



DUCHESS'S

COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL



prospectus 2021

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS • INSPIRING SUCCESS

COMMENTS FROM PARENTS

There are many great teachers in the school.

My daughter attended this school reluctantly after not getting into feeder school. After 2 weeks she said she wanted to stay. Teachers go the 'extra mile' to ensure she is happy and achieves her potential.

This school offers some excellent quality of teaching which has helped my child to develop her self-esteem as well as her potential in many subjects.

Communication between home and school is wonderful as is celebrating our children's successes.

School has been friendly, flexible and welcoming to our son. Some very good extra-curricular activities eg. French exchange, drama productions, maths, extras, etc.

I think the teachers and leadership/advice are excellent and communication in all other areas is good. Thank you.

For my daughter who needs high level grades, she needs very good quality teaching and support when she does not understand. I think the school is very good at this.... My child is happy in school and that is due to the kind, helpful teachers. Thank you!

Overall I am so pleased with Duchess, I even paid in the first year, for her transport because it wasn't her catchment school.

We have been very impressed to date, with happiness and advancement of our daughter. Communication is perfect. Overall I am very pleased with almost everything at DCHS.

I have been delighted at the way my daughter has settled into the High School, made new friends and loved all her new experiences. She is taught by skilled teachers who make her lessons fun and interesting and genuinely care about her progress and wellbeing ... We feel that she really is in the right place and value all the hard work your staff put in to generate a real love of life and of learning.

Very happy with how my year 9 child settled in. He enjoys going to school and has matured since September.

Fantastic school!!!

We have been impressed with the quality of teaching and support. School senior management is very impressive and approachability of staff excellent.

I didn't want my child to come to DCHS as I had thought it wouldn't be suitable for my child, but I am more than happy with the way he has achieved and succeeded in school, he is a happy well adjusted young person who has a wide range of friends.

Regarding the DCHS overall I like the way the students are treated as people by the staff, rather than statistics.

My son has received fantastic support and encouragement from most staff members and as a result has started to re-engage in learning. They have treated my son as a young adult and explained any reasons for discipline which has given him the opportunity to put his side and point of view across and accept the consequences of his actions... Well done and thank you for a great start to the high school and helping my son to prepare for 'real life', even when the school is beyond its shelf life.

My daughter chose the 'Duchess', it was not the logical (or logistical!) school for our area. She has been happy, inspired and has become an assertive and focused young woman.

Great school and asset to Alnwick. Keep up the great work so far.

Teachers are high quality and the ones that I've spoken to are very approachable and seem to care.

The most important thing to me is my child seems extremely happy in her first year at the Duchess. A happy child is far more likely to succeed. I have always been impressed by the dedication I have seen displayed by the teachers and feel sure that in this environment my child will fulfil her potential.

Welcome

The Duchess's Community High School Prospectus for 2021

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Mission Statement and Values

Building Relationships, Inspiring Success

We believe that the pursuit of excellence should be at the heart of all aspects of school life

We believe that we should respect everyone, valuing the uniqueness of each individual

We believe that positive relationships and opportunities are the key to positive outcomes

We expect everyone will take responsibility to:

Contribute positively and creatively

Take pride in and celebrate our achievements

Continue to grow and develop as special human beings

Appreciate, value and support each other

Stand up for what we believe in

Our Core Values are:

Relationships

Respect

Success



Maurice Hall Headteacher

Moving to the school

Moving to The Duchess's Community High School is an exciting prospect!

To help students to settle in quickly, we have a well established programme of events that we undertake in the run up to starting with us in September.

BEFORE ENTRY

- Joint activities during the year.
- This prospectus is sent out at the beginning of September prior to transfer-transitioning.
- Initial visits to meet all students in feeder schools.
- Invite parents to visit during the school day. If they wish, a meeting with a senior leader can be arranged.
- An Open Evening is held in September/October.
- Visits to feeder schools by the Year 7 Transition Staff.
- There is a 'New Intake' Day in July.
- Consultation with parents of students with Special Needs before the end of the year.
- Parents' evenings in July.
- Letters home from the Year 7 Transition Staff.

ONCE AT SCHOOL

The first year has an organised series of events, meetings and target-setting sessions that serve

as milestones of progress and celebration.

Students can see how well they are doing and plan for success in the future.

- Induction assembly – 'Welcome to DCHS' – Introduction to the school.
- Meetings with parents – Mid-September – held in a variety of locations.
- Supporting Your Child Evenings – October.

• Progress Checks – three times during the year.

• Consultation Day for KS3 year groups.

• Presentation Evenings – July.

• There is a dedicated Transition page on our website.



The Curriculum

During the last few years significant investment has been made in the curriculum so that we can now cater for all needs and aspirations. A variety of courses, both vocational and academic, are available at all levels.

YEAR 7, 8, 9 (KEY STAGE 3)

All students study English, Mathematics, Science, IT, Create, Technology, History, Geography, PE, French, Spanish, RE and Food, Health & Wellbeing.

YEARS 10 & 11 (KEY STAGE 4)

Students continue with English, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Life Studies and PE. Different academic routes are available to all students and as a result students choose a baccalaureate subject from History, Geography, French and Spanish.

Students will also choose up to three more courses from a list that includes, French, Spanish, Art, Photography, Geography, History, PE, RE, Computer Science, Child Development & Care, Drama, Business, Health & Social Care, IT, Engineering, Music, Hair & Beauty, Food Preparation & Nutrition, Materials Technology and Systems Technology.

We are always looking for new opportunities to expand our curriculum. New developments will appear on the school website.

STUDY SUPPORT

For some students, studying for up to 10 qualifications is too much and in these cases we offer the opportunity to develop basic skills or coursework in weaker areas through "study support" options. Students continue to be placed in a teaching group appropriate to their ability and these groups are formally reviewed during the course of the year.

HOMEWORK

We expect Homework to be set weekly from each subject.

Homework is an important and necessary requirement since it enables students to accomplish more work than they could otherwise do, consolidate their learning and helps develop self-discipline.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

The school's policy is to enter students for public examinations where the student has a reasonable prospect of success. Entry fees are paid by the school. Parents of students who fail to arrive at public examinations, without good cause, are liable for the cost of the entry fees.

If the school believes that an examination result is not a fair reflection of a student's performance, then the school may ask for and pay for a review. If parents wish for a review in circumstances in which the school believes that the original mark is likely to be fair, then this may still be arranged, but at parents' expense. If a review paid for by parents shows an improvement on the original grade, the school will normally reimburse

The Curriculum

the parents, if the examination board itself does not. If parents wish their son or daughter to re-sit a public examination, the re-sit fee must normally be paid by the parent.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is offered to KS3 and is an option to KS4 students. Religious Education aims to promote students' moral and spiritual development by giving them the chance to reflect on their own beliefs and the beliefs of others. This sort of study develops a range of academic skills, including the ability to reflect, empathise and explore, as well as to challenge the views of others with sensitivity.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE, but we do request that parents should first write to the Head of RE and then to meet with him to discuss the issues involved.

