



Derby
Grammar
School

Where you belong

DERBY GRAMMAR GAZETTE



 JACK DAVIES PHOTOGRAPHY

This edition of the Gazette yet again highlights the extraordinary level of activity each week involving all our pupils.

It's good to give parents a window on what happens in the classroom during science lessons, and of course lots of parents came into school to support their sons and daughters in the Panto. But it's also important that you see how successful pupils have been on a regional and national level in Latin Reading and Hockey competitions. Many other pupils have been getting out and about to the climbing wall and Symphony Hall, Birmingham!

So everyone is now ready for a half term rest – pupils and staff alike! May I wish you all a happy half term holiday and we look forward to seeing pupils soon, fired up and ready to go again!

All best wishes,
Paul Hilliam
Acting Head

WORLD CLASS MUSIC AT THE SYMPHONY HALL

This week, Year 7 and 8 students had the opportunity to attend a live orchestral performance at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, where they experienced the exceptional talents of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). The concert provided an immersive introduction to orchestral music, featuring a programme that spanned multiple genres and cultures.

Students listened to works by John Williams, renowned for his iconic film scores, R.D. Burman, a pioneer of Bollywood music, Tchaikovsky, the master of ballet compositions, and Offenbach, known for his lively operettas.



This visit was not only an engaging musical experience but also an invaluable educational opportunity. Witnessing a live orchestra in such an acclaimed venue helped students develop a deeper appreciation for classical and contemporary orchestral works, reinforcing the role of music in storytelling across different cultures.

Events like these are instrumental in broadening students' artistic and cultural awareness, and Derby Grammar School looks forward to continuing to provide such enriching experiences in the future.



DIARY DATES

FEBRUARY

- 24** 2pm - 4pm U14 Hockey V Dixie Grammar School (A)
- 26** All Day - U18 Midlands Hockey Finals
Primary School Parents Evening - 4.30pm - 6.30pm
- 27** Y11 - Parents Next Steps Evening
6.30pm - 7.30pm - Hall

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Y11/12 Careers Event - Birmingham
Primary Wear Yellow Day for Air Ambulance



ZUMBA FOR TANZANIA!

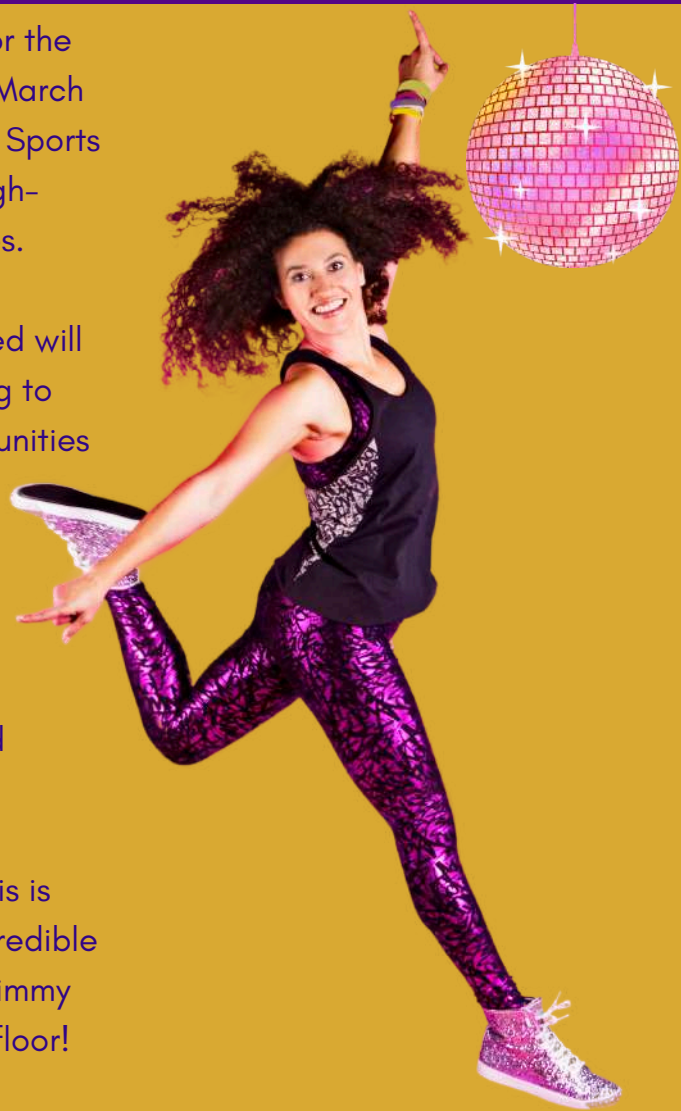
Get ready to dance with a purpose as we raise funds for the Derby Grammar School Tanzania Trust! On Sunday 9th March at 8:30 AM, we're inviting everyone to join us at Rykneld Sports Centre for an energetic Zumba session, packed with high-energy music, fun routines, and plenty of feel-good vibes. This exciting event is more than just a workout—it's an opportunity to make a real difference. Every penny raised will go towards supporting vital projects in Tanzania, helping to provide education, resources, and life-changing opportunities to those in need.

