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## United in collective success

As we come to the end of another vibrant and purposeful summer term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the extraordinary efforts and achievements across all our schools. It's been a term filled with energy, collaboration and no shortage of sunshine – and what better time to celebrate a truly remarkable milestone?

I am absolutely delighted to share that every school within Derby Diocesan Academy Trust has received external judgments of Good or Outstanding. This is an incredible achievement, and one that reflects the commitment, resilience and passion of our school leaders, staff, governance, and, of course, our wonderful children.

Behind every inspection outcome is a story of hard work and high standards – but also of care, compassion and a deep belief in the potential of every pupil. Whether it's through strong leadership, inspiring teaching, or inclusive, values-driven cultures, each of our schools continues to live out our shared vision of enabling all children to flourish.

As we look ahead to a well-earned summer break, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of our staff, families, governance and communities. Wishing you all a restful, joyful and sunny summer.



**by Dr Sarah Clark, CEO**



## Premier League Trophy visits St Peter's



Children at **St Peter's Church of England Primary School** were lucky enough to be selected to host the official Premier League Trophy — a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The iconic, priceless trophy has travelled the globe and only players from title-winning teams are allowed to touch it. During the visit, pupils had the chance to learn fascinating facts about its history and enjoyed plenty of photo opportunities.

A huge thank you to Derby County Community Trust for selecting St Peter's and to the Premier League for giving our school community the chance to be part of something so special.

## Griffe girls are champions



We are thrilled to celebrate the incredible success of the **Griffe Field Primary School's** girls' football team, who have had an outstanding season. The team showed remarkable skill, determination and teamwork to finish as league champions.

Their hard work was rewarded with a trophy presentation at the iconic Pride Park — a truly memorable moment. We couldn't be prouder of their effort, enthusiasm and sportsmanship throughout the year.



## Children step back in time



Children and staff at **Stanley Common Church of England Primary School** turned back the clock to mark VE Day – getting a glimpse into life during wartime Britain and paying tribute to those who lived through it.

They embraced the occasion by dressing in red, white and blue, enjoying traditional 1940s food and taking part in a range of themed activities and lessons.

The day started with a special assembly where children were able to watch footage from the cockpit of a Lancaster bomber, bringing the realities of war to life and helping pupils understand the importance of the occasion.

Throughout the day, a range of activities took place in the classroom, with lessons themed around wartime Britain and VE Day. Pupils took part in discussions about evacuation and life during the war, while proudly displaying the red, white and blue of the Union Jack.

The celebrations ended with a VE Day-themed street party – complete with bunting, music and cakes – for all the children to enjoy together.

Eleven-year-old Maggie said: “I liked all of the children coming together to celebrate in their red, white and blue.

“Lots of people lost their lives for us and I like learning about history and how the children were sent to places like Lincoln and had to live away from their families in the big cities.”





# From field to forest - why nature thrives at St Chad's

Over the past few years, the once-empty school field at **St Chad's CofE Nursery and Infant School** has been transformed into a vibrant and thriving Forest School space — a true testament to the power of teamwork, vision and nature.

Thanks to the ongoing support of the brilliant Forest School leader, Brendan, and the tireless efforts of the Eco Club, the area has blossomed into a space full of life, learning and reflection.

Most recently, the children have helped establish a vegetable patch, planting spinach, lettuce, radishes and peas. One particularly dedicated Eco Club member went above and beyond by creating 'No Digging' signs at home using recycled wood, and even donated plants from her family's allotment.

Her thoughtfulness and care are helping our garden grow — literally!

Alongside the planting, we've introduced a Spirituality Area to support our Ow, Now, Wow collective worship. This calming space invites children to pause, reflect and connect with the natural world.

At the centre stands a large stickman, lovingly built by the children during Forest School. After a school-wide vote, he now has a name we're all proud of... Woody! We can't wait to see how both the garden and our children's connection with nature continue to grow.



## Author visit inspires our young readers



To celebrate the end of SATs week, pupils at **St George's CofE Primary School** and **Bishop Purglove CE Primary School** were treated to an exciting visit from author Philip Kavvadias, who specialises in writing gripping fiction aimed at engaging boys in reading.

Philip spoke passionately about his love of storytelling, sharing insights into how he creates his books and characters. The session was highly interactive, with students offering ideas for plot twists and illustrations in his upcoming book. Their creativity and enthusiasm were truly impressive!

The visit concluded with a lively Q&A session, where children asked thoughtful questions about writing, publishing and Philip's inspiration. Both the staff and Philip were full of praise for the students' excellent listening and questioning skills. A fantastic way to round off the week!



## Inclusive sports at St George's



Pupils at St. George's C.E. Primary School took part in Global Accessibility Awareness Day with a focus on inclusion and accessibility. To mark the occasion, they explored the world of inclusive sports by playing Goalball – a Paralympic game designed for individuals who are blind or partially sighted.

