



Derby
Grammar
School

DERBY GRAMMAR GAZETTE



It's not every week that you witness R2-D2 in a dance-off - but clearly our very own DGS Robot held its own against the astromech droid. As you can see from the images within this edition, the enthusiasm, ingenuity and sense of fun our pupils brought to the creators fair last weekend was a joy to witness, as was Mr Speight's animated recount of the whole day. Moments like these remind us that learning doesn't just happen 'in books'-it also wobbles, whirrs, and occasionally moonwalks across the floor.

Whether it's robotics, revision, cricket matches or composing in music tech, it's been a week full of energy, ambition, PTA generosity and a fair bit of soldering (on). As ever, thank you for your continued support - please do stop and say hello at drop-off or pick-up. I always enjoy hearing your thoughts, and no problem is ever too small, large or robotic to chat about.

I very much hope that you will all join us for what I know will be a true celebration of all that has been achieved by the children, staff and our whole community this academic year.

Our Prize Giving will take place during the evening of Wednesday 25th June. With perfect weather guaranteed, we would like to make the evening a full celebration for all ages and a perfect opportunity to bring our whole community together. The evening will start from 5pm with refreshments and canapés in the school grounds before moving into the school hall for 5.30pm where we will recognise the hard work and efforts from our pupils in Reception through to Year 8. Prizes and awards will recognise the great progress and successes from across these age groups. We anticipate completing their prize giving at 6.45pm. Our pupils and families from Year 9 through to Year 13 are then invited to join us from 6.45pm for drinks and canapés before prize giving commencing from 7.30pm.

Further details will be provided in the first week of June, but we very much hope that the evening will provide a perfect blend of celebration across the whole school and a chance to congregate in the school gardens to toast the success of our children and look forward to what is building to be an even greater 2025-2026 academic year. I very much look forward to celebrating with you all.

Alistair Bond. Headmaster

TANZANIA - CLOTHING DONATIONS NEEDED

If you're having a sort out over the half term break, please consider donating any good condition children's clothes and shoes you no longer need - from baby sizes right through to teens, to our Tanzania Trust.

Our Sixth Formers will be taking these essential items with them, where children often have nothing. Every donation, no matter how small, will make a real difference.

Thank you so much for your support and kindness!



HOUSE STANDINGS

House Football:

1st Bemrose
2nd Atkinson, Blackton & Derby

House Debating:

1st Atkinson
2nd Derby
3rd Blackton
4th Bemrose

Overall Scores:

1st Bemrose 470 points
2nd Derby 420 points
3rd Atkinson 400 points
4th Blackton 320 points

Just two more senior House events left this term - Cricket & Sports Day. Can Bemrose hold onto that lead?



DIARY DATES

MAY

25 Greenpower Heat at Lotus Hethel

JUNE

1 Greenpower Heat at Castle Combe

4 U10/11 Cricket v Nottingham (H)

12 Greenpower Heat at Bedford

8 U12/13 Cricket Dixie Grammar (A)

17 Y4/5 Music Trip to Manchester

18 Primary School Sports Day - Rykneld

25 Prize Giving Evening - DGS

29 Garden Party - DGS



FIRST TECH TEAM GO VIRAL

Degrees of Freedom, Take on the World at Makers Central!

It was a weekend to remember for Derby Grammar School's First Tech Challenge team, Degrees of Freedom, as they took centre stage at one of the biggest technology and innovation events in the world - Makers Central at the NEC Birmingham. This opportunity wasn't just an incredible experience for our students; it was the result of ingenuity, collaboration, and sheer determination.

Last Saturday, our own Ben Blakeman proved beyond all doubt that he's got the gift of the gab. With charm, quick thinking and a little bit of luck, he managed to blag the team a free exhibition table at Makers Central - a high-profile, international event that attracts some of the most influential names in the global tech and maker communities. That moment of magic opened the door for something truly special.



Makers Central is the only event of its kind - a vibrant and inspiring celebration of innovation, invention, creativity and craftsmanship. It brings together makers, creators, and inventors from across the globe, all under one roof. With hands-on workshops, live demonstrations, cutting-edge tools and tech, and a stellar line-up of global YouTube stars and industry leaders, this event is a dream come true for anyone passionate about how things are made.

Families, young engineers, and experienced makers alike can explore the future of making - learning how technologies work and trying their hand at creating something themselves.



