

This Week at Derby Cathedral School

w/c 3rd March 2025



In Romans 15 it says:

“Each of us should please our neighbours for their good, to build them up ... May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind towards each other that Jesus had ... Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you.”

For us at DCS this is a reminder to not only celebrate who we are but to also encourage and accept those around us.

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we move further into the spring term, the words from the Bible verse above mean a great deal to our school community. In a world often focused on individual achievement, these words invite us to consider how we might lift each other up. At DCS, we see this spirit of mutual acceptance and encouragement flourishing throughout our corridors and classrooms – in the way our students support each other, in how staff nurture the diverse talents of our students, and in the countless small acts of kindness that make our school community special.

This week has been filled with enriching experiences across year groups. Our History department organised a fantastic French Revolution masterclass for Year 12 and 13 historians, led by Dr. Ruth Larsen from the University of Derby. This session provided valuable insights beyond the standard curriculum and showcased our commitment to academic excellence. Please read the full article for more details about this aspirational event.

It's also been heartwarming to hear our Year 7 students practicing so well for their upcoming visit to Derby Cathedral. Our strong partnership with the Cathedral continues to provide meaningful spiritual and cultural experiences for our students. We eagerly anticipate seeing and hearing Year 7 showcase their hard work during their next cathedral visit as we approach the Easter break.

World Book Day brought amazing energy to our school this week, with staff surprising students by transforming into characters and themes from a wide range of books. The creativity and enthusiasm displayed by our teachers created a memorable celebration of everything book-related. I extend my huge thanks to all staff members for their tremendous effort in creating such a positive atmosphere around the joy of reading. Don't miss the newsletter article about using technology to support reading – it offers practical advice for encouraging this vital habit at home.

A reminder to our Year 7 parents and carers to book appointments for the parents' evening on Tuesday, March 18th. These conversations provide invaluable opportunities to discuss your child's progress with individual subject teachers and strengthen our partnership in supporting their education.

As always, this newsletter contains numerous articles offering helpful information for parents/carers and highlighting local community events. I encourage you to explore these resources as we continue our journey together, embracing the spirit of Romans 15 – building each other up in acceptance and encouragement.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Brown

Vive la Revolution!

Year 12 and 13 historians were treated this week to a French Revolution masterclass from Dr Ruth Larsen. Dr Ruth is a leading historian from the University of Derby and she very kindly gave up her free time to teach our students all about the causes of the French Revolution. Dr Ruth focused on the role of the Enlightenment in the French Revolution and it was fascinating to find out how important Derby was to the Enlightenment. Students were amazed to learn that enlightenment thinkers from all over the globe flocked to our city to share ideas and develop new ways of thinking. As many of you know the Enlightenment has been immortalised in Joseph Wright of Derby's famous pictures including the Orrery which can be seen at Derby Museum and Art Gallery on The Strand in the City Centre.



We are incredibly grateful to Dr Ruth and the University of Derby for giving our students such an amazing lecture. If you would like to find out more about the history department at the university then please follow the link below. Their next open day is in June.

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/undergraduate/history-international-relations-politics-courses/history-ba-hons/>

Derby Museum and Art Gallery is open every day except Monday and has the largest collection of Joseph Wright of Derby paintings in the world. More information about the Museum and the Joseph Wright Gallery can be found here:

<https://derbymuseums.org/museum-and-art-gallery/visit/>



Year 7 Easter Rehearsals

On Monday 3rd March during collective worship, our year 7 cohort took part in a singing rehearsal for the Easter service which will be held at Derby Cathedral on April 1st.

Students were learning King of Kings, Majesty and they will be singing as a whole year group at the Cathedral! The group is being led by our choral director, Dr Jones. Dr Jones leads the vocal project at Derby Cathedral School.



HAF Programme

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF)

We have now been informed that during this Easter break, Derby City Council will continue to support eligible families through the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF). We have emailed all eligible parents with a detailed letter regarding this from Derby City Council.

From Easter onwards there will be a new booking system in place. The system allows you to discover and book all available HAF clubs.

Look out for an email or text message from HolidayActivities.com with a link to access your voucher. **Please note that any HAF codes previously issued are no longer valid and will not be accepted by the new system.** Vouchers will be issued to each eligible child via email or text message on Monday 17 March.