LIFE STUDIES (PSHE)

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) at DCHS contributes to the development of the skills required to support our young people to thrive as individuals and as part of our community. We wish to equip our students with the qualities needed to live healthily and safely, and to be able to make informed choices and decisions. Through reflection our students will be able to demonstrate their progress, plan and set targets, and develop talents for future employability.

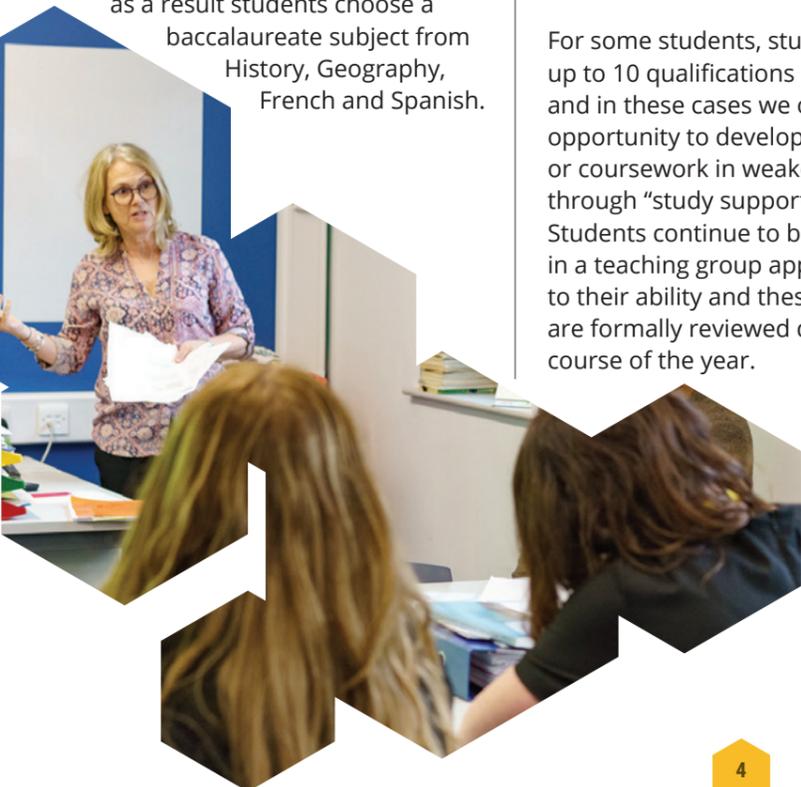
The full Life Studies Policy is on the School website.

SIXTH FORM DUCHESS'S COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

The majority of our year 11 students 'stay on' to join our Sixth Form. There is a wide choice of over 30 A Level / BTEC level 3 subjects.

The majority of our Sixth Form students go onto Higher Education or University (including Oxford or Cambridge).

More information is available in our Sixth Form prospectus, or on the school website or from the Sixth Form Management Team.



The Curriculum

PSHE is delivered to all students in their curriculum areas and through themes in assembly, form time, Health & Wellbeing and Life Study lessons. The topics which are covered in these lessons can be found on the school website. These are mostly delivered by the students' form tutor or Health & Wellbeing teacher; however some aspects are covered by outside speakers.

BRITISH VALUES

At the DCHS we recognise the multi-cultural, multi-faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom. We understand the vital role we play in ensuring that groups or individuals within the school are not subjected to intimidation or radicalisation by those wishing to unduly, or illegally, influence them. We follow equal opportunities guidance which strives to make sure that there will be no discrimination against any individual or group, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, political or financial status, or similar. We are dedicated to preparing students for their adult life beyond the formal, examined curriculum and ensuring that we promote and reinforce British values to all our students. There is further information on the school website outlining how the DCHS seeks to instil the five key British Values.

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

Relationship and Sex Education

(RSE) is carried out for all students and is mainly delivered in Life Studies or Health & Wellbeing lessons. This is delivered jointly by DCHS staff and external organisations. Our RSE curriculum is planned to show progression and ensure that content is relevant to the age group being taught. Our framework allows for the matter to be discussed openly, honestly and respectfully, acknowledging fully differing attitudes and values. Our approach follows government guidelines and best practice. The sessions aim to promote confidence in personal decision making and self-esteem so students are equipped with the required skills to make safe and informed decisions. Parents will be informed in writing when students are about to embark on aspects of RSE with external agencies and will have the right to withdraw their son/daughter from lessons as considered appropriate.

Your Head of Standards for Pastoral Care or PSHC Co-ordinator is available to discuss any matters of concern.

CHARITIES WORK

Students across the school frequently support charitable events at both national and local level. Recently events have been held in support of the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research and Sport Relief.



Visits & Trips

A wide range of educational and recreational visits is offered to students, in addition to curriculum-related day trips in term time.

SCHOOL TRIPS

In recent years, there have been Year 13 Urban Geography Day in Newcastle, Year 9 History Trips to Beamish, Year 12 Biology visits to Ford Castle, Geography & Science Conferences in Newcastle, trips to the First World War Battlefields in Flanders, Ski trips to Italy, France and Austria, Oxbridge Conferences, Sociology Trips, Trips to Germany and Spain, French Exchange visits, Year 12 Science Workshops at the Centre for Life, and Y9 DNA Practical and Chemistry explosions at Sunderland University! There have also been Music department trips to far away places like Italy, Austria and Canada and sports tours to South Africa. Since 2008 we have also been developing links with a high school in China. Sixty students have already visited China, an e-pal scheme is established, staff exchanges have taken place and a number of Sixth Form students will visit for a gap year. In 2018 there was a trip to Iceland. There have been trips to the Stadium Of Light (Engineering Exp), Centre For Life, Nissan and Wilderness days for Years 7 and 8.



Extra-Curricular Activities

At The Duchess's School we are proud of the varied and exciting programme of activities that are offered beyond the school curriculum and are keen to encourage all students to benefit from their involvement in something that stimulates their interest.

CLUBS FOR ALL

As we establish ourselves as a Yr7-13 school our extra curricular provision continues to expand and there are opportunities for all students to get involved in the wider life of the school. Whether it be sports, drama, music, chess, kayaking or even far flung life affirming school trips either to China, Skiing or elsewhere in the UK there are plenty of

opportunities for our young people to be involved and be part of their community.

