



Derby  
Grammar  
School

Where you belong

# DERBY GRAMMAR GAZETTE



Year 11 have been sitting their GCSE Mock Examinations and Year 13 have been sitting their A Level Mock Examinations. Staff have spent this week marking papers and next week the focus will shift to giving pupils their results, going through papers with pupils and starting to write reports. It's a long, but necessary process.

I often tell pupils that their 'mocks' are the worst examination they take! We haven't quite finished teaching all the specification content, there isn't much time to do class revision beforehand, the examinations are bunched together over two weeks and pupils have spent a lot of their Christmas holidays revising (at least they should have done).

However, the good news is that the mocks give pupils a better idea of their strengths and help flag weaknesses that have to be addressed. There's more time now in class to focus on past papers and revision techniques and then there is time over the Easter holidays and between the actual examinations for private revision.

There is everything to play for and the results should be just reward for the effort pupils invest – encouraged, I have no doubt by the support of their parents! Well done everyone

All best wishes,

**Paul Hilliam**  
**Acting Head**

# DESIGN A BOOK HOODIE

Calling all young artists and book lovers! We're thrilled to announce an exciting new competition for our primary school pupils – an opportunity to combine your love of reading with your creative flair. Imagine seeing that as an actual hoodie!

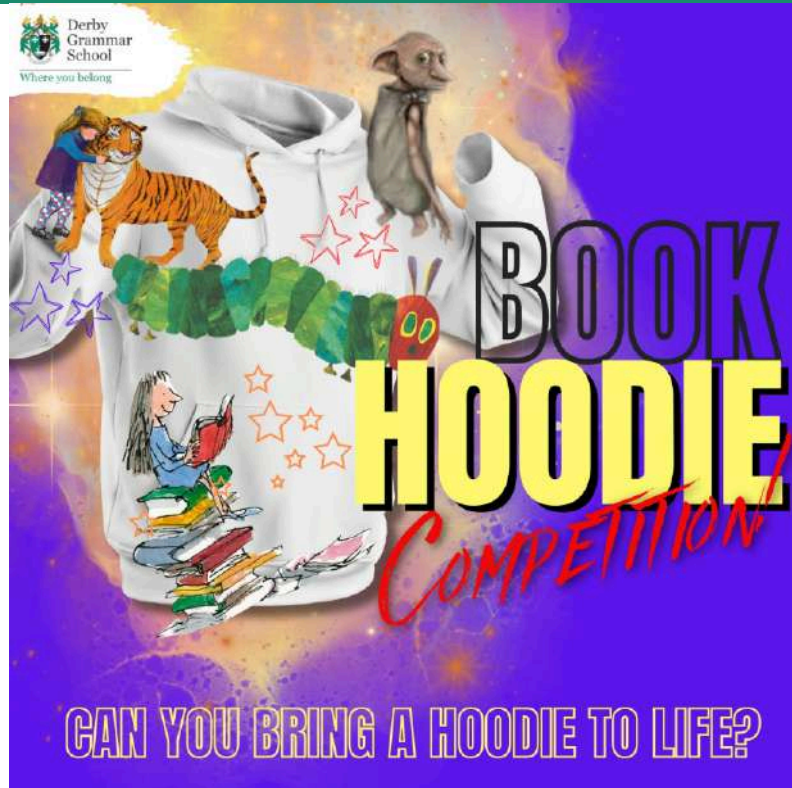
The challenge? Design a hoodie inspired by your favourite book. Whether it's the magical world of Harry Potter, the mischievous adventures of The Gruffalo, or the enchanting tales of Matilda, we want to see your ideas brought to life.

The winning design will be professionally produced into an actual hoodie by the talented team at Spot and Pickle – a fabulous company known for creating unique, personalised clothing.

Here's how to take part:

- Collect a Blank Hoodie Design Sheet: Visit Mrs Genders to grab your template. This will be your canvas to showcase your masterpiece.
- **Submit Your Design: Once complete, hand in your entry to Mrs Genders by 10th February.**
- Be Creative: Think about the colours, patterns, and illustrations that best capture the essence of your chosen book. Don't forget to add a splash of your personality!

