

Ballymena Academy



The Braid
MAGAZINE

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Ballymena Academy

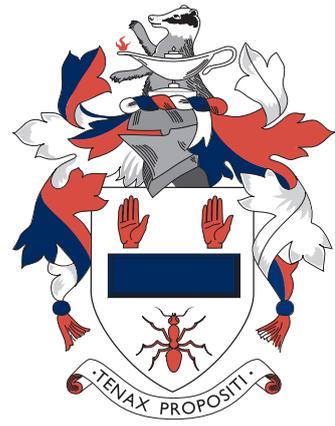


Summer 2020



Ballymena Academy

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SUMMER 2020

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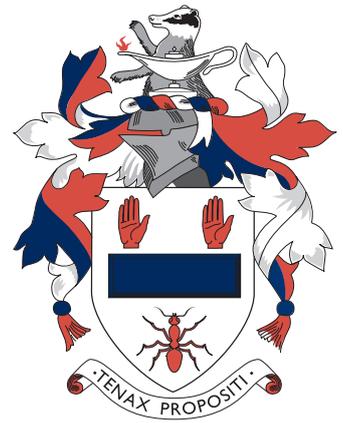
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P.G.C.E. Head of Year 8

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Examinations Officer.

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P.G.C.E. P.G.Dip. Comp. and Inf. Sys.

Head of Sixth Form, Vice Principal



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Madame DOMINIQUE VAN DER
BROECK, French Assistant
Mrs. CONNIE CONDREN, German
Assistant
Ms. M. SERRANO, Spanish Assistant,
B.Sc., P.G.C.E.

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P.G.C.E. Head of Department
B. THOMPSON, B. Mus. (Hons.) P.
G.C.E.
Miss A. WILKINSON, B. Mus. (Hons.)
Dip. R.I.A.M. P.G.C.E.
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*S. BEATTIE, L L.B (Hons.) L.L.C.M.,
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P.G.C.E.

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PhD. P.G.C.E. Senior Teacher
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*Mrs. R. MATCHETT, B. Ed. (Hons.)

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M. S. Sc.
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C.C.E.T.

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W.WARWICK

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D. SWANN

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*Part-time

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*** Teachers on secondment

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Head Boy: Craig SIMPSON

Deputy Head Girls:

Sarah CARROLL Alex WILSON

Deputy Head Boys:

Jack AIKEN John BOYD

Senior Prefects:

Emma ADAIR Caleb LOGAN
Alicia DOWNEY Chloe ROBINSON
Mark HAYES Michael WILSON

Prefects:

Emily AGNEW
Katie AGNEW
Lois ANDERSON
Thomas ARTHUR
Scott ASHCROFT
Chloe BACKUS
Alex BALMER
David BORICEANU
Ella CALDERWOOD
Matthew CORR
Katie CRAIG
Robyn CUPPLES
Niall DOUGLAS
Cara DUNLOP
Mercedez FAUSTIN-CLENAGHAN

Roslyn FENTON
Rachel FLECK
Jane FLEMING
Sam FREW
Ben GILMORE
Paul GOCHER
Charlotte GOURLEY
Laura GRAHAM
Rebecca HAMILTON
Samantha HENDERSON
David HENRY
Sam HENRY
Emma HUNTER
Ryan IRWIN
Matthew JACKSON
Nina KENNEDY
Grace LAVERY
Courtney McCURDY
Katie McDONALD
Ben McKANE
Alastair McKEE
Amy McKEOWN
Harry MCKILLOP
Andrew McLARNON
Jack McMENAMIN
Connor McNEILL
Stuart McNEILL
Hannah McVICKER

Ellen MACDONALD
Lauren MALCOLM
Megan MALFATTO
Bethany MAUGER
Lucy MILLAR
Jack MILLS
Josh MILLS
Chloe MOODY
Henry MOORE
Thomas MOOREHEAD
Jenny MURDOCK
Joel MURPHY
Ciaran NELSON
Samara NICHOLL
Cameron OLPHERT
Adam PAUL
Matthew POSTON
Sarah PRESTON
Jessica QUAIL
Nicole QUINN
Grace REDMOND
Rebecca SMYTH
Jack SPENCE
Angus STEELE
Katie SURGENOR
Connor THOMPSON
George WEIR

Peer Mentors 2019–2020

Peer Mentors Year 8

Girls	Boys
Katie Agnew	Matthew Corr
Chloe Backus	Callum Hamill
Jessica Beverland	Mark Hayes
Alicia Downey	Caleb Logan
Rachel Glass	Alastair McKee
Courtney McCurdy	Andrew McLarnon
Chloe Moody	Jack McMenamain
Sarah Preston	Connor McNeill
Jessica Quail	Dean Miller
Grace Redmond	Josh Mills
Chloe Robinson	Adam Paul
Katie Surgeoner	Connor Thompson