[Here's](#) a helpful guide to assist you with making bookings through the platform. Further information regarding the Holiday Activities and Food Programme can be found [here](#).



An Exciting Summer camp Opportunity!

We have been made aware of an exciting opportunity for young people taking place this summer with an organisation called Action for Conservation - [AFC's FREE Summer Camps](#) (click the link to see a short information film) or click this YouTube link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlU7Ao2Pw-A>

ABOUT THE SUMMER CAMPS

- Camps are open to young people aged 12-16 living in England and Wales.
- Camps offer young people the opportunity to connect with and explore nature in UK National Parks.
- They will take part in exciting activities like stargazing and bat walks, learn about environmental issues and solutions and make amazing friends.
- Our camps are completely **FREE!**

Applications are now open! Please see the website for more information, including about how to apply: www.actionforconservation.org/camp

The deadline is **Monday 5th May 2025**

The poster for AFC's FREE Summer Camps features a vibrant background of a white cliff overlooking the sea under a blue sky with birds. Two young people, a boy and a girl, are smiling in the foreground. The boy is wearing a striped hoodie, and the girl is wearing a white t-shirt with the AFC logo. The text 'FREE SUMMER CAMPS' is prominently displayed in large, stylized letters. At the top left, there are social media links for 'actionforconservation.org/camp' and '@action4conserv'. At the top right is the 'ACTION FOR CONSERVATION' logo with the text 'Reg. Charity (No. 1157297)'. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner, with the text 'Scan for more information' above it. In the bottom right, there is a section titled 'APPLY NOW IF YOU'RE ...' with three criteria: 'Aged 12-16 & live in England or Wales', 'Excited to explore the outdoors & make new friends', and 'Interested in taking action for nature & having fun'. At the very bottom, a green banner states 'APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5TH MAY 2025!'.

actionforconservation.org/camp
@action4conserv

ACTION FOR CONSERVATION
Reg. Charity (No. 1157297)

FREE SUMMER CAMPS

Scan for more information

APPLY NOW IF YOU'RE ...

Aged 12-16 & live in England or Wales | Excited to explore the outdoors & make new friends | Interested in taking action for nature & having fun

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5TH MAY 2025!

Using Technology to Boost Reading Skills

It was World Book Day on 6th March, a perfect time to celebrate the joy of reading and to explore how technology can support literacy. The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy.

At The National College, our WakeUpReading guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Primarily designed by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.



- 1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT**

Before integrating technology, consider the type of text that a child engages with. If they need help on a screen, digital reading tools can assist by scanning and highlighting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used to assess if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.
- 2 READING ON SCREEN**

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles - such as dyslexia-friendly fonts - are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.
- 3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS**

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user-friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.
- 4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES**

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.
- 5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS**

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogue and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text - encouraging children to read these texts closely or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.
- 6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS**

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Regularly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.
- 7 USING AUDIOBOOKS**

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.
- 8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING**

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to hear their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.
- 9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY**

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight or press a sentence and press play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.
- 10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS**

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13-16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educationally-positive environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert
Cathryn Leavel is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neurodiversity.com, which offers a library of short, 'bite-size' and explanatory videos for educators. Cathryn also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

 [DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE GUIDE](#)

Bridge The Gap – Mindfulness for Teens



Starting Soon!

Mindfulness for Teens

A 1-hour webinar with Nikki

Monday 10th March




8pm - 9pm
£7.50

[Book Now](#)

Join Nikki Webster, specialist mental health nurse and ACT therapist, for a friendly and down-to-earth webinar exploring the power of mindfulness for teens.

This 1-hour session will introduce the science behind mindfulness, share simple techniques to weave it into daily life, and inspire hope for what mindfulness can offer.

This NEW webinar is perfect for adults or parents to attend with their teen. Your cameras and audio are switched off so you can get comfortable where you are and enjoy learning more about how to support difficult emotions during these difficult years.

