

DERBY GRAMMAR GAZETTE



It is an affliction for which there is no known cure and can (according to Mrs. Bond anyway) sadly prove terminal. I have sought treatment but, as it transpires I am not alone in this syndrome and I am far too long gone to recover. The syndrome? Unearthing lyrics contained in an otherwise perfectly sensible conversation. For example, I was going to start this Gazette with, 'there goes another week..' I know would have led to the Blur song 'Bang there goes another day where it went I could not say...' A perfectly normal enquiry 'did you sleep well?' becomes 'I can't get no sleep...' Faithless-ly finding any opportunity to succumb to this syndrome.

Imagine my thoughts then as I visited a brilliant Chemistry lesson where the goal was to create aspirin. It didn't go to plan. 'The drugs don't work.' Then on to art. The topic was camouflage and animals with this ability. 'Karma Chameleon...' On to History. Inspiring figures from history? 'We could be heroes, just for one day...'

Each day is fraught with dangers/opportunities here at DGS. Wandering into fascinating and engaging lessons. Seeing young people thrive with challenging questions and being encouraged to think critically and be curious. No walls or barriers to break down ('Teacher! Leave them kids alone') We are lucky to work in the profession we do. Even though it comes with the danger of humming a song and the associated wry grin.

Enjoy your weekend.

Alistair Bond Headmaster

HARVEST FESTIVAL APPEAL

We are looking forward to celebrating our Harvest Festival Service on Monday 29th September. As part of our tradition, we will once again be supporting the YMCA with donations to help those in need through the challenging winter months.

If you are able to contribute, we would be very grateful for donations of:

- Tinned produce
- Pasta and other dried ingredients
- Toiletries
- Blankets, gloves, socks, or hats

Please bring your items into school on Monday morning and take them to the Hall, where they will be collected before being passed on to the YMCA. Your generosity will make a real difference to some of the most vulnerable in our community this winter. Thank you for your support.



DIARY DATES SEPTEMBER

Harvest Festival - Please bring donations to the Hall, all will be sent to the YMCA

OCTOBER

- Spooktacular Open Day Family Creative Fun for everyone whole community welcome. 10 1pm
- 6 German Exchange departs
- 7 Y13 Parent's Eve 4.30 6.30
- 8 U10/11 Rugby Old Vic

- Primary Parent's Evening 4.30 6.30pm.
- 10 German Exchange returns
- PTA Meeting 7.30 9pm New Parent's most welcome
- Primary Achievement Assembly Half Term Closure



YEAR 7'S SHINE IN FRENCH



Earlier this week, our Year 7 French class demonstrated just how quickly young learners can embrace a new language.

After only three weeks of study, students eagerly threw themselves into practising French dialogues with one another, showing both courage and enthusiasm.

It was a joy to see the classroom buzzing with conversation as students introduced themselves, asked questions, and responded in French.

From simple greetings to short exchanges about hobbies and interests, the pupils

showed remarkable progress in a very short time. Their willingness to speak - even when unsure - highlighted both their growing confidence and their excitement for learning.

"C'était vraiment super!" said Mr Thompson - perfectly capturing the energy and enjoyment in the room. Moments like these remind us of the power of immersive learning and the joy of seeing young people actively engage with a new language.

With such enthusiasm, we can't wait to see what our Year 7s achieve in the coming weeks as they continue to build their French skills.



PRIMARY NOTICES

A Message from Mrs Genders

It has been a busy and positive week in school, and I would like to share a few important notices with you.

Scholastic Book Fair

Many thanks to everyone who has supported the Book Fair this week. The books will be collected on Monday, so there is still a little time left to make a purchase. Every book bought helps us earn free books for the school, so your support is greatly appreciated.

Breakfast Club & Wrap-Around Care

Our Breakfast Club runs from 7.30–8.00am for children who would like to have breakfast at school. Please use WisePay to book in advance. Breakfast is free, but we do need to know who is attending. We kindly request that only those requiring breakfast are dropped off before 8.00am.

