

# EMBRACING CHANGE RESET NEWSLETTER

NAVIGATING OUR NEW PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT WITH CONFIDENCE

As we embark upon the fifth year of our school's journey, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment of growth and transformation. This term, our focus is clear: to reset and realign our policies, procedures, and practices, ensuring they are finely tuned to provide our girls with the best education possible. We've already shared our aims for this phase with parents, but it's essential that every member of our school community is fully engaged and ready to contribute to Durham's continued evolution. Our commitment to excellence in education remains steadfast, and it is this commitment that drives us forward. In this edition of our newsletter, we'll delve into the core pillars of our development strategy: Attainment, Attendance, and Attitude. These three areas lie at the heart of all we do, guiding our efforts as we strive to propel Durham to new heights of achievement and success.

**TOGETHER, LET'S EMBRACE CHANGE, SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES, AND  
WORK HAND IN HAND TO MAKE DURHAM THE BEST IT CAN BE.**



## Attendance

Our aim for all girls to reach over 90% attendance is rooted in our belief that consistent attendance is key to academic success and overall well-being.

## Attainment

Our aim is to elevate academic standards across all age groups and to raise reading proficiency throughout our entire school community.



## Attitude

Our aim is to have the right girls and families in our school with the right attitude and behaviour in-line with the MARK Values and the Qatari National Values.





## ATTENDANCE

We are thrilled to extend a warm welcome to Ms. Yasmin, our new DSGD Attendance officer, as she joins our dedicated team. Ms. Yasmin has made a remarkable start at our school and has already proven to be a valuable addition. Her commitment to ensuring the attendance of every girl is commendable.

In her role, Ms. Yasmin diligently monitors attendance, engages with parents, and collaborates closely with teachers and staff to create an environment where every girl has the opportunity to thrive academically. We firmly believe that attendance is essential for success, and Ms. Yasmin's efforts are instrumental in upholding this standard.

## Measures to Encourage Attendance



Appointment of the new Attendance officer Ms Yasmin.



All parents have received the new attendance policy, and it is also available on the school webpage.



Actively addressing attendance concerns by identifying students who may need extra support to succeed academically, including the possibility of repeating a year or failing due to attendance issues.

We understand that setting high expectations for attendance is crucial, but maintaining these standards is equally vital for the continued success of our students. Therefore, we greatly appreciate the support of parents in ensuring that their daughters arrive and depart on time, recognizing the significant impact this has on their educational journey.

As part of our commitment to accountability, we will be reporting our 100% attendees to the Ministry of Education and flagging students who may require additional support. We are confident that with the collective effort of our school community, we can foster a culture of attendance excellence where every girl has the opportunity to reach her full potential. Together, let us continue to prioritize the educational success and well-being of our girls.

# ATTAINMENT



## PRIMARY SCHOOL

In Primary, Ms Driver continues to lead and now both Ms Taylor and Ms Taggart as the Deputy Heads are out of the classroom and working to drive new initiatives and raise standards in Primary. New interventions have been set up, assessment and tracking are moving forward as well as Professional development of staff. All these aspects support the Primary girls learning and really drive progress of our young learners. The phonics programme is making a real difference and primary girls are being monitored against UK standards.

## MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE ATTAINMENT

- ✓ Girls will all be assessed with external UK benchmarking for progress and attainment.
- ✓ Parents' information meetings will be available for all parents to access.
- ✓ Change in staffing and structure to raise standards.
- ✓ Purchasing new programmes to support learning.

## SECONDARY SCHOOL

In the secondary department, we welcome two new members to the team who joins Ms J. Whay as part of the Secondary Leadership team. Ms. Hayward brings her wealth of experience and outstanding leadership background to our team as the new head of secondary, having previously served as Principal at an all-through boarding school in the UK and demonstrated excellence in various leadership positions within prestigious educational institutions. We also welcome Ms Sheridan, who serves as the Deputy Head of Academics. Several changes are underway in the secondary department, as evidenced by the recent Parents' meetings in January. Ms Hayward is currently implementing adjustments to programmes, ensuring accountability among staff and students, and enhancing standards across the board. Information meetings for parents are being organised, alongside individual meetings with teachers and leaders. We encourage all parents to engage with the team to positively influence their daughters' learning journeys. Additionally, Year 10 and Year 9 girls will undertake the CAT 4 assessment from the UK, providing us with a standardised benchmark of their current academic standing and predictions for IGCSE and AS levels. Our Year 12 students have been collaborating with Ms Sara, our new careers officer, and have submitted applications to Texas A&M, Northwestern, Carnegie Mellon, and QU.

Emphasising the significance of reading for academic achievement, we urge parents to consider when their daughters last engaged with a book. Watching TikTok or YouTube does not equate to reading; therefore, we encourage girls to immerse themselves in literature, expand their vocabulary, and cultivate their imagination. We kindly request the support of parents in fostering a culture of reading among our secondary students. As a reminder, it is essential for all secondary girls to bring a reading book to school daily.

## ARABIC DEPARTMENT

The Arabic team's collaboration with the British Curriculum and introduction of phonics and reading programmes demonstrate their innovative approach to language instruction. By integrating phonics-based learning methods and incorporating reading activities throughout the curriculum, they are equipping students with essential language skills and fostering a lifelong love for learning. By organising field trips, cultural excursions, and outdoor learning activities, they are providing students with hands-on learning experiences that complement classroom instruction and enrich their overall learning journey.



# ATTITUDE

- ✓ New Behaviour policy has been sent to all parents and is available on the webpage.
- ✗ All phones found without parents' permission are taken for 1 month.
- ✗ As a school we do not tolerate bad behaviour, attitude, or incorrect uniform.
- ✗ Girls have already been suspended from the school for behaviour and parent meetings are happening with parents of girls who will NOT be continuing in our school.
- ✓ Really celebrating our outstanding girls who are true Durham Girls.



As a school, we continually encourage our girls to reflect on what it truly means to embody the spirit of a Durham Girl. We firmly believe that every student has the capacity to embrace our school's values and contribute positively to our community. While we hold high standards for behavior and conduct, we approach this with kindness and understanding, recognizing that each individual is on their own journey of growth and development.

We are immensely proud of the many girls who exemplify the qualities of a Durham Girl by demonstrating a willingness to learn, displaying admirable values, and exhibiting respectful behavior. These students are not only an asset to our school but also to the wider Qatari nation. Our efforts to reinforce positive behavior through our new behavior policy have yielded encouraging results, with students responding positively and contributing to a noticeable improvement in our school environment.

At Durham, we firmly believe that values lie at the heart of every Durham Girl. We invite families to join us in nurturing and supporting these values both at home and at school, as we work together to cultivate a community of respect, integrity, and compassion.

Furthermore, we are delighted to highlight the achievements of our secondary girls who participate in the Islamic Institute programs. Their success in Quran competitions, Islamic competitions, community projects, and student leadership positions reflects their dedication and commitment to both academic and personal growth. Let us continue to nurture and celebrate the accomplishments of our girls, ensuring that they embody the true spirit of Durham and contribute positively to our school's pride and reputation.