We can't wait to see what imaginative creations you come up with. Good luck, and happy designing!



## DISTINCTLY DRAMATIC!

In December, eight Derby Grammar students took LAMDA Examinations in a variety of specialisms, and Mrs Simpson was very pleased to report that all students scored Distinctions! Distinctions are awarded for marks over 80% and are the highest attainable grade boundary. A special mention must go to Sam Watson, who passed his Grade 7 examination with 91 marks out of 100. Well done to all involved!



# BURNS NIGHT CEILIDH

## TOMORROW NIGHT!

**Join the fun at our Burns Night Ceilidh – Limited Tickets Available!**

Get ready for an unforgettable evening of fun, laughter, and Scottish celebration at Derby Grammar School's Burns Night Ceilidh tomorrow night! If you haven't grabbed your tickets yet, don't worry – there are still a few available, but they're going fast!

From 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM, you'll be treated to an exciting Ceilidh experience with a fantastic live Ceilidh band that will have you on your feet in no time. A professional caller will be there to guide you through all the steps, so even if you've never danced before, you'll have no problem joining in the fun.

But that's not all! You can look forward to plenty of Scottish shenanigans, creating a vibrant atmosphere as you celebrate the life and legacy of Robert Burns. There will also be a delicious hog roast supper to fuel your evening – perfect for enjoying with friends and family.

Children are more than welcome, making this an excellent event for the whole family. We're also offering a family ticket, so everyone can join in on the fun without breaking the bank!

Don't miss out on this fantastic night of dancing, food, and entertainment which our 6th Formers are hosting to help fund their forthcoming trip to Tanzania.

Simply scan the QR code or follow the link to grab your tickets before they sell out!

We can't wait to see you there for a night to remember!

Event Details:

- **Date: Saturday 25th January**
- **Time: 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM**
- **Location: Derby Grammar School**
- **Tickets: Limited availability – don't wait! Scan the QR code or follow the link to secure your spot.**

**Get your tickets now, and let's ceilidh the night away!**



[tickettailor.com/events/derbygrammarschooltanzaniaproject/1525602](https://tickettailor.com/events/derbygrammarschooltanzaniaproject/1525602)



# ASSESSMENT DAY

## Scholarships

On Saturday, we had the privilege of welcoming over 40 talented students to take part in our Scholarship Assessment Day, and what an incredible day it was! The event provided a fantastic opportunity for students to showcase their abilities across a variety of disciplines, whether academic, musical, dramatic, artistic, or sporting.

We were truly amazed by the sheer talent on display. From dramatic performances that left us speechless -, the creativity and passion of these young people was inspiring. Some monologues were simply breathtaking, capturing the heart and soul of the scripts in ways that showed remarkable skill and dedication.

The artistic talent on display was equally impressive, with students creating sublime pieces that highlighted both their technique and imaginative flair. The use of mixed media added a dynamic edge to their work, and we couldn't help but admire the thoughtful, unique approaches that the artists brought to their creations.

The academic achievements also shone through, with some seriously impressive results in our Cat 4 assessments. It's clear that these students are not only hardworking but also have the drive and passion to excel in their studies.

And, once again, our sports men and women look set to excel on the sports fields as we welcomed some seriously talented athletes. We have some very difficult decisions to make.

We want to extend a huge thank you to all the students who joined us on a Saturday and spent the day engaging in "schooly" things with such enthusiasm and dedication. Your contributions made the day a true celebration of talent, and we are grateful for the opportunity to witness your abilities first-hand. You were all absolutely wonderful, and we are so excited to see what the future holds for each and every one of you.





# CREATIVE POETRY CHALLENGE INSPIRED BY BRIAN MOSES

## FREE WRITING FRIDAY

Last Friday, Mrs Genders gave the children an exciting poetry challenge during Free Writing Friday, drawing inspiration from a poem and prompt idea by the well-known poet Brian Moses.

