DURHAM JOHNSTON
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
DARE TO BE WISE

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Registered Charity No. 516935

26th November 2026

Dear Year 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13 Parents and Carers,

End of term arrangements – Friday 18th December 2026

Our Christmas Carol Service is one of the highlights of the school year and will be held in Durham Cathedral at 1.00 p.m. on Friday 18th December. This wonderful event is the only time in the year where almost the whole school meets together in one place. It is a celebratory finish to a long term and a warm way to say goodbye before Christmas. We are the only state secondary school to hold a Carol Service in the Cathedral, and our students have won a reputation over the years for their excellent behaviour in the Cathedral and their outstanding musical contribution. Please join with us in emphasising to your child the importance of sustaining this exemplary conduct. Of course, it is a normal school day for attendance purposes, so all students must attend.

Our arrangements are the same each year. Students should not bring their bags into school. However, any pupil with an AAI, inhaler or other emergency medication will need to have them on their person. Please ensure all medical information is up to date. If your child travels by school bus, they should ensure that they have their bus pass with them. In case of poor weather, students should bring an outdoor coat with them. If your child brings a phone to school, they should bring their pouch as normal. Staff will have mobile unlockers for students to use at the end of the day.

Brunch will be available and form tutors will advise students when food service will be available for each year group. Please note that there will be no food service at morning break.

From 11.50a.m. teachers and students will travel together by bus to New Elvet, and from there, teachers will escort students to the Cathedral for a 1.00p.m. start. Year 12 and 13 students will be dismissed from school at 10:45am to make their own way to the service on foot. Despite the huge size of the Cathedral, we are unable to fit the whole school in as well as inviting parents and therefore we are able to invite only one member of a Year 7 child's family to attend. Parents and carers whose children are in Year 7 will receive a separate copy of this letter by email, together with a form to complete to indicate which parent will attend and to confirm how their child will get home after the Carol Service.

The service lasts approximately 50 minutes, after which students will be dismissed home from the Cathedral. If students usually get a school bus, they will depart from New Elvet, and students will be directed there by staff. Please ensure your child has a clear understanding of how they are getting home on this day.

Thank you as ever for your support this year. Term ends after the Carol Service in accordance with the arrangements above and the new term begins on Wednesday 6th January 2027.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs McFadden
Headteacher