



—ST THOMAS—
AQUINAS
CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



FEBRUARY 2026

De Lisle College

Parent / Carer Newsletter

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Welcome to our third newsletter of this academic year.

We have had a wonderful half-term at De Lisle College, with so many events, trips and speakers into school. This week has been diversity week in school and children's mental health week. Each day we have had our prayers linked to these important themes.

As I am sure you are aware, the Winter Olympics is in full flow in Milan. We are proud that a past student Amelia Coltman is part of the Great Britain team and is competing in the Skeleton event. Please see this link to find out more information about her [Winter Olympics 2026 - Chris Hughes Faces Terrifying Skeleton Run - BBC iPlayer](#)

I do want to take this opportunity to congratulate the students who participated in the recent table tennis competition, badminton and football tournaments, as well as students who have competed in the Ethics cup final. Our Year 8 students enjoyed an excellent retreat to Alton Castle, and we have continued with our inhouse retreat program with Year 9 this half-term. Our physics students enjoyed an excellent educational visit to CERN in Switzerland.

Please do visit our website and view the De Lisle News to see what else has been going on in school. If you haven't bought your tickets already for our school production of Charlie and the Chocolate factory this week, I would really recommend you do, the rehearsals are going very well.

Jubilee Prayer

God our Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son,
Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the
Holy Spirit,
awaken in us this Jubilee Year a missionary heart for the coming of your Kingdom.
May the gift of your grace transform us, Pilgrims of Hope,
into your missionary disciples,
blessed with the gifts and talents you give us.
Strengthen us to share our Saviour's message of
love, joy, and peace with all the people we meet this year,
so that we may help build up your Kingdom on earth.
To you our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be glory and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

I hope you have a lovely half-term break.

Mr C Maher

NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2026



Newsletter Highlights

Headteacher Message
Mr Chris Maher

Library News

Our DofE Award Achievers

Loughborough University
– CASES Day

Sport and Team Spirit
at De Lisle

Former De Lisle Student
Selected for Team GB

Religious Studies in
De Lisle

Autumn Photography
Competition

Year 11 Geography
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Safeguarding Spotlight

Term Break Info



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LIBRARY NEWS



NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026 - 'Go All In'

In this the National Year of Reading, the library is working hard to inspire a love of reading and to encourage students to make reading a regular part of their lives.

Throughout the year there will be activities and competitions to promote reading and ignite a spark that brings reading alive.

**DE LISLE
COLLEGE
LIBRARY**



The Guess Who's Reading Competition took place during January and the winners were: Sophie, Yusif and Johannes, who won a fiction book, praise points and chocolates.

In February the library is encouraging students to take part in Derby Poetry Festival's 50-word Flash Fiction Writing competition which is run by Arts Derbyshire.



Upcoming events in the library include:

- **The De Lisle Bibliophiles Reading Club - Begins in March**
- **Interhouse Chess Tournament**
- **Interhouse Spelling Bee**
- **World Book Day –Thursday 5th March, featuring a Murder, Mystery Quiz**
- **The Library Breakout Room Challenge**

Mrs A Badock
Library



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Our DofE Award Achievers

Huge congratulations to seven of our Year 11 students who have successfully completed their Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Their journey began in the Advent term of Year 10 and culminated in a challenging three-day, two-night expedition in the Peak District during the final week of the Pentecost term.



Throughout the year, participants completed around 26 hours of volunteering, alongside 13 or 26 hours of physical activity or learning a new skill. Many students have continued with these weekly commitments and have already progressed to the Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Completing the Gold Award offers the incredible opportunity to be invited to a celebration at Buckingham Palace with the Duke of Edinburgh and other Award Ambassadors. We are delighted that Daniel in Year 13, who has completed his Gold DofE Award, will be attending the Palace in May.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a fantastic opportunity for students to develop confidence, resilience, leadership skills, and independence. If you or your child would like more information about taking part, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Ruddy through lruddy@delisle.leics.sch.uk.



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FEBRUARY 2026

Loughborough University Outreach Programme – CASES Day

De Lisle Year 10 students took part in the Loughborough University Outreach Programme - CASES Day (Chartered Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences) on Thursday 29th January. This involved 4 workshops: Sports Psychology, Sports Physiology, PhD poster judging and Biomechanics.

