



Derby
Grammar
School

Where you belong

DERBY GRAMMAR GAZETTE



This edition of the Gazette again celebrates the activity and achievements of our pupils. Of course it is just a snap-shot, as there are so many other stories that could be reported. It's been a long and busy term and we have much for which we can all be grateful.

We also have lots to look forward to next year. The hard work of Sam Bird our Head of Marketing and Admissions and Roberta Lowe our Admissions Manager is helping ensure both Primary and Senior school pupil numbers are set to increase and the opening of our new nursery is expected during the spring. We also continue to benefit widely from our relationship with ILG.

Year 11 and 13 pupils will return in January to take their mock examinations, while other pupils enjoy all that makes Derby Grammar School so special, whether that be participating in our French exchange, the School Panto or representing the DGS in a sports fixture or national robotics competition.

I hope all pupils, parents and staff have a very happy and restful holiday meanwhile.

All best wishes,

Paul Hilliam
Acting Head

CHRISTMAS WISHES FROM THE PTA

Celebrating the Season of Giving and Gratitude!

As the festive season approaches, we want to take a moment to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We hope you enjoy a well-deserved break and have a wonderful time with your loved ones. Whether you're spending the holidays with family, friends, or taking some quiet time for yourself, we hope it's filled with joy and relaxation.

We would also like to remind you that the PTA is here to support both pupils and teachers throughout the school year. If there are any special items, that would help make the season even brighter for our school community, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. Whether it's support with special activities, or assistance with upcoming events, we are always happy to lend a hand.

Our volunteers are here to support the school and ensure that every child has those extra resources and opportunities they need to thrive. Your feedback and requests are invaluable, so if there is anything you feel we can assist with, we are just a message away.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our school community. We look forward to a fantastic year ahead, working together to create a positive and enriching environment for all.

Wishing you all a joyful and peaceful break!
Warm regards,

The PTA Team



We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our outgoing chair, Mr. Hilliam, for his outstanding leadership and unwavering dedication over the years, as you may have noticed, his hands are rather full!

His hard work and commitment to the PTA have made a lasting impact on both the school and the wider community. Under his guidance, we have seen numerous successful events, improvements in school resources, and stronger connections between parents, teachers, and students. We are incredibly grateful for everything he has done, from organizing events to offering his time and expertise, always with the best interests of our school at heart. While we will certainly miss his leadership in the chair position, we're delighted that Mr. Hilliam will continue to be an integral part of our team. His passion and enthusiasm for the PTA's mission remain a great asset, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside him in the future.

Thank you once again, Mr. Hilliam, for your exceptional service and dedication to our school community!

RAINFOREST ADVENTURE FOR Y3/4



Last week, Year 3/4 embarked on an exciting educational trip to Twycross Zoo, and what an adventure it was! The day was packed with opportunities to learn, explore, and experience the wonders of the natural world first-hand.

A standout moment of the trip was the engaging rainforest workshop, which perfectly complemented the class's recent studies on rainforests. During the session, students had the chance to delve deeper into topics they had been exploring in the classroom, such as rainforest ecosystems, biodiversity, and the importance of conservation. The workshop leader was genuinely impressed by their knowledge, as the children eagerly answered questions and shared fascinating facts they had learned.

Beyond the workshop, the students loved seeing a wide variety of animals up close, from playful primates to colourful tropical birds and fascinating reptiles. The trip provided a fantastic opportunity to connect their classroom learning with real-life examples, deepening their understanding of the intricate relationships within the rainforest habitat.

The day wasn't just about learning—it was also about creating memories. Whether it was the thrill of spotting their favourite animals, enjoying lunch together with friends, or chatting excitedly about what they had seen, the students returned to school buzzing with excitement and inspiration.



YEAR 7

Experience Day

A Day in the Life of a Derby Grammar Student: Year 5 and 6 Experience Senior School

Last week, Year 5 and 6 students from Derby Grammar School had the exciting opportunity to experience a "Day in the Life" of a senior school student.

The event was designed not only for our current pupils but also to welcome children from outside schools, giving them a taste of what life is like at DGS. The day was filled with a variety of engaging activities, new experiences, and plenty of fun, offering a snapshot of what the future could hold for these young learners.

With a warm and inviting atmosphere, the children were able to interact with their peers, forging connections and learning about the exciting opportunities that await them in senior school. It was clear from the start that the DGS community values inclusivity, and our current students made sure to showcase the welcoming environment that defines our school.