Our Wrap-Around Care provision runs from 8.00am-6.00pm.

One-Page Profiles

If you have not already done so, please return your child's one-page profile as soon as possible. If you would prefer a hard copy, please ask your child's class teacher.

Uniform

Please can I ask for your support in ensuring that all uniform is clearly named? We currently have a growing pile of un-named items, which makes it very difficult to return them to their owners.

In addition, a reminder that children should use a Derby Grammar School bag where possible. If not, we ask that alternative bags are either navy or black in colour. The same applies for outdoor coats - these should be either the school coat or a plain navy/black coat. Finally, please ensure that trainers are only worn for games lessons and outdoor play.

Thank you for your continued support.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Tuesday 2nd December - Primary Christmas Concert 4-5pm. Parents are invited to watch. All children are expected to attend.



F24 2024/25 - WHAT A RIDE!

The 2024/2025 Greenpower season has been a thrilling ride for the DGS team, and the momentum shows no signs of slowing. With both cars performing impressively, qualification for the season's finale looks highly likely. DGS 2 currently sits in an impressive 33rd place, while DGS 1 is not far behind in 44th place - an achievement reflecting the hard work and dedication of all team members.

The season will culminate at the prestigious Goodwood final on 12th October. Attendance from all team members is expected as the event will not only mark the conclusion of the season but also serve as a celebration of the team's successes throughout 2024/2025.

This year has seen the younger members of the team, particularly Year 7 and 8 students, emerging as the pace setters behind the wheel, showing remarkable skill and confidence during races. Beyond their driving talent, the team itself has matured into a highly coordinated unit, running like a well-oiled machine on race days - a testament to their technical expertise.

Meanwhile, the team continues to push the performance envelope. DGS 1 has undergone modifications designed to boost its performance and ensure qualification at the last race, which took place at Aintree on 17th September. More on that in another article! Plans for further enhancements are already underway for the 2025/2026 season, promising even greater excitement ahead.

Both cars will soon receive upgraded bodywork, branded to complement the trailer's livery, enhancing the team's professional presentation and identity. The Greenpower team is also seeking additional support and sponsorship. Expertise in technical services such as engineering, machining, and TIG welding would be invaluable to the team's ongoing development. Financial sponsorship opportunities are invited to support either the development of the cars or participation across the season, helping to secure continued success. If this is something that interests you, please get in touch.

Following the conclusion of the 2024/2025 season at Goodwood, the team will also be recruiting new members. Enthusiastic students eager to join this high-energy, technically driven, and fun team are encouraged to get involved. With the season heading into its final stages, DGS Greenpower is a team to watch both on the track and off it, as they continue to innovate, compete, and inspire.

CLIMBING TREES AND Y3&4 SOLVING MYSTERIES!

This week, our Years 3 and 4 pupils have been fully immersed in both learning and outdoor fun

In English, the class continued exploring The Iron Man, honing their skills in scanning and skimming the text, and developing their inference abilities. Acting as true "book detectives," the children investigated the character of Hogarth, discovering insights into what kind of child he is and deepening their understanding of the story.

In Mathematics, the focus has shifted from place value to addition. Pupils have been practicing exchanging tens using the formal method and applying their skills to solve a variety of word problems. Impressively, each child has been generating their own sums at a level they felt confident with and using calculators to check their answers - showing both independence and excellent attention to detail.

Outside the classroom, the children have made the most of playtime by climbing trees and enjoying the fresh air, combining physical activity with teamwork and confidence-building.

It has been a week full of curiosity, challenge, and adventure for Years 3 and 4 - both on the page and in the playground.





THE GREAT 1&2 BAKE OFF

This week in English, the children have been busy story mapping and creating their own versions of The Tiger Who Came to Tea. Their imaginations have run wild—crocodiles, monkeys, and plenty of other surprising visitors have joined the tea party! The children have been working hard to expand their vocabulary and ensure their sentences are correctly punctuated, bringing their stories to life with flair and creativity.