 **Date:** 10th March
 **Time:** 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM
 **Where:** Microsoft Teams



Webinar
ADULT & CHILD
MINDFULNESS
FOR TEENS

For parents and teens

Monday 10th March 2025
8pm - 9pm
RECORDING AVAILABLE AFTERWARDS
£7.50
Book via jwbridgethegap.com

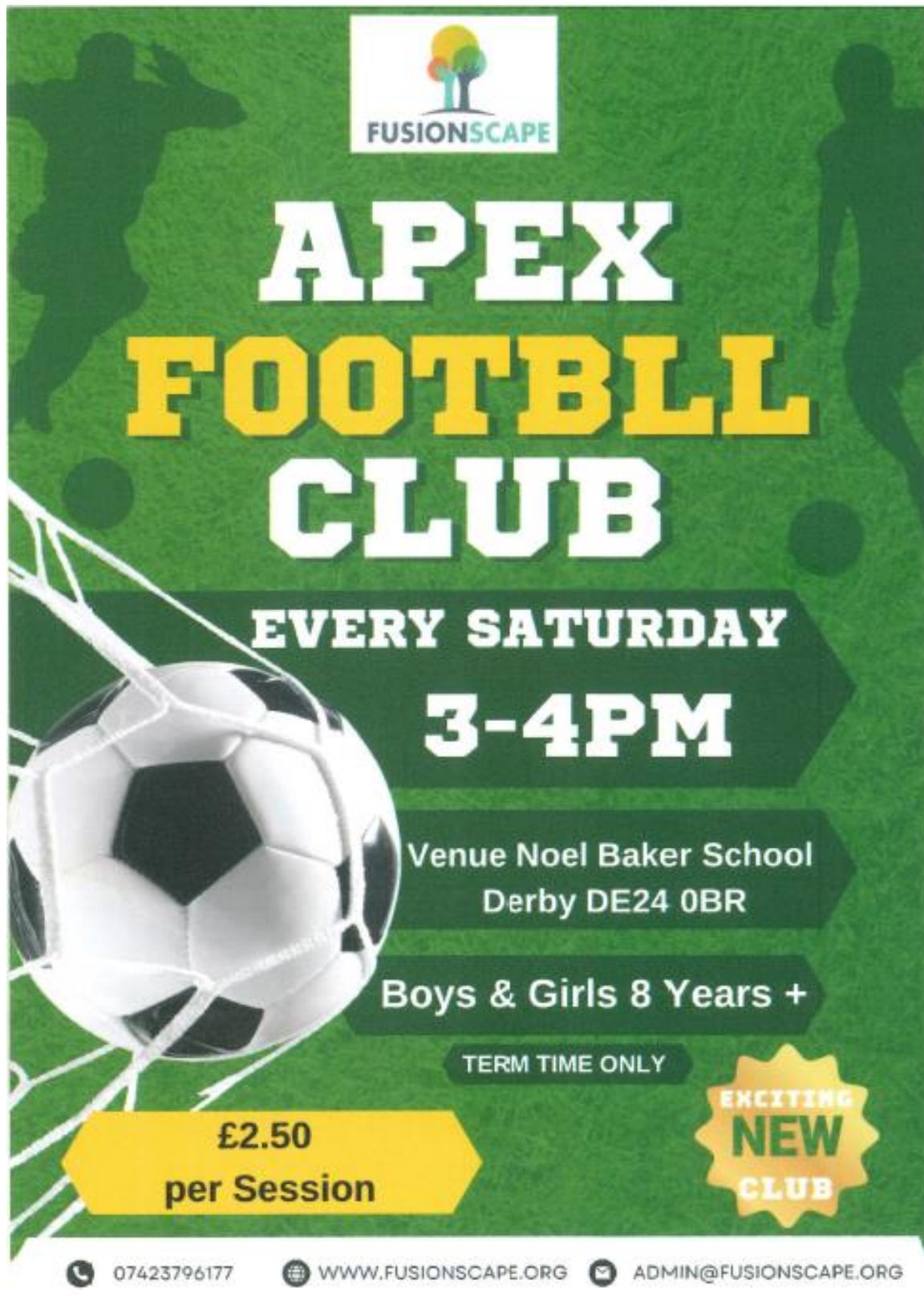
- ✿ Discover the science behind mindfulness
- ✿ Learn simple, everyday techniques to use it
- ✿ Feel inspired by its potential to support wellbeing

This session is just £7.50, helping us raise vital funds to keep supporting children and families through Bridge the Gap.