Mrs. Genders, the head of the Junior School, was particularly pleased to hear how well our pupils interacted with the visitors. "It was wonderful to hear how friendly and welcoming our students were. They made sure everyone felt included, which is exactly what we hope to see in our school community," she remarked.

No special event at DGS would be complete without a memorable meal, and this day was



no exception. The students were treated to a fun-filled "Route 66 Lunch," where hot dogs and all the trimmings were on offer.

With a variety of toppings and sides to choose from, the lunch provided a perfect chance for the students to relax, chat, and bond over a delicious meal. The lunchtime atmosphere was lively and vibrant, with everyone enjoying the chance to share their experiences and look forward to the afternoon's activities.

As if the Route 66 Lunch wasn't enough, the day was rounded off with a special treat for everyone—a Hot Chocolate Station. This was no ordinary hot chocolate, though. Students were given the chance to customise their drinks with a variety of toppings and extras, such as whipped cream, marshmallows, sprinkles,

chocolate chips and candy canes. The joy of decorating their hot chocolate creations added a fun, festive touch to the day, and it was clear that this was a highlight!

The core of the experience day was the opportunity to sample a range of subjects that the students would encounter in senior school. The pupils were able to attend lessons in art, chemistry, sport, computing, and drama. These lessons were designed to give them a real sense of the exciting and diverse learning opportunities they can look forward to at DGS.

One of the most exciting sessions of the day took place in the science lab experiment. Akshat, a Year 5 student, was particularly enthusiastic about the activity: **"I really enjoyed doing the chromatography experiment in chemistry. It was amazing to see how the different colours separated, and it made me want to learn more about science!"**

In the art room, students were encouraged to explore their creativity and express themselves through a variety of activities. Jackson, another student, shared his excitement: **"I loved everything, especially drama and art. I had so much fun creating something new, and I can't wait to try more of it!"**

The computing session was another big hit, especially for Morgan, who was thrilled by the opportunity to create his own computer game. **"Making a computer game in computing was so cool. I want to carry on doing it at home!"** he said. The chance to engage with technology and explore the world of programming was an eye-opening experience for many of the students, sparking an interest in digital creation and problem-solving.

Drama was another key part of the day, and it proved to be a favourite for many. In this lesson, the students worked on a variety of activities that not only enhanced their confidence and performance skills but also fostered teamwork and social interaction. Rohan shared his thoughts on the experience: **"I really enjoyed drama because we did a variety of activities that will be good for our social skills. It was fun to act and work together as a group."**

By the end of the day, the students had a much clearer idea of what to expect from life at DGS and were excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. For the children who visited from other schools, it was a perfect opportunity to see what makes Derby Grammar School such a special place to learn and grow.

Above all, the event was a true reflection of the DGS spirit –welcoming, supportive, and full of enthusiasm for learning. Mrs. Genders, expressed her pride in the students' participation. **"It was fantastic to see how our pupils embraced the day, both in terms of the activities they engaged in and the way they interacted with their visitors. Their friendliness and enthusiasm were a real credit to DGS."**



FIREFIGHTING ADVENTURE

Our Year 1 and Year 2 students embarked on a thrilling educational excursion to the Ascot Drive Fire Station. The visit was a memorable experience, offering the young learners a unique opportunity to explore the world of firefighters, learn about fire safety, and have fun while discovering the important tools and equipment used by fire crews.

As soon as the children arrived at Ascot Drive Fire Station, they were warmly welcomed by the fire crew. The firefighters introduced themselves and explained the purpose of their visit: to give the students an inside look at their daily work and teach them about fire safety. The children were excited to be in the presence of real-life heroes who are always ready to help in emergencies.

One of the most thrilling parts of the visit was when the children had the chance to sit inside a real fire engine. The fire crew showed them all the different parts of the engine, explaining the role each piece of equipment and explained how the fire engine carries all the essential tools needed in emergencies, from hoses to water tanks, and the children could see these in action. They even got to turn on the siren and lights, experiencing what it's like to be part of a fire response team.



The students were also allowed to handle some of the firefighting equipment. The firefighters demonstrated how they use hoses and other tools during an emergency. It was an exciting and interactive way for the children to engage with the tools that are so important to keeping their communities safe.

The fun continued as the students were invited to dress up as firefighters! The children put on full firefighter uniforms, which included jackets, helmets, boots, and gloves. They quickly discovered how heavy and protective the suits are. The fire crew explained that while the uniforms are designed to keep firefighters safe in dangerous situations, they can be quite heavy, especially when worn for long periods.