In Maths, the focus has been on understanding and estimating on a number line. The children had lots of fun learning about less than and greater than symbols, especially when they discovered the clever crocodile "always eats the bigger number"! It's been a week of handson learning and enthusiastic problem-solving.

Our DT topic, 'Teddy Bears' Picnic', continued to delight the children as they followed instructions to make their very own teddy bear biscuits. Practical, creative, and delicious, the children loved bringing their ideas to life in the kitchen!

It's been a week full of imagination, discovery, and hands-on fun, and the children have really enjoyed exploring new skills across all subjects.



CRACKING HOMEWORK

HOW TO STAY ON TOP OF IT (WITHOUT THE STRESS)

Moving up into Senior School is exciting – more freedom, more subjects, more opportunities. But there's one thing that can quickly feel overwhelming if you don't keep on top of it: homework. The good news? With a few smart habits, you can stop homework from piling up and set yourself up for success all the way through to GCSEs and A Levels.

1. Don't Let It Pile Up

It sounds obvious, but it's true: the earlier you tackle homework, the easier it is to manage. Try this: when you get home, take a short break, grab a snack, and then spend just 20–30 minutes getting started. Often, the hardest part is beginning. Once you've made a start, you'll feel more motivated to keep going.

2. Create a Homework Routine

Your brain loves patterns. If you do your homework at the same time and in the same place most days, it'll quickly become a habit. Maybe that's straight after school before dinner, or in the evening once you've had some downtime. Find what works for you, but try to stick with it.

3. Break It Into Chunks

Staring at a big assignment can feel stressful. Instead, break it into smaller parts:

- Read the question carefully.
- Write down the key tasks.
- Do one step at a time.
- · This way, even big projects won't feel impossible.

4. Use the Internet Wisely

The internet is amazing for research, revision videos, and past papers – but it's also full of distractions. A few tips:

- Use trusted sites (BBC Bitesize, Seneca, Oak Academy, etc.).
- Watch short explainer videos, then close YouTube before it lures you down a rabbit hole!
- Never copy-and-paste answers. It's better to read, understand, and then explain in your own words.

And remember: ChatGPT (or any Al tool) might seem tempting, but it can't do your thinking for you. Teachers can tell when work isn't your own – and more importantly, if you don't practise now, you'll struggle in exams.

HOMEWORK TIPS...

5. Make the Most of Years 7-9

Think of Years 7–9 as your "training ground." Building strong habits now means that when you hit GCSEs and A Levels, you'll already know how to manage your workload. Things like:

- Writing a to-do list at the start of the week.
- Using a planner or digital calendar to keep track of deadlines.
- Spending a few minutes each evening checking what's due tomorrow.

6. Be Exam-Smart in Years 10 and 11

As you reach GCSEs, homework often doubles up as revision. Get into the habit of reviewing your class notes when you do your homework – it saves you cramming later. Summarising what you've learned in your own words is one of the best revision techniques you can use.

7. Look After Yourself

None of this works if you're exhausted. Prioritise sleep, drink water, take short breaks, and remember: balance is important. Schoolwork matters, but so do friends, hobbies, and exercise.

The Bottom Line:

Homework doesn't have to be scary. If you start early, stay organised, and make good habits now, you'll not only keep stress low – you'll also be preparing yourself for success in exams and beyond.



ISA ART SUBMISSIONS



Our talented art students have submitted their entries for the National ISA Art Competition, an annual showcase of creativity and skill for independent school pupils across the UK.

The ISA (Independent Schools Association) Art Competition is a prestigious event that invites students from a wide range of independent schools to create and submit original works of art. The competition celebrates artistic talent across different age groups, from primary through to sixth form, and encourages students to explore a variety of media and techniques. Each year, entries range from painting and drawing to mixed media, sculpture, and digital art, reflecting the incredible diversity of young artists across the country.







Participation in the ISA Art
Competition gives students the
opportunity not only to have their
work judged at a national level but
also to gain recognition for their
creativity and dedication. Prizes are
awarded in several categories,
including age-specific awards, overall
winners, and special commendations
for originality, technique, and
concept. Winning entries are often
displayed at national exhibitions or
online galleries, providing students
with a platform to share their work
with a wider audience.