Bridge The Gap - Drop-In Hub

Free walk-in support every Tuesday and Wednesday 9am - 11am



A promotional poster for the Apex Football Club. The background is a vibrant green with a subtle pattern of soccer balls. Silhouettes of soccer players in action are visible on the left and right sides. At the top center is the Fusionscape logo, which features a stylized tree with a yellow sun-like canopy and the word 'FUSIONSCAPE' in blue capital letters below it. The main title 'APEX FOOTBALL CLUB' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'APEX' in white, 'FOOTBALL' in yellow, and 'CLUB' in white. Below the title, the text 'EVERY SATURDAY' and '3-4PM' is written in white on a dark green arrow-shaped background. To the left of this text is a detailed image of a soccer ball hitting a goal net. Further down, the venue 'Venue Noel Baker School' and 'Derby DE24 0BR' is listed in white on a dark green arrow-shaped background. Below that, 'Boys & Girls 8 Years +' is written in white on a dark green arrow-shaped background. A small dark green arrow-shaped box contains the text 'TERM TIME ONLY'. At the bottom left, a yellow arrow-shaped box displays '£2.50 per Session'. At the bottom right, a yellow starburst shape contains the text 'EXCITING NEW CLUB'. The footer contains contact information: a phone icon followed by '07423796177', a globe icon followed by 'WWW.FUSIONSCAPE.ORG', and an email icon followed by 'ADMIN@FUSIONSCAPE.ORG'.

📞 07423796177

🌐 WWW.FUSIONSCAPE.ORG

✉ ADMIN@FUSIONSCAPE.ORG

Fusionscape – Basketball Training



GOLDEN PHOENIX BASKETBALL TRIALS



TEAM TIME ONLY

BASKETBALL TRAINING

BOYS & GIRLS 08 YEARS+

EXCITING
NEW
CLUB

FEE:- £3.50 PER SESSION



13:00-15:00 EVERY SATURDAY

Noel Baker School
Derby DE24 0BR



07423796177



WWW.FUSIONSCAPE.ORG



ADMIN@FUSIONSCAPE.ORG



Reach Community Grocers



REACH COMMUNITY GROCERS

• **NEWLY OPENED!** •

OPEN 10:00AM - 4:00PM MONDAY - FRIDAY

You are invited to visit our newly opened community grocers.

Reach Community Grocers,
Riverside Court, Derby,
DE24 8HY

www.reachcommunitygrocers.org
hello@reachcommunitygrocers.org
01332 332044 (option 4)



REACH COMMUNITY GROCERS

Are you struggling with the cost of living crisis and finding it difficult to put food on your table? If so, the community grocers is for you.

You can become a member for £5 per year. This will allow you to make up to three visits per week. For a contribution of only £6 each time, you can choose a range of good wholesome food valued up to £25.

Our friendly volunteers will be here to help you with your shop and any further information.



Reach Community Grocers,
Riverside Court,
Derby,
DE24 8HY.

Bring this flyer along for an extra free shelf item when you join as a member.

© 2024 Reach Trust (Formerly East Midlands Christian Fellowship)
Registered Charity No. 1090036
Reach Trust is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No. 367667.
The Reach Centre, Riverside Court Pride Park | Derby | DE24 8HY

Lost Property

During last term we had an excessive amount of lost property handed in, which is subsequently put out on display three times per week in the school canteen and can be collected after school or before Period 1 on each occasion. To enable us to return lost property back to students, please ensure all items are labelled with student names.

Moving forwards, any lost property items that are put out for two consecutive weeks and not collected will either be disposed of or sent for recycling as we do not have the space to continuously store these items long term.

Medical Illness within School

During the winter months, we see an increased number of students presenting at Medical with coughs/colds and stomach bugs; however, please be aware that we are unable to treat minor illnesses such as nausea, stomach cramps and headaches, usually related to winter viruses. Students are encouraged to be resilient and self-manage where appropriate. We encourage students to stay hydrated and eat a warm meal at break or lunch.

We cannot provide any medication in school unless prior arrangements have been made between parent/carer and the Medical Officer, Miss Smith. If you wish for your child to keep medication at school, please collect a medication consent form from reception and hand the medication in to Miss Smith in its original packaging.

