

Belper School and Sixth Form Centre

Newsletter – Autumn Term 1 2017-2018

Message from the Headteacher

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2017-2018! I hope you had a great summer and all is well heading into the new academic year. At Belper School we are looking forward to 2017-2018 with excitement and anticipation after another good year last year.

Yet again we have achieved some excellent results in the summer which continues to reflect the hard work and determination of so many students and staff. The GCSE and A Level result days were great and it was fabulous to see so many students smiling and genuinely happy. I am delighted for them and wish them all well for the future.

On top of that there were numerous other achievements and success stories at the school that make us all so proud to be part of the place. These achievements have been detailed in previous publications but it is always nice to re-list a few! So well done Belper for: the sporting success at local, district and county level; Maths success in numerous competitions; English and Media work that was published; art work that was selected to be displayed in various locations in and out of school; Music and Drama performances that showed off such great talent; Technology and Computing for competition success at various levels; Languages for continued excellence in local and national events; the school scientists for their success at various events and competitions; and all the students that have become involved in the numerous events and activities within the Humanities.

In addition we were delighted for the town with its recent success in the East Midlands in Bloom competition. The staff and students contributed to this as the school supported the entry. The town and surrounding areas did look magnificent so it was not surprising to hear of the success. This followed on superbly from a recent media report that put Belper in one of the top ten places to live in the country. Now that is outstanding.

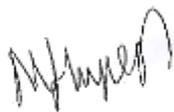
There is a vibrancy in the town and local villages that is reflected in the school and a feeling of great things to come. We look forward to this year with hope and optimism – bring on more outstanding things!

Lockdown Procedures

As part of the health and safety aspects of running a large organisation, the school has developed a lockdown procedure to implement in the case of a need to do so. In many ways this is similar to a fire procedure where there are set steps to take within school to ensure that everyone's safety and welfare is secured. Also, just like with fire procedures, the school will be regularly practising the procedure to test it.

In the event of a lockdown situation we would notify parents/carers, where possible, via the school website and text alert. If such a situation, parents/carers should refrain from contacting the site as this could tie up phone lines that are needed for support providers. As access to the school would be limited in these circumstances, parents/carers should also refrain from coming to the site as this could interfere and cause problems with the procedures and processes that are taking place. The school will notify parents that a lockdown has ended via the website and text alert, which will also contain information on the next steps to be taken.

As I am sure you can imagine there is always the hope and belief that such a procedure will never be needed. But just like a fire procedure, it is important to be ready and prepared.



Mr Cooper
Headteacher

School Calendar and important dates

The school calendar is regularly updated and is available to view on the school website at belperschool.co.uk/calendar/ or by selecting *Calendar* from the Information menu. You can also view our [term dates](#) for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 by selecting *Term Dates* from the Information menu on the website.

The remaining INSET and closed days for 2017/18 academic year are:

Tuesday 2 January 2018

Monday 9 April 2018

Monday 4 June 2018

IMPORTANT: Our Tutor Review day appointments this year will be on the evening of Thursday 15 February and the morning of Friday 16 February 2018. Please note, therefore, that **school will be closed to students all day on Friday 16 February 2018**. Further information regarding Tutor Review Day and how to make appointments will be sent out in the new year.

Parent Governor elections

We currently have two vacancies for Parent Governors to serve on the School's Governing Board from 16 October 2017. If you are interested, please [see the school website for further information](#), or contact the School Office if you wish to be sent a paper copy of the documentation. The closing date for receipt of nominations is 12.00noon on Monday 16 October 2017.

Parent Consultation/Information Evenings this term

Monday 2 October 2017 – Year 11 Information Evening for Parents*
Thursday 12 October 2017 – Year 13 Parents' Consultation Evening
Thursday 16 November 2017 – Sixth Form Open Evening
Thursday 7 December 2017 – Year 12 Parents' Consultation Evening

Letters with further information will be sent home via students in due course.

*Already sent home via Year 11 students.

Christmas Enrichment Activities

The school is currently looking at easier, quicker and more cost effective ways of sharing information with parents/carers and students. As part of this process, we will be increasing the amount of information we share electronically with parents and students via email, and have also commenced a trial with year 9 students using Google Classroom and their student email accounts. You can find more information on this at the end of this newsletter.

