



Mill Hill School  
Foundation

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# SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## 2008

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# Dear Parents,

During the past few months, a great deal of work has been done to identify the Foundation's key development priorities for the next five years. The result is the Foundation Development Plan, approved by the Court of Governors in June, which sets out our major objectives for the period to 2013. The Plan itself is a long document, running to fifty pages and containing many detailed operational targets. We are keen, however, to share with you the key themes in order that you may see how, in the years to come, we plan to offer every one of our pupils the very best teaching, the highest standards of pastoral care and the widest possible range of high quality extra-curricular opportunities.



## SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### Pupil numbers

Each of the three schools is currently full, and each is heavily oversubscribed. As a result, the expansion of pupil numbers would certainly be possible. However, further growth would inevitably carry the risk that our atmosphere of friendly intimacy and our reputation for providing outstanding individual care and attention would be compromised. A positive decision has therefore been made not to increase numbers beyond the current levels. Pupil numbers will be maintained at around 1260 across the three schools, with target numbers of around 165 (full-time equivalent) at Grimsdell, 405 at Belmont and 690 at Mill Hill. Within these numbers, each of the three schools will continue working to ensure a healthy balance between boys and girls, with a ratio of 60% boys to 40% girls being the minimum target, and a balance of 50-50 being the ideal which we shall aim to achieve over the coming years.

### Pastoral Care

The Foundation rightly prides itself upon the exceptional standards of pastoral care which each school achieves. This was something recognised in the 2007 ISI inspection report. Our aim now is to maintain this reputation for excellence and each school will seek to

develop its pastoral provision still further. At Mill Hill and Belmont, the work of tutors will be reviewed in order to develop still further the crucial role that they play in the lives of the boys and girls. All three schools will also review their behaviour protocols and their systems of rewards and sanctions with a view to achieving the more effective recognition of good behaviour and the reinforcement of our already high standards of courtesy, mutual respect and decency. Pupil induction procedures will be reviewed at each school, as will transition arrangements for those moving up from one Foundation school to another. In order to ensure that the Foundation is able to provide its pupils with the best possible medical care, the Chair of the Governors' Pastoral Committee has also begun a review of our medical services.

## Academic Standards

The Foundation is committed to providing an academic education that allows each pupil to achieve his or her full potential. A measure of our success is this year's outstanding public examination results (our best ever) and the excellent Key Stage 1 and 2 scores achieved in recent years by pupils at Grimsdell and Belmont.

Of course, and despite what may sometimes be suggested by the modern culture of league tables, public examinations are far from being the only ingredient of a good education. Nor do academic qualifications on their own guarantee success or happiness. However, it is undeniably true that young people are given a far better chance in life if they do perform to the best of their abilities in their examinations. The



The spiritual life of the Foundation will continue to be developed, with an increased programme of visitors from various faiths being invited to Chapel services. Healthy eating initiatives will also continue to be promoted, and new, cross-Foundation programmes of drug and alcohol education will be introduced.

## Boarding

Mill Hill has always been a boarding school, and boarding makes a vital and distinctive contribution to our ethos. Our commitment to boarding remains as strong as ever and we are keen to encourage many more families (including those who live close to the School) to consider the option of boarding and the great support it offers to young people academically, socially and pastorally. We also want all of our boarders to feel happy, comfortable and fulfilled. Thus, over the coming years, we will be devoting significant resources to the further improvement and development of our boarding facilities and activities. At the same time, we are aware of the importance of ensuring that a suitable balance is struck between school and family life. As a result, from September 2008, those boarders who are able to travel home on a Friday night will be able to do so, providing they are back in school for Saturday lessons.

Foundation schools will continue working, therefore, to ensure that each boy and girl is helped to achieve the best possible outcomes in their SATs, Common Entrance, GCSEs and A levels. At the same time, we will aim to ensure that all our teaching is fun, engaging and inspiring, with lessons being designed as a genuinely educational experience rather than simply a tool of examination preparation.

In order to achieve these aims, we will pay particular attention over the next five years to the further development of teaching standards within each of the Foundation schools. Continued staff development will be a key priority, alongside the formulation of strategies designed to ensure that an appropriate variety of teaching styles is employed to cater for the needs of each child. The Learning Support departments at both Mill Hill and Belmont will be further expanded to allow an increase in the amount of support available to those who would most benefit from it. Meanwhile, provision for the most academically gifted will be developed over the coming years, and greater and more effective use will be made of baseline data to monitor and predict the progress of all pupils.

Other initiatives designed to ensure the maintenance of the highest standards of teaching and learning will include the full introduction of Assessment for Learning across all three schools. This should allow us

to increase the level of pupil engagement in the learning process as well as allowing improved monitoring of each boy's and girl's performance. Following the success of the Belmont timetable review in 2007, Mill Hill will also conduct a review of its academic timetable. Finally, in order to ensure that we are offering the most appropriate range of academic subjects, each of the three schools will review their current curriculum and implement any changes that are felt necessary to ensure that we are making the best provision for our pupils. We are confident that the result of all these developments will be to enhance significantly the levels of academic performance, enjoyment and fulfilment experienced by each boy and girl.