The students took turns wearing the suits, laughing and posing as they pretended to fight fires and save the day. It was a great way for them to understand the physical demands of being a firefighter and appreciate the challenges that the professionals face.



PRIMARY CELEBRATIONS

Primary Pupils Shine in Spectacular DGS Christmas Concert

Last week, Derby Grammar School was filled with festive cheer as our Primary students took centre stage for a wonderful Christmas concert. The event marked the official start of our Christmas festivities and was a delightful showcase of the children's talents, creativity, and holiday spirit.

The concert, held in the school's hall, welcomed an enthusiastic audience of parents, family members, and invited guests. Each year group had their moment to shine, presenting carefully rehearsed performances that highlighted their confidence and passion. From beautifully sung Christmas carols to spirited musical renditions and heart-warming readings, the concert offered something special for everyone.

Finishing off the afternoon was the Nativity play performed by our youngest pupils. Their charming portrayal of the Christmas story, complete with joyful singing and enthusiastic acting, brought

smiles to every face and even a few happy tears from proud parents. Head of Primary, Mrs. Genders, shared her pride in the students: **"Our Primary children worked incredibly hard to make this concert a success, and their dedication and enthusiasm were clear in every performance. It was a joy to see them sparkle and shine on stage and to share this magical moment with their families and friends."**

The concert was a true testament to the spirit of community at DGS, bringing together staff, students, and families to celebrate the season. As the final notes of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" rang out, the festive atmosphere was set for the weeks ahead, leaving everyone looking forward to more seasonal celebrations.

Well done to all our talented Primary pupils for such a memorable start to Christmas at DGS!



SPORTING ROUND-UP



Our U16 Rugby 7's team has just delivered an outstanding performance at the highly competitive ISA Midlands Rugby 7's tournament.

Their skill, determination, and sportsmanship were on full display throughout the competition, making their achievements truly remarkable. The team started strong, winning every match within their group with exceptional teamwork, discipline, and individual brilliance.

Each player brought their best to the pitch, demonstrating an impressive understanding of the fast-paced nature of Rugby Sevens. Their ability to maintain composure, execute well-coordinated plays, and adapt to varying challenges throughout their group games was a testament to their dedication and hard work in training. The boys showed incredible promise in their first few matches, both the forwards and backs played incredibly well.

In particular, their defensive strategies were spot on, with many turnovers and crucial tackles halting opposition attacks. In attack, the team was dynamic, moving the ball quickly, creating space, and finding gaps in the defence.

With each game, they continued to build momentum, taking on opponents with confidence and precision. By the semi-finals, the team faced a tougher challenge against the eventual winners, Worksop College.

In a nail-biting encounter, the game was fiercely contested, and despite their best efforts, the U16 team was narrowly defeated 7-5.

It was a heart-breaking loss, but the team showed remarkable character in the way they handled the setback. The scoreline was a reflection of how evenly matched the two sides were, and our players left it all on the field.

The semi-final result does not overshadow the remarkable achievements of the team throughout the day. Reaching the final four of such a prestigious competition is a testament to their collective effort, skill, and unwavering commitment to the sport.

With such talent, teamwork, and resilience, this team has a bright future ahead in rugby.

House Rugby Results

- 1ST Bemrose**
- 2ND Derby**
- 3rd Atkinson**
- 4th Blackton**

NEVER TOO MUCH RUGBY...

Congratulations to Our U15 Rugby 7's Team on Winning the Bowl at the ISA National Rugby 7's Competition!

A huge congratulations also to our U15 Rugby 7's team for their impressive performances at the ISA National Rugby 7's competition, where they not only showcased their skill and determination but also emerged victorious in the Bowl competition!

Throughout the tournament, the team displayed excellent teamwork, agility, and tactical awareness. Each player contributed to the team's success, from solid defence to quick, precise attacking plays.

Their ability to stay focused and fight through each challenge was evident, culminating in their well-earned Bowl victory.



This achievement is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship shown by all the players.

The team's resilience in tough matches and their unwavering spirit ensured they ended the competition on a high note, winning the Bowl and securing a fantastic result.

Great effort from everyone involved—this is just the beginning for our talented U15 squad, and we can't wait to see what they achieve next!



House Basketball Results

1ST

Bemrose

2ND

**Atkinson
&
Derby**

3RD

Blackton

House League Table

where they're standing...

1st	Bemrose	190 points
2nd	Atkinson	160 points
3rd	Derby	130 points
4th	Blackton	80 points

BIBBIDI BOBBIDI BOO!



