

**Dear Parents/Carers and the Ibstock Community,**

As we approach the end of 2025, Ibstock School can reflect on an incredible year. OUR students have made the most of everything that has come their way with so many of our young people demonstrating OUR values; of Opportunity, Understanding and Respect.

I have mentioned before the warm welcome I received when joining in the summer and as we move towards the Christmas holidays, this hasn't waned in the winter months. Every day, I have so many positive interactions with students, staff, parents and carers.

The opportunities presented to students this term have been varied and for some a real WOW moment, this, our third edition of Ibstock Insights reflects on the number of activities on offer for our students. This half term, our Year 11 students have demonstrated incredible understanding in the importance of their mock exams; displaying excellent attitude and realising some great outcomes as they build on their journey towards their final exams. More recently, some of OUR Year 9 students have completed their MVP training, this encourages students to be upstanders and report incidents of unkindness or bullying; this level of training shows a great amount of responsibility in making Ibstock School a safe environment to learn in.

Starting a new school can be daunting, but not for OUR Year 7 students, they have taken on the challenges of secondary school with determination and resilience. Their attitude in lessons and attendance to school has been outstanding. In fact, the Year 7 attendance is in the best 10% of schools nationally!

Thank you to everyone for their support this term; Ibstock School continues to make an impact on the Community we serve and I can't wait for 2026, where we can continue to grow!

Take care, have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

**Ben White, Head of School**



## Movember

Some of our staff took part in Movember by growing a moustache. Thank you to everyone who supported and donated towards such a great cause. This was OUR first year raising money and we managed over £100! Thank you all.



## LOPC Enrichment Day

Some of our students were lucky enough to have the opportunity to take part in an enrichment day at Leicestershire Outdoor Pursuits Activity Centre. The day consisted of a range of activities which were designed to challenge and inspire students, allowing them to step outside their comfort zones, build resilience and work on developing vital communication and teamwork skills. Students really embraced this experience and had a fantastic time. We look forward to more days like this in the future.





## Awesome Autumn

What a fantastic evening we had at our Awesome Autumn Rewards Night for Year 7! The atmosphere was buzzing with energy as students were recognised with awards for exemplifying our core values: Opportunity, Understanding, and Responsibility. It was heartening to see so many students with their families celebrating their achievements and demonstrating these important qualities. The evening was further enriched by inspiring music performances from our talented music students and the Harmony Group, filling the room with lively, uplifting melodies. The event truly showcased the vibrant spirit of our community, and we couldn't be prouder of our young learners. Here's to celebrating their success and fostering our shared values!



## Christmas Concert 2025



One of our most well attended events each year, for both students and parents is the school Christmas concert – this took place on 4 December, featuring our highly talented group of musicians. 49 students took part this year – this ranged from soloists, to an all-male band, harmony group, the various rock bands and a variety of instrumentalists. Thank you to all of our students for taking part and for all of the audience in attendance.



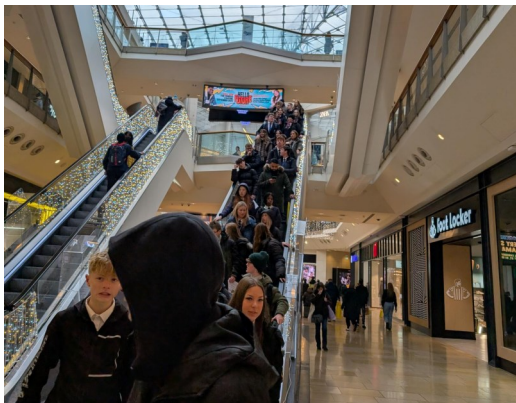
## Uniform Reminder

A gentle reminder to parents that students must adhere to OUR school uniform policy. This includes wearing either a school jumper or blazer along with an appropriate jacket to combat the cold. We do not allow Hoodies to be worn in school. Please ensure that the trousers worn are grey school trousers, with Trutex as the preferred supplier, or a school skirt – black tight flared trousers are not allowed. Ensuring your child is suitably dressed will help maintain our uniform standards whilst keeping them comfortable. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.