In addition, the Christmas Enrichment activities programme will be launched to students via Google Classrooms as a whole school trial after the October half term. Students will receive an email giving them an access code to view the information. **This can only be accessed via their school Google email account.** They will need to download and print the choices form and return it with any payment due to secure their place on an activity. The form can either be downloaded at home or in school.

We are currently sending email invitations to parents/carers to participate in our Google Classroom trial. If you have not yet received an invitation and wish to have parent/carer access to the Christmas Enrichment activities programme and/or participate in our Google Classroom trial, you can sign-up by [clicking here](#). Please note that if you have more than one child in school you will need to complete a separate sign-up form for each of them.

If you have any queries or encounter any problems, please do not hesitate to contact Sally Hitchcock (sally@belperschool.co.uk). We would also appreciate any feedback on how you or your son/daughter found this process as this will be extremely helpful as we move forward.

End of school day arrangements

Could you please ensure that your children are aware that students should not be on the school site after 3.30pm unless they are attending a supervised after-school activity or are under agreed supervision by an individual member of staff.

Stakeholder communications from the Governing Body

Full Governors

1. Parent Governor Elections

The term of office of one of our parent governors has just ended and another will end in October, so we will be holding parent governor elections for 2 parent governors in September. Parents will be notified of the process in due course.

2. Consideration of becoming an academy

At the Governors' Conference in June 2016 it was agreed that we needed to set up a small governor working group to look at the issue of becoming an academy, as it seemed to be the government 'agenda' for all schools to become academies sooner or later. The group decided to gather information from a wide range of sources, analyse it, then draft a recommendation to take back to full governors by summer 2017. Members of the MOOS (Models of Organising Schools) subgroup arranged or attended a number of meetings and a conference

1. With primary schools from the Belper Cluster, which included briefings with governors from academy schools
2. With a head from a secondary school academy.
3. With Russ Barr from Derbyshire County Council (DCC).
4. The Academies Show at the NEC, where a number of government and national organisations had speakers and stands.

We decided that from all the information that we have 6 options going forward. We then performed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis of the 6 options, to help us decide which one to recommend to full governors.

The conclusion was that, having gathered a lot of information and analysed it systematically, we remain a Foundation School, but work on systemised targeted improvement activities with other selected local schools. This was agreed at the full governors meeting on 13 July 2017.

Alan Eccleston - Chair

Curriculum and Performance Committee

Governors were pleased to learn that in the Y9 options selection process, undertaken in the Spring, 93 percent of students managed to be allocated all their preferred options. There were a handful of students where their preferred options just didn't fit. The balancing act the school has to perform every year, between the ever changing Government curriculum demands and tightening financial constraints, is a difficult act to pull off while striving to maintain a choice in line with our school's inclusive policy.

One of those demands is that of the expectation that students take up the more traditionally academically weighted EBACC subject options for which the school will be judged on its success in pushing through. The school has had higher EBACC take up in the past, but the current projection is lower take up for the next couple of years with a leap forward by 2019 to above rates previously achieved. Governors and the school management team are committed to achieve this. However, we are still hoping to offer the broad and balanced curriculum we feel we owe our students despite the severe financial constraints we are under.

Mark Revill - Chair

Belper School's Christmas Cracker

Our annual Christmas Cracker event will be held on Thursday 14 December 2017 from 5.30pm to 8.00pm.

This popular evening combines live seasonal music and drama performances, food and drink and a festive marketplace of local stallholders settling all manner of gifts, decorations, jewellery, homeware and crafts.

If you are interested in having a stall at this event, please email your contact details to info@belperschool.co.uk.

Students in school on crutches/in wheelchairs

Occasionally students sustain injuries which may require them to temporarily use crutches or a wheelchair. In these situations, it is very important that we make the correct arrangements in school for the students so that they can move around the site safely and access their timetabled lessons as much as possible.

If your child needs to use crutches or a wheelchair, could you please, in the first instance, ring the School Office to give us as much notice as possible. You will then be called with an appointment to meet with a member of School staff to plan your child's return to school.

