

Belper School May Newsletter

Dear Belper Families,

It may have been a short half term, but it's certainly been a busy and productive one. From adventurous expeditions and important milestones to inspections and exciting enrichment activities, there has been a real buzz around the school.

Duke of Edinburgh and Year 8 Work Experience

Today, 108 of our students set off on their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition, which will run over two days. We wish them the very best as they take on this exciting challenge, which tests resilience, independence, and teamwork. We look forward to hearing all about their experiences when they return tomorrow.

Meanwhile, 12 of our Year 8 students have been taking part in a fantastic work experience placement this week, supported by Vaillant at the Derby Museum of Making. The placement began on Monday and will finish tomorrow. The students have approached the opportunity with great enthusiasm and maturity, and we are proud of how well they've represented the school throughout.

Good Luck Year 11!

Today marks the final full day in school for our Year 11 students as they begin their study leave. They have been exceptional throughout the examination period so far – focused, respectful, and clearly well-prepared. We are immensely proud of their efforts and wish them all the very best for the final stretch after half term. Keep going – the finish line is in sight!

Of course, this isn't goodbye just yet. We still have a few important weeks ahead, including the all-important Prom – a well-deserved celebration of all they've achieved. And for many of our students, this is not the end of their journey with us, but simply the start of a new chapter, as they return to us in the Sixth Form.

A reminder that our Sixth Form Induction Day will take place on **Friday 4th July**. This day is a great opportunity to explore subject choices further and prepare for the exciting transition into post-16 study.

Ofsted Visit

As many of you will be aware, we welcomed Ofsted to the school this week. Thank you to everyone who completed the parent survey – your feedback was invaluable in helping to shape the inspectors' understanding of our community.

The inspection was a detailed and thorough process, with every area of school life examined. While we are not yet able to share the final outcome until the official report is published, we can say that the experience was a positive one and provided a valuable opportunity to showcase what makes Belper School so special.

Our students were outstanding throughout – showing confidence, pride, and integrity. They demonstrated exactly what we see every day: that they feel safe, want to learn, and are growing into kind, caring, hardworking and capable individuals. They were excellent ambassadors for the school and should feel incredibly proud of themselves.

We will share the full report with you as soon as it is released.

Young Enterprise Regional Finals

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, our Year 12 Young Enterprise team progressed to the regional finals. We are delighted to share that they represented the school brilliantly at the event. To find out more about how they got on, take a look at the Computing and Business Faculty newsletter below – they've done themselves proud!

Year 9 Pathways

Our Year 9 students have now received their Pathways letters. We hope they are pleased with their allocations and are feeling positive about the next stage of their journey. After the half term break, they will take part in their final Key Stage 3 assessment window. We encourage them to revise thoroughly so they are well prepared to make a confident start to their GCSE studies.

Year 10 Mock Exams

As our Year 11 students complete their exams, our focus will shift to Year 10. Their mock exams begin shortly after half term and are an important checkpoint at this stage of their GCSE course. The results will help us identify where support may be needed and guide their thinking ahead of post-16 choices. We'll be running visits to our Sixth Form later in the term and look forward to helping them take those next steps with confidence.

Support for Parents: Webinar on Self-Harm

Bridging the Gap are offering a low-cost webinar for parents and carers on '*Parenting a Teen through Self Harm*'. This will take place across two evenings – 16th and 23rd June, from 8:00pm to 8:45pm, online. You can book your place using the following link:

 [Parenting a Teen through Self Harm | Bridge the Gap](#)

Bridging the Gap have a wealth of knowledge and expertise in supporting young people's mental health and are real asset to our school community.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We wish all our students and families a relaxing and enjoyable half term break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back soon for the final weeks of the academic year.

Don't forget to scroll down and read the latest Computing and Business Faculty newsletter for more great stories, student achievements, and curriculum highlights.

With best wishes,

M Warden

Matilde Warden

Headteacher, Belper School and Sixth Form Centre





COMPUTING & BUSINESS

FACULTY NEWSLETTER

INTRODUCTION

Dear Parent/Carer

2024/2025 has been a very busy year and memorable year for the Computing and Business faculty at Belper School. It has been a pleasure to see the wonderful students we teach contributing towards the positive ethos of the school. Headlines have been made and records have been broken. Here's hoping the next 12 months will be as successful!

