



CASTLE DONINGTON COLLEGE

WEEKLY PARENT BULLETIN

Working Together, Achieving Together

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our weekly bulletin, providing you with a range of general information and forthcoming events at the college.

The Bulletin is divided into three sections:



Key Information for Next Week – information relevant to all pupils or pupils in multiple year groups.



Year Group Specific Information – updates and reminders relevant to particular year groups.



General Information – this section contains a mixture of regular information that we include each week and new notices or updates. Although some items may already be familiar, please take a few moments to read through this section each week, as new and important information may be included alongside recurring reminders.



WORD HARD



TAKE RESPONSIBILITY



BE KIND





KEY INFORMATION FOR NEXT WEEK



Free School Meals eligibility – please check:

From **1st September 2026**, there will be a significant change to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility in England: **All children in families receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to free school meals**, regardless of household income. This replaces the current system, where families must earn below a set income threshold to qualify.

From September 2026, your child will be eligible if you receive:

- Universal Credit (no income limit) or certain other benefits (such as Income Support)
- You will still **need to apply/register** for free school meals through your local authority or school.
- Even if your child already receives meals, **eligibility may be rechecked from September 2026**

This change is expected to help hundreds of thousands more children access a healthy school meal each day. Families could save around **£450–£500 per child each year** on lunch costs.

If you receive Universal Credit, we encourage you to check and apply for free school meals now: [Free School Meals | Leicestershire County Council](#)

Term Dates 2027-28

We have not yet been able to publish our term dates for the academic year 2027–28. You may remember that earlier in the year, Leicestershire County Council ran a consultation on two options for term dates for the next academic years, these were to either keep the holiday pattern as it is, or for pupils to return earlier at the end of the summer holidays to accommodate a two week October half term break. The current message of Leicestershire County Council's website can be viewed in full [here](#) and states the results of the consultation will be discussed at the Local Authority Cabinet meeting in September. We will update you as soon as we have confirmation of the decision the Cabinet makes.



YEAR GROUP SPECIFIC INFORMATION



Year 7	We are delighted with the start year 7 have made to their learning journey here. Well done on a fantastic beginning of term! <u>Pastoral Support</u> Please contact your child's Form Tutor and Head of Year (Mr Nelson) for any further support required in school. We would also like to hear of any success stories outside of school, so we can help to celebrate these achievements with our students.
Year 8	Year 8 have had a great start to the school year and we are really proud of how they have supported the new year 7 intake in finding their way around this week! <u>Pastoral Support</u> Please contact your child's Form Tutor and Head of Year (Mr Canavan) for any further support required in school. We would also like to hear of any success stories outside of school, so we can help to celebrate these achievements with our students. <u>Ski trip</u> If your child secured a place on the ski trip, the second payment is due by Sep 4th
Year 9	Year 9 have had an impressive start to the year and we are delighted with their energy, enthusiasm and energy this week! <u>Pastoral Support</u> Please contact your child's Form Tutor and Head of Year (Mr Brown) for any further support required in school. We would also like to hear of any success stories outside of school, so we can help to celebrate these achievements with our students. <u>Ski Trip</u> If your child secured a place on the ski trip, the second payment is due by Sep 4th
Year 10	Year 10 have had an amazing start to the year and are rising to the challenge of beginning their KS4 courses with determination and positivity. We are so impressed with them! <u>Pastoral Support</u> Please contact your child's Form Tutor and Head of Year (Mrs Danes) for any further support required in school. We would also

	like to hear of any success stories outside of school, so we can help to celebrate these achievements with our students. Textiles/Graphics/Art GCSE students and families, are invited to join us for the Design Showcase on 8th October, 6-7pm. We will be exhibiting our GCSE leavers work, which can provide inspiration, and aspiration for our current GCSE cohorts! GCSE History Berlin Trip If your child is going on the GCSE History trip to Berlin, the parent meeting will be at 6pm on Wednesday 2nd September in College. GCSE PE All GCSE PE kit taht has been ordered through LissSport should arrive in College by the end of next week. Students on GCSE PE will be given their Ever-Learner login details next week which will give them access to their online learning platform to complete all homework and revision.
Year 11	Year 11 have set a great example to the younger year groups this week and have shown dedication and enthusiasm in their lessons in the first week back – well done! Pastoral Support Please contact your child's Form Tutor and Head of Year (Mrs Danes) for any further support required in school. We would also like to hear of any success stories outside of school, so we can help to celebrate these achievements with our students. Textiles/Graphics/Art GCSE students and families, are invited to join us for the Design Showcase on 8th October, 6-7pm. We will be exhibiting our GCSE leavers work, which can provide inspiration, and aspiration for our current GCSE cohorts! Year 11 History Revision Lunchtime Year 11 History revision will begin on Wednesday 2nd September in H3 with Mr Turner. GCSE History Berlin Trip If your child is going on the GCSE History trip to Berlin, the parent meeting will be at 6pm on Wednesday 2nd September in College. GCSE Maths Individual PinPoint learning accounts have been updated following the End of Year 10 exams. Year 11 pupils have been given their individual PinPoint Learning booklet to complete for homework. This personalised booklet has been created based on the 5 weakest topic areas from the end of year 10 exam Paper 1 (Non-Calculator).