Peer Mentors Year 10

Girls	Boys
Sarah Carroll	Peter Bacon
Jill Forsythe	Alexander Diver
Laura Graham	Daniel Fullerton
Samantha Henderson	Stuart McNeill
Jade Herbison*	Matthew Poston
Grace Lavery	Craig Simpson
Bronwyn Livingstone	
Rachel Mackey	
Laura McCaig*	
Sarah McCloy	
Kora McMillan	
Lucy Miller	

Peer Mentors Year 12

Girls	Boys
Emily Agnew	Scott Ashcroft
Nicole Campbell	Jacob Buchanan
Robyn Cupples	Niall Magee
Cara Dunlop	Angus Steele
Emma Hoey	Adam Wilkins
Emma Hunter	Michael Wilson
Nina Kennedy	
Jenny Murdock	
Jedidah Shanks	

Peer Mentors Year 9

Girls	Boys
Beth Andrews*	Jack Aiken
Katy Clarke	Thomas Arthur
Rachel Fleck	John Boyd
Jane Fleming*	Sam Henry*
Lucy Gibson	Simon McWhirter
Charlotte Gourley	Jack Mills
Jessica Gregg	
Rebecca Hamilton	
Katie McDonald	
Amy McKeown	
Alex McLeister	
Laura McNally	

Peer Mentors Year 11

Girls	Boys
Lois Anderson	Calum Cavanagh
Roslyn Fenton	Paul Gocher
Tori Kennedy	Thomas Moorehead
Megan Malfatto	Nathan Nelson
Georgia McClelland	Kyle Robinson
Kirsten McLeister	
Samara Nicholl	
Sophie Smyth	
Alex Wilson	

School Diary 2019–2020

May 2019

The Transfer Information Evening for parents of Primary 6 pupils outlined arrangements for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment and other aspects of transfer to Ballymena Academy.

The 'A' Level Art exhibition showcased talents of Year 14 pupils.

The Year 12 Social Evening was enjoyed by all who attended.

The members of Ballymena Academy Class of 2019, wearing stylish Navy leavers hoodies, were treated to 'The Big Breakfast' and special entertainment on their last school morning before 'A' Level examinations.

£1120 was presented to a representative from Mid Antrim RDA, proceeds from non-uniform day and donut sales.

Y.E.S volunteers planted out sweetcorn, carrots, courgettes, lettuce, chard and spring onions in the polytunnel.

Ballymena Academy pupils performed well in Ulster Schools' Athletics Championships.

Years 8-10 Summer Term examinations took place.



Year 14 "Big Breakfast"



Charity Committee present a cheque of £1120 to Madeleine McIlroy from the Mid Antrim Riding for the Disabled Association.



Year 12 Social Evening



June 2019

Pupils successfully participated in the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships at Tullamore.

Year 13 Students were placed in Leadership teams for 2019-2020. All teams provide students with significant leadership opportunities in Ballymena Academy.

The Annual Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award Presentation took place in the W.H. Mol Assembly Hall. 86 pupils received their Award.

Primary 6 pupils attended a 'Taster Day' at Ballymena Academy. They engaged in a range of 'fun' activities.

Year 8 Induction Day – 14th June.

Year 9 pupils attended a Careers event '4seeyour Future' at University of Ulster (Jordanstown).

The Year 8 Cricket NEBSSA Tournament was hosted by Coleraine GS.

80 pupils competed from six different schools.

Creativity Club held an end of year 'Art' celebration, an informal exhibition of work portfolios.

Senior CU committee met together on 24th June for leadership training and to start planning the programme for the Autumn Term 2019. Rachel Sheppard (E3 Ballymena SU worker) presented the morning session on the topic of "Nehemiah".

The Careers Department bade farewell to Mrs. Julia Fielding and Mrs. Helen Clarke.

Year 10 Career Interviews took place.

P.F. Martin Achievement Awards were presented in Assembly by the

President of the Past Pupils' Association.

On a warm June afternoon, some Year 9 pupils released butterflies they had cultivated.

Year 8 pupils participated in the Action MS sponsored walk in Portglenone forest.

Twelve pupils travelled to Microsoft HQ in Dublin to participate in the Microsoft Dream Space Workshop.

Year 10 pupils, with staff, went on a History Trip to World War I battlefields in France and Belgium.

Robyn Cupples, Mercedes Faustin-Clenaghan and Georgia McClelland were invited to participate in the 'Gifted and Talented Programme' Summer School at the University of Dundee.



Year 8 NEBSSA cricket tournament at Coleraine.



Creativity Club, informal exhibition of portfolios at end of year Celebration



Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award Presentation

September 2019

The Year 8 Parents' Information Evening took place.

