



September 2010

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

The first concert of the year will be the **Music Staff charity evening on Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7.00pm**. This will be a hugely entertaining and informative occasion; it is our biennial outing to prove that we can actually play our instruments! Whilst noting that this is at a weekend (so we can get as many of the staff as possible) I do hope that as many girls can attend this as possible so they can see/hear their teachers in action.

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 Wednesday lunchtime concerts that help this process (no parents allowed) the first of the girls' public **Friday Evening Concerts** is on **Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**, 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 12<sup>th</sup>** at 7.00 p.m. We are always grateful to those parents who regularly support these events, sometimes despite their own daughters not playing; the evenings are always delightful. 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 and knowing the reluctance of some, it might be worth your asking her whether she is involved. These concerts are preceded by drinks/nibbles at 6.30 in the Outer Hall and usually last about 40/60 minutes.

Two services in Ripon Cathedral follow in quick succession. The RSCM is running a different type of **Schools' Festival Service** this year and so Senior Choir will be taking part on **Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>** at 4.30 p.m. The service will end at about 5.15. Two days later on **October 15<sup>th</sup>** there is a whole school **Jubilee Celebration Eucharist** at 10.30 a.m., following which half term will start. Details will be sent out about this nearer the time.

The first major instrumental ensemble concert of the year is on **Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>** at about 2.15 p.m. in the Great Hall when the Orchestra and ensembles great and small, together with the choirs, celebrate **(Almost) St Cecilia's Day**. 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.

Our Christmas events start with the **Chapel Choir's** atmospheric annual **Christmas Charity concert by candlelight**, on **Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>** at 7.00 p.m. in St James' Church, Baldersby St James. Tickets for this concert will be available in advance from the Office after half term – to reserve them please use the enclosed form – and also at the door. On the following **Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>** at 7.00 Year 7 will join Miss Shepherdson's Northallerton Male Voice Choir for a concert in St Mary's Church, Thirsk. To allow more girls in on the Christmas fun the **Rock Band Christmas concert** has been expanded to include more Christmas items from a variety of non-rock ensembles on **Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>** at 7.00pm in the Great Hall, with a retiring collection. The final music of the term is the Carol

Service, held in Ripon Cathedral on the last day of term, **Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>** 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. In order to gain the most 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 we 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.

### **Music exams**

Though these are not compulsory many of the girls aim for music exams as targets and last year's practical exam sessions saw another 100% success. (More advanced pupils should also 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 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the current 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. Exams this term will be in mid November.

### **Music Lessons**

If your daughter has individual music lessons may I remind you that the visiting teachers would appreciate settlement of their accounts within *one month* of receipt of the bill? Charges are currently based on £182 for 10 lessons, with 30 lessons arranged 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 £182 each term. If this is the case adjustments will be made to subsequent bills. 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](mailto:ncarter@queenmarys.org) or ring my office phone - 575012. We are currently short of lower strings and brass players should anyone be interested.

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas Carter  
Director of Music

Please return to Nicholas Carter

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

Please reserve .....seats @ £3.00 concessions (children 12 yrs and under)

for the Chapel Choir Christmas Charity candlelight concert on

**Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>** at 7.00 p.m. at St James' Church, Baldersby St James.

Refreshments (donations) will follow the concert.

Name -----

Address -----

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