On Wednesday morning, the Primary School children of Derby Grammar School enjoyed a well-deserved treat - a trip to Derby Theatre to see the enchanting pantomime Cinderella. After the excitement and hard work of rehearsing and performing at the Christmas Carol Concert at Derby Cathedral the previous evening, this outing was the perfect way to unwind and revel in the festive spirit.

The day began with the excitement of a coach trip, filled with chatter and laughter as the children anticipated a trip to the Pantomime. Arriving at Derby Theatre, the atmosphere only added to their excitement. Once seated, popcorn in hand, the pupils immersed themselves in the magical world of Cinderella. The performance was everything a traditional pantomime should be - vivid, lively, and interactive. The children joined in with gusto, cheering for the heroes, booing the villains, and shouting the classic, "Oh yes, they did!" at every opportunity. The energy in the theatre was electric, and their happiness was infectious.

This special outing offered the perfect opportunity for the children to spend time with their friends and make lasting memories during the last week of an extremely busy term. We hope the children had an amazing time and you enjoy being regaled with tales from the show!

DIARY DATES

January

- 6 INSET Day for staff
- 7 All pupils return to school
- 23 Year 9 GCSE Option Evening

February

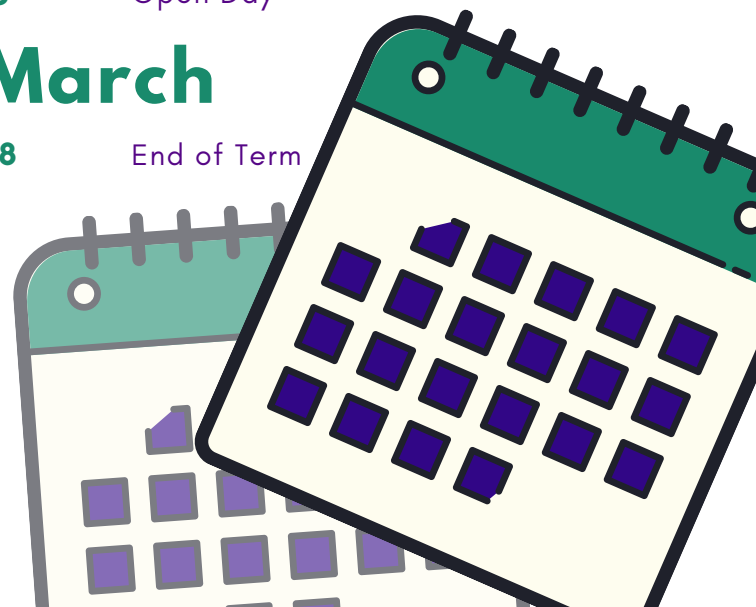
- 7 School Pantomime - Snow White
- 8 School Pantomime - Snow White
- 10 Year 13 Parent's Evening
- 17th -21st Half Term Holiday

28 Y11/12 Careers Event, Birmingham

15 Open Day

March

28 End of Term



HARK! THE DGS CHOIRS SING!

On Tuesday evening, the pupils of Derby Grammar School gathered at the breathtaking Derby Cathedral for the annual Christmas Carol Concert—a much-loved tradition in the school calendar. This cherished event once again brought the wider school family together in celebration of the festive season.

The evening was filled with exceptional performances, heartfelt readings, and beautiful vocals from both students and staff. A standout moment came from the Primary Choir, who performed with angelic poise and harmony. This was particularly impressive given that they had spent the latter part of the afternoon letting off steam with a spirited session of Christmas karaoke and even a Conga line led by Mrs. Gentles in the school hall! Despite their lively warm-up, the children sang and behaved impeccably, earning admiration from everyone in attendance and making their parents proud.

The Carol Concert is not only a highlight of the festive season but also a wonderful reminder of the strength of the Derby Grammar School community. Derby Cathedral, with its stunning architecture and historical significance, provided the perfect setting for this joyous occasion.

We are incredibly fortunate to have such a longstanding relationship with this magnificent venue.

Thank you to everyone who came to support us and made the evening so special. Your presence truly added to the warmth and spirit of the event.



FESTIVE FEASTING



This Wednesday, the hall was filled with festive cheer as we celebrated our much-anticipated Christmas lunch. As always, Andy and his amazing team in the kitchen went above and beyond to make the occasion truly special.

Students and staff were treated to a sumptuous meal featuring all the traditional favourites, from golden roast turkey to perfectly crispy roast potatoes, accompanied by a selection of seasonal trimmings.

