



THE  
CHORISTER  
SCHOOL

### **Durham School and The Chorister School announce plans to merge**

The Governors of Durham School and the Chapter of Durham Cathedral have announced that Durham School and The Chorister School are planning to merge and operate under one single Foundation, to be known as the Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation.

This proposed merger will bring together two historic schools which have a shared heritage stretching back over 600 years in the City of Durham. The new Foundation will operate as a whole from September 2021.

Announcing the merger Durham School Chair of Governors Rob Ribchester said, "This is a wonderful opportunity to create a merged school which will offer outstanding academic, pastoral and co-curricular opportunities for all pupils and enhance the provision of independent education within the City of Durham.

"It will allow the schools to grow and develop in size and strength whilst continuing to provide a focus on the education of the individual, celebrating the unique talents of every child, nurturing and bringing out the best in them, values both schools have always shared"

The Foundation will be located on the current sites of both schools. As a recognition of the history of all three schools, the Pre-Prep will be known as "Bow School", the Prep as "The Chorister School" and the Senior school as "Durham School". Together they will all form part of the new Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation.

The Principal of the Durham Cathedral School Foundation will be Kieran McLaughlin, who will continue as the Head of Durham School. The Headmistress of the Prep school will be Sally Harrod, the current Headmistress of Bow School. Ian Wicks, the current Headmaster of The Chorister School has announced his intention to fully support the process until September 2021, when he will step down.

The Foundation will be governed by a new Board of Governors from both Durham and The Chorister School, including members of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral. The Chair of Governors will be Robert Ribchester, currently Chair at Durham School, and the Vice-Chair will be the Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett, Dean of Durham.

Choristers from Durham Cathedral will continue to be educated within the Foundation's Schools and to be fully supported as they play their part in the Cathedral Choir which will continue to be a source of great pride to the School.

Dean of Durham, Andrew Tremlett said “This is an exciting opportunity for the pupils of both schools to benefit from an enhanced educational experience at every level. In particular, the merger offers more varied and extensive opportunities for pupils. There will be more chances to take part in competitive sports teams and greater opportunities to participate in musical and cultural events.

“We will be able to make greater investment in facilities and offer a more vibrant boarding experience. There will also be many social benefits associated with a larger school community. The merger offers a strong and vibrant future for both schools. Furthermore, I am delighted that we will be safeguarding the choral tradition in the North East of England for the next generation.”

Durham School and The Chorister School have committed to a programme of regular meetings and communications with staff, parents, and pupils as they move towards the opening date of September 2021.

Ends

November 23, 2020

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## **Notes to editors**

### **Durham School**

Durham School is one of the oldest schools in England, dating back to 1414. It educates boys and girls aged 3-18 years old.

Durham School’s mission is to provide its students with a complete education; one which instils in them an aspiration for achievement, a respect for others and a confidence for life. The three pillars of Durham School which support this mission and so provide an environment where pupils can explore, make mistakes, learn and grow are:

1. Academic challenge which gives students a lifelong appetite for learning.
2. Pastoral care to provide our students with emotional, moral and spiritual strength.
3. Co-curricular opportunities which enrich and develop the individual, and foster leadership, collaboration and teamwork.

We do this by nurturing and supporting our students to become:

- Thinkers who can understand, research, evaluate and create, both collaboratively and independently.
- Individuals who are morally sound, emotionally resilient, reflective and effective communicators.
- Adults who act with responsibility, humility and kindness and are ready to make a positive contribution to society.

Children aged 3-11 are educated at the school’s preparatory site - Bow, Durham School. The combined 3-18 provision currently caters for day and boarding school education for 520 pupils, including international pupils from 20+ different countries.

For further information, visit [www.durhamschool.co.uk](http://www.durhamschool.co.uk)

**Durham Cathedral** is a Christian Church of the Anglican Communion, the shrine of St Cuthbert, the seat of the Bishop of Durham and a focus of pilgrimage and spirituality in North East England. It inhabits a treasured sacred space set in the natural and human landscape of the UNESCO Durham World Heritage Site.

Its purpose is to worship God, share the gospel of Jesus Christ, welcome all who come, celebrate and pass on its rich Christian heritage and discover its place in God's creation. The building of Durham Cathedral commenced in 1093 and took around 40 years to complete. It replaced a Saxon cathedral built by the Community of St Cuthbert after it arrived in Durham in 995 following its flight from the 'Holy Island' of Lindisfarne 80 miles North of Durham. The body of St Cuthbert is enshrined in the Feretory at Durham Cathedral and the Tomb of the Venerable Bede is in The Galilee Chapel. The Cathedral existed as a Benedictine Monastery until 1539 when it became one of the Church of England's major Cathedrals.

Covid aside it continues as a focus for pilgrimage and usually attracts around 750,000 visitors each year from all over the world. The Cathedral has internationally important collections of artefacts, manuscripts and books that include St Cuthbert's coffin and his pectoral cross; superb examples of Anglo-Saxon craftsmanship. Durham Cathedral is often referred to as the best example of Romanesque architecture in Europe, or as American writer Bill Bryson put it, 'the best Cathedral on planet earth.'

Since its construction Durham Cathedral has been alive with people and a centre for community activity. The Cathedral is home to a vibrant worshipping community and continues to celebrate the English Choral Tradition with sung services by its highly acclaimed Choir. As a new century unfolds Durham Cathedral aspires to enrich the many different ways in which it engages with people and organisations. It is cherished equally by those who live, work and study in the region and by those who come to visit.

**The Chorister School** has been established at Durham Cathedral for over 600 years and sits in the magnificence of The College, part of the cathedral complex at the heart of the Durham UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is an independent day and boarding prep school for boys and girls from 3 – 13 years. The school is home to the girl and boy choristers of Durham Cathedral, as well as welcoming children from Durham and beyond.

Children are taught to think and act independently; to respect their peers, their elders, their surroundings and themselves; to nurture each other; to be proud of their heritage; and to seek success. With a broad curriculum including Latin and French, emphasis is placed on children having access to subjects that enable them and give them the skills and qualities they will need to be successful students and adults.