

24th October 2025

Dear Parent Carers,

Weekly Update: 24/10/25

I hope this update finds you well. As we come to the end of the first half term, I'm proud to share that I've had a really positive start to the year in my new role as Headteacher at St Martins Special School. Having worked here for the past seven years as a Teacher and Deputy Head, it's a privilege to now lead such a passionate and dedicated team. I continue to be inspired by our amazing young people and the strength of our school community. Thank you all for your support and for making St Martins such a special place to be.

Key Stage 5 Update

For this week's update, Key Stage 5 have put together a fantastic newsletter showing how their first half term at Friar Gate Studios has been – both as a new site and as a new cohort of Year 12 students joined. We hope you enjoy reading this.

Monster Marathon

Thank you to all who took part in Creepy Crafts and the Monster Marathon on Wednesday – it was great to see so many Parent Carers take part in activities and in dressing up too! Photographs from the day will appear on our social media over the next few days. Please hand any sponsorship money in to Terrie by Friday 7th November.

Staffing Update

We would like to share that Ryan Gascoine, our Transitions Learning Mentor, will be leaving St Martins on Friday 14th November. Ryan has been a huge part of the Year 11 and Year 13 transition process, bringing a wealth of knowledge and building strong relationships with students and staff alike. He is moving on to an exciting new role within Derby City Council, and we wish him all the very best in this next chapter. Rest assured, everything Ryan has been working on will be carefully handed over. Key contacts moving forward will be Heather Woodward (SENCO), Rachel Cooper (Assistant Head and Key Stage 4 Lead), and for any students pursuing Horizons, Liz Sanger (Assistant Head and Key Stage 5 Lead). If you have any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to email or call. We will continue to provide the same strong support for our students throughout this transition.

Free School Meal Vouchers

This week, vouchers have been posted to eligible families to support the cost of lunches during the half term. These vouchers are provided through Derby City

Toni Beardmore **Headteacher**

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Council's Holiday Activities Fund (HAF). More information about Free School Meals can be found here - <https://www.stmartinsschoolderby.co.uk/parents/school-meals> and details on how to access HAF can be found here - <https://www.derby.gov.uk/education-and-learning/extra-curricular-activities/derby-haf/>

Tempest School Photographs

Students have brought their proofs home today. Please use the proof to purchase photographs via Tempest's website. If ordering within 7 days, photographs will be delivered to school free of charge.

Hubbub Half Term Workshops

Hubbub are hosting free workshops for young people aged 11-18 next week during the half term. Please see the poster later in the update for more information on how to take part.

Maternity Leave

Three of our staff team are going to start their Maternity Leave today – Sammy Thompson, Alice Malone and Saffron Hanley. I hope you will join the school in wishing them all well. We look forward to hearing some very special news from them soon!

I look forward to welcoming all students back to school after the Half Term on Monday 3rd November.

With best wishes for a relaxing and refreshing half term,



Toni Beardmore
Headteacher

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Key Stage 5 Newsletter

Settling in...

The start of the Autumn term has been very busy at Horizons as we have settled into our new building: Friar Gate Studios. This has been an exciting time for us to sort out learning spaces alongside welcoming in new Year 12 students and Year 13s for their final year. The team have been very impressed by how quickly all students have settled in, supporting one another - we are very proud of them!

October 2025

Where are we?

Horizons 6th Form
Friar Gate Studios
Ford Street
Derby
DE1 1EE



Tel: 01332 571151

WHAT DOES A TYPICAL WEEK IN YEAR 12 FEEL LIKE?

In this edition, one of our new Year 12s has captured what a 'typical' week feels like at Horizons:

On Mondays, all Year 12s have English for an hour and 45 minutes, and Maths for two hours and 15 minutes (broken up by lunch). Tuesday, I go to my placement at Artcore which runs from 10am to 12pm. Then on Wednesday I have Gallery 5, which is a printing business ran by students, as my Enterprise project and then PSHE. Lastly, on Thursdays I go to Elvaston Castle where we volunteer to clean up Bartholomew Church's graveyard, and back to Horizons for my last lesson of the week: Futures.

I moved into Horizons sixth form from an external school and have found it a welcoming environment.

