

April 2009

Dear Parents

In a term which has been filled with reasons to celebrate, I will begin with the warm congratulations due to our public examination candidates who took examinations in January. When the results arrived in March they included 23 examples of students gaining full marks on particular papers. Our 100%ers were:

Veda Avula	Mathematics
Eunice Chan	Mathematics
Anna Chung	Mathematics
Lucy Downes	Mathematics
Dominique Forrest	Biology
Stacey Kwok	Physics
Lucinda Thompson	Geography (2 modules)
Ingrid Tjendro	Psychology

and at GCSE level:

Christie Beedle	Biology
Mandy Poon	Chemistry
Deborah Cheesbrough	Chemistry, Physics
Alexandra Day	Chemistry, Physics
Juliet Edwards-Heathcote	Biology
Devenne Henderson-Clark	Biology
Esmé Montgomery	Chemistry
Katie Riley	Chemistry
Sarah Scott	Chemistry
Lara Tysseling	Biology, Chemistry, Physics

Well done to all – and also to the very many more whose results matched or exceeded expectations.

Polam Hall students also excelled at the recent Darlington festival. Our students were represented in almost every class in the Speech and Drama categories and several students, from both Junior and Senior schools, were winners in their groups. Full details of our pupils' many successes can be found on the school website. The outstanding success of the day was shared by Juliet Edwards-Heathcote and Lara Tysseling, both in Upper Five. They shared the Championship Trophy which I was delighted to present to them in our final Reading of the term. In Music, Robyn Haggie was the winner of the Singing class for 13 to 17 year olds.

Speaking of music, we have enjoyed musical performances of truly outstanding quality throughout the term. The Junior and Senior Concerts were a delight, as were the two very entertaining talent contests. Senior students also demonstrated their remarkable talents at the House Music

Competition, won by Tees, and I congratulate Suzie Millar (Skerne) who emerged from an excellent field as our Young Musician of the Year. Several of our musicians provided the entertainment at the recent Old Scholars' President's Evening where their magnificent music was enjoyed by all. Music-making, film and video-making skills are also very evident now in our morning assemblies. This term Seniors have been joined in Reading by representatives of the George Hardwick Foundation and the Butterwick Hospice to receive cheques from the students.

A major date for your diaries with regard to fundraising please keep the late afternoon of Friday June 12th free if you possibly can. The date marks a whole school event – from Nursery to Upper Sixth, and all their relatives and friends – in aid of Help for Heroes. Several of our boarders, and some day girls, have fathers in the armed forces, and some are on active service in Afghanistan or Iraq. Two of the girls came up with this initiative and are working hard, with staff support, to organise the event. A sponsored walk will take place in the school grounds and South Park. We will be joined by many distinguished guests and figures from the local media. We are hoping to draw on the Army Catering Corps for sustenance! Please do check the entrance hall screen and the website for more details next term.

On the subject of the website, please note that it is now possible to sign up for the school e-newsletter by visiting the site. Newsletter sign up is at the foot of every page. Also on the website (click on Polam Hall School > Parents > Uniform > New PE Kit) you will find details of our new games kit. This will be introduced in September 2009 for new pupils and for those pupils requiring new items of kit. Girls will still be able to wear their current PE kit, so there are no unnecessary costs for parents. The new kit is modern and high quality. The number of compulsory items will be fewer which again is cost effective and will make it easier for students to carry to school and to look after. We hope that the pupils will feel comfortable in their sports kit and be proud to wear it!

Pride in their school, and a well-articulated desire to represent it, are the hallmarks of the students who take part in the elections for new school officers. Annually, the hustings show the passion, commitment and leadership potential of our Sixth form students. Positions were fiercely – and expertly – contested this year. I congratulate our new leadership teams:

Head Student	:	FLORENCE LAI	
Games Captains	:	KRYSTAL FORSTER-GEORGE PAGE WILSON	
Vice Games Captain	:	OLIVIA RICHARDSON	
Head Boarder	:	STACEY KWOK	
Deputy Head Boarders	:	SHANI EVERSON INGRID TJENDRO	
Heads of Boarding Houses	:	YVONNE CHAN (Peace) KELLY LAI (Harmony)	
Kent Captain	:	VICKY MERCER	
Kent Vice Captains	:	STACEY KWOK, PETER STANESCU	

Skerne Captain : SUZIE MILLAR
Skerne Vice Captains : WILL KITCHEN, OLIVIA RICHARDSON

Swale Captain : INGRID TJENDRO
Swale Vice Captains : SHANI EVERSON, TIM GARDNER

Tees Captain : TARA PORTAS
Tees Vice Captains : HANNAH COLE, BETH CUNNINGHAM

The House Committees will be chosen at the start of the new term.

The Spring Term has seen students take part in Eurolinks, develop our Eco-school initiatives, visit Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh, discover more about geology at a local quarry, enjoy performances at local theatres, and win sporting trophies galore – both as team members and individuals. The March production of ‘Twelfth Night’ was memorable and distinctive as ever. As I write, our Year 5 and 6 students are hopefully enjoying their Paris visit. All of these things reflect the tremendous energy and commitment of the Polam Hall staff.

The UCAS process begins for the **Lower Sixth with our Information Evening for parents and students on Wednesday May 6th at 7.00pm**. Please note the change of date from your school calendars. This is always a valuable evening offering advice which is up-to-the-minute and insightful. Please can I take the opportunity to remind Lower Sixth that we allow only ONE school day for University Open Day visits. Missing valuable teaching to visit universities is a sure way to put the results you will need at risk!

Friday May 8th sees us ‘Undressing Mr Darcy’. This is a delightful evening’s entertainment, organised by the PHPA: please do come if you can. I look forward to seeing many of you there, or at the May Ball or on June 12th.

Over the Easter holidays, on Thursday 23rd April, the National Council for Women are holding an event here at Polam Hall. Young people from all over the North East are invited to discuss and debate whether 21st century women can ‘have it all’. Guest speakers include Kate Adie (news reporter) and Pinky Lillani (TV chef). If any students from Upper Five or Sixth would like to come along, please telephone the office to reserve your tickets. The day begins at 10.00am.

My warm thanks to staff, parents and students of all ages for all your contributions to Polam Hall life.

Happy holiday!

Marie Green (Miss)
Head