

17th December 2025

Dear Parent Carers,

Weekly Update: 17/12/25

I hope this update finds you well. As shared last week, this week's update is a couple of days earlier than usual, and has a large focus on Family Support over the Christmas holiday. There is lots of information and advice, as well as details of activities that you may wish to access. We hope you find these helpful.

It was great to see so many of you at the Winter Wondershow and Christmas Market yesterday. We hope that the new timing of the market was beneficial in allowing so many of you to attend with your child or young person. It's great to know that we have also raised more money to provide all of our students with an exciting activity or experience next year – we will have to get our thinking caps on!

There are still a couple of days of school left ahead of the end of term on Friday 19th December. We are still working hard to maintain routines as much as possible, because as delightful as Christmas activities are, we appreciate that some students struggle with the change or with too many things taking place.

As we come to the end of my first term as Headteacher, I would like to take a moment to thank our young people, families and staff for the welcome, support and encouragement I have received since September. Having previously served as Deputy Headteacher and Head of School, it has been a real privilege to continue working alongside such a dedicated community in this new role. I am incredibly proud of the achievements of our young people this term and grateful to our staff for their commitment to providing a nurturing, inclusive and aspirational environment for every child. I very much look forward to building on this strong foundation as we move into the next term.

Christmas Reading Challenge

This Christmas break we're inviting students to take part in a festive Reading Challenge! The aim is to encourage a love of reading over the holidays by enjoying books at home in a fun and relaxed way. We appreciate your support in helping your child find time to read and share their progress. If you are able, please take photographs and email them into school for your child to win a prize.

Toni Beardmore **Headteacher**

St Martins School, The Derwent Campus, Bracknell Drive, Alvaston, Derby, DE24 0BT
Tel: 01332 571151 **Email:** admin@stmartins.set.org **Online:** www.stmartinsschoolderby.co.uk

Progress Reports

Students will receive their Autumn Progress Reports towards the end of this week. Please get in touch with the office if you don't receive a copy.

Free School Meal Vouchers

Students in receipt of Free School Meals have been sent vouchers to cover the holiday period. If your child has not received their voucher, please get in touch with the School Office as soon as possible.

Farewell

At the end of term, we are bidding farewell to Verity Ellison. Verity has worked at St Martins since December 2013, starting first as a Teaching Assistant before training as a Teacher. Whilst working at St Martins, Verity has taught across the school with a range of learners from Key Stage 3 – Key Stage 5. Verity is leaving to work as a Doula, and will be a great support for expectant parents and families. Thank you for your positive contribution over the years!

Return to school after Christmas

We look forward to seeing students back in school on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

With best wishes for a peaceful Christmas,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'T. Beardmore'.

Toni Beardmore
Headteacher

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Term Dates 2025/2026

Autumn Term 2025

School Starts Back – Monday 3rd November

School Breaks up for Christmas – Friday 19th December

Spring Term 2026

INSET Day – Monday 5th January 2026

School Starts Back – Tuesday 6th January

School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 13th February

School Starts Back – Monday 23rd February

School Breaks up for Easter – Friday 27th March

Summer Term 2026

School Starts Back – Monday 13th April

INSET Day – Friday 1st May

Bank Holiday – Monday 4th May

School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 22nd May

School Starts Back – Monday 1st June

School Breaks up for Summer – Wednesday 22nd July

INSET Day – Thursday 23rd July

St Martins follows Derby City Council's term dates. Dates for next year can be found on their website – please follow the link for these - <https://derby.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/term-holiday-dates/#>

Social Media Links

Facebook - [St. Martins School Facebook](#)

Instagram - [St. Martins School Instagram](#)

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12 Days of Christmas Reading Challenge

Over the festive break, see if you can complete as many of these reading challenges as possible. Tick off the ones you have done. Ask someone to take a photo of you completing the challenges and send it to your teacher to win a prize!

1



Read a Christmassy book.

Draw a picture to retell the story from your favorite book.

2

3



Read to someone else such as a relative or pet.