## Geography Field Trip

The GCSE Geography fieldwork trip to Birmingham investigated whether regeneration in the city has been successful. Students visited Eastside City Park, Birmingham New Street, and the Bullring, carrying out Environmental Quality Surveys, land use surveys, pedestrian counts, public surveys, photo comparisons, and field sketches.



The students were brilliant throughout the day, working hard to collect accurate data and showing real enthusiasm for the project. After completing their fieldwork, they enjoyed exploring the Bullring and visiting Birmingham's Christmas Market, which provided a lively end to a successful and engaging trip.

## Dodgeball Sporting Event

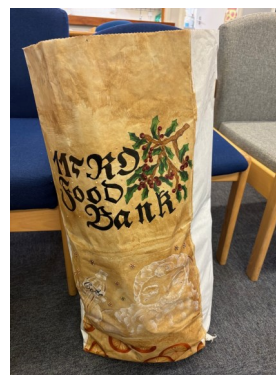
We were proud to host an exciting KS3 girls' dodgeball tournament filled with fast-paced action, fantastic teamwork, and great competitive spirit. Every match was played with enthusiasm and determination, creating an electric atmosphere throughout the event. A huge congratulations to the Year 7 team, who battled brilliantly to take first place, and well done to the Year 8/9 team for an outstanding performance to finish second. A massive thank you to the School Sports Partnership for all the amazing work they do in making events like this possible.



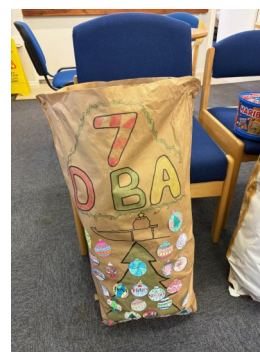
## Christmas Food Bags



This week, each CREW took on the inspiring challenge of decorating a food bag for our local foodbank. Mr White carefully judged each creation, recognising creativity and effort with awards for the top three.



Congratulations to 7SCa, who took 1st place; 11TRO, our 2nd place winner; and 8CCo, who came in 3rd. 7DBa got awarded the heaviest sack!



Our Ibstock Champions visited the local food bank to deliver the heft sacks of donations from across the school. Well done to everyone for showing kindness and teamwork in supporting our community!





# Christmas Dinner/ Jumper Day

On Wednesday, our students enjoyed their annual Christmas dinner day, and what a spectacular, joyful occasion it was! Everyone got into the festive spirit by wearing their favourite Christmas jumpers and accessories. The lunch was fantastic—delicious food served with lots of festive cheer, all thanks to our wonderful dinner ladies. Mrs Koncarevic and Mrs Pape also helped serve lunch to our students. It was lovely to see our school filled with lots of Christmas spirit.



Mr White enjoying his Christmas dinner with a group of our Y10 boys.



Our wonderful kitchen team who cook wonderful meals not just at Christmas but every day for our students.

## MVP Group

Our Year 9 MVP training day was a fantastic success, with students demonstrating excellent leadership, maturity, and enthusiasm throughout the sessions. MVP (Mentors in Violence Prevention) is a leadership and mentoring programme that empowers young people to act as positive role models, promoting healthy relationships, challenging harmful or negative behaviour, and supporting others to make safe and respectful choices.

During the training day, pupils explored real-life scenarios, learning how to speak up, support peers, and lead by example. The day has equipped our Year 9 MVPs with the confidence and skills needed to support and mentor younger students, helping to create a safe, inclusive, and respectful community in OUR school.

## Opportunities Programme

The second half of the Autumn Term has seen the launch of a very popular opportunities programme. Amongst the clubs on offer, students have been attending the retro gaming club on a Friday lunch time – this has proved to offer a light-hearted but serious element of competition between the students in achieving the highest games scores in order to win a prize! For our students who enjoy sport, clubs including football and badminton have been the sports of choice for this half term.