AT MAKERS CENTRAL

For our Degrees of Freedom Team, being part of such a prestigious event was a phenomenal opportunity - and they rose to the occasion with style.

Throughout the day, the team impressed crowds with their robotics work, spoke confidently to makers of all ages, and demonstrated their engineering expertise with pride. But it wasn't just the public who paid attention... Some of the most followed tech influencers on social media engaged with the team, reposted on their channels, offered professional advice on how to refine their skills, and even invited the students to take part in future events. This kind of global exposure is something many in the industry dream of - and our students earned it through talent, professionalism and passion. Oh - and the team only went and secured sponsorship, too! That's right.

Thanks to the confidence they showed, the conversations they led, and the impression they made, they managed to gain vital backing to support their ongoing journey in tech and robotics. And for those of a certain age, there was a particularly magical moment: our robot had a dance-off with R2D2. Yes, that R2D2 - the galaxy's most beloved droid (we'll diplomatically skip past any BB-8 debates). It was a hilarious and unforgettable highlight that perfectly captured the fun and futuristic spirit of the event.



Behind every student success story is a network of support - and we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Mr Speight, whose tireless dedication to our robotics programme continues to inspire and empower our students every step of the way. We are equally grateful to Mrs Speight, who was right there at the event offering her support and enthusiasm, and to Dr Hughes and Sam Blakeman, whose involvement and encouragement helped make this experience such a triumph.



This was more than just a fun day out - it was a landmark moment for Derby Grammar School's presence in the world of technology and innovation. Our students weren't just attendees at Makers Central - they were contributors, creators, and equals among some of the brightest minds in the field.

To the Degrees of Freedom Team - and to everyone who helped make this incredible experience possible - we salute you. You have done your school proud.

YEAR 10 VISIT HADRIAN'S WALL

Derby Grammar School's Year 10 History pupils have enjoyed a fascinating residential trip to Hadrian's Wall, stepping back in time to explore one of the most iconic landmarks of Roman Britain. The visit, part of their GCSE curriculum, offered an immersive experience that brought the ancient world vividly to life.

Accompanied by Mr Taylor and Mr Fletcher, pupils explored key sites including the remarkable Vindolanda Roman Fort and the Roman Army Museum. These visits provided hands-on insights into Roman military life, archaeological discovery, and the unique role Hadrian's Wall played as the north-west frontier of the Roman Empire.

A particular highlight was walking a section of the Wall itself. With the dramatic Northumberland countryside stretching around them, pupils were able to appreciate the vast scale and strategic brilliance of this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Mr Taylor said: "Hadrian's Wall is one of the best places in the country to experience Roman history in context. The pupils were genuinely engaged throughout, and it was brilliant to see them connecting their classroom learning with the real world."

Residential trips like this inspire group discussions, and team-building activities, allowing pupils to reflect on what they had learned while building camaraderie and independence. Mr Taylor added: "Trips like this make history feel real. The enthusiasm and curiosity the students showed was fantastic to witness – it's a privilege to help bring the subject to life for them." The Hadrian's Wall residential has not only deepened pupils' understanding of Roman Britain but also sparked a renewed interest in the wider historical context of empire, conflict, and identity – all core themes in the GCSE course. We're proud at DGS to offer such enriching educational experiences, where history is not just studied – it's lived.



MANAGING EXAM STRESS: A GUIDE FOR GCSE AND A-LEVEL STUDENTS

With external exams underway we know that pupil's can feel overwhelmed, when the pressure is high. While some stress is normal, managing it well is essential for both your wellbeing and your performance. This guide offers practical tips to help you stay calm, focused, and ready to succeed.

Understanding Exam Stress

Exam stress often stems from:

- Fear of failure
- High expectations (from yourself or others)
- Feeling unprepared

While a little stress can be motivating, too much can harm your sleep, concentration, and overall wellbeing.

Signs of exam stress include:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Changes in appetite
- Feeling anxious or overwhelmed
- Trouble concentrating
- Feeling unusually emotional or irritable

If this sounds familiar, don't worry - you're not alone, and there are ways to manage it.

Top Tips for Managing Exam Stress

1. Build a Routine

Create a balanced daily schedule that includes revision, rest, exercise, and sleep. Structure gives you control and reduces anxiety.

2. Take Regular Breaks

Use techniques like the Pomodoro method - 25 minutes of study followed by a 5-minute break. Stretch, walk, or do something fun during your breaks.

