



Boarding Newsletter

FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (BOARDING)

Induction in September feels like a very long time ago, but it was only 3 months ago that we had so many returning boarders come back to welcome new students into our boarding house. Our staff, of course, contribute enormously to this, and it is sad this term that we say farewell to Assistant Houseparents Freddie Wintrip, and Laura Voinea, who we thank and wish well for their futures.

Since then, an enormous amount has happened in Boarding at DLD. We have seen students do all of the following, and more...!

This term, boarders have forged friendships, taken part in concerts and real life Monopoly Challenges, skated at the Tower of London, met with (and advised!) the MP who chairs the all Party Parliamentary Group on Independent Education, made pancakes for friends, contributed to our shortlisting for TES Boarding School of the Year, dressed up for Halloween, put a bauble on the Christmas tree, watched their first rugby game, witnessed astonishing fireworks at Blackheath, met with inspectors for our highly successful ISI inspection, volunteered at the farm, beaten staff at chess in Huddle Reg, undertaken leadership training, given their views in many different ways, volunteered at our local urban farm, raised money for Evelina

Children's Hospital and the Waterloo Foodbank and Movember, seen the Christmas lights at Kew Gardens, gone paddleboarding for the first time, watched the ballet at the Royal Opera House, told inspectors they feel 100% safe in boarding, supported a local charity's campaign for use of an empty police station, taken initiative in supporting others, played with our dog Sasha, laughed together, cried together, worked together, struggled through things together, learned life lessons together... The list goes on and on.

This only gives a brief snapshot of this term, but these things have all happened and more—not to mention all the amazing things that happen in lessons and in College every day! Supported by our staff, who I am very lucky to have, there's nothing stopping our boarders, and I am increasingly proud of the initiative they show, the responsibilities they take, and the community they create.



John giving Boarder of the Week to Charlotte in October

John J. Taylor



Christmas Tree Decorating Night!

FROM THE VICE-PRINCIPAL (PASTORAL)



This has been an exceptionally busy term for the College and has seen all the students take on board a number of initiatives and challenges. It was great to see the Lower School students take on board the new Health Charter under the guidance of the new appointed Head of Lower School, Gareth Evans. Gareth plays a key role in the School bridging the academic, pastoral and where appropriate the boarding lives of those in the Lower School. He is on duty in the boarding house at least once a week and has supported a number of weekend activities over the term. He is supported by a number of dedicated tutors, who show a keen interest in the students, during the college day and their boarding lives too.

This term we were delighted to welcome the Independent Schools Inspectors, who came to evaluate the College. This was an opportunity to share with them some of the wonderful work from the students and the boarding team and I am very pleased to share with you the excellent rating they gave to us for the student's personal development. It was a real team effort from the community, but I would particularly like to acknowledge the fantastic work from the boarding staff and John and the Heads and Deputy Heads of Huddles, who really shone.

Looking forward there are plenty of exciting initiatives moving forward and with the recent short listing for Boarding School of the Year from the Times Educational Supplement, we have much to build on. In the coming few weeks work will begin on an outdoor recreation area in the garden area of the College, allowing games of football, basketball and netball to be played as well as an improved seating area allowing students to study, eat and socialise.

Over the coming term we hope to gain recognition for the wellbeing initiatives that we have been working on by gaining recognition at gold level from Leeds Beckett University with the Mental Health Boarding Award. We continue to train students in the Mental Health First Aid qualification and consolidate our work on AS Tracking, developing pastoral responses for the students in the College. AS tracking has allowed us to work much more effectively to support the boarders proactively and positively.



Tom Hadcroft
Vice Principal (Pastoral)

HOLISTIC PASTORAL CARE



This term we have been focusing on delivering holistic pastoral care to all our boarders. We continue to use AS Tracking, a practise that has been rolled out to the whole school, as a tool to measure any bias in students thinking and to try and support them with this in the boarding house.

We have changed the way we do our weekly room visits; this is now more focused on getting to know all aspects of a student – from academics, pastoral, home life, hobbies & interests and future plans.

We are continuing to think about how we can best support all students and how we can get to know you all better. If you have any suggestions please come and see us, we're always keen to get your feedback!