As the year develops we hope to expand even further our extra curricular opportunities to prepare everyone for the world beyond our school. Be a part of it!

CREATIVE ARTS

The **Creative Arts Faculty** offers all students the opportunity to engage, explore and develop creative

The arts, quite simply, nourish the soul. They sustain, comfort, inspire.

GORDON GEE

practise through the thriving environments created by Art, Photography and Music. Each area provides high quality practise and Arts engagement for students during curriculum time, extra-curricular and at a national level. We are very proud to hold Artsmark Gold status, and this filters through each area in the opportunities we give our students.

As a Faculty, we actively work with community arts organisations such as The Alnwick Playhouse, who have been keen supporters for many years, alongside regional galleries (The Baltic, Laing) and arts events (Berwick Film Festival, Alnmouth Arts Festival) in addition to working with professional practitioners, Musicians, Film Directors, Poets, Artists, Historians, Designers, Theatre groups to name but a few.

We are extremely proud of our students' achievements across all the Faculty areas – our Musicians and Artists & Photographers consistently demonstrate high academic achievement through their innovative, creative practice.



Extra-Curricular Activities

MAGISTRATES' COURT COMPETITION/DEBATING

The Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition is part of the Young Citizens 'citizenship experiences' and helps to improve young people's life skills, their understanding of the justice system and the legal system, and helps them to understand that the law touches every aspect of their lives. It has been running since 1994 and annually involves over 4,000 students from over 270 schools across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The students, aged 12-14, take part in mock trials inside magistrates' courts and crown courts using specially written cases, in the roles of magistrates, defendants, witnesses, lawyers, legal advisers and ushers, giving them a unique opportunity to gain

knowledge and awareness of the legal system and how it works. As well as learning about different aspects of the law, the team have also gained skills in public speaking, critical thinking and team work.

POETRY CLUB

Duchess Poetry Club meets every Tuesday night after school. It's run by Mrs Newton, who teaches English and who writes poetry herself. Each week, Mrs Newton runs a poetry workshop, where students read and discuss well-known poems, and then write their own poems from prompts. Sometimes, we have a guest poet, which is very exciting!

This year we have welcomed Associate Professor Tony Williams from Northumbria University; Christy Ducker, research fellow at Newcastle University; Lisa Matthews, academic and publisher; and Samantha Levy from the Fusiliers Museum at Alnwick Castle.

We firmly believe in the fact that taking part in an extra-curricular activity, whatever it might be, contributes hugely to a young person's personal and social development and each year a superb range of opportunities are available. Though these change from year to year, activities are likely to include:

DRAMA GROUP

MUSICAL PRODUCTION

DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS

RUGBY

CRICKET

FOOTBALL

HOCKEY

GYMNASTICS

ATHLETICS

TENNIS

GOLF

YOUTH EXCHANGES

CHESS CLUB

PHILOSOPHY CLUB

READY STEADY COOK

SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

MATHSLETES

POETRY

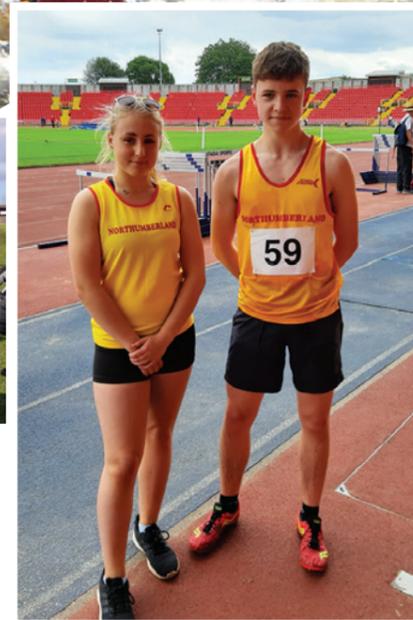
MAGISTRATES/DEBATING

MUSIC GROUPS INCLUDE
CHAMBER GROUP
CAPELLA (Choir)
CEILIDH BAND
ROCK BANDS
BIG BAND



Extra-Curricular Activities

We have also taken part in a Read Regional poetry workshop at the Northern Poetry Library in Morpeth, where we met nationally acclaimed poet Clare Shaw. Next year we are travelling to Kendal to take part in workshops and readings at Kendal Poetry Festival and our poems in response to WW1 artefacts are going to be interactively displayed at the Fusiliers Museum. Members of Poetry Club have had some success in competitions this year, too: Antonia Johnson came second in the AONB poetry competition; Amy Palmer's poem was displayed at the Schools North East patrons' dinner; and Izzy Hamer and Dorit Greene, both in Year 7, won the Newcastle Poetry Festival national competition.



Extra-Curricular Activities

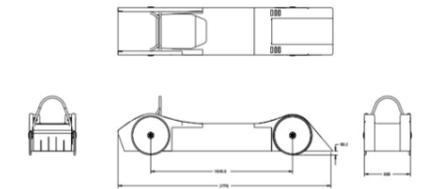
GREENPOWER - IET FORMULA 24

Greenpower is a national electric car racing series where schools from across the country design and build their own electric endurance racing cars using standard motors and batteries. We have had some success in the past with our own car designs and are looking to the future with a lightweight aerodynamic car design for the next generation.

This school year has been incredibly busy with the move to our new site taking precedence and our old car now retired. The schools Greenpower team has been involved with the ongoing development of our new carbon fibre car, building the monocoque body shell and machining wheel

and steering components. We were lucky to receive some sponsorship from Metrology Software Products and Barrington Metalworks who were able to laser cut and waterjet cut some parts to our own design to enable us to build our own wheel hubs and brake parts.

The team were then able to machine those parts to our final specification. Year 7 & 8 students may have the opportunity to become involved with the team as we look for further sponsorship to enter the beginners "Goblin" class, with the team looking to recruit new members for Formula 24 in September.



FIELD TRIPS FOR GEOGRAPHY AND BIOLOGY



Extra-Curricular Activities

There is now a long-standing history of our young men and women bringing their Year 11 to a superb ending with a Leaver's Prom. This gives everyone a chance to dress up in their finery – their beautiful dresses, suits and kilts and let their hair down in a final celebration of time spent at The Duchess's School.



Extra-Curricular Activities



Drama and Musical Production

The calibre of our dramatic and musical productions is outstanding, and each year many students – as actors, musicians or technicians – benefit from involvement in performances that are professional in standard.



