

This Week at Derby Cathedral School

wc 2nd October 2023



In Proverbs 3: 21-22 it says:

"... do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight, preserve sound judgment and discretion; they will be life for you."

For us at DCS, this shows the value of improving our understanding of the world. It also demonstrates how understanding is closely connected to wisdom and making good decisions.

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have now moved into October and this half term feels well under way.

Last week I talked about the enrichment experiences we offer and it's been great to see more of this with the recent year 12 theatre visit.

During the first month of school, we have had a focus on uniform standards. It has been great to see a big improvement in how well students have been meeting these expectations. We will soon start to issue a pass for any students who have a uniform issue beyond their control (e.g. are waiting for a blazer on order). These will be time limited and will help to reduce the number of times they are asked about the issue during the day.

Our focus now has turned to equipment. It is really important that all students have the necessary equipment they need to learn each day. The full equipment list is on our website but as a reminder, all students must have the following with them every day:

- Pencil case
 - Black pens
 - Purple pen
 - Pencils
 - Rubber
 - Ruler
 - Pencil sharpener
 - Whiteboard pen
- Reading book
- Calculator

All of these are essential items that are needed for their lessons. Tutors will be making checks and logging any missing equipment on Classcharts. If students do not have these, their tutor may replace some but these will be purchased from the reward store and 'cost' them some of their positive points. We are strongly encouraging all students to take responsibility for their own organisation and being ready to learn.

All students read every day during our 'DEAR' (Drop Everything And Read) sessions. Improving reading is a critical skill, and again, our students benefit enormously from these activities. Books can easily be borrowed from our library which is open every break and lunchtime.

A calculator is not just needed for maths lessons but for many others such as science, geography, DT and business. These are not routinely lent to students in lessons as they are expected to have and look after their own calculator. They are available to buy on Parent Pay; if you need financial support with this then please do let us know.

Just as you have done so with uniform, we would really appreciate your support with ensuring your child/children have all of the items listed above. It really does make a big difference to their lessons and their learning.

With many thanks for your support, I wish you all a great week.

Mrs Brown
Headteacher

Year 12 Derby Theatre Visit

If we asked you to describe Frankenstein, what would you say? Most people today confuse the scientist with his creation as the story has been retold in so many different ways. Year 12 English students visited Derby Theatre last month to watch a modern recasting of Frankenstein in which the scientist Victor Frankenstein was recast as Victoria and set in the pre-war era of 1930.

The production clearly explored the strength and capability of women, a topic the author Mary Shelley was very committed to, by not only recasting Victor Frankenstein as a woman, but also Captain Walton the explorer and the scientists who support Frankenstein's studies. The play dealt with issues such as discrimination, loss of identity, misuse of power and a failure to prioritise family and relationships.

The students loved the performance and said that it had been scarier than they thought it would be. "The jump scares were really good, I wasn't expecting the gunshot," said Hiba Nibouch and Hiba Toubai. They enjoyed the female actors and thought the stage setting was crafted beautifully. "I was really surprised by the impact of the ice machine in adding to the eerie atmosphere. The setting was actually amazing; there were so many tiny details in the scientists' lab that made it interesting including the glowing objects in the flasks and the liquid that bubbled and pulsed," said Alicia Gashi. "I also really admire the character Francine who demonstrated such important values about discrimination." Erica about Johnson Ahiaga added, "The character's monologues on the value of life were really powerful. The whole experience was fantastic."

The students are studying the original text written in 1818 and this provided them with a modern version that highlighted how relevant the topics Shelley explored still are today.

A big thank you to Miss Noble for organising this experience for our students.

If you fancy a trip to the theatre, Derby Theatre is a great place to start. Have a look at <https://derbytheatre.co.uk> to see what is on.



Open Evenings

We were extremely proud to host prospective parents and students for our Year 6 Open Evening this week on Wednesday, and we are looking forward to our Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday 12th October.