GCSE revision sessions for Year 11 History students

Date	Topic	Content
30 October 2017	Lincoln Castle	Roman and Medieval Lincoln (1)
13 November 2017	People's Health	Early Modern Britain 1500-1750
4 December 2017	Norman Conquest	Three battles of 1066
11 December 2017	Lincoln Castle	Roman and Medieval Lincoln (2)
15 January 2018	People's Health	The Industrial Age
22 January 2018	Norman Conquest	Resistance and Rebellion
5 February 2018	Lincoln Castle	Georgian Prison
26 February 2018	People's Health	Britain since 1900
5 March 2018	Norman Conquest	Castles
16 April 2018	Lincoln Castle	Victorian Prison
23 April 2018	People's Health	An overview of People's Health
21 May 2018	Norman Conquest	The impact of the Normans

All sessions are held in H7 at 3.00pm on the above dates.

Students carrying their own medication in school

Students are able to carry their own medication in school for self-administration. Parents/carers are required to complete and sign the relevant section in the student planner giving their permission. **Students should only bring sufficient medication for a single day's dose, with medicines in their original containers/packets clearly labelled with the name of the student, dosage instructions and expiry date.** We would ask parents of students carrying asthma inhalers to ensure that these are clearly labelled with the student's name.

The School Office is able to hold a supply of prescribed medication for your son/daughter for either short or long term medical conditions. For further information, please either email firstaid@belperschool.co.uk or call the School Office.

School policies and procedures

Don't forget that you can view all of our policies and procedures on the [school website](#). Paper copies are available on request from the School Office.

Parent Reporting and Parent Portal

This academic year we are trialling a new system of parental reporting which will mean that you will have more accurate and timely information about your child's progress. Our main method of sharing this information will be via the Parent Portal which you can access online via the Parents Link tab on our school website or directly at <http://eportal.belperschool.co.uk>

The new system means that parents will be able to access an updated progress report online on the following dates:

Monday 18 December 2017 from 5pm (all years)

Monday 19 March 2018 from 5pm (all years)

Monday 16 July 2018 from 5pm (Years 7-10 and Year 12)

As the data in the online reports will give a comprehensive picture of your child's progress there will not be any written subject reports this year. However, the progress report in July will also include a written tutor report. There will still be an opportunity for you to formally meet your child's subject teachers at Parents' Consultation Evenings throughout the year. Additionally our Tutor Review Day which is scheduled for February this year will also provide an opportunity for a mid-year review of your child's progress with their tutor.

If you do not have access to Parent Portal then please contact the school office who can send you an application pack and arrange for your username and password to be made available. If you have more than one child in school then their data can usually be accessed with just one account. If you do not have Internet access available to you then we have a dedicated computer terminal located in visitor reception which you can use to access Parent Portal. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you are unable to make use of our online reporting system and will be happy to make an alternative arrangement for you to access your child's termly report.

Please note that as part of the new system, teachers will be regularly submitting data into the system. Sometimes this could be in a draft format or for internal tracking purposes. You may be able to view this draft data when accessing Parent Portal. However, you should only respond to the data that is published specifically to parents on the dates shown above. This data will be presented in a detailed PDF report which can be accessed by selecting a link in the 'Reports' tab inside Parent Portal.

We believe that the new system will make it easier for you to track the progress of your child throughout their time at Belper School and Sixth Form Centre and that it will also provide you with detailed and timely information to allow you to better support them with their studies. If you have any questions about the new system then please do not hesitate to contact Mark Kaźmierczak, Assistant Headteacher in the first instance.

Lockers

Could parents/carers please stress to students the importance of keeping to their allocated locker. We have to keep a central record of who lockers are allocated to, just in case keys to padlocks are mislaid and the lock needs to be removed to retrieve contents. If students wish to change the location of their locker, they must come to Student Reception first and not just switch to an empty locker by themselves.

First Aid

We have a team of staff in school who are fully First Aid at Work trained. If your child presents to us injured or feeling unwell, we are able to administer first aid and keep them comfortable. If we assess that your son/daughter needs to go home or requires medical care, we will normally contact a parent or carer to arrange their collection. Our policy on how we support students with medical conditions in school and the administration of medicine is available to view on the school website. If you would like to receive a paper copy, please contact the School Office.

Students adopted from Care

If you have adopted a child or children from care, please consider letting Acting Deputy Headteacher Jo Hawkyard know. We are able to access pupil premium funding to support the education of adopted students. All we need is a copy of the adoption certificate. All information would be treated in the strictest confidence.

Jo Hawkyard can be contacted on the main school number or by email to jmh@belperschool.co.uk.



