27.02.2026 Issue No: 1186 The Link

Charles Darwin School

Aspire - Endeavour - Achieve

Headlines

Welcome back
I hope all our families had an enjoyable half term break and are ready and refreshed for what is a short term ahead.

Attendance
We have had an excellent start to term this week. Please keep the momentum going by supporting your child with 100% attendance this term.

Exams
We kindly ask that you encourage your child to revise regularly and prepare thoroughly for coming PPE's and formal examinations. You can view your child's homework and revision tasks on the Satchel One app. Parents are able to download the app to monitor homework, revision activities, and completion rates. If you require your parent login details, please contact Lkelly@cdarwin.com
All homework tasks and online apps are designed to support your child's learning and help strengthen their understanding and retention of key knowledge.

Year 8 Parents' Evening
A reminder that Year 8 Parents' Evening will take place next Wednesday. We are very much looking forward to welcoming our Year 8 families into school.

This is an important opportunity to meet with your child's teachers, discuss their progress so far this year, celebrate their successes, and talk through any questions or next steps. Year 8 is a key stage in developing strong study habits and confidence, and your support and involvement make a real difference.

Aston Smith, Headteacher

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Spring term clubs and activities
We have a variety of clubs and extra curriculum activities being run this term.

Details can be found on our website or click the link Charles Darwin School - Clubs

Congratulations to Maksym Kryvylo 11JAl who on 15 February won 1st place in his age and weight category at the Ali's Dojang Open Taekwondo Championship in London.

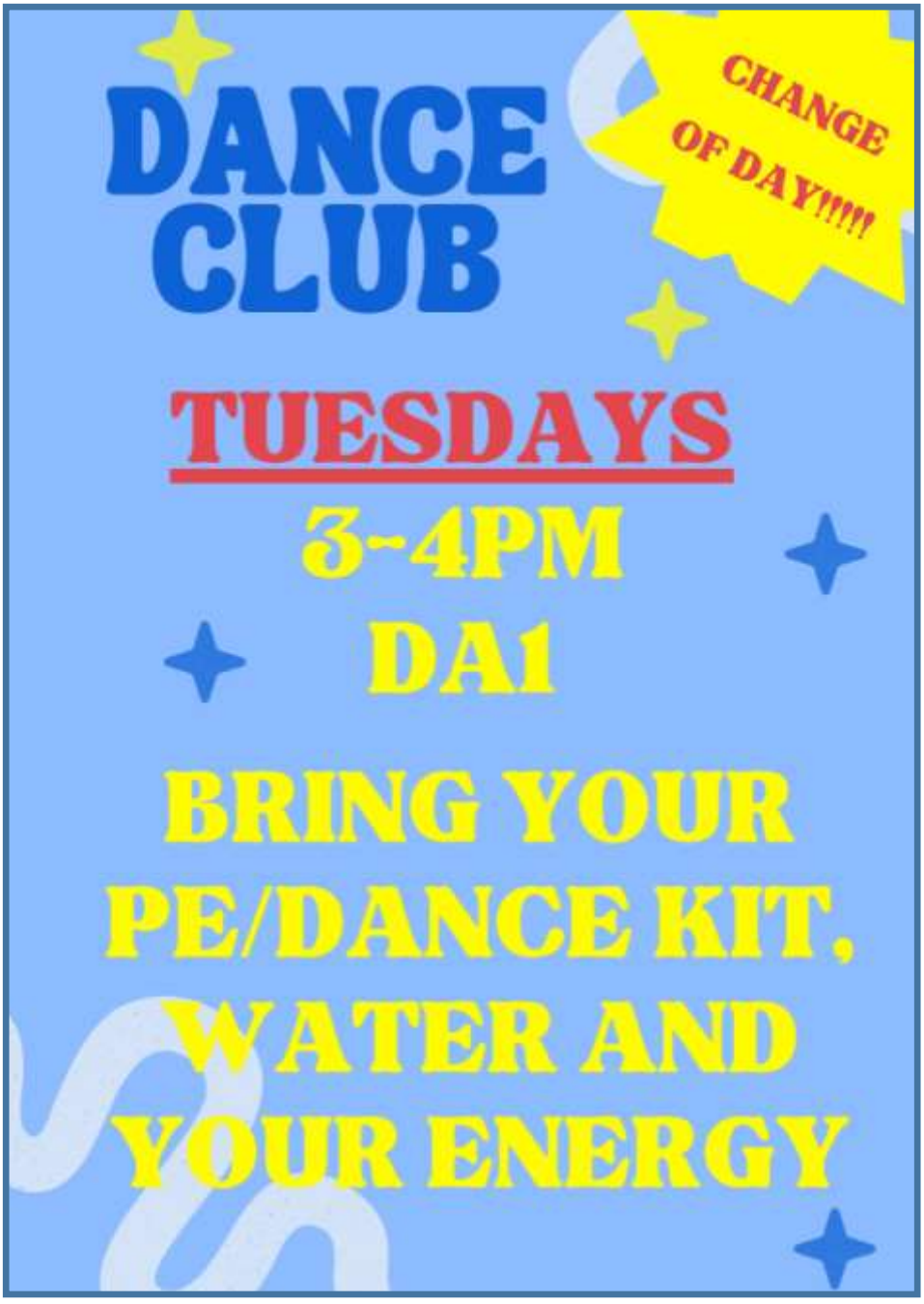
That level of success takes tremendous focus, resilience and discipline, and it is clear that his hard work has truly paid off.

