

Headteacher

Erasmus Darwin Academy, Pool Road, Burntwood, Staffordshire, WS7 3QW

Mr P. Walklate BSc(Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH, NPQEL

T: 01543 685828 E: admin@eda.staffs.sch.uk

September 2026

Dear Families,

Welcome back to the new academic year. This letter outlines important information for Year 11 and 13 families to ensure that every child exceeds their potential throughout Year 11 and 13 and achieves incredibly well in their Summer examinations.

Success in Year 11 and 13 is achieved through the amazing support we offer the students, both academically and pastorally, but also through how hard the students themselves work and how seriously they take the next 9 months. I would like to outline some key members of staff who will be supporting your child throughout the duration of this academic year:

- Mrs Copestake – Deputy Headteacher (Academic and Vocational Standards & Teaching and Learning)
- Mr Foster – Assistant Headteacher Progress and Curriculum
- Mr Maddox – Assistant Headteacher Sixth Form
- Mrs Freeman – Senior Leader (Assessment and revision)
- Mrs Such – Sixth Form Administration Support
- Mrs Dodge – Year 11 Progress Leader
- Dr Thomas – Year 11 Pastoral Leader
- Mr Hall – Academy Careers Leader
- Mr Gilbert – Staffordshire Local Authority Careers Leader

These staff are working together with one aim, to ensure your child is well supported to do their very best.

Communication throughout Year 11 and 13 will be focussing on notifying families of key dates and to give you an indication of what this looks like, I have outlined the key planned dates so far for Year 11 and 13. The Academy calendar does change throughout the year and we will ensure that you remain aware of any changes. The remainder of this letter will outline important information for the rest of this half term and how you can support at home.

In the next few weeks, all Year 11 and 13 students will complete an in-class assessment. This assessment will assess either knowledge or skills linked to each specific qualification. To prepare students to these assessments, they will be issued a specific revision document which outlines what will be included in the assessment and what the assessment will require them to do. This will be shared with families next week via EduLink. Once these assessments have been marked, the students will complete their 'Improvement Phase'. This is where the teachers address misconceptions in learning and students will correct their errors. Once the improvement phase is completed, students will continue with the taught curriculum.

On **Monday 5th October** teachers will, using Year 10 and 12 assessment outcomes and the recent assessment, enter two sets of data which will be reported home via a Progress Report:

- Your child's Attitude to Learning Grade (The progress report outlines what this means)
- A predicted grade – this grade is our best guess professional judgement based on your child's holistic assessment picture throughout (Year 10 and 12)

This data is then forensically analysed by the relevant staff members and interventions are put in place to support the students.





Academic Concern Evenings

On Monday 19th October, we will be holding a Academic Concern Evening. These events are an opportunity for key staff to meet with students and families where we have concerns about their progress. These meetings are purely supportive and will hopefully be used to provide advice and guidance on making improvements in both work in lessons and remaining assessments. This will also give us an opportunity to discuss your child's future career aspirations and how we can further support towards this. Separate communication regarding these evenings will be sent to individual families. Academic Concern Evenings will be held after each data capture point.

Data Captures

We will be collecting on your child's performance 4 times in total throughout Year 11 and 13. This will be completed at the following times:

- WB 5th October 2026 (following in class assessments)
- WB 16th November 2026 (following formal assessments in the sports hall)
- WB 25th January 2027 (following in class assessments)
- WB 8th March 2027 (following formal assessments in the sports hall)

The cycle of assessment preparation, assessment completion, improvement phase, intervention and Academic Concern Evenings that I have outlined above, will be completed each time.

Careers

During WB 14th September, all Year 11 and 13 students will complete a Careers Audit. This audit will gather information about their overall career aspirations and their preferred next steps, both Post 16 and Post 18. This information will be analysed, and we will ensure careers information opportunities are provided throughout the academic year, so we are supporting with their next steps. Ensuring we dovetail our Careers, Advice and Guidance to our raising achievement is key.

Year 11 and 13 Assemblies

We have started our cycle of specific revision and preparation assemblies to Year 11 and 13. These assemblies outline the Academy revision strategy and explain how the students should best prepare for forthcoming assessments. These will be set periodically throughout the year to remind and prompt students about effective revision and the importance of all assessments.

Year 11 Intervention

Our Year 11 intervention programme begins on Wednesday 16th September. Our intervention sessions are bespoke and targeted. Therefore, specific families will be contacted where we feel your child will benefit from intervention and additional support. Mrs Dodge will be sharing more detail about this early next week.



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Year 11 Mock Examinations and Year 13 Assessment Weeks

These are scheduled to take place **WB Monday 2nd November** and will be completed in formal examination conditions. This is a deliberate strategy to support the students with getting familiar with the specific requirements of formal examinations. These assessments are overseen by our team of Exam Invigilators who will be the same people that oversee the final Summer A Level and GCSE examinations. Familiar faces in these circumstances make a huge difference to the students.

Prior to these Mock Examinations and Assessment Weeks, students will be given 'active revision' materials to support with their preparation. These materials will require students to complete tasks and questions specifically designed to ensure students are thoroughly prepared for the Mock Examination and Assessment Week.

Year 11 Examination Success Evening

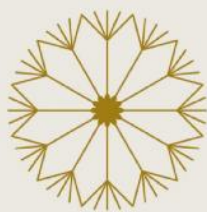
We will be holding a meeting whereby we outline the Year 11 journey to families. This is a face-to-face meeting and allows us to share, in greater detail, the Year 11 journey and how we can work together to ensure your child is best placed to achieve great things in the Summer 2027. The plans for this are currently being finalised and Mrs Dodge will communicate more details in due course.