Written by DW

SCHOOL VISITS AND OPEN EVENING EVENT

This half-term we have welcomed different groups of pupils and staff from St Martins to see our new setting and join us for lunch. Pupils from Year 10 and Year 11 have enjoyed catching up with Year 12 students and hearing about their new experiences. They have arrived with lots of very good questions about life at college and all it involves. On Tuesday 6th October, we hosted our first Open Evening at Friar Gate Studios. The evening was very well attended with almost 50 visitors coming to see our provision and learn more about us. There were multiple tours that took place and it was fabulous to have so many prospective students and their families come and meet us.

KS5 Council

Alongside settling into new routines and the demands of their college timetables, students have been putting themselves forward for our Horizons' Student Council. It is important that all our students have a 'voice' and the 9 student councillors are excited about the new initiatives and experiences they plan to launch, as a part of their important work representing their peers.

In the second week of October the voting booth and ballot box appeared in Liz's office (our make-shift polling station) for all students to elect the Year 12 and Year 13 council representatives. Read on to learn a little more about what the role will enable them to do and how they will represent the council dutifully!



Our Year 12 Council Representatives:



MAYSON

YR 12 REPRESENTATIVE

I want people to have a positive experience at Horizons and to make sure they feel comfortable during these really important 2 years of their lives.



MASON

YR 12 DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE

I want people to feel 'safe' and enjoy college, so I will listen to the requests that students have and take them forward, to action changes where needed.

Our Year 13 Council Representatives:



SAM

YR 13 REPRESENTATIVE

I want everyone to be themselves, feel positive and have a good time while at Horizons. I look forward to hearing what great ideas people have to support positive changes for everyone.



BRADLEY

YR 13 DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE

I will be gladly waiting to hear everyone's ideas to help make college a fabulous experience.

Settling in...Year 12 experiences

Starting college can be both exciting and daunting! Read on to hear what some of our new year 12s have to say about their experiences thus far at Horizons...

I have been at Horizons 6th Form College for nearly a whole half-term and was able to settle in with the help of friends. I love my current weekly schedule here. I have three and a half-days. My placements have been perfect for me. I am still getting to talk to new people but still feel a bit shy - I will continue to try though!

Yusef

Since coming to Horizons I have felt more confident travelling by myself and doing things that I like; I even love doing Quad and Gallery 5!

Scott.

It's been good to settle in. The teaching team at Horizons have helped me do this. I have enjoyed English. I also enjoy my placement at the Heart of the Park Cafe where I make drinks and serve customers. I get the bus home everyday and it feels good to be independent. Jack.

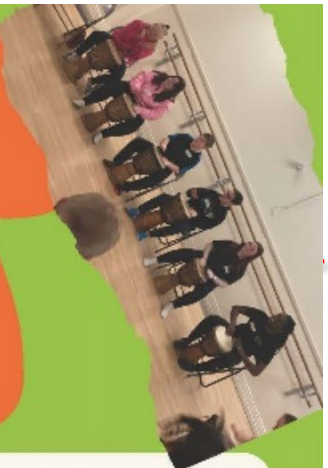
I have been here for 7 weeks, staff have been very supportive and very helpful. Horizons boosts confidence and gets you ready for adulthood. Confidence and independence are key for a successful future! Mason

I've been at Horizons for pretty much a half-term and it was easy to settle in thanks to the staff here. The sessions I enjoy most are Quad (because it is interesting) and going to Pear Tree Station (because I get out some where). Horizons has helped me boost my confidence travelling because I have to get on the bus independently 4 days a week! Ben

October Half Term Workshops

Who: 11-18yrs

Where: Chapel Street Arts Centre - Studio 2



Tuesday

28th
October

10.30am to 2.30pm



Wednesday

29th
October

10.30am to 2.30pm



Thursday

30th
October

10.30am to 2.30pm



To book by phone 07405 156800



To book by email info@hubbubtheatre.org



www.hubbubtheatre.org



Funded By:



Term Dates 2025/2026

Autumn Term 2025

School Starts for the new Academic Year – Monday 8th September

School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 24th October

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](#)

Toni Beardmore Headteacher

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