OFSTED Parent View

Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about your child's school, from the quality of teaching to dealing with bullying and poor behaviour. The survey can be completed at any time; you don't have to wait until the school is being inspected.

Ofsted will use the information you provide when making decisions about which schools to inspect and when.

You can access the Parent View website at parentview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Message from the PE Faculty

With cold and wet weather now approaching, we thought it would be an appropriate time to send out a few notices and reminders about PE kit. The vast majority of students are smartly and correctly dressed for their PE lessons and we would like to thank you for your support in making sure students are ready to participate and appreciate the challenge this poses with students needing different kits on different days. If you have any queries about PE issues, you can contact me directly at stl@belperschool.co.uk.

Jewellery

With the current trend for facial piercings, Derbyshire County Council has issued guidance on safety in PE for students who choose to wear these items. It is important that Belper School ensures its students are operating within the health and safety expectations of DCC. To this end we need to have clear rules on jewellery in PE. All visible piercings must be removed. The only exception that can be made is for newly pierced ears which may be taped over in the first 6 weeks for non-contact activities. Thereafter they must be removed. Students are required to provide their own tape. Students and parents are asked to bear these rules in mind when considering new piercings.

Mouthguards

Parents are reminded that the PE Department strongly recommends the wearing of a mouthguard for hockey and rugby. A 'boil and bite' style of mouthguard offers considerable protection for just a couple of pounds from most sports shops. Custom made mouthguards are often available through dentists and are worth considering for those who are participating more often or at a higher level.

Shinguards

These are a compulsory part of the kit for football, hockey and rugby for all age groups.

Cold Weather

In the event of cold weather, students may bring tracksuit bottoms to wear over their PE kit for outdoor lessons at the discretion of the teacher. Students may also wear extra layers under their PE kit. They can wear woolly hats. Gloves may be worn provided they do not limit grip or movement in activities where the hands are used.

Wet Weather

Lessons will often continue outside when it is raining. Sometimes we can go out in reasonable weather and find ourselves caught in a downpour. We strongly recommend students bring a towel and a change of underwear when rain is forecast.

Showers

Showers are available in the changing rooms for students to wash themselves off if they get muddy. They must bring a towel if they anticipate needing a shower.

Football boots

Football boots are not a compulsory item of kit due to the relatively small number of football and rugby lessons on the PE programme. Those who have them are expected to bring them. An old pair of trainers is acceptable for football and rugby lessons.

Rugby Shirts

Despite the name, rugby shirts are compulsory for boys for rugby, football and hockey in lessons. T-shirts are not up to the rigours of rugby and the reversible shirts aid quick selection and identification of teams in the other outdoor activities.

Names on PE kit

We have an incredible array of kit that has been found down the years with no name on. Please try to ensure that any kit is clearly marked with the student's name. Clearly marked kit will be returned to the student if found.

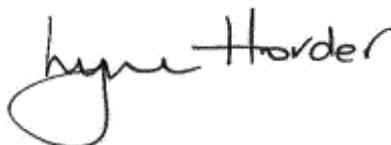
Kit Problems

In the event of a problem providing kit for your son or daughter, we keep plenty of spares at school and can easily arrange a long term loan. A short note to your child's PE teacher to explain the situation will allow a discreet arrangement to be made with the student.

Notes

In the event of a fitness or kit problem, a note in the student planner remains the best way to inform the PE teacher. Please be aware that we may not see emails or receive telephone messages until it is too late.

Please do not hesitate to contact the School Office team if you have any queries regarding the above, require paper copies of any documentation on our website or have any other school enquiries.



Lynne Horder
School Office Manager

Belper School and Sixth Form Centre - John O'Gaunts Way – Belper - DE56 0DA

Telephone: 01773 825281 - Email: belperschool@belperschool.co.uk

Website: www.belperschool.co.uk

twitter  [@belperschool](https://twitter.com/belperschool)

GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Google Classroom is part of the suite of education applications that are created and operated by Google; as a school we recognise the huge value and potential that this suite provides and have subscribed fully to make use of all that this offers.



The icons above are (from left to right) Google Mail, Google Drive, Google Calendar, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, Google Forms and Google Classroom

Within these facilities your child has access to free word processing, spreadsheet and powerpoint type apps as well as a personal email account and links to Google Classroom.