Extra-Curricular Activities

Past productions have included:

- 2020:** Popstars
- 2019:** Ebony Scroogette And Her Amazing Christmas Epiphany
- 2018:** Much Ado About Nothing *and* We Will Rock You
- 2017:** Fame *and* Much Ado About Nothing
- 2016:** Rock Of Ages *and* 1984
- 2015:** Disco Inferno *and* Midsummer Night's Dream
- 2014:** Return To The Forbidden Planet *and* Cyrano de Bergerac
- 2013:** Back To The 80s *and* Wuthering Heights
- 2012:** Grease
- 2011:** We Will Rock You *and* The Flint Street Nativity
- 2010:** Death Of A Salesman
- 2009:** Dracula *and* Jesus Christ Superstar
- 2008:** Our Country's Good *and* West Side Story
- 2007:** An Experiment With An Air Pump *and* Oh What A Lovely War!



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

We are keen to offer a real breadth of opportunity and many outdoor expeditions are organised (through curricular and extra-curricular activities) each year.



Pastoral Care

We pride ourselves on the quality of care, support and guidance that we offer as a school. Every child truly matters and we seek to ensure that every individual is happy motivated and keen to learn.

THE KEY STAGE SYSTEM

Years 7, 8 and 9 each have a Head of Standards who is responsible for the Pastoral Care and Overall Progress of students. At Key Stage 4, there are two Heads of Standards, one with responsibility for Pastoral Care and the other for Progress.

SWIFT AND EASY REFERRAL

The school has a Student Support structure which can quickly identify need and put in place effective strategies which make a real difference to our young people. Our multi-agency approach includes three full-time pastoral mentors, three full-time

behaviour support workers and a pastoral support co-ordinator who work with Heads Of Standards For Pastoral And Progress to ensure access to support is effective.

SUCCESS BREEDS SUCCESS!

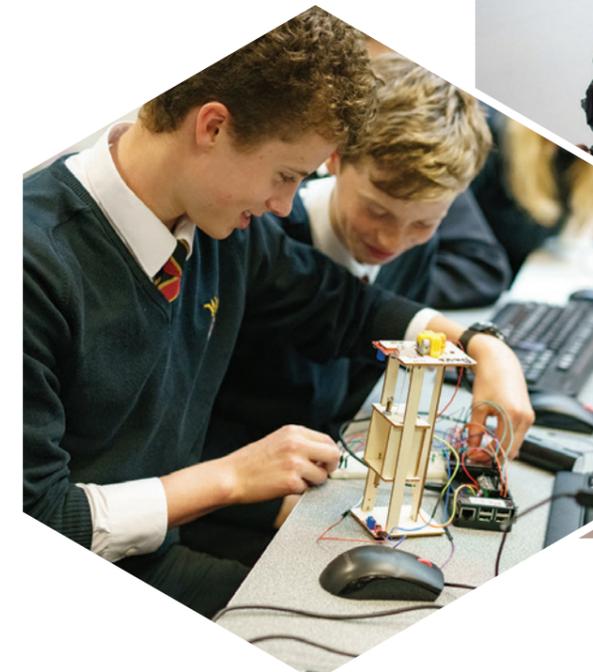
The ethos of the school encourages praise and recognition of the efforts of our students. We believe that students respond best if they are encouraged and we reward success. 'Success' assemblies are held regularly in each year group throughout the year. Awards are presented for good progress, good behaviour, effort, excellent attendance and a variety of activities and achievements.

PHOTOGRAPHS

At various times throughout your child's time at this school, photographs may be taken of them for use by the school.

Examples of use are for our prospectus, parents' evenings, newsletter, as part of our school displays or in other printed publications that we produce. Some material may be used for our school website as it is developed.

To comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), we will have provided a consent form to enable the use of photo's in this way but permission can be withdrawn at any time by notifying the school in writing or via email to: gdp@dcsh-alnwick.uk



Pastoral Care

PROVISION FOR THE MORE ABLE

We have a very good track record in achieving excellent results and university places for our more able students. We have a comprehensive enrichment and extension programme for all students. Those who have been identified by the school as having a particular talent or gift in a certain subject are challenged by that subject. All teachers are aware of these students and departments have policies in place which provide many extension and enrichment opportunities.

Our aim is to increase the number of top grades achieved by the students and to increase the breadth of the curriculum that they study.

To do this a number of strategies have been put in place:

- Students with good mathematical ability are able to take the further maths challenge against other North-East schools.

- Leadership skills are developed by training and having the opportunity to lead a team of students in organising some of the major school events.
- More able students can be mentored on a regular basis in subjects to set new challenges and provide opportunities to discuss any areas of concern.
- Many extra curricular clubs, activities and trips are run by the school to extend the provision available to our students.



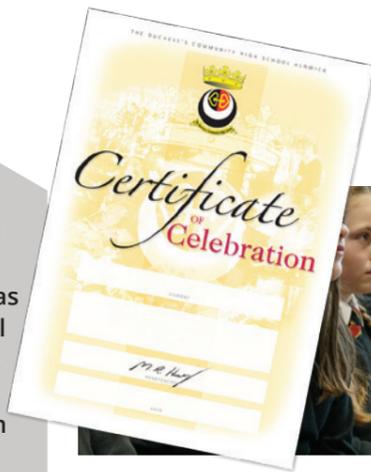
SCHOOL NURSE

The School Health Service works closely with the school and other agencies eg GPs, Paediatricians, Children's Services and the Adolescent Mental Health to ensure all students are looked after both physically and emotionally. All Year 9 students are offered Meningitis, ACUY and Tetanus, Diphtheria & Poliomyelitis (TDP). All girls receive HPV in Year 8 and Year 9.

The School Nurses run a Drop Inn in school which all students can access for physical, emotional and sexual advice and help. Parents, as well as students, can access any help and advice by ringing 01665 626718.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADMITTING DISABLED STUDENTS

Every effort has been made to make the building as accessible as possible. Each application is given careful consideration with parents encouraged to visit and be consulted on their child's needs before a decision is made.



PRIZEGIVING

There is a public 'Prize Giving' held every year which acknowledges success in academic studies as well as outstanding commitment to school activities and to the community at large. In addition to this, there are presentation evenings held for each year group at the end of the academic year.

Pastoral Care

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Duchess' School operates an open door policy for all students including those with a special educational need or specific learning difficulty. All students are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Students are predominately taught in mainstream classes with various levels and styles of support available to meet their needs. As part of a personalised programme students may be supported by both highly qualified teachers and specialised learning assistants.