🌟 No need to book—just turn up and join in!

💰 Entry: £10 (pay on the door)

📍 Location: Rykneld Sports Centre

🎵 Expect an uplifting morning of movement, music, and motivation!



Whether you're a Zumba pro or a complete beginner, this is your chance to get active, have fun, and support an incredible cause. Bring your friends, bring your energy, and let's shimmy our way to making a difference! See you on the dance floor!

ANCIENT HISTORY

A huge thank you to Professor Jack Lennon, a distinguished Professor of Ancient History and Archaeology at the University of Leicester, for joining us this afternoon in our wonderful library. Professor Lennon spoke to our Sixth Form students about university choices and selecting the right degree, offering invaluable insights into higher education pathways.

In addition to his expertise in ancient history, Professor Lennon was part of the renowned team that discovered the remains of King Richard III beneath a Leicester car park. His visit provided a fascinating glimpse into both academic decision-making and the excitement of archaeological discovery.

We are grateful for his time and inspiration!



DGS PANTOMIME: SNOW WHITE

Last weekend, the halls of Derby Grammar School were filled with laughter, excitement, and a touch of wickedness as pupils took to the stage for the much-anticipated annual pantomime, Snow White. This year's production was not only a theatrical triumph but also a fantastic fundraiser, raising over £1,500 for the Tanzania Trust—a testament to the generosity and community spirit of DGS.

From the very first scene, the audience was captivated by the sheer energy, comedic timing, and talent on display. Every pupil — whether performing on stage or working tirelessly behind the scenes—delivered an unforgettable show that left the audience in stitches and thoroughly entertained.

While the entire cast shone, there were a few performances that had the audience talking long after the final curtain call. Akili, as the Evil Queen, was nothing short of sensational. Not only did he embody the perfect mix of menace and humor, but he also embraced his role with such enthusiasm that it was clear he was relishing every second—particularly when it came to donning the villainous wig! His wickedly delightful performance had the audience booing, hissing, and laughing in equal measure.

Sofia's stunning vocals were another highlight of the night. Her powerful and emotive singing added an extra layer of magic to the production, drawing well-deserved applause from the crowd.

Of course, no production of Snow White would be complete without its ensemble of lovable characters, and the entire cast brought boundless enthusiasm and charisma to their roles.



A MAGICAL SUCCESS FOR CHARITY!

From the comical dwarfs to the ever-charming Snow White herself, each performer played their part with confidence, delivering witty lines and hilarious slapstick moments with perfect comedic timing.

A show of this caliber doesn't come together overnight. Mrs. Simpson, once again, went above and beyond, dedicating countless hours of her already limited free time to working with these talented young people. Her dedication to nurturing and developing their skills was evident in every scene, every joke, and every well-executed musical number. Her passion for the performing arts and for bringing out the best in her students was clear for all to see!

Beyond the actors, a phenomenal backstage crew of Mrs Standing, Mrs Wheat and Mr Speight worked tirelessly to ensure smooth scene changes, perfect lighting cues, and seamless sound transitions. Their work behind the curtain was just as crucial to the success of the production as the performances themselves, and they deserve immense credit for their contributions.

