

October 2026

Dear Belper Families

As we approach the end of our first half term, it is good to reflect on what has been a very busy few weeks. Thank you for your support and for the time so many of you have taken to join us at our information and open evenings.

Parent information evenings: Years 7–11

It was wonderful to see a full hall at each of our parent information evenings. These have been valuable opportunities to share our aims for the year, highlight useful dates and explain changes introduced across the school.

Our main change this year has been the updated homework policy. According to our records, the vast majority of students are coping well with the change, and many have told us that they are enjoying it!

We also appreciated the opportunity to hear your feedback. In response, students in Years 7 - 9 will have an additional homework page in their knowledge organiser to record which platforms they need to use to access the homework set. We hope this will help students organise their work and make it easier for parents to support them at home.

Presentations from the evenings are available on the relevant year group pages of our website. The homework policy for all year groups, together with links to the platforms we use, can be found on our homework page.

Year 5 and 6 Open Evening

Our Year 5 and 6 Open Evening was our busiest yet. It was a pleasure to welcome so many families, introduce them to our school and give them the opportunity to meet staff and students.

Thank you to everyone who joined us, and to the staff and student helpers who made the evening such a success. Information about applying for a place, along with the presentation from the evening, can be found on our admissions page.

Sixth Form Open Evening

Our Sixth Form Open Evening was similarly busy, and we were delighted to receive so many positive comments from parents. Alongside our own Year 11 families, it was particularly pleasing to welcome students and parents from other schools who are considering Belper for the next stage of their education. This year, we have welcomed a large number of students from neighbouring schools into our Sixth Form. They have settled in well and have been a delightful addition to our school community.

For those who were unable to attend, the presentation can be found [here](#).

Our Autumn Sixth Form newsletter can be viewed [here](#). This gives a taste of the opportunities, experiences and achievements of our Sixth Form students. Previous editions can also be found on the school website.

Updated behaviour policy

Our updated behaviour policy now incorporates the changes to our mobile phone rules, reflecting that students must have phones away in lockers if they bring them to school. There is no longer the need for a separate mobile phone policy, so that has been removed from the website.

Thank you for your patience while we have ensured the updated policy has been through the appropriate checks with our governors. Please take some time to read it with your child so that everyone is clear about our expectations.

Personal development: trips, visits and enrichment

Students have already enjoyed a wide range of experiences this half term, with opportunities to explore new places, develop their confidence and represent the school.

Year 7 have taken part in their Drum Hill residential, and some Year 9 students have visited Germany and France. Geography fieldwork has taken Year 11 students to Hornsea and Years 12 and 13 to the Holderness Coast, putting their classroom learning into practice. Meanwhile, 18 Year 11 students have arrived safely in Nagoya for their visit to Japan. They will be there over the half term break, and we look forward to hearing all about their adventures on their return.

We were delighted to welcome visitors from China to our school. Our Year 10 and Year 12 student ambassadors did a wonderful job of welcoming our guests and helping them feel at home. During the visit, we celebrated China's National Day together, giving students and visitors the opportunity to share and learn about each other's cultures.

It has been a busy half term for school sport too. Our U15 girls' football team travelled to Sleetmoor United for their first-round fixture, marking the first outing for our school minibus. Year 7 and 8 students represented Belper at the Sportshall Athletics event at Alfreton Leisure Centre, and students from Years 7–13 competed in cross country at John Flamsteed. There were some excellent individual wins, and we look forward to sharing the overall results.

Alongside these events, our autumn enrichment timetable lists more than 40 opportunities across lunchtimes and after school, including clubs, rehearsals, leadership activities and subject support. Students can try activities such as STEM Club, choir, origami, textiles, Warhammer, basketball and technical theatre, as well as getting involved in student leadership or becoming an anti-bullying ambassador.

Please encourage your child to look at the timetable and join in when they can. These activities are a great way to make friends, discover an interest and build confidence. Thank you to the staff who give their time to make these opportunities possible.

Our Christmas charity appeal: Reverse Advent Calendar

After half term, we will be launching one of our Christmas charity appeals in assemblies, supporting the Derby Food4thought Alliance's Reverse Advent Calendar campaign.

The idea came from Harrison in Year 9, who takes part in a Christmas charity project with his dad each year. Harrison asked whether our school could get involved to help collect more donations. Thank you, Harrison, for bringing this thoughtful suggestion to us.

A reverse advent calendar involves giving an item each day rather than receiving a treat, building up a collection of food to help individuals and families over Christmas. The campaign runs from 6–30 November, with suggested donations including in-date, non-perishable items such as cereal, tinned food, pasta, rice and UHT milk.

We will share details of how to contribute and where to bring donations after half term. Any contribution families feel able to make will be very welcome.

Keeping safe on the journey to and from school

As the mornings and evenings become darker, please take some time to talk with your child about keeping safe on their journey to and from school. The roads around our site are particularly busy at the beginning and end of the day, and we want everyone to arrive safely.

For students travelling by bicycle, please reinforce the importance of riding carefully, following the Highway Code and giving pedestrians and other road users plenty of space. We strongly encourage students to wear a properly fitted cycle helmet, which can be stored in their locker during the school day, and to make sure they can be clearly seen.

Please also remember that privately owned e-scooters must not be used on public roads or pavements, including for journeys to and from school.

For those walking, a reminder to avoid stepping out from behind parked vehicles, where drivers may not be able to see them.

Thank you for helping us keep all our students safe.

Upcoming dates

Week commencing Monday 2 November: Year 9 assessment window, week 2.

Thursday 5 November: Year 11 mock examinations begin.

Thursday 19 November: Year 12 and 13 Parent Consultation Evening.

Thursday 26 November: Year 9 Parent Consultation Evening.

Friday 27 November: INSET day.

Wednesday 2 to Friday 4 December: *Guys and Dolls* evening performances. Tickets on sale soon!

I hope all our students and families have a restful and enjoyable half-term break. See you all when we get back!



Matilde Warden
Headteacher