Well done Maksym, amazing achievement!

The U19 team had a fantastic result this week against Ravensbourne School. After going in 3-2 down at half time following a few unfortunate goals conceded, the boys showed great character and resilience in the second half to turn the game around and secure a brilliant 6-3 victory.

The goal scorers were Jake Fowler (3), Max Brandrick, Owen Atkinson, and Kayden Pinston. Player of the match was Jake Fowler, who was absolutely outstanding throughout the game. This result moves us up to third in the league, sitting behind Hayes and Beth Grammar School, with five games remaining in the season. A great position to push on from for the final run-in!

Mrs Johnson



Careers Update

National Careers Week

Next Monday marks the start of National Careers Week. The focus this year is on bridging the gap between schools and the world of work. More information can be found at:
National Careers Week 2026 | Teacher notes | Classroom activities - BBC Bitesize
I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight the work that has been taking place at Charles Darwin School and some of the opportunities available to students during the rest of the year.

Key Stage 3:

All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have recently had the opportunity to complete a careers survey online. The survey has not only looked at which types of careers/industries students are interested in but also focused on skills in which they feel they are confident in and ones which they think need developing further. Please see the results attached to this week's Link.

It was really encouraging to see so many of our younger students having a good understanding of the skills they have and an understanding of what employers are looking for. These results will be used to tailor a range of careers sessions for KS3 students where employers from a range of businesses (both local and national) will come in to speak to students about careers they have chosen. This will take place on **Wednesday 1st July** as part of the school's **KS3 Careers Fair**. Areas that students felt less confident in were their understanding of the various career paths available to them such as Apprenticeships and T-Levels. Assemblies and tutorial programmes are used to highlight the importance of good careers guidance and understanding.

Key Stage 4 & 5

All students in Year 10 will be involved in arranging a 'Work Shadowing Day' at the end of the year. This is aimed to give them a better understanding of the world of work. They are also involved in 'Mock interviews' where a wide range of local businesses are involved. Students plan and prepare for these interviews including writing a CV and covering letter. All students in KS4 and 5 (with some starting in Year 9) will have at least one careers interview with our external careers advisor. This gives them to opportunity to look in more detail about careers they may be interested in and the career paths involved. If your son/daughter would like an additional appointment, then please let me know so I can see if there is further availability (email address at the end of the article). Assemblies and tutor programmes are used to give the students a better understanding of career paths such as apprenticeships and T-levels.
Sixth Form students have a huge range of careers guidance including Horizons Week, where they organise work experience placements, external guest speakers discussing individual careers, career pathways such as apprenticeships/T-levels, financial advice and help with university applications and CV writing.

Useful resources for careers

I would encourage you to discuss which careers your son/daughter may be interested in. There are many useful websites available which are good starting points.
https://careerswales.gov.wales/buzzquiz

A quiz which looks at careers linked to the skills and personality your son/daughter has
https://icould.com

A website which includes videos based on subjects that students are interested in.

Latest Labour Market Information

If you would like to read the latest LMI bulletin please click below:
Sway

Volunteer?

If you are willing to give up some of your time to speak to our students and feel you have an area of expertise, perhaps linked to the industries highlighted in our recent surveys (particularly areas such as Construction, Law, Sports, Finance, Creative design, Medical and Police/Soldier) it would be great to hear from you. This could involve talks to smaller groups of students or assemblies targeting year groups or even providing a contact for individual students to find out more.
If you are interested, then please email me directly via jsimpson@cdarwin.com with brief details including:

Name, Contact No, Brief description of your area of expertise.