What makes the pantomime even more special is its purpose. The event raised over £1,500 for the Tanzania Trust, a cause close to the heart of the DGS community. The generosity of the audience, along with the hard work of everyone involved, will go a long way in supporting valuable initiatives that make a real difference in Tanzania.

The success of Snow White is a testament to the talent, dedication, and teamwork of everyone at Derby Grammar School. From the brilliantly funny script to the outstanding performances and the wonderful support from staff, families, and friends, this was a night that will be remembered for years to come. A huge congratulations to the entire cast and crew—you truly delivered a panto to remember!

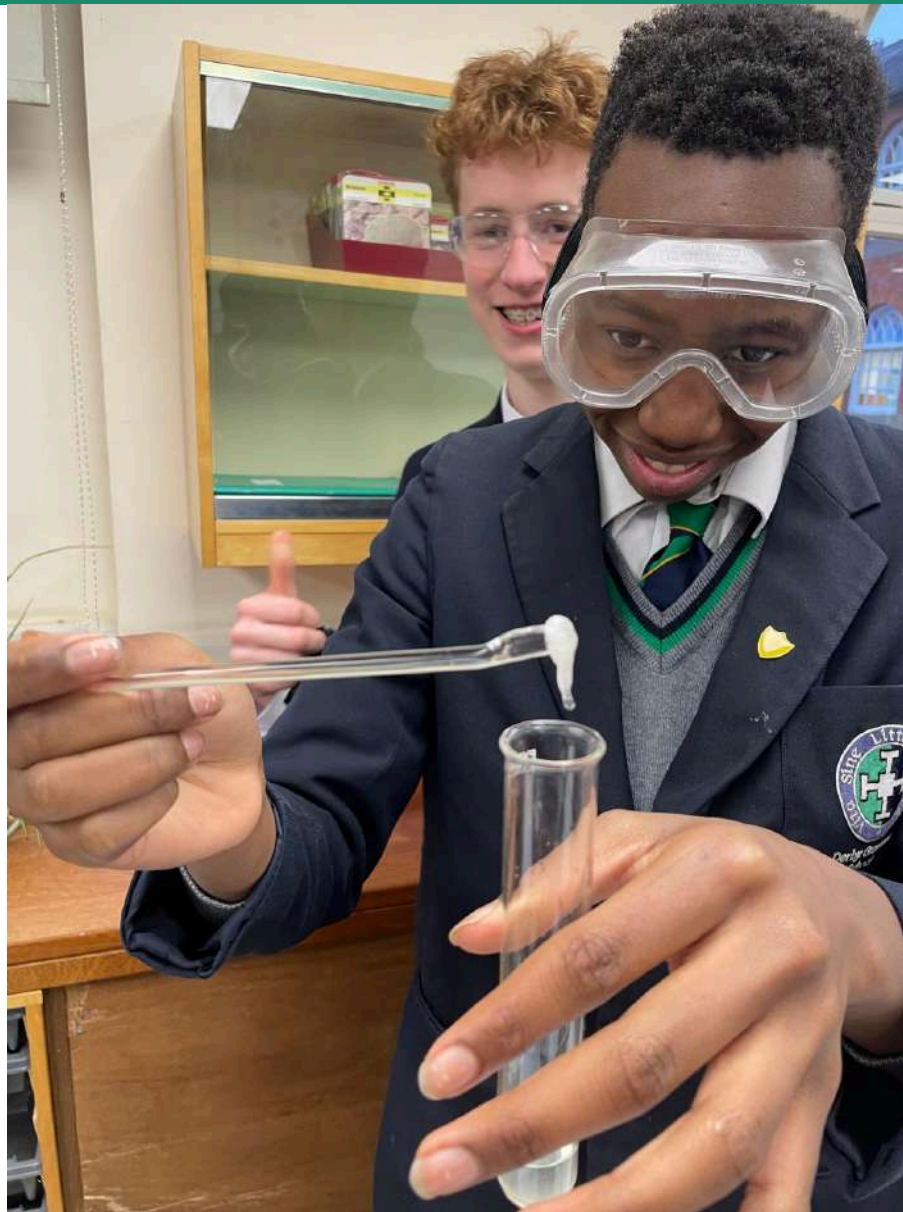


YEAR 10 BIOLOGISTS

Year 10 Biology students at Derby Grammar School have been putting theory into practice by conducting one of the key practical experiments in their GCSE curriculum—extracting DNA from banana cells.