Year 14 Parents' Consultation afternoon was well attended.

Year 14 pupils attended Open Days at Queen's University and University of Ulster.

BA hosted 'Eye4Education workshops' for Year 8 pupils, to facilitate transition from Primary to Post-Primary school.

Ethan McCormac (Year 11) and Tom Coulter (Year 10) were offered places on the RYA NI Laser Sailing Youth Performance Programme, after fiercely competitive selection trials. Tom and Ethan then completed an intensive winter training programme, to prepare them to represent NI at the National and International Youth Sailing Championships.

An online company 'Zeeko' delivered an 'Internet Safety' programme to Year 9 pupils.

The Charity Committee organised the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning for staff. A fantastic £339 was raised. Staff baked or bought items to support this worthy cause.



Staff enjoying the Macmillan Coffee Morning fundraiser in school.



Year 14 Peer Mentors await the arrival of Year 8 pupils on their first school day.



Year 8 girls at one of their first Saturday hockey training sessions.



October 2019

Year 12 GCSE Geography pupils participated in a fieldwork Trip.

Year 13 English Literature students enjoyed a trip to the Seamus Heaney Centre in Bellaghy.

Years 8, 10, 12 and 13 attended 'Love for Life' talks in the WH Mol Assembly Hall.

Year 11 Parents' Information Evening in Assembly Hall.

Year 13 Health and Social Care placements took place.

Year 13 Parents' Information Evening in Assembly Hall.

Some pupils from Years 12-14 participated in a Costume Design workshop.

'Aware, Defeat, Depression.' presentation for Year 11 pupils took place in school.

Year 13 pupils participated in a 'film regulation' workshop.

Senior CU members had an action-packed, fun weekend at Castlewellan Castle.

Ballymena Academy pupils took part in Ulster Schools' Swimming Gala at Bangor Aurora Centre.

Ballymena Academy Year 14 pupils participated in a multi-stage Assessment Programme, which is based on current employer recruitment procedures in Northern Ireland. This was organised by 'Eye4Education' consultancy firm.

The Queenie McMullan Public Speaking Competition was held at school on 10th October.

Art students visited galleries in London as part of their studies for 'A' Level.

In June 2019, Year 8 pupils raised £5750.95 in aid of Action MS, proceeds from their sponsored walk. Mrs Ann Walker, Action MS

Chief Executive, visited school for a special presentation to thank the pupils for their tremendous fundraising effort.

Professor Liz Grant was the speaker on Prize Day.



Year 14 boys pictured before their Eye4Education assessment interview.



Fundraising proceeds from Action MS Walk in Portglenone Forest presented to Chief Executive, Mrs. Ann Walker.



Pupils and parents enjoying afternoon tea after Prize Day in the school canteen.

School Diary 2019–2020

November 2019

A 'Parents and Friends of Ballymena Academy' Information Event took place on Tuesday 5th November 7.30 p.m. in the Sixth Form Centre.

Year 12 Parents' Consultation afternoon.

Pupils participated in 'Remembrance Assemblies'.

Ballymena Academy Players presented a fantastic production of 'Bugsy Malone' over three nights in W.H. Mol Assembly Hall.

Young rugby players enjoyed the Junior Rugby Camp.

Year 13 pupils attended the PSNI 'Road Safe Roadshow' in Cambridge House.

Parents, pupils and staff contributed to the Annual Shoebox Appeal, organised by Samaritan's Purse. The school donated 128 Christmas boxes!



Pupils organise shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child Appeal 2019.

The Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition was held on Thursday 7th November in The Braid Arts Centre.

Ryan Irwin and Katie Agnew (both Year 14), Rachel McCartney & Luke Gregg (both Year 13) took part in the UKMT Senior Team Maths Challenge at St. Malachy's College, Belfast on Friday 8th November. The Ballymena Academy team members were delighted to come a creditable 5th place out of 16 teams.

Common Entrance Assessments took place in school on 9th, 23rd and 30th November.

Y.E.S. created sustainable, plastic-free Christmas decorations, available to purchase at the Past Pupils' Christmas Fair on Saturday 7th December.

The Charity Committee sold donuts, pin badges and wristbands for



Charity Committee selling donuts, badges and wristbands for Children in Need.

Children in Need. A fantastic £600 was raised.

Ballymena Academy pledged support for the #iwill campaign! #iwill week ran from the 18th-24th November. School recognised the initiative by holding assemblies to highlight the 'volunteering work' of Year 13 and Year 14 students.

Some Year 11 pupils attended a PwC Digital Enterprise and Innovation Workshop at The Braid Arts Centre, organised by Mid and East Antrim group, PwC and Sentinus.