Wearing blindfolds, the children relied on sound, teamwork, and communication to score goals, giving them a powerful insight into the experiences of others. This hands-on activity, combined with classroom discussions, sparked thoughtful conversations about accessibility and empathy. It was a meaningful day that deepened students' understanding of the importance of creating inclusive environments where everyone can participate and thrive.

## Notts uni helps in the field



Year 9 students from Derby Cathedral School took part in a fieldwork day in Wirksworth, led by Geography PGCE students from the University of Nottingham.

The trip, part of the trainee teachers' course, gave pupils the chance to explore new landscapes and assess human impact and sustainability.

Assistant Professor Alex Booth praised the students for their enthusiasm and excellent behaviour throughout the day.

# Ofsted praises Sale and Davys Primary School



Sale and Davys Church of England Primary School in Barrow-on-Trent has been praised by Ofsted inspectors for delivering a “good” quality of education and for providing an “outstanding” level of personal development, in a recent inspection carried out in March.

In the glowing report, inspectors recognised the school's high expectations, nurturing atmosphere and strong values that guide pupils to “grow, believe and succeed.” The school's commitment to academic excellence and personal growth was also praised, with pupils achieving well and consistently demonstrating respect, inclusivity and kindness.

The report notes the school's exceptional approach to personal development, describing it as “exemplary.” Pupils develop a strong understanding of the protected characteristics and know what these mean in law, equipping them with the knowledge and values to thrive in a diverse society.

The school's imaginative Beanstalk display showcases the vast range of experiences pupils will enjoy throughout their time at Sale and Davys – both within and beyond the classroom – helping to nurture social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness.

## Sporty youngsters

Turnditch Primary School has received the School Games Mark Gold Award, presented to schools demonstrating a strong commitment to sport and competition.

The news comes hot on the heels of the year 3&4 Tri-Golf team winning first place in the Rural Derbyshire Sports Partnership event.

Well done to Idris who also received Player of the Tournament. 🌟







## Nursery expands due to demand

The Nest, attached to Newbold Church of England Primary School is now offering full-time provision for children aged three and four years old. The expansion comes as part of a national push to support working families with increased access to funded childcare.

Nursery teacher Melanie Johnson has worked at the school for 18 years and has led The Nest since it opened in January 2021. She said: "Teaching early years is a huge passion of mine, I love to see the children progress. I'm proud to say that pupils settle straight away thanks to the warm, welcoming environment we've created."

## Inspirational Olympic visitor



Donna Kellogg, former Olympian and European Badminton Champion, visited Griffie Field Primary school this term to give the children a beginner's masterclass in the sport. They learned a range of skills from serving to rallying with a partner and were thoroughly inspired by this amazing, local sportswoman.

## Nothing to whittle about here

Children at **All Saint's Federation** in Matlock have been thoroughly enjoying attending Forest School.

Pupils learned how to whittle sticks, making wands, pencils, swords and tools. Plus they got fresh air and exercise too!



## Netball team are crowned champs

The netball team at **Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Primary School** netball team have been crowned champions of the Derby City West Netball League - winning every single match in an undefeated season!

Throughout the season, the team consistently demonstrated the core values of sportsmanship: respect, determination, teamwork and fair play. Congratulations!





# A healthy start to every day at Sale & Davys

Primary-aged children from **Sale & Davys CE Primary School** enjoyed a bright and early MP visit after their school was picked for a Government scheme providing free breakfasts.

South Derbyshire MP Samantha Niblett paid a visit to meet children being offered free breakfasts before morning class.

Early adopter schools are using Government funding to help provide free breakfasts to children, while feeding back to Whitehall on how successful the pilot scheme is proving.

Sale & Davys applied to be part of the project and was one of the successful applicants, with the Government keen to see a range of different types of school taking part.

Headteacher Sarah Briggs said the project had been extremely successful at the school with around a third of all families on roll taking up the offer.

The school is opening up the



gates for parents dropping their children off at 8am to enjoy a free healthy breakfast of cereal and fresh fruit and a chance to enjoy some play time with their friends.

She said: "It's good for children's mental health to come in and socialise with their friends. A balanced breakfast helps make sure they are ready to learn when lessons start." Mrs Briggs said the project was particularly popular with

working parents who were benefiting from dropping their children off and getting to work early.

She said prospective parents visiting the school also often asked about a breakfast club and having the ability to provide a free scheme was invaluable for those who may be struggling with the rising cost of living.

South Derbyshire MP Samantha

Niblett found time to sample some of the school's breakfast, chatting to children and teachers about the success of the project.

She said: "Having a healthy breakfast first thing is so important for children's learning and it's brilliant to see children tucking in and having fun with their friends. One little girl said she had had her breakfast, and this meant her mum could go to work."