The front cover of the booklet also includes a list of linked MathsWatch videos to watch. I recommend pupils watch these videos for support. Solutions to the booklets can be found if pupils log into their PinPoint Learning account. Login details are on the front cover of the booklet.

Year 11 homework will be set each Wednesday and due the following Wednesday.

The video link below explains how the PinPoint learning programme works.

[Supporting Year 11 Pupils with GCSE Maths final \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

GCSE PE

Welcome back to Y11 – we are offering lots of lunchtime support, Monday lunch is support with any aspect of paper 1 or paper 2. Wednesday lunch is NEA support with Mr Woolf and Friday lunch is Ever-Learner time in PE1.

NEA deadline is Christmas, and by this point, students should have completed sections 1 – 5 and emailed this to Mr Woolf for feedback. Any issues or support they can see Mr Woolf on a Wednesday lunchtime.

Y11 need to be accessing their online Ever-learner learning platform on a daily basis, spending 15-20 mins at a time watching tutorials and doing quizzes to get feedback on their knowledge.

We will be setting all Y11 students a past paper to complete over the course of this half term to give them more exposure to exam technique.



GENERAL INFORMATION



Communication with the College

If you need to contact the college, you can telephone on
01332 810528

To ensure efficient use of staff time and appropriate handling, all email communication should be sent to **postroom@cdcollege.uk**

Emails sent to the postroom address will be triaged and escalated using the following criteria. Please include the nature of your enquiry in the subject line of the email.

Area	First Contact	Escalation
General enquiries	Admin team	Relevant teacher, middle or senior leader
Safeguarding (pupil)	DSL	
Safeguarding (staff)	Principal (for a safeguarding concern regarding the Principal contact the Chair of Governors)	
Behaviour	Form teacher	Head of Year or senior leader
Attendance	Attendance Officer	Head of Year or Vice Principal
Curriculum	Subject teacher	Head of Department, then SLT
SEND	Assistant SENDCo	SENDCo
Complaints	As per complaints policy	Chair of Governors

You can contact us directly regarding absences: **attendance@cdcollege.uk**
Please include full details and attach/screenshot appointment cards for our records.

For all communication with the SEND department, please direct emails to our central SEND inbox **send@cdcollege.uk**

Please familiarise yourself with our College and EMET policies and procedures, which can be viewed [here](#) on our website and are updated throughout the school year.

Mobile Phone use

We would like to remind parents and carers of our expectations regarding mobile phone use in school, in line with current guidance and legislation aimed at reducing distractions and supporting pupils' wellbeing and learning.

Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones at any time during the school day, including breaktimes and lunchtimes. If a pupil brings a mobile phone to school, it must remain switched off and out of sight throughout the day.

Any mobile phone that is seen or used during the school day will be confiscated by a member of staff and will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day. If pupils are seen with their phone on more than one occasion, then they may be asked to hand this in at the beginning of every day for a period of time.

We recognise that some pupils may need access to a mobile phone or connected device for medical reasons. Medical exceptions, such as for pupils managing diabetes or other documented medical conditions, will continue to be supported on an individual basis.

We appreciate the support of parents and carers in helping us maintain a focused, safe and positive learning environment for all pupils.

First Aid

Please update the college on any new medication that your child is taking. Please remember that if you are bringing any medication into college it needs to be in prescribed pack with the student's name and prescribed dose on.

We have a first aid email address where you can send any new or updated medical information for your child. firstaid@cdcollege.uk

Polite reminder: - We are happy for your child to carry a small amount of paracetamol or ibuprofen for their own use but please inform them not to give to other students.

Wellbeing support

All pupils have access to youHQ Wellbeing app for schools and colleges youHQ.co.uk they can log in using their @cdcollege.uk email address through the Microsoft 365 log in

You can find out more about youHQ on this youtube video
<https://youtu.be/QyKDZlHmAkl>

Attendance

Thank you for your continued support with your child's regular attendance to school.

Regularly attending school has a positive impact on children and young people - academically, socially and emotionally. Evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best examination results.

Percentage Attendance	Number of Days Absence	Learning Missed in 1 Year	Learning Missed over 5 Years
100%	0 Days	0 Lessons	0 Lessons
97%	6 Days	30 Lessons	150 Lessons
95%	9.5 Days	48 Lessons	240 Lessons
93%	13 Days	65 Lessons	325 Lessons
90%	19 Days	95 Lessons	475 Lessons

Careers Education at CDC

Labour Market Information (LMI)

What is LMI?