Please enjoy the read!

Adam Walton
Head of Computing and Business

YOUNG ENTERPRISE COMPANY PROGRAMME SUCCESES!

As part of the Sixth Form timetabled curriculum, Y12 are expected to sign up for an enrichment activity that runs once a week throughout the duration of year. For the second consecutive year we have offered in school an exciting and fulfilling opportunity from Young Enterprise called the "Company Programme".

The Company Programme is a national accredited and registered scheme for students who are looking to gain the necessary skills and experience in terms of entrepreneurship and building vital communication and teamwork skills working with others they may have not worked with before.

The cohort from 2023/2024 was the first team we ever entered from Belper School. Our team called "RopeHope" secured 3 awards in the Derbyshire region and were unfortunate not to make the Regional Final that year.

Based on the success from last year, the Young Enterprise programme initially had 32 students from Y12 sign up for it. With this in mind we made the call to split the group into two and enter two competing teams.

One team called "All Boxed Up" and the second team "Second Shine".

Throughout the Autumn term the students and teams were encouraged to work through the activities on the YE learning platform "Company Connect". They also did numerous fundraising activities in school to raise the necessary funds and start up capital to get their enterprises up and running.

All Boxed Up produced a product with the idea of personalised gift packages using sustainable materials. Second Shine also produced a product using unwanted glass bottles to produce upcycled glass jewellery.

Trade Fair - Chesterfield Town Centre - February 2025

Both teams visited Chesterfield in North Derbyshire at the end of February to take part in the annual Young Enterprise Trade Fair. The trade fair involves exhibiting the students products as well as setting up a trade stand displaying products for sale. This year's fair was based inside The Pavements Shopping Centre within the town centre.

Both teams showed remarkable resilience and dedication to set up stalls and speak to members of the public with such passion. Sales were made and allegiances formed. Part of the day involved an interview with YE judges as well as a competition challenge.

After the conclusion of judging for the second successive year, we have a winner at Belper School for Best Trade Stand. "All Boxed Up" pipped our other team "Second Shine" to the award.



All Boxed Up's Trade Display Stand



All Second Shine's Trade Display Stand



The Winners of the Derbyshire Trade Stand Award "All Boxed Up"

County Finals - Chesterfield - March 2025

The County Finals took place on the evening of Monday 24th March at Chesterfield Library. Both our teams presented their business ideas as a pitch to an audience of parents, judges and other schools. As part of the process they had to produce a 10 page business plan in advance of the evening which was submitted to the judging panel. A very very close run final saw the team "Second Shine" pip favourites "Peak Pebbles" from Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School to the place at the Regional Finals at the University of Warwick as Derbyshire County Winner for 2025. For the first time ever Belper School has a team which has progressed to the Regional Final! Buzzing!



Second Shine presenting their product to the audience in Chesterfield



The successful winning team with the Derbyshire County Winners award



A close up of the award. A first for Belper School!

Regional Final - May 2025 - University of Warwick

Following their win in Chesterfield, Second Shine were given feedback on how to improve their presentation and business plan from Simon Patterson, the Young Enterprise Manager for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. The team took on board Simon's advice to improve both documents in preparation for the final.

The team headed down to the final on Thursday 15th May, which this year was held at the University of Warwick, located just outside the city of Coventry. Simon gave advice to the group that the standard was significantly higher than the Derbyshire final that they won a month earlier. With this in mind mine, and the team's expectations were quite low. We were up against some teams from private schools who had sponsors and financial backing from parents. We were going there to enjoy the day and the experience.

The first job upon arrival was to set up the stall for the judging panel. The judging panel included some people with extensive experience in the world of entrepreneurship and enterprise, including the founder of the national discount chain and retail powerhouse, Poundland; Steve Smith. Steve founded the Poundland chain from a single store in Burton-Upon-Trent, building up the chain to several hundred stores. He sold the chain for £250 million in 2006.



The first Poundland store in The Octagon Centre, Burton-Upon-Trent



Steve Smith, founder of Poundland, and also part of the Regional Judging Panel.

Our team Second Shine had to take part in a formal interview with judges as part of the process. The judges had already read through the business plan which had been submitted in advance of the day. The presentations took place in the lecture theatre of the Oculus building at the university. 10 teams had made the finals from the various counties of the midlands. We were the sole representatives of the Derbyshire region as winners.