3. Get Enough Sleep

Aim for 8 hours of sleep per night. Your brain needs rest to absorb information and

stay focused.

4. Talk About It

Whether it's a friend, teacher, or family member, sharing how you feel can reduce pressure and help you feel supported.

5. Eat and Drink Well

Healthy meals and plenty of water fuel your brain. Avoid excess sugar, caffeine, or energy drinks.

6. Try Mindfulness

Apps like Calm or Headspace offer short exercises to help with breathing and relaxation. Even a few minutes a day can make a difference.

Effective Revision Tips

1. Start Early

Begin revision well in advance of your exams to avoid last-minute stress.

Break topics into manageable chunks.

2. Revise Actively

Avoid just reading or highlighting. Use:

- Flashcards
- Quizzes
- Mind maps
- Teaching someone else
- Past papers

3. Know the Exam Format

Understand what the paper will look like and what types of questions will be asked.

Practice with real past papers under timed conditions.

4. Focus on Weak Areas

Identify and prioritise the subjects or topics you find most challenging - don't just revise what you're already good at.

5. Use Spaced Repetition

Review information multiple times over several days or weeks to help it stick in your long-term memory.

6. Mix It Up

Use a variety of revision techniques and switch subjects regularly to keep things interesting and avoid boredom.

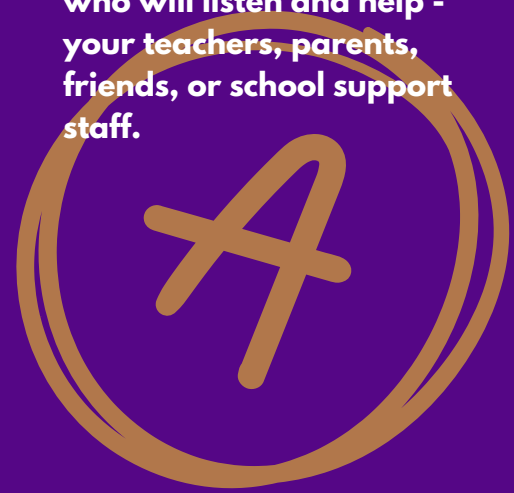
Final Thought: Your Best Is Enough

It's important to try your best - but remember that exams don't define you.

Your effort, resilience, and wellbeing matter just as much as your results.

If you're struggling, speak up.

There's always someone who will listen and help - your teachers, parents, friends, or school support staff.



OH WE DO LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEASIDE!



This week, the Infants embarked on a fun-filled trip to Spring Lakes as part of their topic, On the Beach. The visit brought their learning to life as they experienced the sights, sounds, and sensations of a day by the water. The children had a fantastic time splashing about in the shallows, chasing each other through the water, and sharing lots of laughter. One of the highlights was undoubtedly soaking Mrs Wheat - much to everyone's delight! The day ended on a high with a well-deserved ice cream treat, leaving smiles on every face. It was a joyful and memorable experience for all.



As part of our Speaking and Listening curriculum, Year 3/4 have begun rehearsing for their eagerly awaited class assembly! This term's assembly on 16th June will explore the fascinating world of Henry VIII and his many wives, offering an engaging and educational glimpse into Tudor history. Costume details will be sent home shortly, and we would greatly appreciate your support in helping your child rehearse their lines and prepare their outfit.

MORE FROM PRIMARY



Our Year 5 and 6 pupils have been getting hands-on with plant science as they explore the fascinating world of asexual reproduction. As part of their topic on life cycles and plant biology, the children have placed geranium stem cuttings into test tubes, and are now observing whether, given the right conditions, these cuttings can grow into brand new geranium plants!

Asexual reproduction in plants is a natural process where a new plant is produced without the need for seeds or fertilisation. Instead, the parent plant creates a clone of itself – an identical copy – using parts such as roots, stems, or leaves. This method of reproduction is common in many garden favourites like potatoes, strawberries, and of course, geraniums.

In this experiment, the pupils have learned how to carefully cut a section of the stem and place it in water or moist soil. If conditions are right – with enough light, warmth, and moisture – tiny roots will begin to grow from the nodes of the stem. Over time, this simple cutting can develop into a healthy, fully independent plant.

Through this experiment, our budding scientists are gaining a deeper understanding of plant biology, while also developing key skills in observation, prediction, and patience. We're excited to see how many new geraniums our young horticulturists can grow, and how this experiment helps bring science to life in the classroom!



