



4th September, 2009

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome to another year of music making at Queen Mary's. Below are listed this term's public concerts to which I hope you will be able to come. Further details of the weekly musical activities that your daughter can become involved in are to be found in the Parents' Handbook. All events can also be found in the Blue Book and on the website, with any updates.

Concerts

As many of you know, we try to encourage the girls to perform as regularly as possible and *at least* twice during the year on each instrument studied, as an aid to building confidence. In addition to the weekly lunchtime concerts that help this process (no parents allowed) the first of the girls' public Evening Concerts is on **Friday, October 2nd**, starting at 7.00 p.m. in the Great Hall, at which all the Music Award Holders and those who get free lessons (amongst others) will be expected to demonstrate their skills; a second one is on **Friday, November 13th** at 7.00 p.m. We are always grateful to those parents who regularly support these events, sometimes despite their own daughters not playing. Apart from hearing great performances, the evenings are also good opportunity to meet other parents. Your daughter should inform you in reasonable time if she is to be a performer though, if past experience is anything to go by, it might be worth your asking her yourself whether she is involved. These concerts are preceded by drinks/nibbles at 6.30 in the Outer Hall.

For the first time **Middle Choir** will represent the school in the annual RSCM Schools' Festival Service, held on **Wednesday, October 7th** at 4.30 p.m. in Ripon Cathedral. The service will end at about 5.15. The first major instrumental ensemble concert of the year is on **Friday, November 20th** at 2.30 p.m. in the Great Hall when the performers, including choirs, celebrate **(Almost) St Cecilia's Day** – your daughter should be able to tell you why it is so-called nearer the time! The leave-out begins after this concert, though there is a Christmas Fair to tempt you to stay a little longer. Tickets are not required for any of the above events.

Years 5 & 6, under the baton of Miss Shepherdson, continue their annual concerts outside school in Thornton Watlass church on **Friday, November 27th** at 7.00 p.m. – further details regarding tickets will be sent nearer the time. The **Rock Bands Christmas concert** is now a fixture; there will be another one on **Friday, December 4th** at 7.00pm in the Great Hall, with a retiring collection. The **Chapel Choir's** annual Christmas Charity concert will be by candlelight, on **Saturday, December 5th** at 7.00 p.m. in St Mary's Church, Roecliffe. Tickets for this concert will be in very short supply as the church is small. They are available in advance from the Office – to reserve them please use the enclosed form – and also at the door. On **Wednesday, December 9th & Friday, December 11th** KS2 will perform their Christmas Production, *The Evacuees*. On the intervening **Thursday, December 10th** at 7.00 Year 7 will join Miss Shepherdson's Northallerton Male Voice Choir for a concert in St Mary's Church, Thirsk. The final music of the term is the Carol Service, held in Ripon Cathedral on the last day of term, **Thursday, December 17th** at 10.00 a.m. We hope to see you at some, if not all, of these events; your support is, as always, greatly appreciated.

An Annual Plea – Music Practice

Learning an instrument is a wonderful and rewarding activity but requires great commitment on the part of the learner and parent. In order to gain the most progress, enjoyment and fun from her lessons your daughter needs to organise her time to practise *daily*. As is stated in the Parents' Handbook, Years 3 to 8 boarders are allotted practice times every morning; Senior School girls are expected to find their own time during the day or in the evenings. However if your daughter is a daygirl please can I encourage you to listen to her practising each day? Her teacher will write down practice requirements in the music notebook – don't let your daughter kid you that she does not have one of these. We appreciate that the girls (and you) lead busy lives and that practice is sometimes seen as something to do the night before a lesson but the famous Japanese teacher Suzuki said '*practice should only not be done on the days you do not eat*'! These efforts are rewarded not only by hearing individual progress but also by music points and accolades/potential prizes at the end of term, including the Ryan Effort prize (for gaining an average effort mark of at least 1.5 over the term). Daygirls can of course practise in the Music Block whenever they are free during the day, particularly if practice at home is impractical. Many of the girls aim for music exams as targets and our last exam session saw another 100% exam success. (More advanced pupils should remember that success at Grades 6-8 can be used to help University Entrance.) When your daughter is ready for an exam her teacher will enter her – *she* should know of the possibility before the end of the previous term (it may also be on her report) and she will know definitely if this is to happen by the 3rd week of the new term at the latest, by which time I will have given her a test on scales, prior to entry. Fees for the entry will be put on the bill. You will receive written notification of the entry from Miss Shepherdson. If there are any exams this term they will be around November 16th/17th.

Music Lessons

If your daughter has individual music lessons may I remind you that the peripatetic teachers would appreciate settlement of their accounts within *one month* of receipt of the bill? Charges are currently based on £179 for 10 lessons, with 30 lessons to be taught during the year. As the teachers are self-employed, and the Autumn term is particularly long, some of them may choose to charge for the actual number of lessons arranged rather than £179 each term. If this is the case adjustments will be made to subsequent bills. For the Rock Bands girls are charged £20 per term. The teachers are very happy to speak to you either on the phone or in person at a suitable time, should the need arise. If necessary you can contact me by phone or email to arrange this. One term's notice, *in writing*, is required if your daughter is to stop having lessons. Would you please also let the teacher know if your address changes? Should you wish to hire a school instrument for the start of your daughter's instrumental career the charges are £25 per term. If you wish to purchase an instrument for her then please do talk either to me or to her teacher, as we may be able to help in choosing a suitable instrument.

Should you wish your daughter to *start* lessons, (providing she understands the content of the paragraph on practice!) or have a trial lesson, this can easily and quickly be arranged. Please you drop me an email at ncarter@queenmarys.org or ring my office phone – 01845 575012. We are currently short of viola, cello and brass players should anyone be interested!

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas Carter
Director of Music

Chapel Choir Christmas Charity concert
St Mary's Church, Roecliffe

To Nicholas Carter (Please return as soon as possible)

Please reserveseats @ £7.00 (cash/to be put on the bill; please delete)

Please reserveseats @ £3.00 concessions (children 12 yrs and under)

for the Chapel Choir Christmas Charity concert on

Saturday, December 5th at 7.00 p.m. at St Mary's Church, Roecliffe.

Refreshments (donations) will follow the concert.

Name -----

Address -----