Visit a local library or book shop to look at books.

4

5

Get cosy with a blanket and hot drink while you read.

Read somewhere festive, like next to a Christmas tree.



6

7

Write or draw your own winter themed story.

Read in your PJs tucked up in bed or on the sofa.



8

9



Read something you wouldn't normally read like a newspaper or comic.

Read a Christmas poem or search the lyrics to your favourite Christmas song.

10

11



Make yourself a den out of blankets and cushions to read in.

Read something that feels magical!

12

CHRISTMAS

Support

Christmas can be a difficult time for many.

You are not alone.

Many find it difficult with the change of routine, noise and how busy it is this time of the year.

Social Care - 01332 641172

In an emergency please call 999

Please contact your GP for mental health concerns

Derby City and Derbyshire Mental Health line: 0800 020077

We hope you find this leaflet useful with information to support you and your family with activities available, advice, visuals and agencies that can support during the Christmas holidays.



The National Autistic Society have a list of tips for the festive period.

www.Autism.org.uk



Support



Derby's Family Hub is there to help you find the right support at the right time for you and your family.

Derby and Derbyshire HUB offer Neurodevelopmental support

Neurodiverse community hubs have been set up to provide neurodevelopmental support for families. There are four hubs which can be found in Derby city, South Derbyshire, central Derbyshire and High Peak.

Derby city's neurodiversity hub is based out of the St James Centre, Malcolm Street, Derby, DE23 8LU.

Opening hours for calls, booked appointments and drop ins:
Monday to Thursday from 10am to 1:30pm
Friday 10am to 1:30pm

Contact details

Telephone: 01332 604080

Mobile: 07561 856320

Email: neurohub@stjamescentre.org





FamilyHubDerby
Stronger families through support & friendship

Your guide to what's on for families in Derby

September – December 2025



Please scan for further information



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Community Action







SUPPORTING YOU WITH THE COST OF LIVING



Please visit www.communityactionderby.org.uk
If you can't find what you're looking for, please
get in touch with the Community Action
reception on 01332 346266 between 9:00 - 16:30
Monday - Friday. Or you can email at
support@communityactionderby.org.uk





Internet Safety

As the festive season approaches and new devices arrive under the tree, it's the perfect time to make sure your child is safe, supported, and confident online. At St Martins School, we care deeply about helping young people stay safe online – So we have put together some useful tips.



Top Tips for Parents & Carers

1. Set Up Devices Before They Start Using Them

Install parental controls on new phones, tablets, and consoles.

Create child-friendly profiles on apps and games.

Check privacy settings to restrict who can contact them.

2. Talk About Online Safety Early

Keep conversations open and relaxed.

Encourage them to tell you if something online worries them.

Remind them that nothing is too small to talk about.

3. Know What They're Playing, Watching & Doing

Explore apps, games, and sites together.

Check age ratings and in-app purchase settings.

Set boundaries around screen time, especially during holidays.

4. Keep Devices in Shared Spaces

Make online activity part of the family space.

Avoid devices behind closed doors, especially at night.

★ Where to Get Help

School Safeguarding Team – We're always here if you need advice.

CEOP – Report any online concerns: www.ceop.police.uk

NSPCC Online Safety – Guidance for families.

Internet Matters – Step-by-step guides for setting controls.

Let's work together to make this Christmas fun, safe, and worry-free online!





A large number of young people struggle with their mental health, especially without the routine of school. Please see below some tips on helping support your child with their mental health.

In an emergency please seek help at A+E

Ways to support a child or young person



Be there to listen

Regularly ask your child how they're doing, to help them get used to talking about their feelings, and know there's always someone there to listen. You can get tips on Young Minds: How to talk to your child about mental health -

<https://youngminds.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-with-your-child/>



Support them through difficulties

Pay attention to how your child is feeling or behaving and try to help them work through difficulties. It may not be easy facing challenging behaviour, but try to help them understand what they're feeling and why. Learn more from the Maudsley Charity on difficult behaviour -

<https://maudsleycharity.org/familiesunderpressure>



Stay involved in their life

Show interest in their life and what's important to them. It not only helps them value who they are but also makes it easier for you to spot problems and support them.