'Eye4Education' provided feedback on their October assessment to Year 14 pupils. Stuart McNeill, Jacob Buchanan, Ryan Irwin, Matthew Jackson and Matthew Poston were highly commended on their scores.

Junior CU members enjoyed a fun-filled and informative weekend at Castlewellan Castle.



Eye4Education Assessment feedback and winners announced to Year 14.



Cast and backstage crew of the phenomenal "Bugsy Malone" production.

December 2019

Year 12 pupils attended a drug and alcohol talk, organised by Start 360.

The Medallion XV defeated Wallace High School 36-0.

The P.P.A Christmas Fair, which featured a 'Show-Stopper Cake Competition' and fashion show, was well attended. Musical entertainment was provided by pupils and staff of the Music Department.

The Talent Show was a well-attended, exciting, successful evening which showcased a wide range of diverse talent, boy bands, Bollywood dancing and individual entertainers.

The popular Christmas Carol Services in St. Patrick's Church were well attended by pupils and their families.

Junior School pupils enjoyed their Christmas Party and fun activities.

Ballymena Academy Foundation held its first Networking Breakfast in the offices of Cleaver Fulton Rankin, Belfast. Friends and alumni gathered over a buffet breakfast, provided by Jane's Kitchen and were entertained by Stephen Walker, BBC NI.

The Rotary Club Appeal 'Gifts for the Elderly' was well supported by pupils.

Local primary school pupils enjoyed the Christmas Concert organised by the Music Department, during the school day. Another performance for parents took place on the same evening. Refreshments were provided by the Parents and Friends of Ballymena Academy Group.

Junior CU pupils raised a fantastic £136 at their Christmas party and fun night. This money was used to purchase gifts from 'Christian Aid', which were sent to people in developing countries, on behalf of the school. Areas of specific need were targeted.



Medallion XV defeated Wallace High School 36-0



B.A. Networking Breakfast in Belfast.



B.A. Talent Show.

School Diary 2019–2020

January 2020

The 1stXI beat Regent House 3-0 in the 3rd round of the Belfast Telegraph Schools' Cup.

Some Year 9 pupils attended the Action MS Awards luncheon in Belfast.

The annual Open Nights on Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th January were well attended by prospective pupils and their parents.

Junior School pupils eagerly participated in the Annual 'Readon' event, organised by Mrs. Murray. This worthwhile activity promotes the importance



Junior School pupils enjoying the Annual ReadOn Event for the N. I. Cancer Fund for Children.

of reading for pleasure and supports The Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children, as the pupils are sponsored for every book they read. Over the last few years, Ballymena Academy has raised over £50,000 for the charity and we thank the pupils who read the books and the parents who give so generously every year. The total raised this year was a super £8,410 - the highest amount raised by any school in Northern Ireland.

Year 8 Parents' Consultation afternoon.

Some Year 13 pupils attended the Stranmillis College Open Day.

Three Year 11 girls participated in The Aberdeen Angus Youth Challenge.

Ballymena Academy hosted Primary school Principals' lunch.

Many congratulations to Ethan McCormac (Year 11) who won 'Young Sailor of the Year 2019' at RYA Annual Dinner Awards.

Before the 1stXI School's Cup Quarter Final Match, away to

Omagh Academy, the girls received a boost with a visit from team sponsors Katherine and Sara from Jane's Kitchen. Both girls were past members of BA 1stXI and have many happy memories of playing in the school colours. Jane's Kitchen also provided goal-keepers' kits for Junior Hockey teams during the season. The school greatly appreciates their continued support.

Teams made up of four P7 pupils from twelve local primary schools took part in the 'Primary Team Maths Challenge', organised by Mrs. Wilson and Y14 Maths Mentors.



Primary Team Maths Challenge in the Assembly Hall

Queen's University Talk for Year 13 pupils.



1st XI defeated Regent House 3-0



February 2020

Colliers International hosted a BA Foundation Networking event in their Belfast offices. Special guests for the evening were Ulster Rugby CEO, Jonny Petrie and former Ulster star and past pupil, Ian Humphreys.

Professor Tom Moody from the Almac Group addressed some Sixth Form Pupils. He is the Vice President of Technology Development and Commercialisation at Almac Sciences. He gave a fascinating talk, providing the students with an insight into some of the incredible work which shows how the "Science of DNA" can aid many world problems, including sustainability, data storage and the fight against hunger, disease and pollution.



Professor Tom Moody from Almac Sciences with Year 14 pupils.

Year 10 Careers' Convention was well attended.

Year 10 Parents' Consultation evening and briefing.

Year 10 G.C.S.E subject choice interviews took place in the Assembly Hall.

Year 13 Parents' Consultation afternoon and briefing.

Some Year 9 and 10 pupils attended a 'Digital DNA Applinventor' training course.