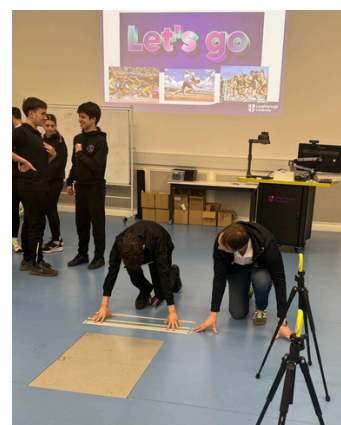
First up was a Sports Psychology workshop, throwing darts under pressure, where students kept their nerve to achieve some extremely high scores. Students tried their best to unearth their inner Luke Littler, with some excellent techniques on show.



Secondly, students took part in some physiology testing. Sprint speed, chest and leg power were the main focus. This took place in one of Loughborough University's elite Sports Science laboratories. Students got to grips with all of the equipment and were willing to give all of the tests a go wherever possible.

Students were challenged with the task of judging PhD level work. They were asked to judge posters about Sports Science and/or health and fitness. This provided valuable insight and inspiration for their own upcoming poster challenge as part of the outreach programme.

The final session involved practical sprint block starts, where students explored how adjusting block positions can optimise power and performance. This proved particularly engaging and sparked discussions about sprint technique in preparation for Sports Day 2026.



Students now have the opportunity to create a poster based on their findings and enter a national competition. Any student who attended the trip and wishes to take part should contact Mr Greenwood (cgreenwood@delisle.leics.sch.uk).

Overall, a fantastic experience for all students involved and the students did De Lisle proud.



FEBRUARY 2026

Key Stage 3 Girls Badminton

Congratulations to the Key Stage 3 Girls Badminton team who won the Charnwood Schools Competition on Thursday 22nd January.

The team of Xanthie, Hannah, Steffany and Euna beat schools from across Charnwood including Limehurst, Charnwood, Loughborough High and Woodbrook Vale.



On 10th February, our Key Stage 3 girls Badminton team proudly represented North Charnwood at a county tournament at Babington Academy against schools from across Leicestershire.

The tournament provided a fantastic opportunity for the girls to test themselves against strong opposition, and they rose to the challenge superbly in the group stage. They opened with a dominant 5–0 victory over Gartree High School before edging a thrilling 3–2 win against Brookvale School to finish top of their group.

In the semi-final, the team faced Brockington College in another tightly contested match. Showing resilience, teamwork and respect for their opponents — true examples of our school values — De Lisle secured a well-earned 3–2 victory to book a place in the final.

The final against English Martyrs proved to be a demanding encounter, but the girls embraced the challenge and played with courage and composure. Although they eventually lost 4–1, they produced some outstanding Badminton and supported one another throughout, demonstrating love for the game and for their teammates, while honouring the spirit of sporting encounter with their competitors.



By representing De Lisle with pride, commitment and sportsmanship, the girls gave excellent service to their school community. Congratulations to Euna, Steffany, Hannah and Xanthie on a fantastic tournament performance — they should be extremely proud of their achievements.



FEBRUARY 2026

De Lisle U13 Girls Show Fighting Spirit at East Regionals Table Tennis

On Saturday 7th February, De Lisle U13 girls competed in the East Regionals at Highfield Table Tennis Club in Wellingborough, facing strong opposition from counties including Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Nottinghamshire and Cambridgeshire.

The team opened their campaign against The Kings (Cathedral) School in a challenging first round. Although the match was lost, De Lisle produced an excellent performance against two opponents ranked first and second nationally. Phoebe was the standout player, securing an impressive victory in her match against their 3rd seed. Alice showed great determination by taking a game from her opponent and Rebecca took the 2nd nationally ranked player close in all 3 of her games.

The team responded superbly in their second fixture, delivering a dominant performance against Woodland Middle School. De Lisle won all seven matches, including the doubles, to record a convincing overall victory and finish the day on a high. A special mention for this round to Victoria, who stepped in and won her first game convincingly needing only 3 games in a best of 5.

A huge well done to Rebecca, Alice, Phoebe and Victoria for their commitment, teamwork and outstanding effort throughout the competition. The girls represented the school brilliantly and should be very proud of their performances.





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FEBRUARY 2026

U16 Girls Shine at East Area Table Tennis Championships

The Under-16 Girls Table Tennis East Area Championships on Sunday 8th February proved to be a fantastic day of high-quality competition and sporting spirit, with De Lisle proudly represented by Millie, Keira, Lauren and Lara.

