May.



Congratulations to Issy

Congratulations to Issy, Year 11, who was one of two runners up in the Derby Book Festival Flash Fiction competition for the 12-17 category. Her work will be published on their website. Issy was tasked to write a 50-word story on the theme of hope.

Title: Growing Hope

After the storm, the town assembled their fractured pieces and faint courage. Seeds were rooted in cracked streets. Children smiled, elders remembered, hands rebuilt. Each sunrise demonstrating yesterday's pain wasn't the end. Their faith emerged softly, wearing patience, and remained for everyone who chose to trust that tomorrow could blossom.

Safeguarding Corner

Safeguarding Podcast, Episode 65: Approach to Mobile Phones

This week Mrs Bellman (Deputy Head - Pastoral) discusses Derby High School's approach to mobile phones. Further to the Governments recently strengthened guidance in the area, Mrs Bellman talks about our clear and consistent approach to mobiles phones.

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

You can find Derby High School's full updated Mobile Phone policy [here](#).



For further information on this topic, we recommend visiting the following link:

[The Parent's Guide to Mobile Phone Health & Safety for kids](#)

Growing up in the online world: a national consultation – gov.uk

The Department for Science, Innovation and technology are consulting on further measures to prepare children for the future in an age of rapid technological change. This includes potential age restrictions on social media and other services such as gaming sites and AI chatbots, restrictions on addictive design features and risky functionalities, and better support for parents and families.

For more information and to part in the consultation please visit the following link:

[Growing up in the online world: a national consultation - GOV.UK](#)

Dates For Your Diary

Monday 20th April – Staff training day – no students

Tuesday 21st April – Start of term for all Students

Thursday 23rd April - Individual portrait photos by Alethea Simpson – Year 8 and Year 11

Thursday 23rd April – Individual portrait photos by Alethea Simpson – Year 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13

Friday 24th April – Silver D of E Practice

Saturday 25th April – Silver D of E Practice

Sunday 26th April – Silver D of E Practice

Monday 27th April – GCSE Art & Design Examination

Tuesday 28th April – Year 10 Geography field trip departs

Tuesday 28th April – GCSE Art & Design Examination

Wednesday 29th April – Year 10 Geography field trip returns

Thursday 30th April – Year 8 HPV Vaccinations

Friday 1st May – Year 11 Top of the Pops and last day before study leave

Useful Links