NRC Apprenticeship Event was attended by some Year 12 pupils.

Pupils from Years 10, 11 and 12 attended the UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge.

Some pupils from Years 8 and 9 attended The Lego Robotics Regional Final.

Sixteen Year 9 girls participated in the NCSC Cyberfirst girls' competition. After completing an online round of problem-solving challenges, Amy Baird and Sara Beggs were one of 9 teams from NI to qualify for the UK semi-final.

Some Year 11 girls participated in the Ulster Hockey Young Umpires' course.

Some Senior School pupils visited the CCEA True Colours Exhibition in the Ulster Museum, Belfast to view Matthew Jackson's fantastic artwork.

A group of Year 14 pupils attended the 'Here2Help Roadshow'.

Year 8 attended Chinese New Year workshops, organised in conjunction with the Confucius Institute.

Luke Gregg (Year 13) was awarded a place in the prestigious Ulster Youth Orchestra after successfully auditioning in December. Luke continues a Ballymena Academy tradition and joins Cameron and Caoilin Olphert. The UYO is composed of the province's top young instrumentalists and is conducted by internationally acclaimed Italian conductor Daniele Rustioni.



Hockey Coaching Clinic at school, with special sporting guests

BA Foundation hosted a Schools' Cup Breakfast in the Sixth Form Centre and a total of £350 was raised for School funds.



Past pupils enjoying a fundraising Schools' Cup Breakfast

Pupils from all year groups enthusiastically participated in the Ballymena Music Festival and enjoyed much success in many categories. The Ballymena Academy Chamber Choir swept the boards, winning all the Senior Youth Choir classes and taking home the prize bursary for overall best performance. Senior Strings won a 2nd place, 1st place and a bursary for the Overall Best Orchestra.

At the end of February, Miss D. McNeill, Ballymena Academy Head of Hockey, welcomed 25 Hockey coaches from across the North Eastern area to a 'Hockey Coaching Clinic' at school, to share best practice and learn from some of the greats in the world of Irish Hockey: Ireland's most capped sportsman, Shirley McCay, Ireland Women's Hockey player Megan Frazer and the Ireland Women's Hockey Assistant Coach, Gareth Grundie.

Some Year 10 pupils participated in a Technology Competition, organised by Rotary, NRC and Sentinus.

March 2020

Year 11 Parents' Consultation afternoon.

Modern Scottish Universities' presentation to Year 13 took place in the Careers Room.

The 4th XI played in a Cup Final at Stormont.

3rd XV played in a Cup Final at Roughfort, Belfast.

Year 13 English Literature pupils attended a lecture at The Seamus Heaney Centre, Bellaghy.

Some pupils in Year 13 participated in an Irish Language week event.

Some Senior pupils visited Greenmount Agricultural College.

Former pupil, David Johnston, founder of 'Outside In' brand, talked to Year 9 pupils about Homelessness.

Representatives from Guide Dogs NI attended Year 8 Form Assembly and were presented with a cheque for £420 (proceeds from a successful Doughnut Sale in school). Quaver, a retired guide dog, accompanied the ladies.

Aware NI recognised Ballymena Academy as one of a 'leading' number of schools across Northern



"Aware" Mental Health Award for Ballymena Academy.

Ireland, for its contribution to the promotion of mental health and well-being amongst pupils. The ceremony took place at the Titanic Building in Belfast and the award was presented by Paulo Ross, (an Ambassador of Aware NI) to Mr. Stephen Johnston. The school has been investing time and resources to promote pupil mental health and well-being, through mental health workshops and staff training.

At the beginning of March, Invest NI London Hub hosted a Ballymena Academy Foundation networking event. Many past pupils re-connected with the school. The



London Networking Event.



£420 cheque presented to Guide Dogs NI.

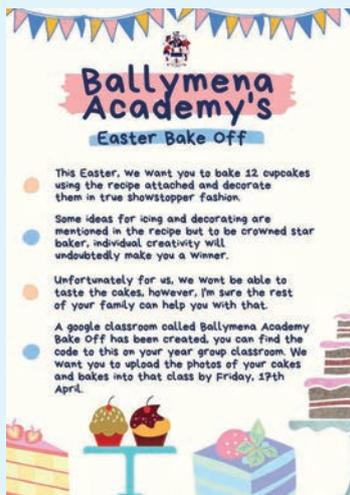
school is incredibly thankful for the support of its alumni and their enthusiasm for helping in the future development of the Academy.

As we are all aware, the coronavirus pandemic led to schools closing their doors to the majority of pupils, apart from children of key workers. Although most B.A. staff and pupils were not in the building, the sense of community and learning still continued as pupils and teachers adapted to Google Classroom for the purposes of teaching and learning.