## Star attendance leads to silver kite award

**Bishop Lonsdale Primary School** has become the first school in the UK to be awarded the Inclusive Attendance Silver KITE Mark.

This prestigious recognition celebrates the school's commitment to creating a supportive, inclusive environment that promotes excellent attendance while recognising the individual needs and circumstances of every child.

School staff are dedicated to understanding the barriers some children may face and working collaboratively to provide solutions that ensure no pupil is left behind.

In addition to this achievement, the school is also proud to be recognised as an Inclusive Attendance Collaborative School. This means we are now part of a network of schools working together to



to share best practices, champion inclusive strategies and continue improving attendance through empathy, communication and strong relationships.

Pictured above are the school's attendance ambassadors.

## It's good to talk at Griffie



As part of **Griffie Field Primary School's** ongoing commitment to developing pupils' oracy skills, Conversation Boards have been introduced along the main walkway into school.

These boards are designed to spark meaningful discussions between children and their parents or carers during drop-off and pick-up times. Updated weekly with new thought-provoking questions, the boards encourage families to pause, talk and connect.

It's been wonderful to hear the quality conversations taking place each morning.



# Celebrating second platinum School Games Mark Award

**Walter Evans Primary School** is celebrating a sporting triumph after being awarded the prestigious School Games Platinum Mark Award for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 academic years – the highest accolade of its kind.

This is the second time the school has received the Platinum Award, a rare achievement shared by only one other school in the entire city of Derby.

The School Games Mark, a Government-led initiative, recognises schools for their commitment to developing competitive sport at school and within the wider community. The Platinum Mark is reserved for schools demonstrating long-term excellence in PE, inclusion and leadership.



## Holbrook's pupils have outstanding behaviour

Pupils at **Holbrook Church of England Primary School** have been praised by Ofsted inspectors for their “outstanding” behaviour, attitudes and personal development during a recent inspection.

All other areas of the school's provision – including the quality of education, leadership and Early Years – were graded as ‘good’, reflecting the school's strong overall performance.

But it was the “impeccable” and “exemplary” behaviour of the children that particularly impressed inspectors. And inspectors highlighted the strong relationships between staff and children and the proactive approach to mental health support.

## Nurturing environment builds pupil confidence

**Hardwick Primary School** has earned praise from Ofsted inspectors for its warm, nurturing and supportive environment, which is helping children feel secure and confident.

The school was judged as outstanding for personal development and good across all other areas including behaviour and attitudes, quality of education and leadership and management.

Hardwick has 600 pupils on roll, 36 languages are spoken and nearly two-thirds of children receive free school meals.

The report also praised staff for their meticulous planning of a variety of rich experiences which helped to broaden pupils' horizons.

The school's CARE values were noted by the inspectors who said these helped children feel safe and valued.

Head of School Randhir Sandhu said: “It's really wonderful to see in the report how positively the children talked about our school to the inspectors. To hear that the children refer to Hardwick as a “wonderful and a paradise”, really means a lot.”





# Pupils return from China with love for own schools



A group of 24 Year 5 pupils from **Firs Primary** and **Griffe Field Primary** have returned from a once-in-a-lifetime trip to China with a fresh appreciation for the relaxed and nurturing atmosphere of their own classrooms.

They travelled to Hefei through the Global School Alliance, where they connected with local students and learnt about their culture.

During their visit, the children – aged between nine and ten – explored Chinese traditions from martial arts and calligraphy to clay modelling and board games like ‘Wakey’, but what struck many was the contrast between the strict discipline in Chinese schools and the more relaxed atmosphere back home.

Dawid Laskowski, from Firs Primary School, said: “The schools in China were really strict, and their days were much longer than ours. I really missed how relaxed and personal it feels at our school here, we get to talk to our teachers more and have proper relationships with them.”

Ornella Odonkor, also from Firs, said: “So many people in and out of the school wanted to take photos with us and they kept touching my braids. I felt like a celebrity.

“Everybody was so nice though and often gave us gifts, I think we just looked so different to anybody else there, as you only see Chinese people, it isn’t very diverse.”

Throughout the trip, each child kept a journal, offering them a chance to reflect on the experience, capture lasting memories and record what they had learned from this unique experience.

Paula Martin, head teacher at Firs Primary School, said: “This was a truly unforgettable experience for our pupils that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. They not only represented both of the schools fantastically, but embraced every opportunity to learn, connect and grow.

“Watching them communicate across cultures, build friendships and reflect so thoughtfully on their experiences was a proud moment for us all.”



## Bishop badges for youngsters

This summer, pupils from across the Diocese of Derby’s family of schools gathered at Derby Cathedral for an uplifting occasion—the 2025 Bishop’s Badge Awards.