In his original poem, Brian created a humorous list of New Year's Resolutions that were easy to keep—offering a refreshing and witty take on the tradition of setting goals for the year ahead.

Mrs Genders put her own twist on the idea, encouraging the children to write New Year's Resolutions not for themselves, but for a character from a book or film. This creative spin opened up endless possibilities and allowed the pupils to imagine what resolutions iconic characters might make.

Would Harry Potter resolve to lose fewer wands? Could Matilda promise to read even more books? Perhaps Paddington Bear would vow to pack extra marmalade sandwiches!

To make the experience even more special, Mrs Genders tweeted Brian Moses to let him know how his idea had inspired her class. To the delight of everyone, Brian responded and asked to see some of the children's poems—how exciting!

This activity showcased the creativity and imagination of the children, allowing them to put forward her innovative idea and to Brian Moses for inspiring such a memorable Free Writing Friday!

Here are some of the brilliant poems the children came up with:





# HOCKEY ROUND-UP

## Battling the bitter cold and Queen Mary's!



Last week, Derby Grammar School's Year 7 and 8 hockey teams faced the formidable challenge of taking on Queen Mary's Grammar School – a much larger school with access to an extensive pool of players. Battling not only against their opponents but also against the bitter cold and heavy fog, our pupils demonstrated incredible grit, determination, and sportsmanship in what turned out to be an intense and memorable set of matches.

From the first push back, it was clear that Queen Mary's had skill and numbers on their side, but that didn't deter our DGS players. Every member of the team gave it their all, showing brilliant focus and a commitment to playing their best hockey despite the difficult conditions. Passes were sharp, tackles were determined, and the energy on the pitch was nothing short of inspiring.

One of the standout aspects of the matches was the teamwork displayed by our players. They supported one another at every turn, communicating effectively and adapting to the fast-paced game. Whether it was a last-minute clearance, a strategic pass, or a courageous dive to defend the goal, every player contributed to the team effort.

Mr Smyth, who was refereeing one of the matches, said, **"Our pupils really worked together from the first whistle to the last. It was tough out there, but they didn't give up and showed true DGS spirit."**

Amongst our 7 and 8's, there are certainly some hockey stars in the making. Individual skills shone through in moments of brilliance – from powerful strikes on goal to skillful dribbles past multiple opponents. But what truly stood out was the way the players grew as a team, building confidence in one another and in their own abilities.

Although the results didn't go in DGS's favour this time, the experience was invaluable. Playing against such strong opposition is key to developing skills, strategy, and resilience. And despite the challenging conditions, our players can hold their heads high, knowing they gave everything for their school and their teammates. A huge well done to the Year 7 and 8 hockey teams for their brave performance. You've shown that with determination and teamwork, anything is possible – and the future of hockey at DGS looks very bright indeed!



# PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

## House Music & Drama Auditions



All pupils are given the opportunity to perform a solo music or drama piece in the forthcoming Primary Performing Arts Evening. At the start of February, they will be invited to perform a piece in their class music lessons to Mrs Davy or Mr Coley. Each performance will earn them a house point. Mrs Simpson will discuss options with individuals who have Speech and Drama lessons. Pupils across the age ranges will then be selected to perform at our event on Tuesday 18th March. Get practising and good luck!

Reception - Year 4 were paired up to become reading buddies this week. All pupils loved spending some time with students of different ages and sharing their home reading book.



For the past couple of weeks in music pupils have been hooting and tooting on the recorder. They have learnt notes B, A, G. So far there has been barely a warble or a squeak!



## Forest Fun

In Forest School, pupils decided there were too many leaves and they were covering the snowdrops that are starting to appear. They asked how to make them into compost. The class worked really well as a team to gather the leaves and put them in the repositioned compost bin!

Asher and Noah found mysterious holes in the bark. On further investigation, they found a big beetle burrowing into the wood. After researching this they found out it's called a bark beetle!



## Reading Diary

### Reception - Year 4

Please make sure that you are hearing your child read five times a week and recording the reading in the reading record/weekly diary.