One way the lines of communication were maintained, despite staff and pupils working remotely, was through the school Facebook page and Twitter account. Fun competitions, game suggestions and tips for improving mental health were frequently posted on this platform and provided an invaluable focal point for past and present pupils alike to stay in touch with the school community.

Over the Easter break, school provided fun activities, for example: Great Easter Bake off Challenge. A series of Creative challenges linked to Science, Art and Craft.



B.A. Easter Bake off!



Sample of the B.A. Easter Design Challenges!



Mr. Pedlow handing over PPE donated from Ballymena Academy to Dr. Humphreys for Antrim Area Hospital.

Ballymena Academy was delighted to donate 400 safety goggles and other safety equipment to the COVID-19 response team. This equipment was taken to the pharmacy at Antrim Area Hospital to be distributed around the hospital and community teams.

Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Pedlow



Mr. Armstrong helping to source PPE from school to donate to the staff in Antrim Area hospital and community teams.

gathered the safety equipment and one of our parents, Dr. Ruth Humphreys organised the transfer to the hospital.

During the Easter holidays, the Technology Department made visors using a 3D printer. These were passed on to protect those on the front line of the Coronavirus pandemic.



Visors made for frontline workers by the Technology Department using their 3D printer.

Pupil Achievements

May 2019-March 2020

External Examinations

At G.C.S.E. level six young people achieved 9 A* grades – James Craig, Rachel Gillan, Rachel McCartney, Erin McCurdy, Eve Patterson, and Hannah Reid.

36 pupils achieved a minimum of 9 A*/A grades – Katie Alexander, Cameron Bailes, Tim Bailie, Holly Boyd, Patrick Browne, Richard Carson, Ashleigh Church, Jonathan Cochrane, Jackson Darragh, Naomi Dickey, Molly Drennan, Grace Francey, Matthew French, Megan Gordon, David Heaney, Oliver Hunt, Ellen Lackermeier, Andrew Lawther, Robert Mark, Sarah McBride, Anna McCaig, Jonathan McCullough, Joshua McIlhagga, Beth McIlrath, Kathy McIlveen, Lucy McKane, Hannah McKibbin, Abbie Millar, Grace Moore, Zara Mulholland, Kaden Patterson, Grace Reid, Hollie Stirling, Katherine Stronge, Tori Surgeoner and Rachel Wilson.

They were closely followed by a further 22 young people with a minimum of 8 A*/A grades – Brooke Arbuthnot, James Cahoon, Odhran Cosgrove, Amy Cunningham, Esther Davison, Daniel Elliott, Katie Glass, Luke Gregg, Ailsa Hamill, Sarah Holland, Rachel Kennedy, Sophie Kennedy, Jacob Loughridge, Emma McGahey, James McLean, Maria Olteanu, Alice Rodgers, Hope Snoddy, William Snowden, Katie Stevenson, Rebekah Strahan and Hannah Wylie.

Finally, 15 pupils obtained a minimum of 7 A*/A grades – Harry Andrews, Peter Armstrong, Corey Clail, Taylor Crabbe, Joshua Drain, Robert Greer, Jack Guild, Adam Lamont, Kerry Laverty, Richard Mallon, Emma Mark, Nigel Moore, Daniel Pyper, James Ross and Victoria Turtle.

At A Level two pupils obtained 4 A* grades – Aaron Clinton and Michael Gregg.

A further six pupils obtained a combination of 4 A*/A grades – Michael Allen, Timothy Day, Alissa Forsythe, Michael O'Neill, Amanda Robinson and Kirill Sakharov.

A further thirty-seven pupils each obtained a minimum of 3 A*/A grades – Ciara Anderson, Harry Bill, James Brown, Rachel Brown, Juliet Cameron, Susanna Crabbe, Adam Dickey, Anna Doherty, Martyn Doherty, Patrick Doherty, Crawford Fairfield, Anna Gordon, Beth Herbison, Ruth Hoey, Jonathan Hogg, Jonathan Hunter, Oisín Jordan, Sarah Logan, Rachael Macaulay, Lydia Manson, Jenny McAlister, Sophie McAllister, Ellen McAuley, Elizabeth McCartney, Anna McGahey, Ruth McKane, Olivia McMaster, Sarah McNabney, Hannah L. Millar, Adam Morrison, James Poston, Ben Pyper, Suzanne Reid, Alex Richmond, Matt Smith, Anisia Tiplea and Jack Turner.