Mr Simpson

Second Hand Keyboards for Sale

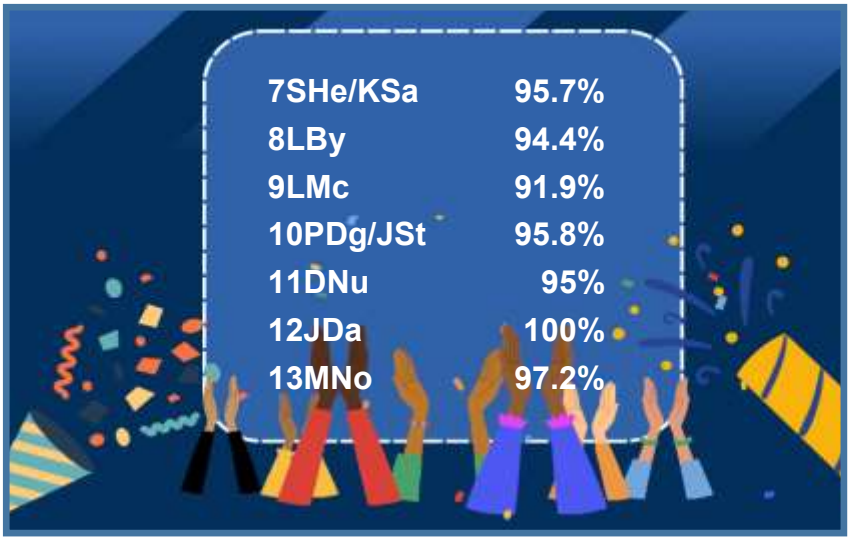
The music department has recently upgraded its music keyboards. As a result, we have 16 second hand keyboards for sale. All are in working order but do have the note names written on the keys for ease of use.

We are asking for a £40 donation per keyboard. If you are interested, please send an email to Miss Mace vmace@cdarwin.com

Miss Mace

Attendance

Congratulations to the following Tutor Groups who have the highest attendance for week ending 13 February 2026.



As you are aware attendance is linked to a student's attainment and at Charles Darwin we work closely with the parents to keep students' attendance levels as high as possible. Please could we ask that if your child feels unwell in the morning (headache etc.) and they do feel better later on, that you send them in. This will benefit them as they will not miss a whole days learning.

Please can we also remind parents to call in before 8.30am for each day of your child's absence and clearly stating your child's name and form. Please do not rely on receiving a text from us chasing their absence.

A reminder that pupils **should not** contact home if they feel unwell but should be seen and assessed by Mrs Booth, our Health Care Lead.

Parents should be aware that pupils will not be sent home without being seen by Mrs Booth in the first instance.

Students Services Team

Pupil absence line: 01959 574043

Reminder – please can parents call the absence line each day of your child's absence **before 8.30am**, clearly stating your child's name and form. Please do not rely on receiving a text from us chasing their absence.

If you wish to report your child's absence, **OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS**, please call the school on **01959 574043** and when prompted to enter the extension number, please **dial 1** and you will be taken through to the student absence line where you can leave a message regarding your child's absence. This ensures we know your child is safe and their absence is authorised where possible.
Thank you for your support.

Parents should be advised that the school does not provide students with Paracetamol unless it is a medical emergency. We have a limited supply in school and prefer that medication wherever possible is administered at home.

Mrs Booth
Health Care Lead

Charles Darwin School

Headteacher: Aston Smith, BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

Jail Lane
Biggin Hill
Westerham
Kent TN16 3AU
Tel: 01959 574043
enquiries@cdarwin.com

Exam Invigilators
£13.70 per hour

We wish to appoint a number of Exam Invigilators to join our dedicated pool responsible for the invigilation of public and internal exams and tests. Invigilators will be present throughout the whole exam and may also undertake tasks such as checking registers against scripts and packing them at the end of the exams. All successful candidates will receive appropriate training.

We are a "good" school (Ofsted 2023) with an ethos that encourages academic rigour, high expectations and a well-disciplined approach to learning.

Application Forms and further details are available on our website www.cdarwin.com – about us/ vacancies.

Closing date: Friday 6th March 2026

Please note: all applicants must complete the Charles Darwin School application form which is available on our website: www.cdarwin.com (about us/vacancies). CVs alone will not be considered.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Any offer of employment will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure with the Disclosure and Barring Service and full background checks.

Preloved Uniform Shop
Promoting a positive eco-friendly culture of reusing

Did you know we have a preloved uniform shop with a variety of nearly new school uniform and PE kits?

If you are interested in checking stock, please send an email with your requirements (size, gender, specific item) to preloveduniform@cdarwin.com you can also use the link below or scan the QR code.
https://forms.office.com/e/qSR8ju6P5C

Year 8 Duty Pupil
Josh Latter
Emily Bugden
Dexter Davies
Gabriella Rodrigues
Faith Cooling
Isla Comley
Daisy Shier

Student Services Duty Pupils
Iris-Grace Penfold
Sonny Nye
Eva Lawson
Thomas West

They have been fantastic this week, and their help has been invaluable.