Labour Market Information (LMI) helps young people understand the changing world of work. It provides information about careers, employment trends, skills, qualifications, apprenticeships, salaries and opportunities.

LMI can help young people make **informed decisions** about their GCSE options, post-16 choices, apprenticeships, university and future careers.

Useful LMI and Careers Websites

National Careers Service – Explore Careers

Explore hundreds of careers and find information about what different jobs involve, the skills and qualifications needed, salaries and progression routes.

[Explore Careers – National Careers Service](#)

National Careers Service – Advice for Parents & Carers

Practical advice to help parents and carers support young people with education, training and career decisions.

[Help a young person make career choices](#)

National Careers Service – Post-16 Options

Information about the different routes available after Year 11, including further education, technical and vocational courses and apprenticeships.

[Explore Post-16 Options](#)

National Careers Service – Post-18 Options

Explore options including university, higher technical qualifications, apprenticeships, employment, volunteering and gap years.

[Explore Post-18 Options](#)

The Careers & Enterprise Company – Gatsby Benchmarks

Find out more about the Gatsby Benchmarks and how good careers education helps young people understand future pathways and labour market opportunities. Benchmark 2 specifically focuses on learning from career and labour market information.

[Gatsby Benchmarks and Careers Guidance](#)

How can parents and carers help?

You don't need to have all the answers. Explore careers with your child and encourage them to ask:

- What does this job involve?
- What skills and qualifications are needed?
- What different routes could lead to this career?
- What are the future opportunities?
- Are there apprenticeship or work-based routes?
- What other careers use similar skills?

Remember: LMI is not about telling a young person what career to choose. It gives them reliable information so they can explore possibilities and make informed decisions about their future.

At Castle Donington College, we encourage students and parents/carers to use reliable, up-to-date careers and labour market information alongside discussions with teachers, tutors, employers and qualified careers advisers.

Clubs

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club runs every day in the library from 8am. You can come in and chat with your friends, read any of our lovely books, or bring your own, have a game of chess, or just sit quietly before the day begins. We do not provide food, but you are welcome to bring your own.

Puzzle Club

Do you enjoy doing jigsaws? We always have a really big one that we all like to help complete but there are also smaller ones that can be done in one lunch hour. We have word searches, crosswords and access to puzzles online too. Come along and make some new friends. Puzzle club happens on Tuesdays at lunch.

Chess Club

Come and take on our grand master Edward. If you don't win you will at least pick up some moves that you can use. It's great for quiet time in the library or meeting new friends. Every Wednesday lunch.

Book Club

New for this term. Book Club is starting at Thursday lunch times in the library. You need to register with Miss Radley for this one as we only have a limited number of books. Our first choice is The Haunting of Aveline Jones and it's fantastic! Perfect for those spooky Autumn nights.

History Club (Mondays in H3)

In History Club we do a variety of things related to the joys of History! Currently, we are planning activities for the Year 6 Open Evening and would appreciate any ideas or help!

Debate Club (Fridays in H3)

Debate Club allows you to debate the issues of the day in the style of the House of Commons. It helps you develop your skills of arguing and builds confidence, as well as helping you with some extra knowledge for your PPE/Citizenship lessons!

PE Extra Curricular clubs

PE extra-curricular clubs will start next week. All lunchtime clubs will be done in the school GYM (unless stated otherwise), for these clubs' students only need to change their footwear (unless taking part in our competitive sports we run throughout the such as football games and interform competitions).

Full details can be seen on the next page.

After school sessions require students to change for the activity, these will start at 3.20 (students come to the changing rooms straight after school) and the session will finish at 4pm. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with parents if they are attending a PE club and arrange an appropriate way of getting home.

Fixtures – if students are selected to represent the school at a competitive fixture against other schools they will be notified with at least a weeks' notice and details will be given via a letter to take home to parents.

Gym Club (Tuesday Afterschool)

Whether it's working on your cardiovascular fitness or you're wanting to build muscle, this will happen in the new fitness suite. Machines and weights available to use with also a start up initiation on how to use the equipment safely. Come along and bring your friends!

PE and Sports Clubs

	Lunch Turn up and play	After School (3.15 – 4.10)
Monday	GCSE Theory support (PE1) (AD LM)	
Tuesday	Year group Football – Astro (DW)	KS3 Fitness (fitness suite) (HC) Fixtures (Netball/Football)
Wednesday	NEA – Project support (DW) Badminton Hall (AD)	KS 3 Football (Astro) (AD)
Thursday	Netball Club (GYM) (LM)	Fixtures (Netball/Football) KS4 BOYS FITNESS (Fitness suite NB/PD)
Friday	GCSE Ever-learner catch up (PE1) (AD)	