Nicola Borland
Senior Houseparent



CHARITY & COMMUNITY

We've had some great charity involvement this term with students volunteering to help and set up at the Oasis Christmas fair, Emma's Huddle and their wonderful donation to the food bank and our Christmas party that through hopes to raise money for the Evelina Childrens Hospital.

It's great to see our students getting involved in our local charities an community events.

Myles Blair, Senior Houseparent



Sheila's Huddle taking donated clothes to the 'Gift of Love' hostel



Emma's Huddle filled a trolley with food to deliver to the Waterloo Food Bank

Tim and Archie, pictured with Steve Chalke, founder of Oasis Global, supporting a community initiative for use of the empty local Police Station

Who doesn't love a Bake Sale? Especially when it's for a local cause!



STUDY TIME PLANS



From January we will be making a few changes to Evening Study Time. Once a month we will be using Study Time to run Wellbeing Workshops for all of our Compulsory School Age and Lower School Students.

These Workshops have been planned with input from our College Counsellor, Emily Elliot, our Head of Wellbeing, Mark Johnson and the Boarding Team and will cover a variety of topics from resilience to sleep awareness.

Our motivation behind these workshops is to enable all to develop tools and knowledge that will benefit our students as they become more independent and grow in confidence with their ability to manage themselves and different situations.

Emma Finnerty, Houseparent



*Some of the best
shots from our
Christmas Party
Photobooth!*



DUKE OF EDINBURGH

We are always encouraging our boarders to make the most of their time at DLD and a fantastic way to do this is to sign up to a range of Co-Curricular Activities. These CCA's offer, not only new experiences, but also opportunities to mix with students from all over the world.

One of the stand out opportunities on offer is the Duke of Edinburgh Award. This is a youth scheme that is recognised by universities and employers across the world and sees participants engage in their local communities through the volunteering section and increase their personal skills and fitness... through the Skill and Physical sections. These are very individual and tailor made to the participants personal interests. However, the section which springs to mind when you ask most participants about their DofE experience, is the Expedition. This is where a cohort of participants going through the same level (Bronze, Silver or Gold) are teamed up in order to plan and carry out an expedition on foot through one of our many beautiful countryside areas. This is where their memories are made and could be in the South Downs, New Forest, Peak District or even Wales. As the Award level increases, so too does the length of the expedition; by the time a participant is working toward their Gold award, they would be assessed on their ability to work as a team during 4 days of walking through wild country, and 3 nights of camping. They must carry all of the equipment necessary to be self sufficient from start to finish - how many of us could physically or mentally push themselves to achieve this I wonder?

This section is where memories are made and for the adults overseeing this, it is the most rewarding, when we see the personal journey they go through whether it is difficult weather conditions, heavy rucksacks, tired feet, cooking their own meals, navigating through cow fields, working out disagreements with tired teammates or just facing a night in a cold tent after a long day - they always find themselves achieving things they didn't believe possible.

This year we have more participants than ever signed up for the award so keep yourself up to date with their adventures, and indeed all of our boarding adventures through our social media platforms.



Jan Haines
Houseparent





As you know I will be leaving DLD at the end of this term. I would like to thank you all for welcoming me into the boarding community. It is with a heavy heart that I say farewell, as many of you know I will be starting a new adventure with my partner in Australia. It's bittersweet to say goodbye as I will miss you all but thank you for the amazing experience, relationships and memories. *Freddie*

Farewell to Freddie!

SECURITY DOG?

Some people have a dog for Security reasons, and to be fair, if I hear something unusual, I do occasionally bark, but if I'm honest, most of the time I can't really be bothered. I'm quite happy to roll about on a rug, be patted by boarders, or to beg for scraps of food—particularly if boarders have got a takeaway in the lifts!

Recently, though, I have started to learn that our Security guards (especially Jim) have treats, and I've started annoying John and Kim by woofing at them whenever I see them, in the hope that they might reach for the box of gravy bones in the back office. You can't blame a girl for trying!

Sasha Taylor
The "DLD Dog"



PADDLE-BOARDERS!