### Year 5 & 6

We advise that you hear your child read at least twice a week. There should be five recordings in their reading record each week.



# PRIMARY HOCKEY



Our Year 5 and 6 pupils are making fantastic progress with their hockey skills during games lessons! They've been working hard on key techniques such as dribbling, passing, and shooting, showing great enthusiasm and determination. It's wonderful to see their confidence growing with each session, well done everyone!



## Advance Notice

Tuesday 18th March

Primary  
Performing Arts  
Evening

4.00 – 5.30pm

**All students  
are required  
to attend  
this event**



## Well Spotted!

Ameer and Aaraf spotted that the hot chocolate we were drinking was fairtrade, remembering their learning from our previous rainforest topic!

Well remembered boys!



# F24 GEARS UP FOR 2025 SEASON

The roar of engines, the buzz of competition, and the relentless pursuit of innovation – the Derby Grammar F24 team is back for its 14th consecutive year of racing in the Greenpower F24 and F24+ categories. Over the years, this dedicated group of young engineers and drivers has built a proud tradition of excellence on and off the track, and the 2025 season promises to be one of the most exciting yet.

Each year, the F24 team says goodbye to its experienced Year 11 members as they hand over the reins to the next generation of racers. It's an emotional but exciting moment, as these seasoned veterans share their hard-earned wisdom with the younger pupils eager to fill their racing spots. As ever, competition for places on the team has been fierce, with a surge of interest from across the Derby Grammar community. The team now boasts an impressive 19 members – its largest lineup to date – ready to push boundaries and take on the challenges ahead.

The team is currently hard at work designing and building a brand-new race car to replace their much-loved but well-worn vehicle, The Stag. After years of loyal service and countless thrilling races, The Stag has earned its rest, making way for a successor that will embody the innovation, creativity, and determination of this year's team. While the new car remains unnamed for now, its design promises to be a game-changer, with the potential to shatter previous distance and lap time records. With recruits and a cutting-edge car in the works, the 2025 season is shaping up to be an unforgettable one.



The team's first challenge will come in March at Mallory Park Motor Circuit, kicking off an eight-race season that will test their skills, teamwork, and resilience. Every race is an opportunity for the team to learn, adapt, and grow – and with their sights set on breaking records and achieving personal bests, they're ready to tackle whatever the track throws at them.

Derby Grammar's F24 team has always been about more than just racing. It's a chance for pupils to develop their engineering expertise, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork skills in a dynamic and exciting environment. Their dedication and passion are an inspiration to the whole school community.

Keep up with the team's progress, behind-the-scenes insights, and race-day highlights by following their Instagram account, [greenpowerdgs](https://www.instagram.com/greenpowerdgs). With the energy, ambition, and talent this team brings to the track, the 2025 season is bound to be one for the history books. Let the countdown to March begin – go DGS F24!



# OUR FABULOUS PTA

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

The PTA, along with the school would like to thank April Sly for her long standing service to both DGS and the PTA in the capacity of Treasurer for many years! April has now stepped down, and her role has been taken on by Andy Blakeman. We'd like to wish Andy every success as he joins this energetic, fundraising team!

## PRE-LOVED UNIFORM SALE



**THURSDAY 13TH FEBRUARY**  
**3.45pm - 4.45pm**  
**IN THE SCHOOL HALL**

## DIARY DATES

### February

- 3-7** Children's Mental Health Week  
This week, we will be running a series of extra events to support the week - more information to follow but please be aware that on Friday 7th February we will be 'Wearing a Number' to raise money for the NSPCC - £1 donation
- 5** Reception Stay and Play event
- 7- 8** Senior School Pantomime - Snow White
- 10** Primary Achievement Assembly
- 10** Year 13 Parent's Evening
- 12** U10/11 Hockey v Old Vicarage School
- 17-21** Half Term Holiday

**28** Y11/12 Careers Event, Birmingham

**15** Open Day

### March

**28** End of Term

