

Dear Belper Families,

January Newsletter

As we embark on the Spring term, I'd like to share to share some of the achievements and activities that have already taken place, as well as highlight some upcoming events for our school community.

Year 11 Mock Results Day

We started off the new term with our Year 11 Mock Results Day. This was a key milestone as we continue to prepare for the summer exams. The event, alongside the recent Year 11 Parents' Evening, marked the launch of our final push towards the GCSE exams. Thank you to everyone who attended.

Our 13 students have also recently completed their mock exams, which are a vital step in preparing them for the challenges of their final assessments.

Year 11 Visit to Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre

This month, as we commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, our Year 11 GCSE History students visited the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre. The impactful visit offered students the chance to deepen their understanding of this dark chapter in history and reflect on its relevance to our world today.

The students were an absolute credit to the school. They made outstanding contributions in the workshop sessions and listened perfectly to the talk by the Holocaust survivor before asking some very thought-provoking questions. Accompanying staff said it was a pleasure to accompany the students on the day.

Belper 250 Celebrations

Belper 250 is a year-long festival taking place throughout 2026, celebrating Belper's pivotal role in the Industrial Revolution and marking an extraordinary set of anniversaries. It will be 250 years since the first cotton mill opened in Belper, 300 years since the birth of Jedediah Strutt, who transformed the town into the world's first cotton mill town, and 25 years since the Derwent Valley Mills were granted UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

The festival invites everyone to get involved in celebrating, creating, reflecting and learning in and around Belper and the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Plans are already well underway, with a community steering group shaping a programme of over 100 events, including a reimagined Belper Donkey Parade and Town Carnival, horticultural shows, heritage walks and talks, concerts, a Derwent River cruise and even a "Struttybanger" competition to create a new signature sausage! The celebrations will explore Belper's rich story, from water power, sustainability and landscape to its mills, architecture and global connections.

This week, John McCleery delivered assemblies to all year groups about our World Heritage status, and how we can get involved in this important community milestone. Please keep an eye out for upcoming Belper 250 events and opportunities to take part.

Upcoming Events

Year 9 Guided Pathways Evening – Thursday 5th February

As our Year 9 students prepare to transition into Year 10, we are hosting a Pathways Evening next week to provide essential information and support as they begin to shape the next stage of their academic journey.

The process has changed significantly over recent years, so even if you have had older children go through it before, we encourage you to attend to ensure you have the most up-to-date information available.

Year 10 Assessments – Monday 2nd February – Friday 13th February

Year 10 students will soon undertake in-class assessments across all their subjects during the upcoming assessment window. This will be the first time they will receive GCSE-style 9-1 grades for their assessed work and is a valuable opportunity for them to evaluate their progress and adapt their approach as they settle into their GCSE courses.

Students will have received information about how to revise for each subject. Please encourage them to revise thoroughly to ensure their teachers can accurately pinpoint any areas of need.

Year 11 Revision Evening – Thursday 26th February

To further support our Year 11 students with their revision, we are holding a Year 11 revision evening for parents and students. The evening aims to help families navigate the busy months ahead. Look out for invitations, which will be sent out shortly.

Requests

Work Experience Placement Help

We are delighted that our Year 10 Work Experience programme has been relaunched this year for the first time since COVID. While many students have successfully secured placements and logged them on Unifrog, some are finding it challenging to source appropriate opportunities, particularly due to the increase in working from home.

We would be very grateful if any parents, grandparents, family members or friends who work in organisations able to accommodate a Year 10 student from 6th–8th July could get in touch with Richard Leach, Careers Coordinator, at rbl@belperschool.co.uk.

Further information about the programme will be shared early next week, so please keep an eye out. The deadline for securing placements has been extended to **1st April**, and if your child has not yet arranged a placement, a gentle nudge to continue making applications would be much appreciated.

Updating Your Contact Details on Bromcom

We kindly ask all families to take a moment to check that your contact information on Bromcom is up to date, including addresses, phone numbers and contact priorities. It is essential that this information is accurate, as we are unable to contact individuals or share information with anyone who is not listed on Bromcom without parental consent. If there are any special circumstances you feel the school should be aware of, please let us know by emailing belperschool@belperschool.co.uk. Thank you for your support in helping us keep our records accurate.

Thank you to our entire school community for your ongoing support and involvement. Wishing everyone a productive and positive final few weeks of this half term.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matilde Warden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Matilde Warden
Headteacher