The girls produced a series of strong performances throughout the event, starting with a competitive round against Market Bosworth, where Lauren and Keira both secured impressive victories to keep De Lisle firmly in contention. Their teamwork, focus and determination were evident as they battled through each match.

Facing The King's School, Harpenden was always going to be a tough challenge, and they lived up to their reputation as formidable opponents. However, De Lisle rose to the occasion, showing incredible resilience, positivity and fighting spirit on every table. The experience provided valuable lessons and highlighted just how much the team has grown.

After a demanding day of matches against some of the strongest schools in the region, the girls finished an outstanding third overall in the entire East Area — a superb achievement at such a high-level competition.

Well done to Millie, Keira, Lauren and Lara on a fantastic performance — De Lisle are extremely proud!



The U13 girls are now the 8th best team in England, whilst the U16 girls are ranked 15th nationally.



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Former De Lisle Student Selected for Team GB



We are delighted to share some fantastic news about former De Lisle student, Amelia, who has been selected to represent Team GB at the Winter Olympic Games in Milan & Cortina.

This incredible achievement comes after 10 years of dedication and training, and Amelia will be competing in skeleton, with medal prospects in both the women's event and the mixed pairs competition.

You can read more about Amelia's selection on the Team GB website here: [Team GB's Skeleton Team for Milano Cortina 2026](#) / [Team GB](#)

We are extremely proud of Amelia's hard work, commitment, and determination, and we wish her every success as she prepares to compete on the world stage.



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Year 8 Alton Castle Retreat

Our De Lisle Year 8 students have been enjoying a deeply enriching retreat at Alton Castle, exploring what it means to be rooted in faith, friendship and a strong sense of belonging. This experience links beautifully with our school mission to be “rooted and grounded in love,” encouraging pupils to reflect on how God’s love shapes who they are and how they live.

Throughout the retreat, students have been given valuable time and space to reflect on personal growth, the importance of relationships, and how they can live out love in their daily lives—at home, in school and within the wider community. Through prayer, discussion and reflection, pupils have thoughtfully considered what it means to build strong foundations for the future.

The Year 8s made the most of every aspect of the retreat, growing in confidence, friendship and faith. It was a memorable experience that supported pupils’ spiritual development and strengthened their sense of community.



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Year 9 Retreat Day – Exploring Vocation

Our Year 9 students recently took part in a special Retreat Day focused on the theme of vocation – reflecting on the unique calling God has for each of us and how we can use our gifts in service of others.



The day began with a Celebration of the Word and an introduction to the theme led by Fr Patrick Bassey, who shared stories of faith and encouraged students to think about how God calls each person in different ways. Students then prepared for Mass through music and heard from members of staff about their own journeys and sense of vocation, helping to connect the theme to everyday life and future aspirations.

Throughout the morning, students took part in a carousel of engaging workshops with visiting speakers and staff. Activities included a teamwork challenge, reflections inspired by St John Henry Newman on God-given purpose, and opportunities to think about personal strengths, gifts, and future pathways. Students created symbolic paper chains to represent how each person's vocation is linked to the wider community and the Church.



After lunch, students spent time in guided reflection using retreat booklets, considering what they feel called to be and how they can make a difference in the world. The day concluded with a beautiful celebration of Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr Michael Eastwood, giving thanks for our gifts and asking God's guidance as our young people continue to grow in faith and purpose.

It was a thoughtful and inspiring day, helping Year 9 to recognise that vocation is not only about future careers but about living with purpose, serving others, and responding to God's call in everyday life.