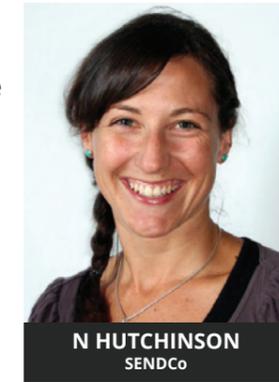
We run specific support and intervention classes alongside the mainstream curriculum and are able to target student literacy and numeracy skills, amongst other things, as part of these. Students complete Pupil Passports when they arrive at school to share with teachers; these describe working methods which support the child and allow teaching staff to differentiate their work and lessons accordingly. Student needs and progress are regularly reviewed and support adapted as necessary to ensure that students are able to achieve their potential. Students with additional support are assessed for exam concessions and where appropriate arrangements are put in place to ensure they are provided with the correct conditions in which to complete their exams in Year 11 and A Level.

We work closely with external agencies and our feeder middle schools to ensure that transition

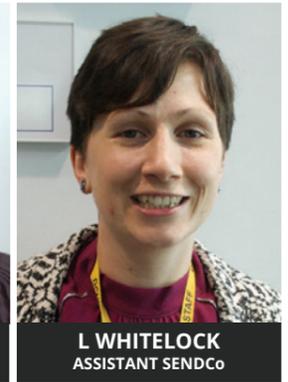
is as smooth as possible for children with special educational needs and to allow us to provide the appropriate level of support. We continue to work with external agencies throughout the academic years where necessary to ensure students receive the best possible targeted support and intervention to meet their needs. Our aim is to support every child to achieve their potential and feel secure and valued whilst at school with us. We care very much about the view of students and parents in all that we do and our SENDCo is always willing to speak to or meet with parents regarding their child and answer any queries they may have.

CHILD PROTECTION

Our school fully recognises the responsibility it has to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We recognise that high self esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. We will therefore raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep them safe. The school will establish and maintain an environment and positive ethos where children feel secure, supported and encouraged to talk, are listened to, can learn, develop and feel valued.



N HUTCHINSON
SENDCo



L WHITELOCK
ASSISTANT SENDCo

We will ensure our children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty. We have an extensive PSHE curriculum which aims to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know whom to turn to for help. We have a designated safeguarding team who ensure that all staff are suitably trained and aware of their responsibilities to the welfare of our students. A more detailed policy is available on request.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Governors have adopted a Single Equalities Diversity Policy in relation to all aspects of school life. A policy is available on request.

School Routines

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

School will not normally authorise any holiday taken in term time. We clearly have an obligation to protect the learning and progress of students and understand from past experience that this absence can have a detrimental effect. Students who absent themselves as a result of a family holiday with be marked with an "unauthorised absence". If any parent felt that they may have extenuating circumstances they should write to the Headteacher with full details for his consideration.

We do understand that from time to time we need to authorise absence on compassionate grounds e.g. the death of a family member, interview, participation in a recognised sporting activity, university visit, and in any of these instances, parents should contact Mr Rogers to agree necessary arrangements.

ABSENCE

Attendance at school is vital to achieve success. Research shows that 17 days of absence from school can lead to a drop in achievement of one grade at GCSE. Any student who has an attendance of 90% or less is considered to be a Persistent Absentee. Parents are asked to inform us as soon as possible if their son or daughter is not well enough to come to school. A telephone call, email or a note sent in with a sibling or neighbour on every day of absence is ideal.

LESSON TIMES 2020-2021

	LESSON BEGINS	LESSON ENDS
Registration	08.50	09.10
P1	09.15	10.15
Break	10.15	10.35
P2	10.40	11.40
P3	11.45	12.45
Lunch	12.45	13.30
P4	13.35	14.35
P5	14.40	15.35

Students should bring a note explaining the absence, signed by a parent, when they return to school, except if it has been a one day absence and a note has already been sent.

The school works closely with the Education Welfare Service to support students and parents.

ILLNESS & ACCIDENT

The school provides first aid facilities and a medical room. Students who become ill at school will be cared for whilst parents are asked to come to school to collect them. In the case of accidents to students, a wide range of

responses may be needed, from calling out the emergency services to administering minor first aid. It is essential that we have emergency contact telephone numbers, ideally for both parents. Where parents are often difficult to contact, or both work a long way from school, the numbers of other appropriate people, e.g. grandparents, can be helpful. Students needing urgent hospital treatment will be transported by ambulance. If non-urgent hospital treatment is needed, we will contact parents and ask them to arrange it. We hope that you will understand that only in exceptional circumstances will school staff escort students to hospital for non-urgent treatment. However, in cases of emergency

School Routines

hospitalisation by ambulance, school staff will remain at hospital with all students aged 16 and under, and with older students who need support, until parents can get there.

MEDICAL

We need to know about medical conditions which may affect a student's wellbeing in school and parents will be asked for this information.



PERSONAL PROPERTY

Money and valuables should never be left in school-bags or coat pockets. Items may be handed to the school office or to a teacher for safe-keeping. Items of personal property and clothing should be clearly named. The school does not accept responsibility for lost items but we will gladly help with problems, provided sensible precautions have been taken.

All items found are handed into one of the school offices

TRANSPORT

Students who travel by bus are issued with bus passes by the Local Education Authority Transport Department if they live more than three miles from school. We ask parents to stress to their children the need for good behaviour when journeying to and from school. The bus pass must be shown to the driver every time students travel to or from school. If the pass is not shown, they will have to pay until the pass is produced. Replacement bus pass are available at a cost of £10 by contacting the main switchboard at County Hall on 0345 6006400. Replacement Arriva passes are available by contacting Arriva directly (Amy Walker - 0191 520 4144) and cost, depending on type of bus pass, between £5 and £10.

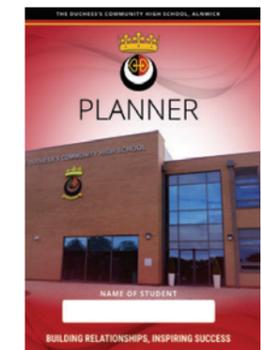
FIRE EMERGENCY

Fire and emergency evacuation procedure is practised each term. The assembly points in case of emergency evacuation are the multi-use games areas.



STUDENT PLANNERS

Year 7 students are provided with a professionally printed planner or diary, which provides spaces for timetables, attendance monitoring, the daily noting of homework tasks and simple communications between staff and parents. Parents are asked to sign the planners each weekend and they are then counter-signed by tutors at registration.



Other Year Groups can purchase planners at a cost of approx. £2.50.

EQUIPMENT

All students must have the following equipment each day: a black pen, pencil, ruler, rubber, planner (provided), a bag, sports kit (on days when it is required) and a scientific calculator (these can be purchased in school).



School Routines

SCHOOL MEALS

Meals are provided on a self-service basis. A wide range of healthy choices is available: two course meals or snacks, whichever is preferred. Students entitled to free school meals may select items to the current value of a standard meal. Any student may bring a packed lunch to school.