Encourage their interests

Support and encourage your child to explore their interests. Being active or creative, learning new things and being a part of a team helps connect us and boost our mental wellbeing.



Take what they say seriously

Listening to and valuing what they say makes them feel valued. Consider how to help them work through their emotions in constructive ways. Anna Freud Centre's guide on ways to support children and young people has more on this - <https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/resources/7-ways-to-support-children-and-young-people-who-are-worried/>



Build positive routines

Try to have structure around regular routines, especially around healthy eating and exercise. A good night's sleep is also important, so have a fixed time for going to bed and getting up. The Sleep Charity has relaxation sleep tips for children -

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/>

The following apps/websites are useful to support young people and their mental health



Mental Health and wellbeing support for Parent Carers



Online counselors
(Please see next page with opening times over the Christmas period)



Online mental health support for young people and Parent Carers ★

Christmas and New Year opening hours



You can access Kooth any time you need; we're always open. If you're looking for a one-to-one chat with our team, check below to see when they're available over Christmas and New Year:

Christmas Week

6 – 10PM

Saturday 20th December

6 – 10PM

Sunday 21st December

12 – 10PM

Monday 22nd December

12 – 10PM

Tuesday 23rd December

12 – 8PM

Christmas Eve
Wednesday 24th December

4 – 8PM



Christmas Day
Thursday 25th December

12 – 8PM

Boxing Day
Friday 26th December

New Year Week

6 – 10PM

Saturday 27th December

6 – 10PM

Sunday 28th December

12 – 10PM

Monday 29th December

12 – 10PM

Tuesday 30th December

12 – 8PM

New Years Eve
Wednesday 31st December



4 – 8PM

New Years Day
Thursday 1st January

12 – 10PM

Friday 2nd January

From 3rd January 2026, our team will be available as usual: 12 - 10pm Monday to Friday and 6pm - 10pm at weekends.

SAFE & SOUND
Transforming young lives

Cotton Lane Youth Hub



Monday

Boys Club 5pm - 7pm (Table tennis, Pool, PS5)
Open space 7pm - 8pm



Tuesday

Girls Code (alternate weeks) - Arts, Crafts, Topics and Chats
@ 4:30pm - 6pm (Please contact the office for dates)
Girls Drop In 6pm - 8pm (Every Week)



Wednesday

Dance - Under 12's - 4:30pm - 5:30pm
Over 12's - 5.30pm - 6:30pm
Drop in - 6:30pm - 8pm



Thursday

Graffiti - 4.30 - 6pm
Boxfit - Under 13's 6 - 7pm
Boxfit - Over 13's 7 -8pm



FREE

Friday

Youth Club
Under 13's @ 4:30pm - 6pm
Under 17's @ 6:30pm- 8:30pm

All activities are FREE of charge



The Hub

50 Cotton Lane, DE24 8GG
01332 362120

WINTER ACTIVITIES

MUSIC - FOOD - DANCE

AGES 8-16

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE MAKING
BEATS, RAPPING, LYRIC WRITING,
ARTS, CRAFTS AND GAMES

DECEMBER

MON 22ND

TUES 23RD

MON 29TH

TUES 30TH

12PM - 4PM

BABY PEOPLE
3 FORMAN ST
DERBY, DE1 1JQ



REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.HOLIDAYACTIVITIES.COM



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Derby City Council


Community Action






Christmas and new year



The  Christmas period can be a  fun and enjoyable time, but can be  busy

and full of  different activities. Sometimes,  we  might  feel  overwhelmed and

 stressed and these are  normal  feelings.