Top candidate placings CCEA 2019:

Juliet Cameron –
1st Place GCE A Level History

Sophie Gaston –
1st Place GCE A Level History

Jonathan Hogg –
1st Place GCE A Level Mathematics

Michael Gregg –
1st Place GCE A Level Physics

Martyn Doherty –
1st Place GCE A Level Spanish

James Craig –
1st Place GCSE Biology

Matthew Orr –
1st Place GCSE Construction

Grace Moore –
1st Place GCSE Music

Michael Gregg –
2nd Place GCE Chemistry

Tim Bailie –
2nd Place Construction

Rachel McCartney –
2nd Place GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

2nd Place Digital Technology Multimedia

Joshua McIlhagga –
2nd Place GCSE History

Grace Moore –
2nd Place GCSE Single Award Science

Michael Allen –
3rd Place GCE A Level Digital Technology

Richard Carson –
3rd Place GCSE Construction

Kathryn Alexander –
3rd Place GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

CITB Awards for GCSE Construction were presented to three pupils from Ballymena Academy at an event held at CITB NI, Nutts Corner Training Centre.

At the presentation of the Hans Sloane awards at the Ulster Museum, James Craig was recognised at the 3rd prize-winner in the Sloane McClay GCSE Award. This award is based on the cumulative score attained across GCSE Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics by all students in Northern Ireland.

Michael Gregg received the 'Institute of Physics Ireland medal' for obtaining the highest marks in NI 'A' Level Physics 2019. The Awards Ceremony took place in the Thomas Prior Room, RDS Members Club, Ballsbridge, Dublin.

P.F. Martin Awards were presented in February to eight pupils for being placed in the top 3 in Northern Ireland in various GCSE Examinations (Summer 2019): Katie Alexander, Tim Bailie, Richard Carson, James Craig, Rachel McCartney, Joshua McIlhagga, Grace Moore, Matthew Orr.

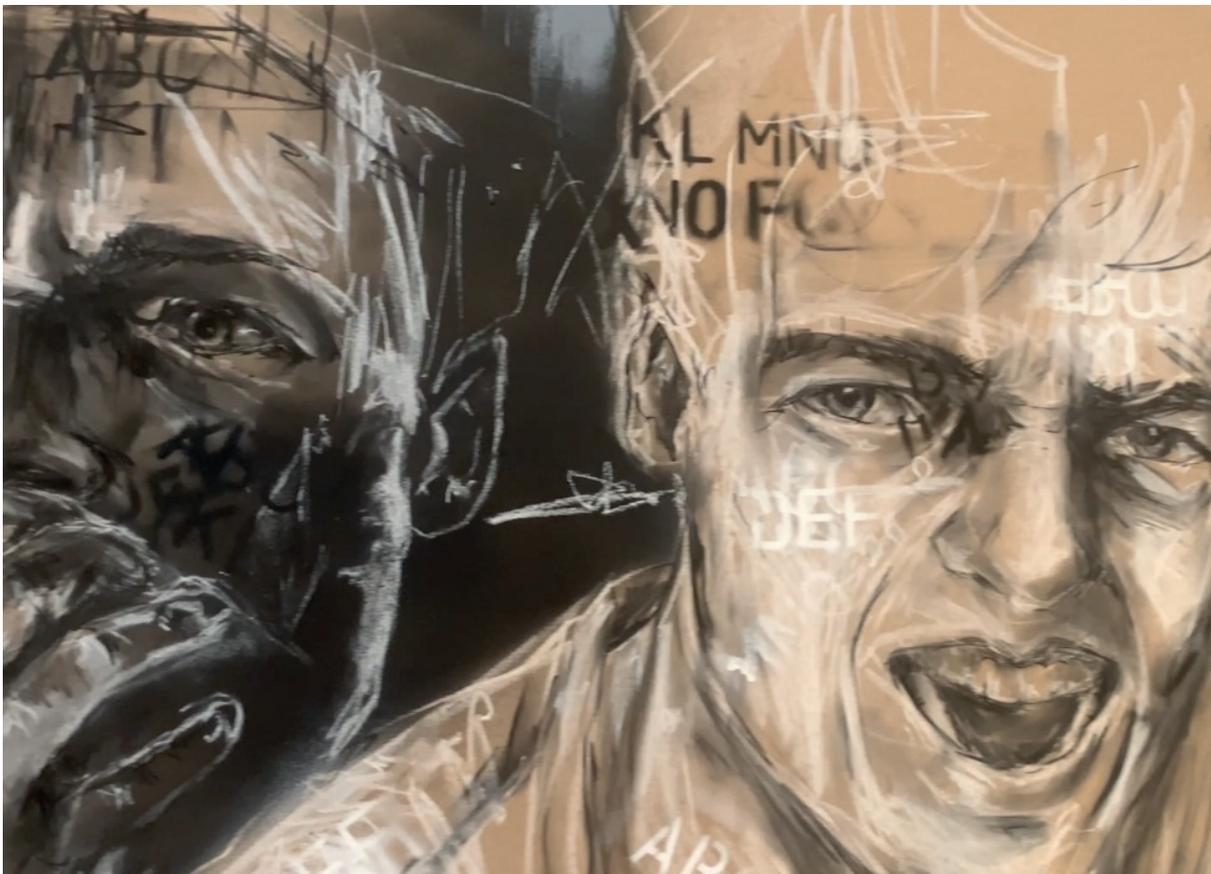
Matthew Jackson's fantastic 'AS' Level artwork was chosen for the CCEA True Colours Exhibition in the Ulster Museum, Belfast. His theme was 'Highlighting Social Issues'.