At DGS, our students have been working tirelessly on their pieces, putting thought, skill, and passion into every stroke and detail. This year's submissions reflect a broad spectrum of artistic approaches and ideas, showcasing the incredible talent we have in our school.

We are immensely proud of all our students who took part in this competition. Whether or not their work wins a national prize, the process of creating, reflecting, and sharing their art is a remarkable achievement in itself.



CONGRATULATIONS TO LIV!

Huge congratulations to Liv in Year 9, who has successfully auditioned for the prestigious Tom Shilcock Dance Training Academy! Liv will be joining the academy in January for a full year of advanced training, and we couldn't be prouder of her incredible achievement.

Well done, Liv – we can't wait to see you shine on stage!



PRIMARY CLUBS ARE GO





This week, the primary pupils have thrown themselves enthusiastically into our extracurricular lunchtime clubs, and the results have been fantastic.

In Lego Club, imaginations ran wild as pupils created some truly impressive architectural designs. From intricate structures to bold new ideas, the level of creativity on display was remarkable - who knows, we may well have some future engineers and architects among us!

Meanwhile, Beyblade Club continues to be a huge hit. The excitement has been so great that we've had to split pupils into groups to make sure everyone has a chance to take part. This week it was Group 1's turn, and it was wonderful to see pupils coming together, laughing, and bonding over their shared passion.

These clubs are a great opportunity for children to explore new interests, develop new skills, and spend time with friends outside the classroom. Judging by the smiles and the energy in the room, they've certainly been a highlight of the week!

LOTUS HETHEL - F24

The Derby Grammar School Greenpower teams travelled to the iconic Lotus Hethel track last week for what turned out to be one of the most exciting and rewarding events of the season.

The day was filled with drama, determination, and incredible performances from both DGS 1 and DGS 2, proving once again that the teams are serious contenders on the national stage.

DGS 1 – Almost Untouchable

Piloted by Thomas Hughes, Oliver West, and George West, DGS 1 delivered a sensational performance. The team stormed to victory in race one, setting a blistering pace that left their competitors chasing. second-place finish in race two, a result that secured them second place overall at the event. The margin between first and second in the overall standings was agonisingly small, but the drivers and pit crew can hold their heads high this was a championship-level performance.

Importantly, DGS 1's results have now secured their qualification for the International Final at Goodwood in October, where the very best teams from across the UK and abroad will compete for top honours.



DOUBLE QUALIFICATION SECURED!

DGS 2 - Fighting Spirit

The DGS 2 crew - Adam Walker, Thomas Boddy, Kyle Chan, Tristan Watts, and Bill Miln - were equally impressive. Running strongly throughout the event, the team were in serious contention for a podium finish, with third place firmly in their sights. However, in a cruel twist of fate, a last-minute puncture ended their hopes of silverware.

Despite this setback, the team's consistent season-long performances mean that DGS 2 has also secured qualification for Goodwood - a huge achievement and testament to the drivers' skill and the team's resilience.

Spirit of Greenpower Award - True Sportsmanship

Beyond results, the DGS teams also demonstrated what Greenpower is really about: collaboration and sportsmanship. When a competitor's car suffered mechanical problems, the DGS students immediately stepped in to help with repairs, enabling the rival team to continue racing. This act of generosity and teamwork was formally recognised by the organisers, who awarded DGS the Spirit of Greenpower Award.

Eyes on Goodwood

With both cars now qualified, all focus turns to the International Final at Goodwood on 12th October. Preparations are already underway, with the teams fine-tuning performance and strategy to ensure they arrive ready to take on the very best.

Lotus Hethel was a reminder of just how talented, dedicated, and spirited the DGS Greenpower teams are. With silverware, qualification, and a prestigious award under their belts, the road to Goodwood promises to be nothing short of thrilling.

Special thanks go to Mr P Boddy for once again supporting the team over the course of the weekend, as always it is very much appreciated!



