

DURHAM HIGH SCHOOL *for* GIRLS

December 2009

Durham High School for Girls
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Dear Parents

I do hope you have enjoyed all our Christmas festivities – the wonderful Nativities and Concerts in Junior House and the inspiring and impressive concert and Senior Play in Senior House; as well as the magnificent Carol Service in the Cathedral.

125th Birthday

With this letter you will have also received our very special 125th Birthday edition of the school magazine which has recorded all the key events of this very special year. I hope you will want to keep the publication as a fitting memento of all the celebrations.

Teaching

The Autumn Term, being the longest, is always a key teaching term and I am delighted to say how impressed staff are at the enthusiasm and commitment the girls have shown in their academic work as well as in the vast array of extra-curricular commitments they have in Music, Sport, Drama, Art etc.

Christmas Fayre

I am delighted to announce the Christmas Fayre raised approximately £1900. Thank you so much for your generous support, especially to those who worked so hard to make it such a success.

Inspection

Next term we are anticipating a school Inspection. It has been six years since the last one and we now find ourselves in the first tranche of those inspected under new arrangements by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate. This new inspection regime is much more similar to that of the maintained sector. We will receive just five days notice of the Inspection and then several inspectors will come into school to check we are compliant with all the regulations and inspect our Early Years' provision. The number of regulations has vastly increased over the last few years and is now well over 400. These regulations require us to produce a number of new policies and to update others; you will find the updated policies on our website. Parents might be particularly interested to look at policies concerning Curriculum, Behaviour and Complaints alongside the Safeguarding policies which all schools are required to have.

Parents will also be asked to fill in a short questionnaire about the school and its provision; there will only be a short window within which this can be done. We are unable to give you advance notice of this because of the way the Inspectorate notifies us of Inspection but we will tell you as soon as we know on which few days you will be able to access the on-line questionnaire. I hope very much you will be able to make time to fill it in.

After the first brief Inspection the Inspectors will then come back again, with a slightly bigger team, to spend more time looking at lessons and extra-curricular activities.

The full list of documents available on the school website is listed below. If you do not have access to the website please contact the school if you wish to have a hard copy:

- Academic performance in previous school year including results of public examinations
- Complaints procedure/number of formal complaints in previous school year
- Staff including temporary staff and qualifications

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Technology Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Disability Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- EAL Policy (English as an Additional Language)
- Fire Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- LDD/SEN Policy (Learning Difficulties and Disabilities/Special Educational Needs)

Admissions

Entrance Tests to the Senior House for 11+ take place on 20 January 2010, for 12-14+ on Tuesday 9 February 2010 and 16+ Scholarship Examinations take place on Tuesday 2 February 2010. Please do draw these dates to the attention of any friends or neighbours who may be interested in applying.

Junior House admissions takes place at various points throughout the year

Staff News

We have had two staff weddings this term. Miss Iveson from the Art Department became Mrs Cardy and Miss Edwards in Junior House became Mrs Hart. I am also delighted to announce the birth of a baby boy (no name as yet) weighing 8lb 6oz to Mrs Hall in Junior House. Congratulations to them all.

School Closure and Uniform Shop

The school will be closed from 4pm on Wednesday 23 December and will open on Monday 4 January 2010. The school uniform shop will be open on Tuesday 5 January from 9.30 am – 12.30 pm and will open as normal on Thursday 7 January from 2.15 pm – 4.15 pm.

Recycling Christmas Cards

Please bring your Christmas cards into school at the beginning of next term for recycling.

May I take the opportunity of wishing you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Templeman
Headmistress