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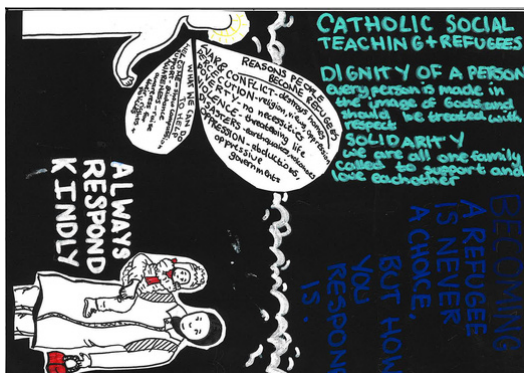
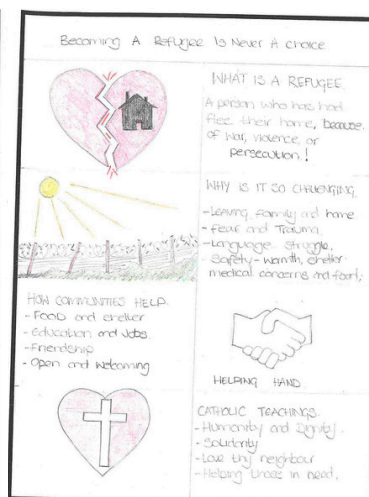
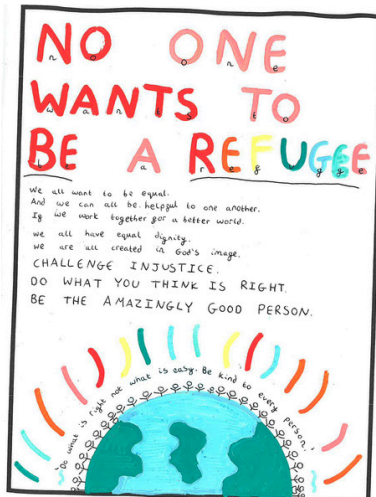
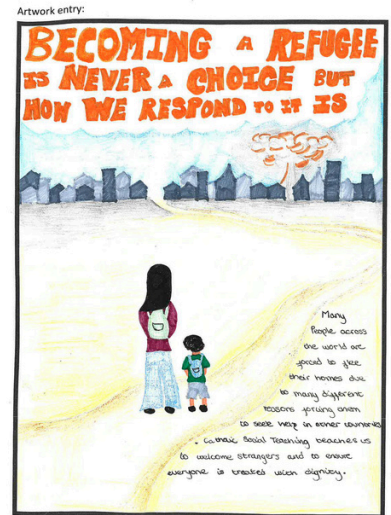
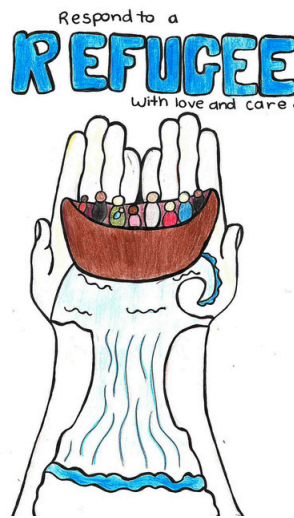
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Columban's Artwork 2025

Students in Year 9 have been taking part in a national competition where they could either create a piece of artwork or write an essay on the theme 'being a refugee is never a choice'. Students have responded very sensitively to the theme, creating beautiful artwork and writing passionately about the plight of refugees.





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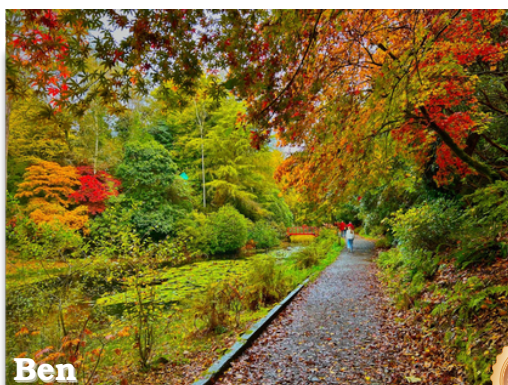
Autumn Photography Competition



Amelia's winning image stands out for its natural framing, with arching branches guiding the viewer's gaze toward the softly lit water beyond. The warm golden light, layered foliage and balanced composition create a peaceful, immersive scene that feels both dreamy and timeless.



Ellie



Ben



Rosa

Year 11 Geography Fieldtrip to Birmingham



On Thursday 5th February, our Y11 geography students completed their second piece of fieldwork in an urban environment. Students were investigating the 'Birmingham city centre has been sustainably regenerated'. Despite the weather, our students conducted fieldwork in four locations around the city centre- The Bull Ring, Bull Street, Grand Central and Birmingham Library. The Y11s investigated the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability and carried out footfall surveys, mood mapping, environmental surveys and connection mapping. Before heading home, we visited The Library of Birmingham, the biggest library in the UK, set in Centenary Square. A soggy, but enjoyable day seeing 'geography in action'.



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CERN Trip to Geneva

Earlier this term, a group of our Key Stage 5 students enjoyed a fantastic three-day visit to Geneva, centred around the world-renowned CERN laboratory. The trip was both academically enriching and culturally rewarding, and our students represented the school exceptionally well throughout.