Dates for the Diary

March
4th March - Trip: Year 12 Poetry Work Shop, Down House
4th March - Year 8 Parents' Evening
5th March - World Book Day
6th March - Trip: Year 7/Year 8 Science Live, London
7th March - Bronze DofE Practice Walk
10th March - Trip: Year 10 GCSE PE Cycling Trip, Cyclopark Gravesend
11th March - Year 9 Options Evening
12th March - Trip: Year 10 GCSE PE Cycling Trip, Cyclopark Gravesend
14th March - Bronze DofE Practice Walk
16th March - Trip: GCSE Cycling Trip - Cyclopark
19th March - Year 12/13 Parents' Evening
20th March - Trip: GCSE Cycling Trip - Cyclopark
24th March - Trip: Year 12 UCAS Conference
27th March-4th April - Ski Trip to Austria
27th March-31st March - Year 10/Year 11 Geography trip to Iceland
27th March - End of Term
30th March - 10th April - Easter Holiday

April
13th April - Summer Term starts

Term Dates 2025-2026

Spring 2026

Monday 5th January – Friday 13th February

Half term: Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February

Monday 23rd February – Friday 27th March

Easter Holiday: Monday 30th March - Friday 10th April

Summer 2026

Monday 13th April – Friday 22nd May

[Monday 4th May Bank Holiday]

Half term: Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May

Monday 1st June – Friday 17thJuly

INSET Days:

Friday 22nd May 2026

Friday 26th June 2026

Notes:
Good Friday 3rd April 2026
Easter Monday 6th April 2026

The SEN team at Charles Darwin:

Mrs L Thom, SENDCo
Mr B Frost, Assistant SENCo
Mrs J Patten, Senior Learning Support Assistant
Miss R Higgins, SEN Administrator

Should you need to make contact with us, please use the inbox below:
send@cdarwin.com

Term Dates 2026-2027

Inicio Educational Trust – Secondary Schools

Term Dates 2026-2027

Term 1

Start:	Tuesday 1st September 2026
Finish:	Friday 16th October 2026
Autumn break:	Monday 19th October 2026 to Friday 30th October 2026
	Staff Development Day Tuesday & Wednesday 1st & 2nd September 2026

Term 2

Start:	Monday 2nd November 2026
Finish:	Friday 18th December 2026
Christmas break:	Monday 21st December 2026 to Friday 1st January 2027
	Staff Development Day Monday 2nd November 2026

Term 3

Start:	Monday 4th January 2027
Finish:	Friday 12th February 2027
February break:	Monday 15th February 2027 to Friday 19th February 2027
	Staff Development Day Wednesday 13th January 2027

Term 4

Start:	Monday 22nd February 2027
Finish:	Thursday 25th March 2027
Spring break:	Friday 26th March 2027 to Friday 9th April 2027
	Staff Development Day Friday 12th & Monday 22nd February 2027

Term 5

Start:	Monday 12th April 2027
Finish:	Friday 28th May 2027
Early May Bank Holiday:	*Monday 3rd May 2027*
May break:	Monday 31st May 2027 to Friday 4th June 2027
	**No inset Day this term*

Term 6

Start:	Monday 7th June 2027
Finish:	Wednesday 21st July 2027
	Staff Development Day Friday 25th June 2027

**Term 5 Staff Development Day – to be chosen by Headteacher*

There will be no inset day for CDS in Term 5 – we will hold our inset day on Friday 12th February

Younger Teens Reading Group

at Orpington Library

Aged 11-13 and love reading? Join our monthly book group for exciting reads, great chats, and plenty of fun.

Day: Third Monday of the month
Time: 5.30-6.30pm

For more information please speak to a member of staff or contact orpington.library@gll.org

@BromleyLibraries @BromLibraries

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BETTER

Bromley
THE LONDON BOROUGH

SENDAT Parent Workshops

Summer Term 2026

Supporting Parents & Carers of Neurodivergent Young People

SENDAT will be running a series of supportive, informative workshops for parents and carers of school-aged neurodivergent children and young people. A formal diagnosis is not required; children should have identified differences through paediatric referral in Bromley or a specific assessment

Parents/carers need to attend all three sessions:

They will take place from **6-8pm** at the **Phoenix Children's Resource Centre**, 40 - 42 Masons Hill, Bromley, BR2 9JG on:

- Tuesday 10 June 2026
- Tuesday 17 June 2026
- Tuesday 24 June 2026

What to expect:

- A safe, supportive environment
- Practical advice and guidance
- Space to explore your young person's strengths, motivators, and areas for development

Tea, coffee and snacks will be provided

Please note:

- These are adult-only sessions. There are no crèche facilities available.
- For any further information please contact Emma Donovan-Brown at Emma.Donovan-brown@bromley.gov.uk

They are well received by families and provide support, advice and a safe space to talk about their young people's strengths, motivators and areas of development.