Our team was 5th up in the running order to present. I would estimate there were over a hundred people present in the auditorium. Very nerve wracking for our team. The students spoke exceptionally clearly and with passion and enthusiasm. They even managed to get in some light humour which brought laughter and applause to the audience. The presentation was flawless. It was hard to imagine these are Y12 students presenting!

After all schools had presented, the judges took 15 minutes to deliberate award winners. We spoke outside candidly as a group and hoped we would win at least one award, hopefully the "Sustainability Award" or "Best Presentation Award".

We were asked to re-enter the auditorium for the judges' decisions. Awards passed and our school was not a winner. Other teams bagged the Sustainability and Best Presentation award, and we were feeling as a group we would leave the university empty handed. The penultimate award, "Finance", which I was hoping we may get went to another school. That was that I thought. The final award, "Company of the Year". As the midlands was such a big area, two winners would go through one from the East and one from the West. The East was up first. This was our only realistic hope.

The judge made a speech, and it seemed to last forever. He went on about being from Nottingham, and I was fearing the team from Nottinghamshire would win. He then announced the winner, "Second Shine", the words uttered from his mouth. We were absolutely stunned and gobsmacked. We had won! It felt personally like an underdog lower league football side knocking a big Premier League football side out of the FA Cup! Good old Belper School in the final!

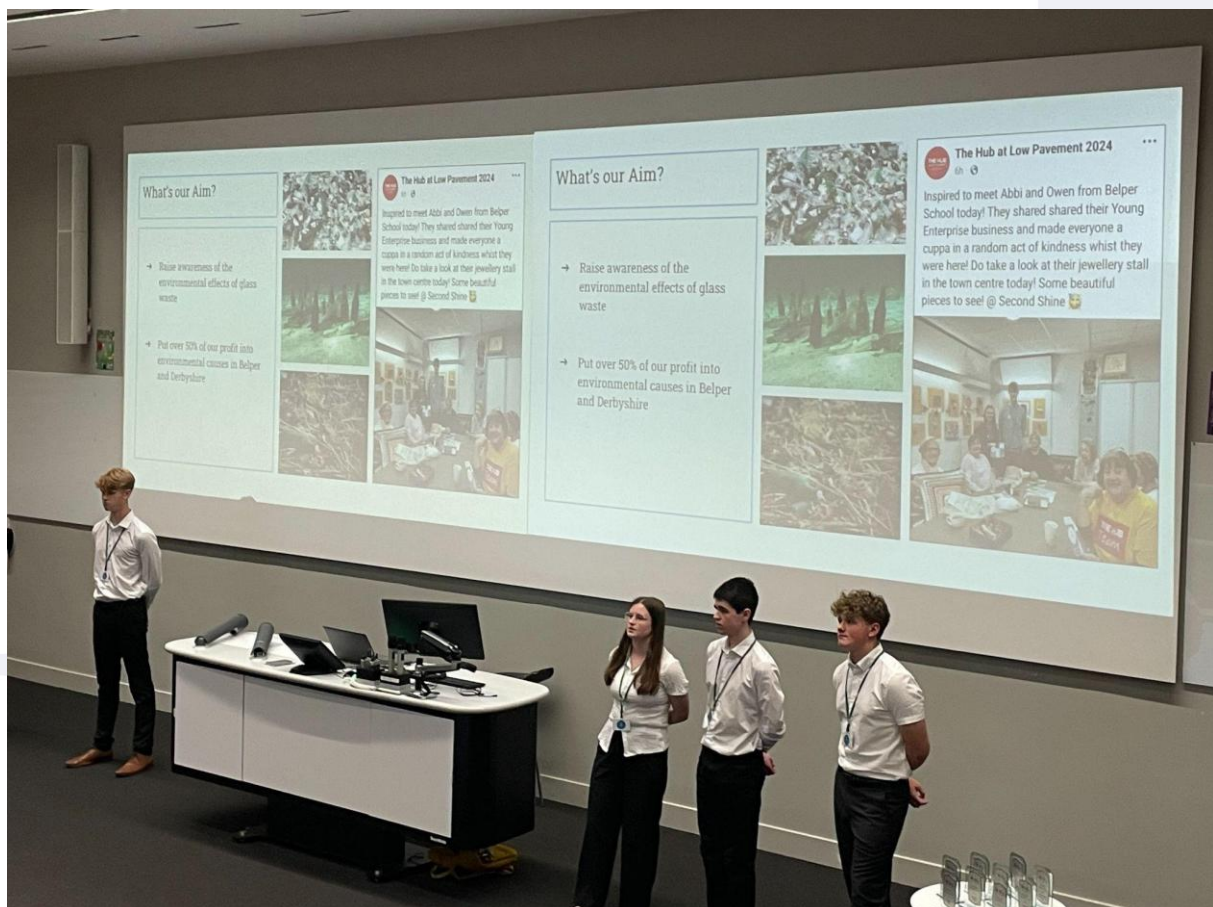
The students were absolutely beaming with joy. On cloud 9!