At CERN, students were given a guided tour of the Antimatter Factory, where they learned how scientists produce, trap and study antimatter to better understand the fundamental structure of the universe. They also visited the CERN Data Centre, gaining insight into the immense computing power required to process and store data from particle collisions. These experiences brought classroom learning to life and provided a valuable glimpse into cutting-edge scientific research.

Beyond CERN, students visited the Palais des Nations at the United Nations, explored the Botanical Gardens, and toured the History of Science Museum. The group also enjoyed wider sightseeing around Geneva, including a boat trip on Lake Geneva, taking in the city's stunning scenery.



The students were a credit to the school. Their behaviour, punctuality and engagement throughout the visit were exemplary, and they embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm and maturity. It was a truly memorable trip that combined science, culture and international perspective in equal measure.

SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT

Stay Device Safe

Lent Term 2025-2026

Devices and children: the bigger picture

Children now move between several internet-connected devices each day, phones, tablets, gaming consoles, smart TVs, laptops and wearables. These devices support learning, creativity, social connection and entertainment and for most families they are a normal part of daily life. Because children switch quickly between platforms, online safety is not just about one app; it is about the whole device environment and the habits around it.

Risks can include:

- **Contact risks:** messages or interactions with strangers, and unkind behaviour from others
- **Content risks:** age-inappropriate, harmful, or upsetting material
- **Conduct risks:** oversharing personal information, accidental spending, and too much unsupervised screen time

The most effective approach is usually simple and consistent:

(1) set up the right controls, (2) keep active interest in what your child does online, and (3) have regular, calm conversations so they will come to you early if something goes wrong.



Device focus: where to prioritise

Start with the devices your child uses most.

Phones & tablets

- Use age-appropriate profiles and app limits
- Check privacy/location settings
- Turn off unknown contact requests where possible

Gaming consoles

- Restrict chat/messages to known friends
- Apply age ratings to games
- Set spending controls and purchase PINs

Smart TVs/streaming & laptops

- Use child profiles and content filters
- Turn off autoplay if needed
- Keep software updated and use safe search

Golden rule: Bedroom-free charging overnight supports safer use and better sleep.

More Top Tips

- **Set controls first, then explain why** (safety, not punishment)
- **Review settings monthly** as apps/devices change
- **Keep devices in shared spaces** when possible
- **Agree screen-time boundaries** (especially before bed)
- **Teach block/report** on games and apps
- **Use strong passwords/PINs** and keep parent controls private
- **Talk often and calmly**: "Anything online made you feel uncomfortable?"
- **Ask for help early** from school if a concern escalates

Get advice on supporting children if they have seen harmful or upsetting content online

[CLICK HERE](#)

How to start the conversation about online safety and how to navigate tricky topics

[CLICK HERE](#)

23 Schools - 9000 Pupils - One Team

FEBRUARY HALF TERM 2026

February half term is nearly upon us and we wanted to send our usual information sheet out to you with some ideas to keep costs down.

Discounted meals

This February half-term, from 14th to 20th February 2026, parents can take advantage of a family-friendly offer at Subway. When you buy any full-price Footlong Sub, you can receive a free children's 4" sub, snack, and drink. You can also find a huge list of other restaurants, pubs and cafes offering free/discounted food over half term. Click on the subway sandwich to find more information.



Things to do

Click on the heart below to learn more about events across Leicester for families to get involved in. Activities include a comedy festival, Bollywood dance workshop, pokemon crafts and Dino Day!



More things to do

Families are invited to a free, drop-in creative workshop on Saturday 21 February 2026, 10:00am–12:00pm at Modern Painters, in Loughborough. The session is designed as a relaxed space to make, play and explore together. Click the balloons to learn more



Fun at home

The National Trust's "50 things to do before you're 11¾" is a family activity list to help children get outdoors, connect with nature and learn new skills. It includes ideas from den building and puddle splashing to stargazing and tree-spotting, with seasonal picks (like winter and rainy-day activities) plus safety tips. Click on the wellies to see the list!



Rutland

Celebrate Chinese New Year at Rutland Museum with children's craft activities inspired by the Year of the Horse. Sessions are drop-in, so there's no need to book a time slot. Cost is £3 per child, and under-4s go free. Click on the horse for more information about this activity.