This hands-on experiment allows pupils to gain a deeper understanding of DNA structure and function, reinforcing key biological concepts while encouraging them to think critically about the scientific method. By following a precise series of steps, students were able to isolate visible strands of DNA, helping to bring textbook learning to life in a tangible and engaging way.

Interestingly, HRH Prince William recently undertook the same experiment alongside scientist Manny in a viral video, where they successfully extracted DNA from a strawberry. The Prince even humorously referred to himself as Manny's "beautiful assistant" during the demonstration.



To watch the experiment in action, follow this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IU-wpY3lx8>

Practical experiments such as these are a vital part of science education at Derby Grammar School, allowing students to develop essential skills in observation, analysis, and problem-solving—critical foundations for all of their studies.

LATIN THRIVES AT DGS

LINGUA LATINA VIVA ET FLORENS APUD SCHOLAM GRAMMATICAM DERBIENSEM

**(THE LATIN LANGUAGE: ALIVE AND THRIVING
AT DERBY GRAMMAR SCHOOL)**

At a time when Latin is disappearing from school curriculums across the UK, Derby Grammar School remains committed to ensuring this ancient language continues to flourish. Our dedication to Latin was on full display at the 2024 EMACT Latin Reading Competition, where our students performed exceptionally well against some of the country's leading classics schools.

The competition, which has been running for nearly 30 years, brings together young classicists to showcase their mastery of Latin pronunciation, rhythm, and interpretation. This year's event, hosted by Loughborough High School, welcomed guest teams from Oakham, Pocklington, and King Edward's Birmingham, highlighting the enduring appeal of Latin despite its decline in mainstream education.

Derby Grammar School's students delivered outstanding performances across multiple categories:

- **Intermediate Competition – Alex Kirke & Aryan Mehta impressed judges with their expertly recited passage from Virgil's Aeneid 1, which they had scanned and practised independently.**



- **Junior Competition – Ojas Ramasharan & Arlo Gestopa performed with confidence and flair, narrowly missing out on a commendation with a strong fourth-place finish.**
- **Novice Section – Charlie Savva, George West, Joan Obayomi & Sofia Cornwell Captivated Playlet, securing 2nd place and earning certificates and prizes.**

Keeping Latin Alive at DGS

While Latin is being phased out in many schools, Derby Grammar remains steadfast in its commitment to the subject, recognising its value in developing linguistic, analytical, and critical thinking skills. Latin provides the foundation for many modern languages, deepens pupils' understanding of history and literature, and even enhances logical reasoning—an asset for subjects like science, law, and mathematics.

Our success at EMACT 2024 is a testament to the enthusiasm and dedication of our students and staff. We are proud to be a school where Latin not only survives but thrives, and we look forward to continuing this tradition for years to come.

Congratulations to all our participants for their fantastic achievements and for proving that Latin is very much alive at Derby Grammar School!



SCIENCE ROUND-UP

Year 10 Biologists Gain First-Hand Insight into the Eye

As part of their GCSE Biology studies, Year 10 students at Derby Grammar School recently took part in a hands-on dissection of sheep's eyes, providing them with a unique opportunity to explore the structure and function of the eye in detail.

This practical activity, which forms part of the Cells and Control topic, allowed students to examine key features of the nervous system and sensory organs, reinforcing their understanding of how the eye processes visual information. By carefully dissecting and identifying structures such as the cornea, lens, retina, and optic nerve, pupils were able to see first-hand how each part contributes to vision.

Practical dissections such as this are an essential element of science education, helping students to develop their observational, analytical, and problem-solving skills while bringing textbook theory to life. Engaging in hands-on learning not only enhances scientific curiosity but also prepares students for future study in biology, medicine, and related fields.