The opportunities programme aims to offer something for all, the creative or performance based clubs have covered fashion, drama, rock band and vocal harmony group. Our library focuses on a variety of activities for students including chess, UN club, Pride, Young Carers and Book Club – to name a few. Moving over to careers, we have had a dedicated careers drop in session for those needing support and advice on next steps. From our languages faculty, students have been able to watch Spanish films and meet to complete Duolingo and from English, our Pokeman club has proved to be a popular addition!



Our Maths and English faculties will be continuing their offer of old skool games and creative writing. Our new timetable for after Christmas is now available.

Thank you to all our staff who have offered clubs this half term and we look forward to increasing our offer after Christmas with a few new activities for students to be involved with.

## Women Into Careers

29 of our Year 10 and Year 11 female students visited the University of Leicester for an inspiring "Women Into Careers" day. Based in the Sir Bob Burgess Building, the event opened up a wide range of opportunities in fields like engineering and technology.

The students moved beyond the classroom with hands-on workshops, from a physics-based marble run challenge to an interactive session on cyber security.



These activities helped them understand how their school subjects translate into real-world careers. They also explored the campus with current students, getting a true feel for university life and the paths available to them.

A major highlight was the "Inspirational Women" panel, where professionals shared their career journeys. They spoke about the responsibility we all have to challenge stereotypes and support the next generation of female leaders. A strong message said by one of the panellist was for all females to "carve your own identity within the path YOU choose to go down. Be the outward character you want to be and be driven by your ambitions".

It was particularly fitting to learn that when the university first opened in 1921, eight of its first nine students were women—a tradition of female ambition that our female students will definitely carry on.

It was a fantastic day that left the girls feeling motivated. A big thank you to the University of Leicester for helping our students see just how much they can achieve.





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## Random Acts of Kindness

Our Ibstock student ambassadors were out spreading some festive cheer yesterday by heading out into the community to perform random acts of kindness. Their efforts not only brought smiles and warmth but also inspired our community to thrive together during this special time. Well done to everyone involved.



## Merry Christmas Everyone

A beautiful design created by Isabelle gRYa which we have used as our Ibstock Christmas card this year.



# Keeping Safe Over the Christmas Holidays

As Christmas approaches, the adverts on the television show an idealised version of the festive period; lots of food, family together, all getting along and lots of presents. We know that for most of us that is not always the case. Christmas can be a wonderful, magical time for families. It can also be a time of stress, worry and arguments. At Ibstock School we would like to offer some advice and highlight areas of support to help you all have a safe and Merry Christmas.



## **Mobile Phones Online Gaming and Social Media**



Many young people will get new devices this Christmas. Please remember that as parents, we pay for the phone and the contract – we can and should be checking ‘phones regularly. Many people enjoy scrolling through videos, playing games or watching programmes on their mobile ‘phones. Young people in particular have difficulty in regulating their use. Please ensure that ‘phones are downstairs when it is time for bed. We know from experience that the temptation to carry on using the ‘phone is too great for many and do not get a good night’s sleep. It is also the time when their usage is not monitored, putting children at greater risk of online abuse.

The age for having a social media account is 13 years old. It is important that their activity is monitored. This academic year, we have already dealt with online bullying, but also the potential online grooming of young children – on this occasion, fortunately we were able to intervene before it was too late, next time we may not be so lucky! Please speak to your children about who they ‘add’ as friends and talk to, whether it is via social media or via online gaming.



## **Vapes and Vaping**



According to government statistics in 2023, 25% of 11-15 year olds had tried vaping. It is already illegal to sell any vape to anyone under 18, but disposable vapes - often sold in smaller, more colourful packaging than refillable ones - are a "key driver behind the alarming rise in youth vaping", according to the government. The content of vapes varies, many contain very high levels of nicotine, some vapes contain other illegal substances that have the potential to have life changing effects if taken by young people. Please take the time to discuss the dangers of vaping with your child. If your child is using vapes and would like help to stop help can be found on the NHS website but also using the following site: [www.quitday.co.uk](http://www.quitday.co.uk)



## **Self-Referral**



If you feel that you, or a member of your family requires help from Social Care Services, you are able to request support or to make a self-referral. Depending on your address, will depend in who you will need to contact: • Leicester City: 0116 454 1004. • Leicestershire: 0116 305 0005



## **Contacting the Academy**



Please note that the school is closed from 3pm on 19th December 2025 and will reopen on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

If you feel that there is a safeguarding issue that the school needs to be aware of you can email [dsl@ibstockschool.co.uk](mailto:dsl@ibstockschool.co.uk). Please note that this email will be checked every two days. Please do not expect a reply to any emails sent to this address until term has resumed.



