

DURHAM HIGH SCHOOL *for* GIRLS

Durham High School for Girls
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9 September 2011

Dear Parents

I do hope that you have had a restful and enjoyable summer. We have had a very busy and successful start to the Autumn Term, and I know I can speak for all the staff when I say that it has been a pleasure welcoming the girls back to school. We are all looking forward to what promises to be an exciting and vibrant academic year.

We begin this term celebrating some outstanding public examination results. GCSE results were excellent with over 60% of entries achieving A* and A, and over a third of the year group achieving nine or more A* and A grades. The A Level results were equally impressive with 70% of the entries achieving A* to B. Almost 30% of the Upper Sixth cohort obtained at least 3 As; a wonderful achievement and I congratulate the girls and their teachers for all their hard work.

Staff News

The school welcomes a number of new staff this year. We are especially pleased to welcome Dr Adrian Frank as Head of Sixth Form and a member of the Senior Management Team. He was previously Assistant Director of Sixth Form at Carmel RC College. We also welcome Mrs Heather O'Neill who joins the Modern Foreign Languages Department. We also welcome Reverend Brett Vallis as the School Chaplain and teacher of Religious Studies. Miss Mary Bambrough will also be joining the Modern Foreign Languages Department whilst Mrs Colon takes the Autumn Term to recover from surgery; we send Mrs Colon all our good wishes. Mrs Diana Barclay and Mr Mike Smith are joining the Classics Department in a part-time capacity. Junior House welcomes back Mrs Corinne Slee who will be running After School Care and covering a maternity leave for Mrs Hart. I am sure our new staff will have lots to contribute to the life of the High School and will enjoy their time with us. We are delighted to welcome Miss Wright back to school as Mrs Stephenson and Mrs Marsden as Mrs Harrison. I am sure you will want me to wish them every happiness as they begin married life.

It is with real sadness that I inform you that Mrs Settle will be retiring at the end of the Spring Term. Mrs Settle has been an excellent Head of Junior House and an extremely supportive member of the Senior Management Team. We wish her every happiness in her relocation to be closer to her family.

Reminders

- Please ensure your daughter arrives at school promptly each day (8.40am in Junior House and 8.35am in Senior House) and in correct uniform. Uniform rules can be found on the school's website.

- No girl should be in school before 8.00am (Senior House) and 8.15am (Junior House).
- Please notify the school by telephone on the first day of any absence; this should be followed by a parental note when your daughter returns. The safety of our students is paramount.
- If your daughter is in After School Care it is vital that you collect her by 5.30pm at the latest. Similarly, if your daughter is on a school trip, or at a sporting event, she must be picked up at the agreed time.

Speech Day

Speech Day takes place this year on **Wednesday 14 September at 7.30pm**. Our guest Speaker is Mr Andrew Dilnot CBE, Principal of St Hugh's College, Oxford; we will also be welcoming back Mrs Templeman to give her report on last year. This is a very important event for the school community and, therefore, attendance is compulsory. The girls may stay in school at the end of the day until Speech Day begins. If you wish your daughter to stay in school please provide her with a packed tea. All girls must be in school for 7.00pm. Thank you to parents who have responded to the Speech Day invitation; if you have not done so yet, I urge you to do so as we need to finalise numbers.

New Parents' Buffet Supper

We are very much looking forward to meeting our new parents at the New Parents' Buffet Supper on **Friday 30 September at 7.30pm** in the Dining Hall for pre-supper drinks. This is a great opportunity for parents of Year 7 girls, as well as all our new parents, to meet and get to know one another.

Important dates for the diary

You will have received the school dates booklet within your end of term pack. Please check if your daughter has a Parents' Evening or Pastoral Evening this term. Other dates to note are:

- **Saturday 8 October and Saturday 19 November – Open Days from 10.00am to 12.30pm.**
All girls from Year 6 upwards are expected to attend and all friends and family are invited.
- **Thursday 15 December – Carol Service in Durham Cathedral at 2.15pm.**
Please do come along and help us celebrate the festive period.

On a personal note, I would like to say what a privilege it is to be Acting Head of the High School. I would like to thank you in advance for your continued support of the School, and I look forward to working with you to help your daughters achieve their true potential in a happy and supportive environment.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely

Mr A R Whelpdale
Acting Head