LUNCHTIMES

All Year 7 - 11 students must stay on the premises at lunchtime.

Sixth Form students are welcome to have lunch at school or to leave school premises over lunchtime.

ADMISSIONS

The Local Authority is the admissions authority for this school. Our current admissions number is 250 per year group. A School Preference form must be completed on behalf of every student.

In September the Local Authority will send Year 6 students who attend our feeder schools and are resident in Northumberland a letter with a unique identification number and instruction on how to access the online Admissions Handbook as well as directing to the on-line application form.

Parents resident outside the school's catchment area who wish their children to attend the school may also submit on-line applications which are available on the Local Authority website. Requests for places should normally be received by the 31st October of the preceding year.

Further information can be obtained from the School Admission Team, Childrens' Services, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2EF. Confirmation from the Local Authority of a place at the school is issued in March.

SIXTH FORM

We operate an open access policy to our Sixth Form; students who meet our entry requirements

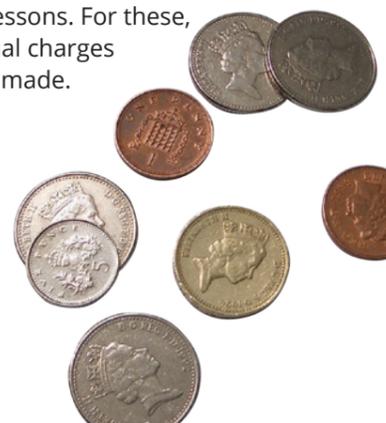
as illustrated in the Sixth Form Prospectus. We are able to offer students comprehensive advice. Potential applicants, other than from our own Year 11, should contact the Head of the Sixth Form in the first instance.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A "Complaints Procedure" produced by the Local Authority and adopted by the School's Governing Body exists and any parents who wish to have recourse to the details may do so on request to the Headteacher.

SUMMARY OF GOVERNORS' CHARGING POLICY

The educational service provided by the Duchess's Community High School is free at the point of delivery, funded by Central Government via the LA and the YPLA. It is a matter of principle that opportunity to benefit from this service should not be dependent upon a student's means. Some desirable opportunities are provided for students beyond the limits of the free service. Examples include school trips and instrumental music lessons. For these, individual charges may be made.



School Routines

School meals are also charged for. 'Holiday time' trips which have no direct significance for any school course, e.g. ski trips, are charged for at cost and attract those who can afford them. Trips which do have direct relevance to a school course are also charged for at cost, though some of this charge must technically and legally be a

voluntary contribution, and we will ensure that no-one is prevented from going for financial reasons, or, failing that, we may have to cancel the trip. Instrumental music lessons may be charged for at cost, but the school may provide an element of subsidy under certain circumstances.

While we have no legal obligation to pay for lessons for those who cannot afford them, we do assist a number of students with additional subsidy. Our ability to help students in financial difficulty is dependent upon the Parental Contribution Scheme, described earlier in the prospectus, and on other fund-raising efforts.

THE LIBRARY

The Library is an up-to-date, modern whole school resource centre for students and staff, providing a welcoming and supportive environment where students are encouraged to discover the enjoyment of reading for pleasure and lifelong learning. It is managed by a knowledgeable librarian with many years' experience in children's and schools' libraries.

WHAT'S ON OFFER

- Books and magazines for leisure and study
- Manga books and graphic novels
- Careers and higher education resources
- Reference section
- Daily newspapers
- Computers for internet access

- Reading recommendations - helping students and staff to find a great book to read and to expand their reading horizons
- Help and advice with research and information skills to assist students become independent learners
- Reading groups for sharing and discussing books, including participation in the North East Book Award
- A varied programme of English / Library lessons for all Year 7-9 students, about books, reading and information skills
- Author visits and other activities
- Quizzes and competitions for national events such as World Book Day
- Fund raising, including cake sales, raffles, etc., for new books.



Year 10 Library Group at the North East Book Awards, Centre For Life, February 2018.

THE AIMS OF THE LIBRARY ARE:

- to encourage reading for pleasure
- to support teaching and learning within the school
- to help students to become independent users of information
- to act as a gateway to information sources including the internet.

School Routines



Catering is managed and provided by our own school kitchen staff. Meals are provided on a cashless cafeteria system. A wide range of healthy choices are available at breakfast, break and lunch times. Students entitled to free school meals may select items to the current value of a standard meal. Any student may bring a healthy packed lunch to school.

WE DO NOT ALLOW HIGH ENERGY DRINKS, FIZZY DRINKS AND SWEETS

WE DO STOCK A SELECTION OF COLD DRINKS WHICH ARE WITHIN GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

ALL ITEMS CAN BE ORDERED UP UNTIL BREAK TIME OR THE DAY BEFORE

FOOD ALLERGIES AND INTOLERANCES:
PLEASE SPEAK TO A MEMBER OF THE KITCHEN STAFF ABOUT INGREDIENTS USED IN YOUR MEAL WHEN PLACING YOUR ORDER

MAIN MENU

Changes each day in a three week cycle.

DESSERTS

Hot Pudding & Custard, fresh fruit, fruit pots, yoghurt and fruit juice available daily.

SANDWICHES

Available daily
Choice of white, brown or granary bread, bread rolls, baguettes, wraps and stotties. Examples of fillings:

- ✂ BLT
- ✂ Roast Beef, rocket and caramelised onion
- ✂ Ham, Brie and cranberry sauce
- ✂ Roast Chicken & stuffing
- ✂ Cheese & Tomato

PIZZAS

A range of stonebaked pizza with a selection of toppings.

SALADS

A wide assortment of salads is available daily.

PASTA POTS

Various pots with a selection of toppings.

HOT BITES

Pasta King

Healthy, Tasty Pasta King served daily with a wide variety of healthy sauces:

- ✂ Baisilico
- ✂ Mediterranean Vegetables



Hot Paninis

Assorted fillings

- ✂ Mozzarella and pepperoni
- ✂ Tuna Melt

Jacket potatoes

Available daily with an assortment of fillings, eg.

- ✂ Tuna & sweetcorn
- ✂ Cheese savoury
- ✂ Baked Beans



School Uniform



Full Uniform is expected during examinations.

School tie.

Black School **V-necked pullover** with crest.

White School **shirt/blouse**.

Formal **Black Trousers**.

Skirt: plain, black knee length formal skirt (not a tube skirt).

