

CHELLASTON ACADEMY

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17th April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you with great excitement as I begin my role as Headteacher of Chellaston Academy.

Having spent my first days in school meeting students and staff, I have already been struck by the exceptional standards that define this community. Our students are consistently polite, respectful, and hard-working; they demonstrate a genuine commitment to their learning and to one another. It has been a pleasure to see such positive attitudes in classrooms and around the school.

I have also been incredibly impressed by the dedication and professionalism of our staff. Their commitment to providing high-quality education and care for every student is clear, and it is this collective effort that ensures the continued success of the academy.

As the new Headteacher, my key focus will be on building upon the strengths that already exist within the school, whilst also carefully identifying areas where we can continue to improve. By working together with staff, students, and families, we will ensure that Chellaston Academy continues to grow and develop.

At the heart of Chellaston Academy are our core values: Integrity, Care, and Excellence. These principles underpin everything we do as a school community from the way students conduct themselves, to the high expectations we set for learning, and the support we provide for one another. These values are fundamental in preparing our students not only for academic success, but for life beyond school, and I am committed to embedding them in all that we do.

As we move into an important time of year, I would also like to highlight our focus on supporting students in Year 11 and Year 13 as they begin their vital GCSE and A Level examinations. We are committed to ensuring that every student feels well-prepared, confident, and supported throughout this period. Our staff are working closely with students to provide guidance, revision support, and encouragement so that they can achieve their very best. I am truly honoured to have the opportunity to lead Chellaston Academy. I look forward to working closely with you, our families, as we continue to support every student in achieving academically and personally. Together, we will build on the school's strengths and ensure that it remains a place where all young people can thrive.

Mr Leese - Headteacher



Community Concern

Could we please remind parents & students to be extra careful at drop off times when getting out of cars near the road, we have had a report of a near miss recently.

Smallmeer Close in Chellaston

Following a complaint from a resident living on this close, we kindly ask that students refrain from throwing any items into gardens when using the alleyway alongside the close. Your cooperation in helping to maintain a respectful and clean environment is greatly appreciated.

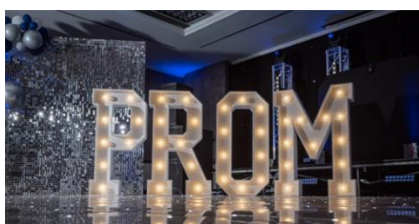
Replacement Bus Pass Increase

We have been informed by School Transport that the council have applied an inflationary increase to some services from 1 April 2026. The cost of issuing replacement bus passes will go up to **£10.30**. This only affects replacement passes – there is currently no change to the cost of pay as you go travel (£1.20) but we are expecting a fare increase from September. This has been updated on parentpay.



Year 11 Prom

Just a reminder that the last few tickets remain for the Year 11 Prom on Thursday 18th June at Heathland Grove, Findern via parentpay.



Oxbridge Candidates Talk

On Thursday, two of our successful Oxbridge candidates in Year 13, Miyuki K and Cameron P, delivered an engaging and highly informative talk for Year 12 students interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge. They shared valuable insights and practical advice on the application process, offering first-hand guidance that was greatly appreciated by all who attended.

Year 12 students found the session extremely beneficial, and we hope that many of them will go on to follow in their footsteps - returning next year to support and guide future applicants with their own experiences. A big thank you to Miyuki and Cameron for giving up their time to support our aspiring Oxbridge students.



Macbeth Trip

On Tuesday 14th April, the English department took over 250+ Year 10 students to see Macbeth at Derby Theatre. This provided students with a valuable opportunity to experience the play live, as it is a core text for their GCSE English Literature course.

The day began with students meeting their teachers and English classes, followed by a final briefing on the schedule. Students then travelled to the theatre, arriving in good time to find their seats and prepare for the performance.

There were audible laughs, gasps, and moments of excitement as students watched Macbeth be manipulated by his wife, descend into madness following the murder of King Duncan, and react in fear as Banquo's ghost appeared. The performance concluded with Macbeth's eventual defeat by Macduff. It was a powerful and engaging production, offering valuable insight into the text.

Students behaved impeccably throughout the day, and it was a pleasure to see so many of them enjoying the performance—especially as, for some, this was their first experience of live theatre. Period 5 was filled with enthusiastic discussion as students reflected on what they had seen.

A huge well done to all students and staff for making the day such a success.

A special mention goes to a Year 10 student who is a Youth Ambassador for the theatre and has had her review published on the Derby Theatre website - Macbeth at GCSE review : <https://derbytheatre.co.uk/news/macbeth-review-creative-ambassadors/>. Congratulations on this fantastic achievement!



Childnet

Please see the useful resources from Childnet about generative AI and AI and its link to nude images. Whilst we educate our pupils about these aspects of online use, further conversations at home are the best way to support your child.

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/cheat-sheet-generative-ai/>

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/ai-and-nude-images/>



History Bulletin

Please see this attached as a PDF.