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## Breadth of Education

A Mill Hill education has always been a broad education. Whilst recognising the centrality of academic progress and achievement, the three schools aim to offer every pupil the opportunity to fulfil his or her physical, creative and cultural potential. This has met with very conspicuous success in recent years, and standards of sport, art, music and drama have never been higher. Over the next five years, we will aim to raise standards still further.

Sport has always been important at Mill Hill. It will continue to be so. High levels of participation in both team and individual sports will be encouraged, whilst new arrangements will be introduced to identify and nurture our elite players.

At Grimsdell, a review will be undertaken to identify additional extra curricular activities and clubs which could be introduced. Meanwhile, both Mill Hill and Belmont will conduct reviews to ensure that we make the best use of our time, maintaining our breadth of education whilst preserving teaching time from the encroachment of non-academic activities. In order to ensure the continued availability of adequate time for senior school pupils to pursue sport and extra-curricular activities, the broad structure of the week will remain as it has always been. Lessons will continue to be taught on Saturday mornings, with sports and activity sessions taking place throughout the week and on Saturday afternoons.



## Estate Developments

Few schools can boast such a beautiful situation, such extensive grounds and such impressive facilities as we do. Over the past few years, much has been done to improve and upgrade our facilities, including the construction of the magnificent Favell building at Mill Hill, the refurbishment of the ground floor of School House, the creation of new changing rooms at Mill Hill and a refurbished boys' changing room at Belmont, and the improvement of the outdoor play facilities at Grimsdell. In the view of many, the Mill Hill estate has never looked better.

It is clearly important, however, that we work hard to ensure that our physical resources continue to be properly cared for and that they are developed in a way that maximises the opportunities open to each of our pupils. This is the objective of the estates development plan for 2008-13. The first major project to be undertaken, subject to planning consent, will be the construction of a new teaching block at Belmont, providing new, state-of-the-art classrooms, improved science facilities and a new girls' changing room. Within the senior school, projects which we hope to complete by 2013 include the refurbishment and extension of the science block; the reconfiguration and redevelopment of the sports hall; further day and boarding house improvements; the provision of a dedicated Sixth Form centre; and the enhancement of facilities for music, art and drama. At Grimsdell, elements of internal reconfiguration and extension will allow the available space to be used more effectively. ICT provision will continue to be developed and extended in all three schools.

## Broadening Access

Mill Hill has long been distinguished by the diversity of its pupil body. The wonderful richness of our community owes much to the range of cultural, religious, linguistic and social backgrounds from which our pupils come. Indeed, the realisation of our founders' core values of mutual tolerance, respect and understanding depend heavily upon the maintenance of a wide and varied intake of pupils. In order to maintain the diversity of our intake, the Foundation will continue to set aside a portion of its fee income to fund bursaries that support pupils from families of modest means. At the same time, we will continue to generate

funds through the Foundation Appeal in order to expand our capacity to offer financial support to such families. Through the generosity of a number of benefactors, led by two Old Millhillians, the ABC ('A Better Chance') bursary scheme has already been established to this end, and our aim is to extend this scheme still further over the coming years. In addition, all profits generated by Mill Hill School Enterprises will, from this year, be donated directly to the Foundation's Bursary Fund.

## Community Projects

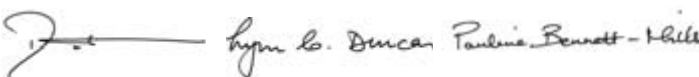
Whilst increasing access to the Foundation, we also wish to increase our engagement with the wider community. We will continue to support our overseas partners in Tamil Nadu, Nicaragua and Ethiopia, and will explore further opportunities for charitable works overseas, including the establishment of at least one micro-finance bank to support local communities in the developing world. Closer to home, we plan to extend the ways in which the Foundation and its pupils engage with, and serve, the local community. Charitable works will continue to be an important part of what we do, and events such as 'Jeans for Genes' and Mufti Days will remain regular features of each school's year. New projects will also be developed, such as those allowing charities working with young people to use our grounds and facilities during holiday periods. Existing relationships, including that with Alford House youth club in Lambeth, will be strengthened, and new links fostered with local schools, youth groups, community projects and sports clubs.

Green initiatives will figure prominently. Belmont will, for example, be developing its own Green Action Plan with a view to securing Green Flag status by 2009.

## Looking to the Future

The Foundation is a truly great family of schools. Last year's bicentennial celebrations at Mill Hill allowed us to reflect upon our past successes and the achievement of the many generations of pupils who have passed through our doors. We are now looking to the future, and we hope that we have been able to give you an idea of how it will look, combining a profound respect for the values of our founders with an appreciation of the demands that the modern world will place upon our pupils. The future is, of course, uncertain. Of one thing, however, we are sure: with the support of our parents and the guidance of our Court of Governors, the commitment and dedication of our staff, and the energy, enthusiasm and talent of our pupils, Mill Hill, Belmont and Grimsdell will go on to even greater successes in the future.

With very best wishes.



Dr Dominic Lockett  
Headmaster, Mill Hill

Mrs Lynn Duncan  
Head of Belmont

Mrs Pauline Bennett-Mills  
Head of Grimsdell



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→ Looking to the Future

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[www.millhill.org.uk](http://www.millhill.org.uk)