When buying school uniform, please be aware of the following:

- Trousers should be full length
- Jeans and jean style trousers are not allowed e.g. if they are black cotton, have patch pockets and rivets they are masquerading as jeans and unsuitable for school.
- School shoes must be plain, all black leather or leather look shoes with no motifs, coloured stitching or coloured/reflective areas
- Boots are not permitted as uniform shoes
- Trainers or athletic shoes are not permitted
- A student's main school bag must be large enough to properly carry an A4 ring binder. Smaller bags are not appropriate as a main school bag.

School jumpers and ties can be purchased from Emblematic Ltd. or Border Embroideries.

All items of school uniform should be clearly marked with the student's name. PE and Games kit should be kept in a named bag and not left on school premises when not in use.

EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOOL UNIFORM

Discreet makeup and nail varnish is permitted. Jewellery is permitted in the form of a wrist watch, small ring and 1 ear stud in each lobe. Eyebrow, nose, tongue and lip jewellery is not permitted.

Outer garments must be intended for outdoor use only; pullovers, non-uniform sweatshirts etc. are not permitted. Likewise hats are only permitted if it is raining or very cold and should be removed upon entry into the school. Training shoes are not permitted and should be removed upon entry onto the school site, except during PE sessions. Knee or ankle length boots should not be worn.

Hair colour must be natural. Streaks and coloured overtones are only acceptable if the colours are natural; even then extremes are not permitted, e.g. black hair with blonde streaks or 3 contrasting colours.

PE KIT

Black and red hoodie, red polo shirt with school crest

Black shorts

Red Football/Hockey socks

White ankle socks (indoor and summer activities)

Training shoes, and football/rugby boots

Black tracksuit trousers for outdoors in winter

Swimming costume (when appropriate).



Parents and the School

As a school, we seek to work very closely with parents/carers and students, recognising that this is the only way to generate true and lasting success for our young people.

Each School Planner contains a 'Home School Agreement'. This identifies the key responsibilities of staff, students and parents/carers and we feel certain that if we all meet these criteria to the best of our abilities we can guarantee the happiness, progress and success of our students.

GENERAL CONTACT WITH PARENTS/CARERS

We pride ourselves on the high quality of communication with parents and offer regular opportunities to meet.

We have scheduled Consultation Days, Open Evenings, Advice Evenings and Guidance Meetings to which you will be invited. Should you have any concerns however, we would urge you to make contact at the earliest opportunity – we want dialogue to be open and honest and value on-going communication.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

From time to time parents themselves may require support or additional advice/information. Should this be the case, they

should not hesitate to contact the appropriate Head Of Standards in the first instance.

We also have a member of staff who is available to offer practical and/or emotional support to students and families.

STUDENT PROGRESS

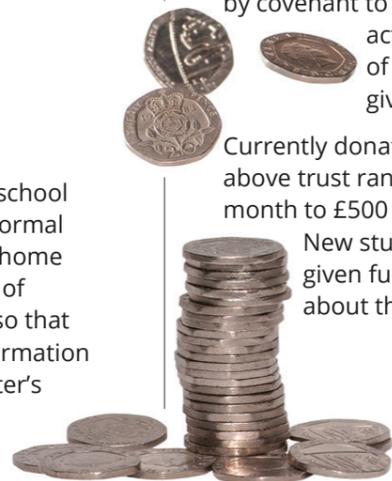
Student progress is monitored formally in school on three occasions. A formal document will be sent home showing current levels of attainment and effort so that you have on-going information about your son/daughter's progress.

THE DUCHESS'S HIGH SCHOOL TRUST

This exists for parents who wish to contribute more substantially by covenant to the school's activities, as part of their charitable giving.

Currently donations to the above trust range from £5 a month to £500 per annum.

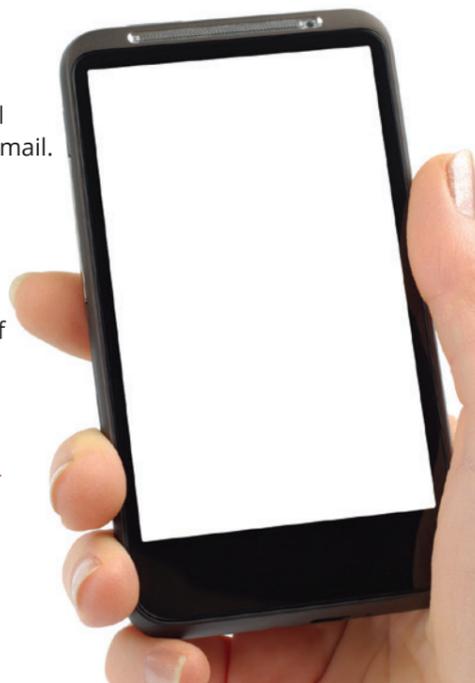
New students will be given further details about these schemes.



SCHOOLCOMMS

We hope to send most of our school communications to you via text or email. We will also be using this to provide online reporting services enabling parents to access student records from home.

Please make sure that we have all of your details so that we are able to contact you in this way.



Safeguarding our Students

At The Duchess's School we believe that every child truly matters and we are committed to their health, enjoyment, well-being and safety as well as their academic progress. With this in mind, safeguarding is fundamental to everything we do; our number one priority.

We have a dedicated and fully trained safeguarding team led by qualified Safeguarding Staff. All concerns are passed through them in accordance with the 'sharing of information' guidance and protocols outlined by Northumberland County Council. In the best interests of all our children we use the following safeguarding measures.

ANY CAUSE FOR CONCERN

All members of staff in school are trained in accordance with requirements. They are asked to report in writing any cause for concern as a matter of urgency to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This concern would normally be shared with parents as early as possible unless, for any reason, we believe that it is not in the child's best interests. Depending on the nature of the concern, we may well need to make contact with the School Nurse, Children's Services, the police or any other agency we feel may be appropriate. Concerns may range from matters connected to self-harm, neglect, inappropriate relationships, illegal use of drugs or alcohol or, indeed, any matter that may place a young person at risk.

E-SAFETY

All students are experiencing a significant rise in the number of safeguarding issues connected to use of the internet and, in particular to the use of social networking sites. We have an E-safety coordinator and will always ensure that we deal with any E-safety violation speedily and effectively.

We educate our young people on E-Safety matters through assemblies, in ICT and in PSHE lessons. All students must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement before they are allowed to access the internet in school.

Despite such efforts, students can put themselves at risk through the sending of indecent images, abusive messages and other inappropriate use. School cannot be responsible for the behaviour of students online outside of school hours. We would urge parents to monitor their son/daughter's internet usage and to keep

abreast of the significant dangers that the internet can pose – to this end we will feature regular articles in the school newsletter and will signpost to appropriate agencies through the school website. If a young person violates the school expectation in any regard we will seek to apply appropriate sanctions. In some cases this could involve contacting the police and/or any other agency deemed appropriate.

