

16 October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of another fantastic week at Parkside and finish the penultimate week before the half-term break, I would like to thank our students for the positivity, maturity and enthusiasm they continue to demonstrate each day. It has been a busy week across the school, with plenty to celebrate both in and out of the classroom.

Fun Day Fridays are Here!

Today marks our Fun Day Friday initiative which takes place every Friday throughout the year. On Fridays students have enjoyed a range of activities and challenges during social times, including football crossbar competitions, bingo, quizzes, music and dance activities, rewards and opportunities to earn additional praise points.

Fun Day Fridays are designed to celebrate our values of Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Community whilst creating positive experiences for students each week. Alongside the fun, the message is a simple one: attendance matters. Students can only take part in these experiences if they are in school, and we want every child to benefit from the opportunities available each Friday. It was wonderful to see so many students participating today, supporting one another and enjoying their time with friends.

Praise points and the reward shop reopens

One of the most pleasing aspects of the term has been the huge number of Praise Points collected by our students. Students have been earning points not only for being Best in Lesson, but also through our QQP (Quality, Quantity and Presentation) initiative, which recognises students who consistently produce high-quality work and take pride in their books.

To celebrate this success, our Reward Shop has now reopened. Students can exchange the praise points they have worked so hard to earn for a wide range of prizes, from stationery and school equipment to games, treats and novelty items. The excitement around the shop has been fantastic to see. More importantly, it reinforces an important message that effort, excellent attitudes to learning and pride in work are recognised and rewarded at Parkside.

Primary Headteachers return to Parkside

This week we were delighted to welcome local primary headteachers back into school. Their visit provided an opportunity to catch up with former pupils and see how our Year 7 students have settled into secondary school life. There were certainly some surprised reactions as they saw just how much some students have grown already in such a short space of time!

The feedback from our visitors was incredibly positive. They were pleased to see students thriving, building friendships, engaging in learning and embracing the opportunities available to them at Parkside. We are proud of how well our Year 7 students have settled and represented both themselves and their former schools.

Music Mark recognition

We are delighted to share that Parkside has been awarded the Music Mark in recognition of our commitment to music education. This nationally recognised award celebrates schools that demonstrate dedication to providing high-quality music experiences and opportunities for young people. The recognition reflects the hard work of our music staff and students and acknowledges the improvements we have made to strengthen music provision across the school.

Music plays an important role in developing confidence, creativity and self-expression, and we are proud that this work has been recognised externally.

Sporting fixtures in full swing

Our sporting calendar is now fully underway and it has been wonderful to see such strong participation from students across all year groups. This week alone, more than 70 students represented Parkside in football and netball fixtures. Participation levels continue to grow, demonstrating the enthusiasm our students have for representing their school and being part of a team.

Whether achieving victory, learning from defeat or simply stepping onto the pitch or court for the first time, every student who represents Parkside deserves recognition. Thank you to our PE staff and coaches for providing these opportunities, and congratulations to all students involved.

Have Your Say: The Big Future Survey

Students have recently been invited to take part in The Big Future, a national survey led by the Children's Commissioner for England. The survey gives young people the opportunity to share their views about what matters to them, their hopes for the future and the changes they would like decision-makers to consider. We believe it is important that young people's voices are heard, and we encourage our students to take the opportunity to contribute. Further information can be found through the Children's Commissioner website.

Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner Survey

Students in Year 10 and above are also being encouraged to take part in the Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Listening to You survey. The survey seeks the views of Derbyshire residents on issues such as crime, anti-social behaviour and community safety. Gathering feedback from young people is particularly important, ensuring that future priorities reflect the experiences and concerns of all age groups across the county. The survey takes only a few minutes to complete and provides students with another valuable opportunity to have their voices heard on matters that affect their communities.

Follow us on social media

Want to see more of what life at Parkside looks like? We regularly share student successes, school events, achievements, activities and important updates through our Facebook and Instagram pages. Follow us to keep up to date with everything happening across the school and to celebrate the fantastic experiences and accomplishments of our students.

Dates for diary

23 Oct – INSET Day, school closed to students

26 Oct-30 Oct – half term break

2 Nov – Student return to school

9 Nov – Y11 Parents' Evening / Post -16 Evening

30 Nov – Y7 Parents' Evening

30 Nov – GCSE mock exams begin

As always, thank you for your continued support. It has been another successful week at Parkside, characterised by positive attitudes, strong attendance, excellent participation and students demonstrating our values each day. We look forward to finishing the half term strongly and continuing to celebrate the many successes of our young people.

Yours faithfully

Mr Andy Kelly
Headteacher