ISA U11 Midlands Hardball Competition

We're incredibly proud of our U11 cricket team for their outstanding performances in the ISA Midlands Hardball Competition last week! It was a fantastic team effort from everyone involved. Although they narrowly missed out on the final, they can hold their heads high representing the school magnificently throughout the day, well done everyone!

SPAGHETTI MATHS



On Friday, our Primary pupils were treated to a truly unique experience as Kelly from Spaghetti Maths led a special assembly filled with energy, enthusiasm, and mind-stretching challenges. This wasn't just about numbers - it was about creative problem solving, teamwork, and thinking outside the box.

Spaghetti Maths is a nationwide programme designed to help children develop a deeper, more intuitive understanding of mathematical concepts through fun, hands-on activities. Rather than focusing on worksheets or rote learning, the sessions are all about exploring problems in new and imaginative ways.

During the assembly, pupils were encouraged to ask questions, challenge assumptions, and try out different strategies to solve puzzles.

Whether they were building structures, spotting patterns, or solving quirky conundrums, the emphasis was always on finding creative approaches and not giving up when the answer isn't obvious.

At the core of Spaghetti Maths is a belief that every child can be a successful problem solver.

By making maths engaging and playful, children gain confidence in their abilities, develop logical thinking, and learn how to approach challenges with an open and resilient mindset.



These are not just maths skills - they are life skills. We're now hoping to introduce a Spaghetti Maths afterschool club next academic year.

This club would give pupils even more opportunities to stretch their thinking, work collaboratively, and have fun while improving their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving confidence.

Thank you to Kelly and the Spaghetti Maths team for an inspiring session that reminded us all that sometimes, the best way to solve a problem is to turn it upside down - band maybe even sideways!



GREEK POTTERY



This term, our talented Year 5 and 6 pupils have been getting creative in their art and pottery sessions with Miss Wilson, diving into the world of Ancient Greece and producing a series of truly impressive Greek-inspired pots. These sessions have given pupils the chance to not only develop their artistic and practical skills, but also to explore the fascinating history behind Greek pottery, learning how these ancient artefacts were used to tell stories, celebrate victories, and record daily life.

Greek pottery is instantly recognisable, known for its elegant shapes, bold patterns, and detailed painted scenes. Originating as early as 1000 BC, Greek pots were traditionally made from terracotta clay and decorated with black or red figures. The designs often featured mythological scenes, battles, athletes, and everyday life, painted with precision and symmetry. These images weren't just decorative; they served as a window into Ancient Greek society and culture.

The results were nothing short of spectacular. From swirling geometric patterns to depictions of gods and heroes, each pot reflects the creativity and enthusiasm of our budding young artists. The care and attention they put into their work was clear, and Miss Wilson and Mrs Cooper were incredibly proud of what they achieved.

These sessions have not only deepened our pupils' appreciation of ancient art, but also highlighted the value of cross-curricular learning - blending history, design, and hands-on craftsmanship in a way that truly brought the past to life.

Well done to everyone involved - we can't wait to display these fabulous pots around school!

RYKNELD SPORTS CENTRE 20% DISCOUNT

This half term, many families are looking for fun and engaging activities to enjoy together. Did you know that as members of the DGS community, you can enjoy a fantastic 20% discount at our very own Rykneld Sports Centre?



Whether you're looking to keep fit, try a new sport, or simply have some fun, Rykneld Sports Centre offers a wide range of facilities and activities suitable for all ages and abilities.

This exclusive 20% discount is available to all DGS families, so make the most of the opportunity to get active during the break. For more information on available activities and to take advantage of the discount, simply visit the Rykneld Sports Centre page on our website.

Don't miss out - take a step towards a healthier and more active Easter break at Rykneld Sports Centre!

For more details, visit:

<https://www.derbygrammar.org/rykneld-sports-centre>

SUMMER CAMPS AT DGS

We're thrilled to announce that DGS will be launching its very first on-site Summer Camp this year – and it's set to be a season full of adventure, creativity and non-stop fun!

Running from 7 July to 22 August, our action-packed camp is open to all children from Reception through to Year 8 – and you don't need to be a DGS pupil to join in the fun!

Whether your child loves outdoor exploration, sports, crafts, games or making new friends, our Summer Camp promises something for everyone. With a warm, friendly atmosphere and access to our beautiful grounds and facilities, children will have the chance to try new things and lots of engaging activities. There will be early bird offers, sibling discounts, and weekly booking discounts available – so it's the perfect time to plan ahead and secure your place.