If  I  feel  overwhelmed or  stressed, it is  important  I  talk to  my  family 

and do  activities that make  me  feel  happy.  I  might  go to  a  different

 room that is  quiet,  listen  to relaxing music, use my  ear defenders or do some

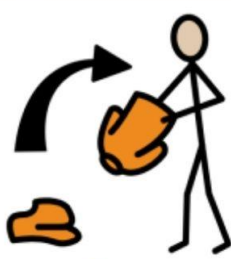
 relaxing colouring.



Some Christmas visuals to cut and put up around the house to help with routine



Christmas
day



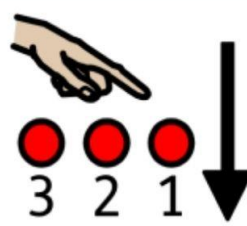
Get dressed



Eat Christmas
dinner



Eat breakfast



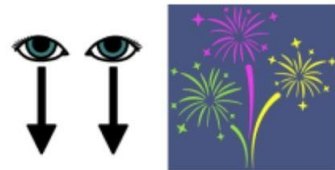
Count down



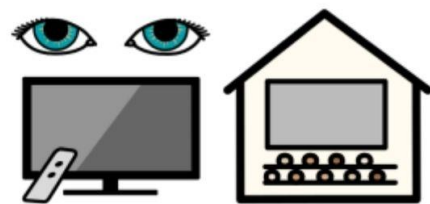
Set table



Get in the car



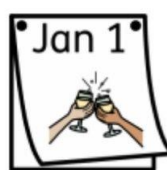
Watch the
fireworks



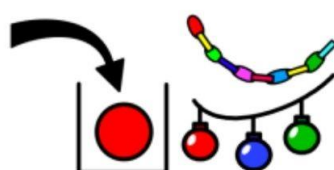
Watch a film



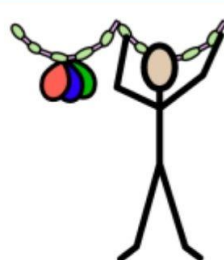
Open
presents



New years
day



Put away
decorations



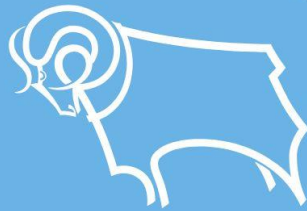
Decorate



Open
presents



Visit family



DERBY
COUNTY
COMMUNITY
TRUST

SEND SPECIFIC

HAF

Holiday
activity
and food

DERBY RACECOURSE

Racecourse Playing Fields, St Mark's Road, Derby, DE21 6AL

Monday 22nd December

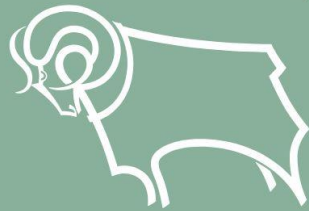
11:00am-3:00pm 11-16 YEARS OLD

The HAF programme supports children and young people receiving benefit-related free school meals. Eligible parents and carers will receive a HAF code and booking instructions from their child's school. For more information, please contact your child's school or the DCCT team at community@dcct.co.uk or 01332 416140.



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DERBY
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COMMUNITY
TRUST

HAF

Holiday
activity
and food

Arboretum Park

Arboretum Square, Rose Hill Street, Derby, DE23 8FR

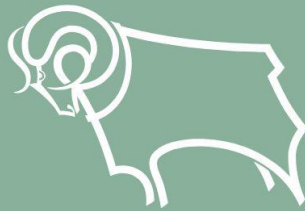
Monday 22nd December & Tuesday 23rd December

11:00am - 3:00pm 8 - 16 YEARS OLD

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DERBY
COUNTY
COMMUNITY
TRUST

Pop up session

HAF

Holiday
activity
and food

Arboretum Park

Arboretum Square, Rose Hill Street, Derby, DE23 8FR

Monday 22nd December

4:00PM-8:00PM 8-16 YEARS OLD

The HAF programme supports children and young people receiving benefit-related free school meals. Eligible parents and carers will receive a HAF code and booking instructions from their child's school. For more information, please contact your child's school or the DCCT team at community@dcct.co.uk or 01332 416140.



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