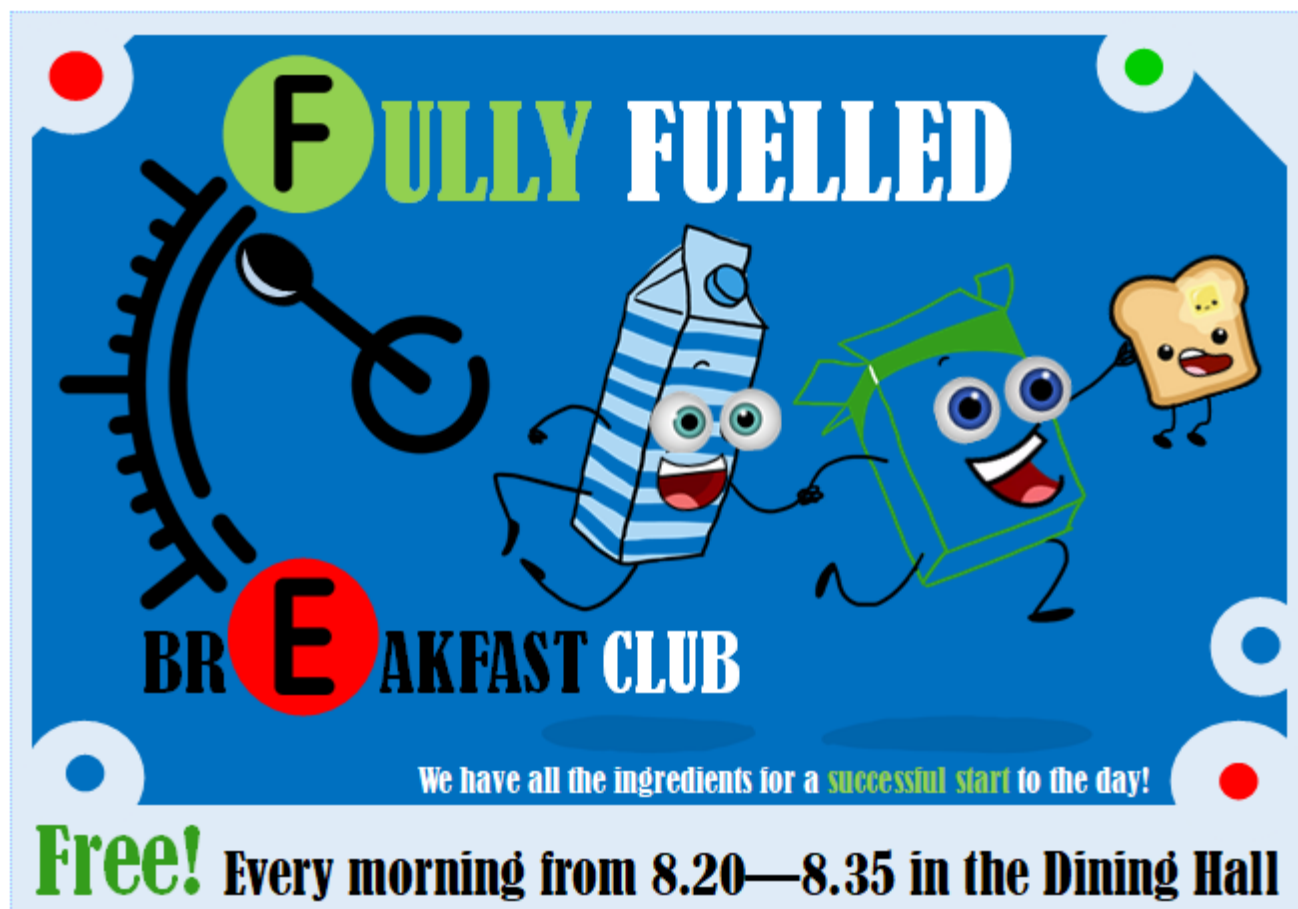
Contact/Meeting Requests

Our phone lines are extremely busy for the majority of the school day. If you have a query for a member of teaching staff or Head of Year, the easiest and quickest way to obtain a response is to email info@derbycathedralschool.org.uk. Please include in your email who you wish to speak to/meet with, along with a brief message. Your email will then be forwarded on to the relevant member of staff who will aim to respond to your request within 48 hours.

Teaching staff, Head of Years and Pastoral Year Leads will not be available to meet with parents/carers at any time during the school day without a prior appointment being arranged. Any requests of this kind will be declined by the Reception Team.