By fostering a deeper understanding of complex biological processes, Derby Grammar School continues to provide an engaging and rigorous science curriculum that encourages exploration and discovery.



A LEVEL PRACTICAL

Year 13 Investigate Photosynthesis with Chromatography

Year 13 Biology students at Derby Grammar School recently conducted an advanced scientific investigation using thin-layer chromatography (TLC) to analyse the photosynthetic pigments in spinach leaves.

This practical experiment, a key component of their A-Level studies on photosynthesis, provided valuable insights into the biochemical processes that drive plant life.

Chromatography is a highly effective technique for separating mixtures, and in this case, students used it to isolate and identify different pigments involved in photosynthesis. By applying an extract from spinach leaves onto a TLC plate and allowing a solvent to carry the pigments upwards, they were able to observe distinct bands representing chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, carotenoids, and xanthophylls—each playing a crucial role in light absorption and energy conversion in plants.

This hands-on investigation reinforced students' understanding of how plants capture and utilise light energy, while also developing their practical skills in laboratory techniques, data analysis, and scientific reasoning—essential skills for future studies in biological and environmental sciences.



Derby Grammar School remains committed to delivering a dynamic and engaging science curriculum, ensuring that students gain both theoretical knowledge and practical experience to prepare for STEM fields.

PRIMARY MOUNTAINEERS



This week, our Year 5 and 6 pupils swapped the great outdoors for an exciting indoor challenge as they took on the climbing wall, bringing their half-term topic of mountain exploration to life in a hands-on way. With the peaks of real mountains inspiring their studies, the students were eager to test their skills and tackle new obstacles on the climbing wall.

The event was an excellent opportunity for students to develop not only their physical abilities but also their teamwork and problem-solving skills. Working together to encourage and support one another, the children learned the importance of perseverance, communication, and trust. Whether they were scaling the wall with determination or offering a helping hand to their classmates, the spirit of collaboration was evident throughout the morning.

As they tackled various climbing routes, our young mountaineers faced challenges that required them to push past their fears and step outside of their comfort zones. With every attempt, they grew more confident, learning how to adapt their movements and improve their coordination. Each route presented new obstacles, but our climbers tackled them with a mix of focus, enthusiasm, and grit.

It was a truly inspiring morning, with plenty of moments of accomplishment, laughter, and fun. The sense of achievement was clear on the faces of every student as they conquered the wall and celebrated each milestone, big or small.

This adventure was not only about physical challenge but also about building resilience, boosting self-esteem, and reinforcing the value of teamwork. A huge well done to all of our Year 5 and 6 pupils for showing incredible determination and spirit—what a fantastic display of teamwork and tenacity!

FANTASTIC ACHIEVEMENTS FOR OUR U13 & U15 HOCKEY TEAMS!

We are incredibly proud of our U13 and U15 hockey teams for their outstanding performances at the recent ISA National Competitions. Competing against top schools from across the country, both teams demonstrated remarkable skill, determination, and teamwork, securing impressive results.

U13 ISA National Plate Runners-Up

Our U13 team delivered an exceptional performance throughout the competition, showcasing their tactical awareness, resilience, and teamwork. Their dedication and hard work paid off as they battled their way to the final and secured second place in the ISA National Plate Competition. Their energy and commitment on the pitch were truly inspiring!

U15 ISA National Bowl Runners-Up

Not to be outdone, our U15 team also put in a fantastic display, demonstrating grit and skill in every match. They fought hard against strong opposition, ultimately finishing as runners-up in the ISA National Bowl Competition. Their performance was a testament to their determination and passion for the sport.

Both teams had the incredible opportunity to compete at Lee Valley Hockey Centre, a world-class venue that regularly hosts international hockey events. Playing at such a prestigious location was an unforgettable experience for our students, further fuelling their passion for the game.

A huge congratulations to all our players for their dedication, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Special thanks to our coaches, whose guidance and support have been instrumental in the teams' success.

We look forward to seeing what the future holds for these talented young athletes! Well done, everyone!