This evening is a great opportunity for any Year 11 students from any school to come and have a look at our facilities, speak to staff about opportunities available to students at our Sixth Form and find out about next steps.

A promotional poster for the Sixth Form Open Evening. The background is a light blue grid pattern. In the top left, there is a photograph of a student in a white lab coat working with a piece of scientific equipment. In the bottom right, there is a photograph of three students sitting around a table, looking at a book or document. The text in the center reads: "Sixth Form Open Evening Thursday 12th October 5:30 – 7:30pm". In the top right corner, the Derby Cathedral School logo is displayed, featuring a stylized white building icon above the text "Derby CATHEDRAL SCHOOL".

Derby
CATHEDRAL
SCHOOL

Sixth Form
Open Evening
Thursday 12th October
5:30 – 7:30pm

Wizard of Oz Auditions

The 20th and 27th September marked the beginning of the journey to the Emerald City, with auditions for our first whole school production: The Wizard of Oz.

Posters had been up around the school advertising this, and there seemed to be a real buzz about it... but you never know who is actually going to turn up. But we needn't have worried – as the main hall was filled with students from different year groups all wanting to be involved.

After warming up and being spoken to about the different characters and opportunities, students were given sections from the script that they worked on bringing to life. The second date of auditions allowed for more of this, but also the opportunity for those interested in the solo singing roles, to be able to test their vocals to the score.

There has also been a huge interest in students wanting to help backstage. Let's remember that the acting is just one part of a production, and there is so much more that goes on behind the scenes (think of the end credits of a film!) This is already giving it even more of a whole school community feel – along with various staff members who would also like to help in putting DCS's first big whole school production together. We are very grateful for all of this support!

The hard bit now is the casting – there are so many talented students at our school; it is going to be tough to make the final decisions. Students will find out on Wednesday 11th October what their role will be – and the good news about this show, is that the ensemble nature means that everyone who wants to be involved can (did someone say munchkin?!) So there's only one thing for us all to do together, and that is to.... follow the yellow brick road!



Morley's Uniform Shop

Just a reminder that Morley's uniform shop has moved to its winter opening hours (see below).

You can still buy uniform online via this link which is also available on our website page:

<https://www.schoolwearsolutions.com/>

You can see full uniform guidance on our website: <https://derbycathedralschool.org.uk/information/uniform-equipment>

Winter Opening Hours 1st October 17th

June

Mon to Wed – Fri – Sat 9:00am – 5.00pm

Thu & Sun Closed

What Parents and Carers Need to Know About 'Among Us'

Among Us: fairly safe, or pretty sus?

This scenario of spaceship crew members cooperating to complete tasks and uncover murderous alien imposters has garnered a sizeable and committed following with younger gamers.

Though Among Us is presented in a (mainly) sanitised visual style, any children's game which essentially foregrounds the concepts of deceit, betrayal and killing is always likely to cause some concerns.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.

AGE RESTRICTION
7
PEGI

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as The Traitors, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Dates Ahead

Key Dates in the Autumn Term

12 October: Year 12 Open Evening

Wc 23 October: Year 9 Holocaust survivor visit

24 October: Year 7 Meet The Tutor Evening

9 November: Year 11 Parents' Evening (early finish of 2.10pm for all students)

28 November: Year 12 Parents' Evening (early finish of 2.10pm for all students)

1 December: INSET day. School closed for all students

Term Dates

Friday 27 October: break up for Autumn half term

Monday 6 November: return to school

Friday 22 December: break up for Christmas holiday (early finish for all students, exact time tbc)

Monday 8 January: return to school

Friday 16 February: break up for Spring half term

Monday 26 February: return to school

Thursday 28 March: Break up for Easter holiday

Monday 15 April: return to school

Friday 24 May: break up for Summer half term

Monday 3 June : return to school

Tuesday 23 July: break up for Summer holiday (early finish for all students, exact time tbc)

INSET Days – school closed to all students

Friday 1st December

Monday 5th February

Friday 28th June

Term and key dates can also be found on our calendar and terms dates sections on the school website.