As the year draws to an end, so does another successful term of trips for our boarders. Our aim is to provide a programme of Wellbeing, Action and Cultural trips, which are carefully planned with these objectives in mind.

This term's wellbeing trips included, a concert at The Globe Theatre to recognise 20 years of an international initiative, Peace One Day, a coach full of boarders leaving London for a day's cut price shopping at Bicester Village and a walk around the beautiful Kew Gardens to gaze in wonderment at their magnificent Christmas lights display.

Our action trips included the ever-popular go-karting, paddle-boarding, ice-skating, football at Wembley Stadium and a night out enjoying a rugby match with our resident rugby enthusiast, houseparent Jan. Our cultural remit included, a night at the Royal Opera House enjoying a ballet, bonfire night fireworks and a show accompanied by the wonderful Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall. All of these trips are made possible by the boarding team putting in a lot of hard work prior to trips taking place to complete a heap of necessary paperwork to ensure that the trips run smoothly, safely and soundly. Huge thanks should also go out to boarding and college staff who accompany our boarders on all trips.



Sheila Price
Houseparent





FROM THE WELLBEING CENTRE

It's been a busy term in the Wellbeing Centre. With GCSE Sport moving to Friday more students than ever have been able to access Matteo the college coach and the feedback has been great. The new post-box outside Emily's office has also been a useful way for people to reach out to Emily, the counsellor, and the Wellbeing Team and we hope that students will feel happy to continue doing so. Lower school students have been furiously submitting their evidence for the DLD Health Charter and the race to the top of the leaderboard is still anybody's to win. 2019 also saw more student mentors have been trained up as Mental Health First Aiders than ever. Here's to a happy and healthy 2020.



Mark Johnson, House Tutor (Myles' Huddle) & Head of Wellbeing



*Jan took Boarders to the
Fireworks Night at
Blackheath in November*

OASIS CHRISTMAS FAYRE



Boarders went to volunteer, helping to set up a local Christmas Fayre. They even joined in with some community carol singing!





Arnaud, Head of Myles' Huddle

FROM THE BOARDERS' COMMITTEE

I cannot believe the term is already about to finish, it has been so fast but the thing is, time flies at DLD! I still remember my first days and, how lost I was... Think of it for a minute, it seems like only yesterday when none of us, the new students, knew each other. And now, we just had a wonderful Christmas party all together! That is just amazing, I personally value the good vibes I get in college, and I really like the fact of how safe and at ease I feel even at the end of the school day. So in order to keep things going the same way they have until now, or to perhaps make boarding even better, I encourage you to help us by giving us your opinion of whatever you think could be improved. Any kind of feedback is more than welcome, including positive comments, which are always helpful. In any case, I, as a Head of Huddle, can tell you that the Boarders' Committee we are working hard to solve any issues we are aware of, as well as continuously trying to stay up to date on what your needs are.



CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING!



FROM THE LOWER SCHOOL!

It's been an exciting first term for the Lower School and for me in my new role as Assistant Principal (Lower School). It's hard to believe that back in September when we took the school out for a team building afternoon in Archbishop's park or when we went on the team building weekend to Shoreham most of these students had never met one another. It's great now to see so many close friendships have formed and the growing community ethos within the Lower School.

Our regular assemblies have brought us together to celebrate all the different achievements of the Lower School with awards given out for Resilience, Community work and Challenge. We also have an inter tutor competition running this year for the tutor group with the best attendance and for gaining the most commendations. Currently the coveted cups are held with Rini's group for attendance and Marks group for the most commendations. I'm excited to see whether they can retain these when we have our next assembly on 7th January 2020!



Finally, we launched the Lower School PT Rep role so that our students have a voice to help shape the Lower School experience. This is the first time in the history of the Lower School that there has been a Leadership team and they have already made a great start! I am looking forward to working with Charlotte, Jo, Carmen, Gemma, Wan, Maria, Mariia, Ursula, Song and Luigi next year.

Have a Wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Gareth Evans

Assistant Principal
(Lower School)
& House Tutor





Boards meeting
Andrew Lewer, MP



Globe Theatre



Induction with Jan



Huddle Chess