ART AND ACTIVISM

Our Year 9 artists are making waves in the classroom as they explore the power of art to inspire change. Currently, students are experimenting with mixed media, combining pencil crayon, ink, and fine liner to recreate the striking work of environmental activist artist Clare Fogie. Known for her thought-provoking pieces, Clare Fogie uses bold visuals to highlight pressing environmental issues, from endangered wildlife to the impact of human activity on the planet. Her work challenges viewers to think, reflect, and take action – a message that resonates strongly with our students.

This creative project forms part of Year 9's Environmental Activism unit, which runs until February half term. Throughout the unit, students are exploring how artists can raise awareness of social and environmental issues, using their skills to make a statement about the world around them. By studying Clare Fogie and other activist artists, students are learning how art can be both visually stunning and a powerful tool for advocacy.

Already, the Year 9s are producing pieces that are vibrant, detailed, and full of meaning. From intricate ink drawings to colourful pencil crayon compositions, each artwork reflects careful observation, technical skill, and a deep engagement with the environmental issues at the heart of the project.

This unit is about more than just creating beautiful art – it's about sparking conversation, encouraging empathy, and inspiring action.

Year 9 are showing that creativity and activism can go hand in hand, proving that the classroom is a place where ideas, imagination, and important messages come alive.



Y13 BIOLOGISTS IN THE FIELD

Our Year 13 Biology students have enjoyed an unforgettable residential this week, demonstrating not only their passion for science but also their maturity, teamwork and curiosity. They were a true credit to themselves and to DGS throughout the trip.

The residential was designed to enrich their A Level studies by taking learning out of the classroom and into the field. Over the course of several days, students immersed themselves in a series of hands-on investigations that brought theory to life in the most memorable ways.

Day One: Agricultural Energetics

The opening day focused on agricultural energetics, exploring how energy transfers through farming systems. Students gained a practical understanding of this by rolling up their sleeves and getting to grips with farmyard research – including the less glamorous, but highly informative, task of weighing pig poo in the barn!

This unusual activity gave students a chance to see first-hand how energy efficiency is measured and managed in real agricultural contexts, highlighting the vital role biology plays in food production and sustainability.

Day Two: Small Mammals and Marine Ecology

The second day began with checking humane live traps, which had been carefully set to survey local small mammal populations. Students were rewarded with the exciting discovery of a beautiful wood mouse and a lively bank vole, with Josh proudly identifying the vole from his Longworth trap.

These moments offered a fascinating insight into population dynamics and the importance of ethical fieldwork practices.



...AND ON THE SHORE



Later in the day, students headed to the shoreline at Filey Brigg, a dramatic coastal location, to carry out ecological investigations. Their focus was on the effect of wave exposure on limpet populations, a classic field study that allowed them to analyse how organisms adapt and thrive in challenging environments.

Collecting and interpreting data in such a dynamic setting reinforced their understanding of key ecological principles while offering an unforgettable experience of science in action.

Learning Beyond the Classroom

The residential has proven to be a hugely beneficial experience, giving our biologists real-life exposure to the subjects they have been studying in the classroom. From energy transfers on farms to adaptations in marine organisms, every activity linked directly back to their A Level syllabus, strengthening both their knowledge and their practical skills.

Most importantly, our students approached every challenge with enthusiasm, good humour and genuine scientific curiosity. They embraced the practical work, collaborated brilliantly, and showed real resilience – qualities that will serve them well in their exams and beyond.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 13 Biologists, who returned not only with notebooks full of data, but also with a renewed sense of excitement for the subject and a shared set of memories that will last a lifetime.

YEARS 5&6 EXPLORE LANGUAGE, NATURE, AND NUMBERS!



This week, our Year 5 & 6 students have been diving into the wonders of both language and the world around them.

In English, they have completed their exciting study of Hansel and Gretel and have now turned their attention to the evocative poetry in The Lost Words. Taking inspiration from the natural world, the children ventured into the school grounds, observing the flora and fauna around them. Using the Merlin app, they listened carefully and identified the birdsong that filled the air, blending technology with hands-on learning.

