

Derby City School Debate Competition 2021

This is the year that we just had to make the best of it. The debate competition was due to go ahead as usual at the beginning of the year but all schools reverted to online teaching and the competition was postponed to the Summer term.

With a slightly reduced field the competition started after Easter all on MS Teams thanks to the University of Derby and the hitherto unknown tech skills of Senior Lecturer and former criminal practitioner Steve Bravery!

The eight teams from four schools threw themselves into debates such as should monuments to controversial historical figures remain with huge enthusiasm. The competitors showed their resilience by taking to presenting their speeches to a screen with skill and confidence. It is testament to these young adults and their dedicated teachers that they were able to deliver such debates of high quality and without exception they took on board the comments of the judges and improved their public speaking skills as the competition went on. Congratulations to all the pupils and to the staff who supported and encouraged them.

The Final took place on 30th June when a team from West Park School narrowly beat a school from Littleover Community School debating whether vaccine passports benefit society. The final was judged by Steve Bravery, Julie Skill - current President of DDLS and Mike Copestake - former President of DDLS, future High Sheriff of Derby and current Chair of E4E. The judges were impressed at the standard of debating on display saying "There were again some real natural orators and I really take my hat off to those challenging themselves to develop."

The competition has, once again, been organized by the Derby and District Law Society, E4E and The University of Derby Law School. The project is a great example of organizations working well together and what can be achieved with lots of time but very little financial input.

A massive THANK YOU to all the academic staff at the University of Derby and members of DDLS who helped judge the competition, all at E4E, particularly Helen Guyatt and Arshad Iqbal, for their support throughout and help in contacting the schools and everyone who gave up their time to make this project such a fantastic success.