There are two sets of key dates below, one for Year 11 and one for Year 13. I hope you found this information useful and I hope it gives a brief overview of the year ahead and the support we are putting in place to ensure that your child exceeds their potential.

Yours faithfully,

Mr P Walklate
Headteacher





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Year 11 Key Dates

Event	Date
Duke of Edinburgh Silver Expedition	Thursday 18 th September – Sunday 20 th September 2026
School Photographs	Monday 21 st September 2026 (Full year and individual photos)
WJEC NEA1 Practical Cooking (Food)	W/B 5 th October 2026
Y11 Meet the Tutor	3.30-515pm 8 th October 2026
Y11 Careers Focus Week	W/B 12 th October 2026
Y11 ACE Meetings	Monday 19 th October 2026
W/B 26th October 2026 – October Half Term	
Sixth Form Open Evening	Tuesday 3 rd November 2026
Year 11 PPEs/Mocks 1(2 Weeks)	W/B 2 nd November and 9 th November 2026
GCSE Music Performance Day 1	Monday 16 th November 2026
CNAT Engineering Design Practicals	Monday 23 rd November – Wednesday 25 th November 2026
INSET DAYS - Friday 27th November and Monday 30th November 2026	
MEP Evening 1	Wednesday 2 nd December 2026
EDA Careers Fayre	Tuesday 8 th December 2026
Y11 PCE Evening	Thursday 10 th December 2026
GCSE Music Composition Day	Tuesday 15 th December 2026
W/B 21st December – 3rd January 2027 – Christmas Holidays	
INSET DAY – Monday 4th January 2027	
Year 11 Digital Imedia External Exam	W/B 4 th January 2027 – Date TBC
Year 11 HSC External Exam	W/B 4 th January 2027 – Date TBC
Sixth Form Interviews	W/B 11 th January and 18 th January 2027
WJEC NEA2 Practical Cooking (Food)	Monday 1 st – Wednesday 3 rd February 2027
W/B 15th February 2027 – February Half Term	
Year 11 PPEs/Mocks 2	W/B 22 nd February 2027
GCSE Music Performance Day 2	Monday 1 st March 2027
GCSE Mock Results Day	W/B 8 th March 2027 – Date TBC
MEP Evening 2	Wednesday 10 th March 2027
Y11 Art visit to Compton Verney	Provisional date - 15 th March 2027 (TBC)
GCSE Music Composition 2	Wednesday 24 th March 2027
Y11 Careers Day (Skills Show @ The NEC)	Friday 26 th February 2027
Mock MFL Speaking Examinations	March 2027 (Date TBC)
W/B 29th March – 9th April – Easter Holidays (Easter School)	
MFL Speaking Examinations	April 2027 (Date TBC)
GCSE Art/Photography Practical Examinations	10-hour practical exams to be held in April 2027 (Date TBC)
Summer Examination Period	Thursday 6 th May 2027 – Friday 25 th June 2027
Year 11 Leavers Assembly and Breakfast	Date TBC





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Exam Contingency Day	Wednesday 23 rd June 2027
Year 11 Prom	Date TBC
Sixth Form Induction Day	Monday 28 th June 2027
GCSE Results Day	Thursday 19 th August 2027

Year 13 Key Dates

Event	Date
School Photographs	Monday 21 st September 2026 (Full year group photograph)
Music A Level composition Day 1	Wednesday 16 th December
Music A Level composition 1 final deadline	Friday 18 th December
W/B 26th October – October Half Term	
Y13 Assessment week 1	w/c 2 nd November
A-Level Music Mock Recital (15:15 to 18:00)	Tuesday 17 th November
INSET Days - Friday 27th November and Monday 30th November	
BTEC Sport Unit 2 pre-release – this will be covered during 4 hours in lessons during the week	w/c Tuesday 8 th December
Music A-Level Composition Day 1 (Period 1 to 5)	Wednesday 16 th December
Year 13 Parents Consultation Evening	Thursday 17 th December
Sixth Form Christmas Fayre	Thursday 17 th December
Geography A-Level NEA fully completed draft deadline	Friday 18 th December
W/B 21st December – 3rd January 2027 – Christmas Holidays	
BTEC IT Unit 2 Cyber security exam	January 2027 – date to be confirmed
BTEC IT Unit 1 resit exam	January 2027 – date to be confirmed
BTEC Sport Unit 2 exam	Wednesday 6 th January
Business Unit 2 exam	Wednesday 6 th January (2 hrs) and Thursday 7 th January (3 hrs)
Art A Level coursework deadline	Friday 29 th January
A Level Art exam paper delivered – project runs up to exam	Monday 1 st February
W/B 15th February – February Half Term	
Year 13 Assessment week 2	w/c 22 nd February
Food Science Unit 1 practicals	w/c 8 th March dates tbc
Music A Level recital	Tuesday 16 th March
Music A Level Composition 2 final deadline	Thursday 25 th March
W/B 29th March – 9th April – Easter Holidays	
Business Unit 8 coursework deadline - final	Friday 30 th April
Food Science Unit 2 controlled assessment	8 hrs tbc during May – should be during lesson time
BTEC Sport Unit 1 exam if resitting	Wednesday 12 th May
Exam Contingency Day	Wednesday 23 rd June (provisional date only)
Year 13 Leavers Assembly and breakfast	Thursday 24 th June
Year 13 Leavers' Dinner	Friday July 2 nd (provisional)
A Level Results Day	Thursday 13 th August 2027