In Maths, our young mathematicians continue to strengthen their understanding of place value, building the foundations for more complex calculations. Additionally, Year 6 have been exploring coordinates in different quadrants, bringing their problem-solving skills to life as they navigate the grid with confidence.

It has been a week full of discovery, creativity, and curiosity, as our students connect classroom learning with the world around them.

U16 FOOTBALLERS SHINE AT ISA MIDLANDS CHAMPIONSHIPS



Vintner and Eyre dominate with stellar performances

Our U16 football team travelled to Dixie Grammar School this week to take part in the highly competitive ISA Midlands Football Championships - and what a performance it was!

The boys played with determination and skill throughout the day, showing excellent teamwork and scoring some outstanding individual and team goals.

All players were fantastic ambassadors for the school, but two performances stood out. Peter Vintner was a wall in goal, making crucial saves all day and even stopping a penalty in the final match.

Hugo Eyre impressed with his skill and composure, scoring a superb free kick and contributing greatly throughout the tournament.

It was a day of hard work, progress, and memorable moments, and our boys can be extremely proud of their efforts on and off the pitch.



DGS BECOMES A CHAMPION FIRST TECH CHALLENGE SCHOOL – A MAJOR MILESTONE FOR STEM EXCELLENCE!

We are thrilled to announce that Derby Grammar School has officially been named a Champion FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) School in the UK – a tremendous achievement that marks a major milestone for STEM education at DGS. This prestigious recognition positions DGS as a community hub member, empowering young people across our local area to develop vital STEM skills, collaborate creatively, and innovate through the FIRST Tech Challenge programme.

As a Champion School, DGS will receive incredible support from FIRST Tech, including:

- A bespoke FIRST Tech Challenge field valued at £2,000
- Up to £1,000 annual STEM grant for school projects
- Waived entry fees for FIRST Tech Challenge competitions
- · Comprehensive training and ongoing support from FIRST Tech HQ

These resources will allow DGS to become a beacon for STEM in our region, sharing expertise and guidance with up to 14 new and growing teams, hosting scrimmage events, and delivering training workshops that will inspire the next generation of engineers, programmers, and innovators.

This recognition is a huge feather in the cap for our school, showcasing the remarkable work of the FIRST Tech team led by Mr. Speight, as well as the thriving Robotics department at DGS. With the programme continuing to go from strength to strength, our students are not only excelling in technical skills but also learning teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership – skills that will serve them for life.

We are immensely proud of this achievement and excited to see how DGS will continue to lead the way in STEM innovation in the local community and beyond.



MAGIC, MOVEMENT & MASTERY

The Drama Department has been buzzing with excitement this week as the cast list for this year's Senior School pantomime was revealed (oh no it wasn't... oh yes it was!) and rehearsals are already in full swing. The cast have thrown themselves into their roles, filling the stage with bold voices, exaggerated movements and plenty of laughter as they bring these larger-than-life characters to life.

This year we'll be whisking you away on a magical adventure with Aladdin, and it promises to be a truly spectacular show! Mark your calendars now: Friday 6 and Saturday 7 February 2026 at 7.00pm – you won't want to miss it.

Meanwhile, across the curriculum, drama is thriving at every level. Year 7 are discovering the essentials of stagecraft through tableau and character, Year 8 are mastering the art of movement, and Year 9 are diving into text work with Stanislavski's methods. Our Year 10 students have launched into their GCSE Drama course with energy and creativity, tackling their first devising projects with enthusiasm.

Beyond the classroom, Mrs Simpson is leading an impressive 40 students from Years 3–13 through Speech and Drama tuition, helping them grow in communication skills and confidence. Many have recently celebrated success in their LAMDA exams, while others are preparing for upcoming assessments in December, March and June.

New students have enjoyed their first lessons this week, and it's clear that performance talent at DGS has never been stronger! A few places remain available, so if you feel your child would benefit from one-to-one Speech and Drama tuition, now is the perfect time to get involved.