Chellaston Academy History Department Newsletter
Week Commencing 13th April

Edexcel

Paper 1 = Medicine On The Western Front 10% & Medicine in Britain Through Time 20% 1 hour 20 minutes
Paper 2 = The American West 20% (y11 Nov mock) & Richard & John 20% 1 hour 50 minutes (55 mins each paper)
Paper 3 = The USA 1954-75 30% 1 hour 30 minutes.
Firefly support page for GCSE students is- <https://chellaston.fireflycloud.net/history/key-stage-4-edexcelgcse-9-1>

Spotlight on Skills:

One of the key skills assessed in Paper 1 is identifying and explaining change over time. This is one of the most important skills in History because it helps you go beyond just remembering facts. Knowing what things were like before, what changed and why the change happened helps get higher marks. How can you revise this skill?

1. Build a "Change Timeline" - Instead of memorising isolated facts, organise everything into a timeline with themes i.e. Causes of disease, Treatments, Surgery, Public health and then write what stayed the same (continuity), what changed (change) and why it changed (factors).
2. Memorise key individuals as turning points. i.e. Andreas Vesalius - challenges old anatomy. Do this for all the individuals you've studied.
3. Practice "change vs continuity" comparisons. Examiners LOVE this. Ask yourself: What stayed the same for a long time? What suddenly changed?
4. Make "before and after" flashcards. On each card: Front: Topic (e.g. Surgery) Back: Before (e.g. no anaesthetic, high death rates) After (e.g. antiseptics by Joseph Lister) Reason (science + germ theory)

Revision opportunities in school

Monday lunchtime- D11 LKH
Monday afterschool- BVB in D12 3-4pm.
Wednesday afterschool- WHD in D10 3-4pm.
DRef every evening.

This week's revision focus- "Blur → Build → Blast" Technique.

This is a fast, repeatable cycle that trains recall, structure, and evaluation—the three things you actually need in history exams.

- Step 1: BLUR (Memory Dump) Pick a topic or question, take a blank page and set a timer (3–5 mins). Write everything you can remember. No notes, no checking, no pausing. This exposes gaps instantly.
- Step 2: BUILD (Structure It Like an Answer) Now organise what you wrote into something exam-ready. Group into factors (e.g. economic, political, social) and/or turn messy notes into clear points and add anything you forgot in a different colour.
- Step 3: BLAST (Mini Argument) Write just ONE strong paragraph answering the question. Then add a 1–2 sentence judgement i.e. "The most important cause was..." "However, this was less significant than..."

The key is to repeat this cycle. Do the same topic again later or the next day to build on what you knew and identify what has or hasn't gone into your short term memory.

Important exam dates:

Paper	Topic	Date	Time	Duration
Paper 1	Thematic study and historic environment	Friday 15 May	Morning	1h 20m
Paper 2	Period study & British depth study	Thursday 04 June	Morning	1h 50m
Paper 3	Modern depth study	Tuesday 09 June	Afternoon	1h 30m

Happy Vaisaki

We would like to wish Happy Vaisaki to all our Sikh community who celebrated Vaisaki earlier this week. The celebrations continue over the weekend with a special parade through Normanton visiting the local Gurdwaras upon route - have a lovely time!



PE News

Bollywood Brilliance!

On Wednesday we were so lucky to welcome Nisha Nath from Surtal Arts into school to lead a Bollywood workshop with the students who are involved with school dance. Our dancers worked hard to learn the finale

piece for our Chellaston Academy Dance show which takes place on Wednesday 29th & Thursday 30th April. Tickets are available on ParentPay now priced £4 each.



Schools Cricket Day

We will be marking Schools Cricket Day on 23rd April by taking part in cricket during PE lessons that day.



T20 ICC Women's World Cup - register interest

We are excited to share with you that the T20 ICC Women's World Cup will be taking place over Summer 2026 and we would like to take a group of students to the **Leeds match on 17th June** if there is enough interest. Please register your student's interest [HERE](#).



TCS Mini London Marathon 2026

Chellaston Academy have entered the Mini London Marathon AGAIN this year for KS3 so we will be hosting a 2 mile fun run during PE lessons for Years 7, 8 & 9 between 29th April and 1st May.



Year 7 Girls - Indoor Athletics Success

The girls below were a real credit to us on Thursday 16th April and achieved a BRONZE medal each in the County Indoor Athletics Championships.

The team were - Amelia, Evelyn, Sophie, Dottie, Erin, Lily and Eva.



Dates for your diary

23rd April - Year 10 Parent evening

21st April 9.30- 10.30am - RSE coffee morning

27th April 2.15-3.15pm - RSE coffee afternoon

8th May - Year 13 last day

20th May - Year 8 Parents evening - details to follow (amended)

22nd May - Break up for half term

1st June - Return to school

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Leese', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Mr D Leese
Headteacher