For desert there were the most amazing array of handmade cookies and biscuits, and the room was full of the sound of cheesy jokes.

A huge thank you goes to Andy and his talented catering team for their hard work, creativity, and dedication to making this event such a success.



KARAOKE CAPERS!

This week, to help warm up and unwind ahead of the highly anticipated Christmas Carol Concert at Derby Cathedral, our Primary students enjoyed a lively Christmas Karaoke session to round off their day.

The school hall was filled with laughter, music, and festive cheer as pupils and staff alike got into the Christmas spirit. From classic carols to modern holiday hits, everyone joined in with gusto.

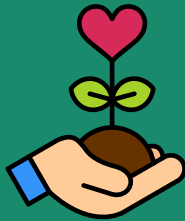
The highlight of the session came when Mrs. Genders took the lead in a crazy conga line, winding its way around the hall to the delight of students and teachers alike. It was the perfect way to relax, have fun, and build excitement for the big concert, showcasing the DGS community's fantastic festive spirit. Who enjoyed it more - the pupils or the staff? We're still not sure, but they all definitely enjoyed themselves!



FEELING THANKFUL

Our Reception children have been learning about holidays from around the world. One highlight of this global exploration was discovering the traditions and significance of the American celebration of Thanksgiving.

During our lessons, we learned about the history of Thanksgiving, its roots in gratitude, and why it is so important to reflect on the things we are thankful for. From harvest feasts to family gatherings, the students enjoyed understanding how people celebrate this special holiday.



To bring the learning to life, the girls created their very own Thanksgiving turkeys! Using vibrant colours and creative designs, each turkey was unique and full of personality.

The activity sparked thoughtful conversations as the children shared the things that they were thankful for and wrote them on the turkey's feathers.

The finished turkeys are now proudly displayed in our classroom, as a colourful reminder of the importance of gratitude.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE



We are thrilled to announce that several of our students have achieved an incredible milestone by finishing in the top 10% of the country in the prestigious Bebras National Computational Thinking Competition! This remarkable accomplishment is a testament to their hard work, problem-solving skills, and dedication to excellence.

The Bebras Competition challenges students to tackle complex computational problems, encouraging them to think critically and creatively. Competing against thousands of students nationwide, our pupils demonstrated exceptional aptitude and resilience, placing themselves among the country's best young minds in computational thinking.

Watch this space!

On Thursday afternoon, the Year 5 and 6 pupils embraced the holiday spirit with an afternoon filled with festive fun and creativity. Armed with plenty of enthusiasm, the students were given free rein to craft heartfelt Christmas cards and decorations for their loved ones.

GETTING CREATIVE

The classroom buzzed with excitement as the children let their imaginations shine, producing beautifully decorated cards and ornaments.

This festive activity not only allowed the pupils to express their creativity but also encouraged them to think about the joy their handmade gifts would bring to their families and friends. It was a heart-warming reminder of the importance of giving during the holiday season.

Well done, Year 5 and 6, for spreading such festive cheer!



ONLINE CAREERS FAIR

We are excited to share that in February, during National Apprenticeship Week our students in Years 11 to 13 will be participating in an online webinar course hosted by the **Success at School** platform.

This initiative is designed to provide valuable insights into career options and apprenticeships, equipping our students with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions about their future pathways.

The webinar, tailored for young people on the cusp of pivotal life choices, will explore a range of topics, including:

- **Understanding apprenticeship opportunities across various industries.**
- **Insight into career paths aligned with their interests and skills.**
- **Practical advice on CV building, interview preparation, and application processes.**



This collaboration with Success at School is a part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring that our students are well-prepared for life beyond Derby Grammar School. Whether considering university, apprenticeships, or direct entry into the workforce, the course aims to inspire confidence and clarity in navigating the next steps of their journeys.

The webinar format allows for interactive engagement, ensuring students can ask questions and gain tailored advice from industry experts.

With such a dynamic and accessible approach, we are confident that this opportunity will resonate with our senior students, helping them broaden their horizons and explore the wealth of possibilities available to them.

We encourage all parents and guardians to discuss the webinar with their children, fostering conversations about their aspirations and goals. Together, we can support them in making the best choices for their futures.

AFTER CARE PICK-UP'S

As the evenings are darker, it can be difficult for staff to see parents upon arrival. To make this process smoother, please ring the doorbell located at the end of the building and proceed to the side door to wait. A staff member on duty will then bring your child to you. Thank you for your cooperation!