- ◆ Children will need to bring a packed lunch
- ◆ Flexible booking options available
- ◆ Open to all, not just DGS families

For more information email
daycamps@inspiredlearninggroup.co.uk



DGS EVENTS THIS SUMMER...

Next month promises to be a truly special one at Derby Grammar School, as we prepare to mark two landmark occasions: the outstanding achievements of our pupils and the significant milestone of the school's 30th anniversary.

We are thrilled to announce the reimaging of our annual Speech Night, which has now been beautifully rebranded as Prize Giving Evening. This year's celebration will be held right here at school on Wednesday 25 June, and for the first time ever, it will be delivered in two parts to ensure that every achievement receives the recognition it deserves.

A formal letter will be sent out to all families with full logistical details to guide you through the evening, including timings and what to expect. We are delighted to be hosting this special event on our picturesque school grounds, allowing us to take advantage of the glorious summer weather.

From academic accolades and sporting triumphs to musical mastery and contributions to school life, this event is a testament to the incredible talent and dedication of our pupils.

But that's not all! This year marks a truly momentous occasion in the history of Derby Grammar School – our 30th anniversary. Since its inception in 1995, the school has grown and flourished, shaping the futures of thousands of pupils and becoming a cornerstone of the local community.

To celebrate this major milestone, we are hosting a vibrant, inclusive celebration at the school on Sunday 29 June – and everyone is welcome!

This multi-faceted event is open to all: current families, prospective pupils, alumni, former staff, and friends of the school. Whether you're a member of our founding generation or looking to join the next, we want you to feel part of the DGS story.

Here's what to expect:

- **Picnic on the lawns** – For those who'd like to enjoy a delicious pre-booked lunch and drink, tickets are available via the QR code on our event posters.
- **Fabulous Food on the Day** – Prefer to decide on the day? No problem! Entry is free, and our chef will be cooking up fabulous pizzas. There'll also be cakes, a fully-stocked bar, and plenty of ice cream to keep the summer vibes going.
- **Fun and Festivities** – Expect entertainment, stalls, activities, games, displays, and chances to reconnect with old friends or make new ones. This event is not just a celebration of the past, but a reflection of our bright and inclusive future.



LITTLE OAKS OPENS ITS DOORS



This week marked a joyful and momentous occasion at Derby Grammar School as we officially opened the doors to our brand-new early years provision: Little Oaks Nursery. Built on a strong Forest School ethos, Little Oaks offers a unique environment where curiosity, play, and a deep connection with nature are at the heart of every child's experience. And what a successful grand opening it was!

From the moment families arrived, there was a warm and welcoming buzz around the nursery. The space was alive with laughter, discovery, and the soft rustle of leaves from the surrounding trees – a perfect introduction to what Little Oaks stands for.

A lovely moment was led by two very special guests: Will, one of our oldest pupils at Derby Grammar School, and Francesca, one of our youngest came together to cut the ribbon marking the official opening. They were joined by Headteacher Mr Bond and Nursery Manager Mrs Kumar, to cut the ribbon, whose leadership and vision have helped bring Little Oaks to life.

Mr Bond shared his thoughts: "Little Oaks is not just a nursery – it is a place where imaginations take root, where learning is active and joyful, and where the youngest members of our community are cherished, guided, and inspired. Today is just the beginning of something very special."

The grand opening was incredibly well attended, with many families taking tours of the setting and seeing first-hand what makes Little Oaks so special. From exploring the facilities to meeting the staff and watching children at play, visitors were impressed by the caring team, beautiful environment, and clear vision for high-quality early years education.

We're thrilled to report that places are already filling up fast following the event. Families shared how inspired they felt by the unique approach of Little Oaks and were quick to reserve places for their children. It's clear that our nature-based, child-led ethos is resonating strongly with parents who want something exceptional for their child's early years experience.

Don't Miss Out – Reserve Your Place Today

If you couldn't make it to the grand opening, don't worry – we'd love to welcome you for a personal tour. Come and meet our passionate team, explore the inspiring environment, and discover what makes Little Oaks such a special place to begin your child's learning journey.

To arrange a visit or reserve your child's place, please get in touch with our team as soon as possible – places are limited and filling fast:

✉ admissions@derbygrammar.org

☎ 01332 523027 (option 2)