The ceremony wound up. The National final in Manchester in June. Belper School into the last 10 schools in the UK, and in the running to potentially win the whole thing! Amazing!

We will report in the next newsletter the outcome of the National Final in Manchester. Fingers crossed for the team.



Second Shine's Trade Stall on display at the University of Warwick



Presentation pitch to judges and audience.



Our Company of the Year winners award!



The winning team (From Left to Right - Harry, Abi, Jess, Owen, Luke and Tim.)



The winning team photo which includes Simon (far left) and Adam (far right).

THORPE PARK RESORT VISIT



On Wednesday 2nd April 2025, we took 51 students to Thorpe Park Resort in Chertsey, Surrey. Our group was made up primarily of Y10 students + 23 Y11 students who were invited as part of a reward basis as they were identified by class teachers for making exceptional progress in GCSE Business lessons or have made significant progress in terms of improving attitude and engagement from Y10.

We will be using the basis of the visit to do some curriculum work with Year 10 on Sales, Marketing and Operations as part of their in class learning. According to Thorpe Park's records this is our school's first ever visit to the attraction. The weather on the day was excellent, sunny and not too cold, although a very strong wind from mid morning caused the new attraction "Hyperia" to unfortunately become valleyed which caused it to close from lunchtime onwards. Most students in our group did get to go on the ride. As a ride connoisseur myself, this is now my number one favourite roller coaster!

Queues in the park were low, the atmosphere was friendly and calm and all students from our school managed to go on many of the roller coasters and rides more than a couple of times, making the long travelling distance to the park more than worth it.

As staff leading the visit we can only commend the exceptional and impressive behaviour and attitudes of the students in attendance. They really did step up to our "Be Belper" values.

This was my first visit to Thorpe Park Resort, and I will be looking to try and implement this trip, so it becomes an annual event for students in KS4 and KS5.

Below are some photographs of our visit to Thorpe Park Resort.



CURRICULUM UPDATES

- Educake Revision Platform

To help students revise and improve their chances of success in upcoming assessments and examinations we decided as a faculty back in September last year to invest in an online formative assessment platform from market leaders Educake.

All students who are part of Year 10 and Year 11 GCSE AQA Business have access to this resource and have their own login. As of Monday 19th May, we as a school had just under 43,000 revision questions answered this year by our students, which on average is just over 400+ questions answered each by everyone in Year 10 and Year 11 taking our course. This is amazing!

Analysis of our students' performance shows that we are outperforming our counterparts in other schools and we are above national average in terms of question accuracy.

We will be looking to continue to roll this out further in Y10 and Y11 next year and also look to include our students studying the Computer Science course.

- **Computing**

We have been identifying changes that we plan to make to our courses next year in Computing to reflect changes in technology and covering topics that are important such as AI and Online Safety. We look forward to implementing these ready for next year.

- **Economics Course Launching**

We are pleased to announce that after an absence of 4 years the A-Level Economics course will be relaunching in Sixth Form to next year's Year 12 cohort. We have spent a long time planning this and look forward to seeing the students in September!

- **Collaborative Working with the Embark Federation Schools**

In terms of improving our student outcomes and learning experiences as a faculty we have been working closely with colleagues from the Computing and Business faculties who are part of the Embark Federation family of schools. We have revised and improved the way we deliver GCSE Business at KS4 following work and advice from a colleague who is a moderator and deliverer of CPD at another school. We are also reviewing our delivery of the Year 7 Computing units to enable improvement in digital literacy skills. We have been planning a scheme of work which we will share amongst all the schools in the trust.