Full copies of our Safeguarding and E-Safety policies are available through the school website or by direct request to the school.



Key Staff

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Head
Mr M R Hall

Deputy Headteacher
Mr J Wilson

Deputy Headteacher
Mr A Rogers

Assistant Headteacher
Mr M Allenby

Assistant Headteacher
Mr T Hillman

Assistant Headteacher
Mrs N Hutchinson

Assistant Headteacher
Mrs D Murphy

Assistant Headteacher
Mrs J M Steel

Business Director
Mrs L Willis

Head's PA
Mrs K Gregory

PASTORAL STAFF

KS3 Standards – Year 7
Mrs K Hopper

KS3 Standards – Year 8
Mrs K Middlemist

KS3 Standards - Year 9
Mrs S Turvey

KS4 Standards – Pastoral
Mr A Ritchie

KS4 Standards – Progress
Miss L Sweet

Head of Sixth Form

KS5 Standards
Assistant Head of Sixth Form
Mr P Batley

KS5 Standards
Assistant Head of Sixth Form
Mrs A Harrison

Pastoral Support Co-ordinator
Mrs L Coford

Sixth Form Pastoral Administrator
Mrs L Purvis

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

English
Mrs A Lawson

Mathematics
Miss S Green

I.T.
Mr A Holt

Science
Miss E Robertson

Languages
Mr A Hall

Geography/Humanities
Ms L Smith

History
Mrs G Miller

Religious Studies
Mr R Best

Design & Technology
Mr M Skinner

Art and Creative Arts
Mrs R Brown

Music
Mr J Ridley

Head of P.E.
Miss S Cox

Business & Politics
Mrs C Campbell

Learning Support
Mrs N Hutchinson

Social Sciences
Mrs J Copeland

Public/Uniform Services
Mr N Brown

Classical Civilisation
Miss C Lawrence

H&SC/CC/Food
Mrs L Brown

Hair & Beauty
Mrs A Bee

Governors

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES

LOCAL AUTHORITY APPOINTED GOVERNOR

Mr I Walker 31/3/2021

CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

Mr P Ayres 31/8/2021

Mrs L Bosanquet 31/3/2021

Mr J Clark 28/3/2023

Mrs L Ilderton
(Vice-Chairman) 5/12/2022

Mr P Johnson 28/6/2024

Mrs C Rae 6/12/2021

Mrs E Smith
(Chairman) 22/8/2022

Mr S Rennie 2/10/2023

Mr S Wilkes 2/10/2023

CO-OPTED GOVERNOR (STAFF)

Mrs R Milburn 31/12/2022

PARENT GOVERNOR

Mrs C Telfer 2/5/2022

Mr D Arscott 9/7/2023

HEADTEACHER

Mr M R Hall

CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNORS

Mrs E Smith
The Duchess's Community High
School, Taylor Drive,
Alnwick,
Northumberland
NE66 2DH

CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS

Janet Bailey
Email: jb@clerkingservices.co.uk

The School: A Brief History

This is a school that values its long history and looks to the future with excitement and anticipation.

In 1808 the Duchess Julia founded a small school for twenty girls in one of the Duke's houses in Walkergate. By 1820 the numbers had grown to fifty and the school moved to larger premises in Canongate



where it remained until 1888. The school then moved into the Bailiffgate building. It was an entirely private school until 1903 when it was recognised by the Northumberland County Council as a County Secondary School. The school continued to expand and as The Duchess's Girls' Grammar School it moved in 1965 into its fourth home, newly built premises on Howling Lane. Finally in 1979 at the time of secondary reorganisation the school became both comprehensive and co-educational as it incorporated the Duke's Boys' Grammar School, Alnwick Secondary Modern

School, Seahouses Secondary Modern School, Glendale County Secondary School and St Mary's RC Secondary Modern School. Numbering some 940 students, the comprehensive high school occupied both the modern building on Howling Lane and the former premises at Bailiffgate which had gained additional facilities during the time it was occupied by the students of Alnwick Training College.

The school continues to have a close association with the castle. Until 1988 Her Grace Duchess Elizabeth was Chairman of the Governors of the school and in relinquishing that position she continued to serve as a Governor, attending annually a wide range of functions and activities until September 2005. She is now a Patron of the Governing Body and still attends prize giving events. In 2000 the school was designated a Technology College under the Specialist Schools programme. This has allowed us to expand our curriculum opportunities and bring in ICT resources that have benefited our students significantly.

In 2003, 2007 and 2012 we were recognised by Ofsted as having significant strengths. Not only were we congratulated for the teaching and learning on offer but

also for the extremely positive relationships that existed between staff, students and parents. In 2004 we were re-designated as a Technology College. Because of our achievements in this area we were able to apply for a Second Specialism of Music and English College as well as continuing to offer Technology. We also became a Full Service Extended School. This brought huge rewards to the Alnwick Partnership of Schools and its wider community.

In 2015 – Artsmark Gold.
In September 2016 – New Build.
In September 2018 – Extension to New Build opened!



This photo was taken for the Centenary in 1908. Pupils were assembled ready to go to the Barbican to be a guard of honour for the arrival of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra on their visit to Alnwick Castle that year. Mrs Selburn was Headmistress at that time. Mrs Brundell was on the staff.

COMMENTS FROM OFSTED

The school has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection.

Have an honest, clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas that need further development.

Senior leaders have a rigorous approach to the monitoring, evaluation and improving of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Teachers are planning lessons that increasingly meet the needs of all groups and abilities of pupils

All staff and governors have high expectations about what pupils and sixth-form students can achieve and are fully committed to raising their aspirations and those of their families.

Have created a school where pupils are achieving well, and where sixth-form students achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils enjoy being at this school. They are well cared for by staff.

The extra-curricular opportunities provided are plentiful and help to support pupils develop their confidence and wider personal and social skills.

The strong focus on raising aspirations through careers education ensures that all pupils and students who continue into the sixth form are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

Provision in the sixth form is a strength of the school.

Sixth-form students are excellent role models to the younger pupils in the school.

Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that any issues will be tackled quickly.

The leadership of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong and effective.

Sixth Form

- The wide range of enrichment activities and charity events enables students to develop as individuals exceptionally well.
- Students are positive, caring and respectful.
- They value and appreciate the high quality of personal development and welfare opportunities they receive.
- Staff know the students well and this allows them to offer tailored guidance for individual students.
- Students are prepared very well for their next steps.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS • INSPIRING SUCCESS



prospectus 2021



DUCHESS'S
COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

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www.dchs-alnwick.org