The ceremony honoured children who have embodied the diocesan values of generous faith, courageous hope and life-giving love in their school communities.

Each school was invited to nominate one child or group of children, and the stories shared were deeply moving – testaments to the quiet strength and kindness that flourish in our school communities.

We were especially proud of the pupils from William Gilbert C of E Primary School, who not only received Bishop’s Badges, but also played a central role in the service.

Six girls from the school were honoured for organising, in their own time and independent of the school, a carol singing visit to Bankwood Care Home, in Duffield.

They raised nearly £100 for the Treetops Hospice, and brought joy to the residents at Christmas. Bishop Badges were also awarded to pupils from Turnditch and St Werburgh’s School.

The William Gilbert School Choir was invited to perform during the service, accompanied on piano by Ernest Jackson, a talented Year 6 pupil.

Pupils also delivered the readings and prayers, contributing to a service that was child-led, interactive and reflective of the worship practices in our schools.





## Exciting term at Arboretum



Pupils from **Arboretum Primary School's** debate team travelled to London this term and enjoyed a private tour of the Houses of Parliament with local MP, Baggy Shanker.

They even managed to sneak into the private members gallery in the House of Lords to listen to a live debate.

Meanwhile, Year 5 girls were invited to experience a morning of engineering at the JCB Academy. After several challenges, lots of strategizing and problem solving they won a trophy! They were so inspired that we expect they will be the engineers of our future.

The school has also staged its annual family picnic which was a huge success and they welcomed over 430 parents and carers. It was heartwarming to see families sharing their food, their culture and their joy. A day to proud of the Arboretum family!

## Read all about our small schools

Two of our smallest schools were in the headlines this term when The Derbyshire Times ran a feature on **Long Lane** and **Marston Montgomery Primary Schools**.

With just 24 pupils on each site, these small village schools may be modest in size, but their impact on young lives is anything but modest.

We were so pleased to see their hard work being recognised.



## Splash of colour brings smiles to the faces at Newbold

This term **Newbold Church School** was bursting with energy, laughter and colour as children, staff and parents came together for its first-ever Colour Run –and what a day it was!

The usually-quiet school field was transformed into a vibrant obstacle course packed with fun challenges, including a slip 'n' slide, slime pools, tyres and tunnels.

At every obstacle, enthusiastic staff and parents stood ready with handfuls of brightly coloured powder—coating runners in clouds of blue, red, green, yellow and pink. Each class captured the moment with a colourful photo to treasure for years to come.

## Inspectors say Christ Church is better than 'good'

Christ Church CofE Primary School, which was described as "Good" during its last Ofsted inspection, is celebrating after it was found to have 'improved significantly'.

The ungraded inspection found 'pupils thrive' at the school which is 'kind and inclusive'.

The inspector hailed the improvements found at the school since its last visit in 2019, and confirmed the next inspection would be graded as a result.



The school is described as a 'beacon in the community' and has a 'highly positive culture' that enables pupils to learn and succeed.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are 'excellent' and children were found to be 'polite and courteous' modelling the manners delivered by adults in the school.



## Students shine at artist workshop



Talented Year 10 Art and Textiles students at **Derby Cathedral School** had the exciting opportunity to work with renowned artist Jennifer Collier at her studio in Stafford.

Students took part in a hands-on workshop where they explored a variety of innovative textiles techniques including wax trapping, plastic fusing, latex work, Sellotape transfers, and paper flower making.

Each student showcased their work in a beautifully crafted handmade sketchbook, capturing the techniques they explored throughout the session. They were also able to view stunning work on display by Jennifer and other local artists who share the studio space.

The students showed outstanding focus, creativity, and enthusiasm. Jennifer even praised them as some of the best-behaved and most engaged students she has ever worked with – a wonderful compliment to their maturity and passion.



# Celebrating 180 years



Children at **St Peter's Church of England Junior School** stepped back in time to celebrate the school's 180th Anniversary.

The children, who enjoyed dressing up, took part in activities from across the decades – right back to Victorian Britain with handwriting and drills in the yard, up to the modern day with toys such as yo-yos and Tamagotchis.

The school also welcomed back former pupils to look at the archive material – including the headteacher's log books dating back to the 1800's.



## Praise for young public speakers

For the first time in **Derby Cathedral School's** history, a group of year 8 students competed against other schools in a public speaking competition.

The event was run with the Lost Boys Theatre Company, who came in to school to help the students write their own speeches.

Our three finalists were against students from years 9 and 10 in other schools – but you wouldn't have known, as they were so impressive.

The judges had a difficult job deciding and although they didn't win, it was a wonderful experience.



One of the nicest parts of the day was watching the support between our own students and between those from different schools. There was applauding, attentive listening and cheering. A massive well done to all involved – they definitely did themselves and Derby Cathedral school – proud.