From a student's point of view, their work is saved regularly and automatically (therefore there is a massive reduction in the likelihood of lost work); it is all stored in Google's 'cloud' so their documents etc can all be accessed from any computer at any time - therefore work started in class can be continued elsewhere. Students can also contribute to the same document which can prove extremely valuable for coursework and group based tasks.



Google Classroom is a significant element of the Education Suite and is something that an increasing number of staff are beginning to use and the numbers, I am sure, will continue to grow over the coming years. All of the elements of the suite, such as Classroom, Docs, Sheets, Gmail, have Apple and Google Play apps meaning that these can be downloaded onto iPads tablets, mobile phones and so on.

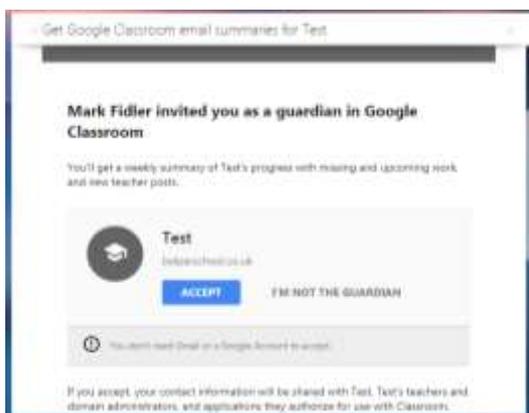
The system acts on a number of levels.

At its basic use there is opportunity to display notices and documents that may be relevant to a lesson or unit of work. These documents are all stored by Google and shared with students to allow them access at any time. Beyond that it can be used to create a class subject forum, allow scheduling and submission of homework, allow staff to mark and feedback (according to the marking policy) as appropriate. It all links seamlessly with the other Google apps including Gmail which allows the programme to email students (and you - see below) if work is late or not submitted.

It then has the opportunity to include parent/carer email addresses - this means you, as parents and carers, can glean a much clearer idea of some of the work and homeworks done by your child whilst at school. You can adjust setting to allow you weekly, monthly updates and you can select to receive or opt out of emails sent to students if you choose. Overall this is a powerful and growing facility that we will be using throughout the school, and we are gradually rolling this out to parents/carers, so some of you may have already received an email invitation to join.

To be enrolled in Google Classroom the class teacher will be required to add your email address - please ensure that contact information is accurate when given the opportunity to do so. It is also important that you keep us informed of any email address changes so we can update the systems.

Once your email address has been entered into Google Classroom you will receive an invitation



Choosing Accept will allow you access to the updates.

You are then asked to



indicate the frequency that you receive updates (this can be amended at a later date)

The name of your child and their email address (a five digit number followed by @students.belperschool.co.uk) appears on this form - please ensure that it is the correct student.

Clearly your child is in multiple classes and two, or more, may well use Classroom. Email updates will be created to see everything that needs displaying into one email.

(Please note for some email providers Google Classroom may ask you to create a Google Account. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING that updates will be forwarded through your Google Account to your chosen email address)

GOOGLE MAIL



Belper School link into Google Mail who manage the email accounts of staff and students alike. As with Google Classroom, the main advantage of this system is that they can be accessed from anywhere, including from the free app available from the App Store or from Google Play.

Each student has their own unique identity number - this is a five digit number starting with the number 9. Their email address is this unique number followed by @students.belperschool.co.uk

Therefore an email address will be **9****@students.belperschool.co.uk**

Please note - teaching staff can be contacted directly via email using their three letter code followed by @belperschool.co.uk - the staff code should be on the student's timetable.

On Monday 21 September we began a communication pilot with Year 9 students. All messages and notices are now sent DIRECTLY to the individual students involved OR on a Year noticeboard within Google Classroom.

To date the use of student emails has been somewhat varied, but in order to help ensure that messages are received promptly and efficiently it is to become the **student's responsibility** to ensure that these emails are checked daily. This can be done, as mentioned above, via mobile devices, computers at home or in school. We are encouraging all parents and guardians to discuss emails regularly with their children to help promote the routine but to also be able to engage fully with what is happening at school.

If you have any questions relating to the programmes above or their use - please feel free to contact Mark Fidler (lead for the pilot project) directly - mrf@belperschool.co.uk or Sally Hitchcock (sally@belperschool.co.uk) if you have a query relating to the Christmas Activities.