# Is Christmas feeling tricky this year?

Young people can cope with loneliness at Christmas by connecting with others through volunteering or contacting friends, engaging in enjoyable solo activities like hobbies or exercise, and practicing self-care like setting boundaries and limiting social media. If feelings of loneliness are overwhelming, seeking support from a trusted person or a helpline is a valuable step.



## Connect with Others

**Volunteer:** Look for opportunities to help out in your local community, as organizations are often in high demand for volunteers during the holidays, or even litter picking with others, whilst using the correct safety gear.

**Reach out:** Contact friends and family, even for a quick "Merry Christmas" message, or safely use online communities/ interest based forums (gaming, art, tech, fitness).

**Stay in touch digitally:** If family is far away, use video calls like WhatsApp or FaceTime to stay connected.

**Attend local events:** Go to a community event or festive workshop to be around other people, even if you don't feel like talking much.

## Engage in Solo Activities

**Enjoy your own company:** Make time for things you genuinely enjoy, such as watching a favourite movie, reading a book, or listening to an audiobook.

**Stay active:** Go for a walk outside, or if the weather is bad, walk around a shopping centre or even your home to boost your mood.

**Stimulate your mind:** Learn a new skill or try a new hobby to keep your mind busy.

## Practice Self-care and Set Boundaries

**Be gentle with yourself:** It's okay to not be in the festive spirit and to not take part in every social invitation.

**Say "no":** Don't overwhelm yourself by taking on too many social commitments. Prioritize your well-being.

**Track your feelings:** Keep a mood journal to help understand and manage how you're feeling.

**Set small goals:** Give yourself a few small goals for the holidays to achieve, which can boost your self-esteem.



## Is Christmas feeling tricky this year?

Christmas can be a fab time of year, however for some people it can feel difficult, and sometimes even lonely. If you are struggling, please know that there are people out there who can help...



It takes courage to ask for help. Young Minds is leading the movement for change. They provide you with the tools to look after your mental health, and give you the space and confidence to get your voice heard. Loneliness is just one area where Young Minds offers support.

Loneliness is a part of life. You can feel lonely in school, on social media or on your own. Sometimes admitting you feel lonely can be hard. Understanding your reasons for feeling lonely can help identify and manage these feelings. Find out about possible signs of loneliness and ways to manage it.



**Better Health**  
Let's do this



Life can be great. Life can also be hard. Samaritans offers you support when you need change. There is always someone to listen.

Childline is a free, private and confidential service where you can talk about anything, big or small. Trained counsellors are there to support and because Childline counsellors know how hard it can be to get in touch, they will not judge and will give you time to talk.



**childline**  
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME



The Mix offers free, confidential support, expert advice and a welcoming community. Whether you need help with mental health, loneliness or anything else, you'll find it here - whenever you need it.



Everyone at Teen Health wishes you a peaceful Christmas - if you celebrate - and holiday period, however if you need support then please take a look at these services, or visit the Teen Health website. Your Health & Wellbeing Officer is in school every week, so ask your pastoral team for information about which day you can speak with them.



Ibstock School will be closed over the Christmas break and will reopen on **Tuesday 6th January 2026**.

Please see below for in-term contact details:

**Ibstock School**, Central Avenue, Ibstock, Leicestershire, LE67 6NE

t: 01530 260705 e: [admin@ibstockschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@ibstockschool.co.uk) w: [www.ibstockschool.co.uk](http://www.ibstockschool.co.uk)

# Opportunity, Understanding, Responsibility