If you have an urgent safeguarding issue to report, please contact our Safeguarding Team on safeguarding@derbycathedralschool.org.uk. If a child is at immediate risk of harm, please call reception and your concern will be raised with the safeguarding team.

Breakfast Club – FREE breakfast for all Students



Our Breakfast Club is open Monday to Friday from 8:20 – 8:35 am

During the above times, all students are entitled to purchase breakfast items totally free of charge from the Dining Hall. Items available are:

- Toast
- A variety of cereals (subject to availability)
- Porridge

To request Gluten free toast or to discuss any other special dietary requirements, students should liaise directly with the catering staff who will aim to source the necessary items however, advance notice should be given.

PLEASE NOTE THAT NO DRINKS OR OTHER FOOD ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE DURING BREAKFAST CLUB

ParentPay Credit/Top ups

Thank you for your support with our parent pay system. The vast majority of families are ensuring there are sufficient funds on their child's accounts to purchase food in school. We are very grateful for this.

Unfortunately, there are an increasing number of requests from students to call home to have ParentPay accounts topped up so meals can be purchased. This is adding significant pressure to reception staff who have limited capacity to deal with the multiple requests.

We would ask that all families ensure students have sufficient funds on their ParentPay account to pay for these items. This will allow your child sufficient time to purchase food and consume it without having to queue at Student Services and wait for a phone call home beforehand; therefore reducing their break/lunch time considerably.

Please also note that students can purchase a 'main meal deal' at **lunch time only**, for the great price of £2.50, which is by far the best value for money on our menu. A meal deal includes a Hot or Cold Main Course, Dessert and Cuplet drink, whereas a sausage roll alone is currently £1.45.

For those who qualify for Free School Meals, the allowance does enable students to purchase items at break time if they wish, however this will leave them unable to take advantage of the meal deal option at lunch time. If you wish for your child to purchase additional snacks at break time, please add extra credit each day/week to their ParentPay account to cover the cost of these items. Alternatively, students are welcome to bring in snacks from home to consume at break time.

Full details of our Catering Menus and Price Lists can be found on the Derby Cathedral School Website or by scanning the QR code



Community Pharmacy First Services



Providing NHS services

Most pharmacies can help you
with **seven common conditions**
without needing a GP appointment

- **Sinusitis**
(adults and children aged 12 years and over)
- **Sore throat**
(adults and children aged 5 years and over)
- **Earache**
(children and young adults aged 1 year to 17 years)
- **Infected insect bite**
(adults and children aged 1 year and over)
- **Impetigo**
(adults and children aged 1 year and over)
- **Shingles**
(adults aged 18 years and over)
- **Urinary tract infection**
(women, aged 16 to 64 years)



Ask your pharmacy for more
information about this
free* NHS service

**Visit your
Pharmacy First!**

*NHS prescription charge rules apply where a medicine is supplied



Dates Ahead

School Holidays 2024-25

7th April 2025 – 21st April 2025 – Easter Break (inc Good Friday and Spring Bank Holiday)

5th May 2025 – Bank Holiday

26th May 2025 – 30th May 2025 – May Half Term (inc Bank Holiday)

24th July – Last day of term

INSET Days 2024-2025 – School closed to all students

Monday 30th June 2025

Parents Evenings / Opening Evenings 2024-25

Tuesday 18th March 2025 – Y7 Parents Evening (Virtual) 3 pm – 6 pm, early finish for all students at 2:15 pm

Thursday 12th June 2025 – Y9 Parents Evening, 3 pm – 6 pm – early finish for all students at 2:15 pm

Please Note:

For any students sitting exams on the above dates, they will be required to stay in school until the exam has ended.

****NEW** - School Term Dates and INSET days 2025-26**

Please click on the link below to view the Term Date calendar and INSET days for 2025-26:

[DCS Term Dates 2025-26 with INSET.pdf](#)

INSET Days 2025-26 – School closed to all students

Thursday 4 Sept 2025

Friday 5 Sept 2025

Friday 5 Dec 2025

Monday 2 Feb 2026

Friday 26 June 2026

Other Key Dates

- **Wednesday 23rd April 2025 – Year 11 & Year 13 Group Photographs**

Term and key dates can also be found on our calendar on the school website:

<https://derbycathedralschool.org.uk/>