The Braid



P.F. Martin Achievement Award winners for their performance in G.C.S.E summer exams 2019.



A panel of Matthew Jackson's art work on display the True Colours Exhibition at the Ulster Museum.

Pupil Achievements

The School of Mathematics and Physics, Queen's University Belfast, presented certificates to four pupils for their participation in an event during December 2019. The pupils were: James Craig, Ryan Irwin, Stuart McDowell and Daniel Puper.

Amanda Robinson (Year 14 – 2018-19) was awarded the J.P. McManus All-Ireland Scholarship based on her achievements in the 2019 'A' Levels.

Sporting Achievements

18 pupils were selected to participate in the Ulster Rugby Age Grade Squads: -

- U.19 Matthew Corr
 U.18 Harry Andrews, Tim Bailie, Patrick Browne, Jonathan Cochrane, Adam Lamont, Joseph Mawhinney, Ross McKay, Dean Millar, Jordan Millar, Henry Moore, James Wright.

- U.17 Timothy Douglas, Josh Drain, Matthew French, Connor Louw, Harry Marcus.

Patrick Browne, Joseph Mawhinney, Ross McKay and James Wright attended the IRFU High Performance Camp in Dublin for the "Irish Schools U18" and "Irish Clubs and Schools U18" squads.

Jonathan Cochrane (Year 12) was selected to participate in a Training Camp for the Ireland Under 18 7's Rugby Squad.

Ballymena Academy 1st XV beat Methodist College 1st XV (22 - 14) in the annual fixture for the Allan Young Cup. Mr. Bob Young presented the Allan Young Cup to Matthew Corr, 1st XV captain.

BA 1st XV defeated Down High School in the Schools' Cup before losing narrowly to Armagh in the quarter final.

The Medallion XV defeated Belfast High School in Round 4 of The Medallion Shield before losing 22-15 to Royal School, Armagh in the Quarter Final match.

BA 2nd XV defeated Bangor Grammar School in Round 4 of the competition before losing to Royal School, Armagh 8-0 in the Quarter Final.

BA 3rd XV reached the final of the 3rd XV Trophy before losing to a strong MCB side.

The 1st XI defeated Regent House 3 - 0 in the 3rd Round of the Belfast Telegraph Schools' Cup before losing narrowly in the quarter final to Omagh Academy.

BA 2nd XI defeated B.R.A. 1 - 0 in the McDowell Cup Quarter-Final.

BA 4th XI defeated Strathearn 1 - 0 in their Cup Semi-Final.

The 1st XI qualified for the Quarter-Final of the Super League,



1st XV won the Young Cup, defeating Methody 21-14.



U13A XI won the Derry and Antrim Hockey Tournament.

being placed runners-up in their group. In the group stages, the 1st XI defeated Coleraine Grammar, Dalriada School and Glendlola Collegiate.

Alex Henry-McCool was a member of the Ulster U.16 Hockey Squad which won the Schools' Inter-Provincial Competition in Cork. Alex was then selected for the Ireland U16 Training Panel in preparation for the International Games.

The U.13A XI Hockey won the Derry and Antrim Tournament, held at Ballymena Academy. In the group stages, the team dominated all their games. Dalriada were their opponents in the Final and Lucy McAllister scored the winning goal. Year 8 Team Osaka were runners-up in the NEBSSA Hockey Tournament. In their group games, they had two wins and two draws before defeating Dalriada in the Semi-Final.

Following nomination, Jonathan Cochrane and Ethan McCormac were shortlisted for Junior Sportsperson of the Year at the Mid and East Antrim Sports Awards. The Golf Team were shortlisted for the Best Sporting Team Performance of the year.

The Senior Girls' Cross-Country Team were awarded the Best Sporting Team Performance of the Year.

Kirill Sakharov (Year 14) became World Champion for his age/weight in powerlifting at the World Class Powerlifting Championships held in Helsingborg, Sweden.

Mark Glenn (Year 10) came 6th in the Ulster Schools' Minor Boys' Multi-Event Championship.

In the NEBSSA Athletics Finals Ballymena Academy pupils won 11 Gold, 8 Silver and 9 Bronze

Medals. Etain McGuckian equalled The Competition Record for the under 15 Girls' 200 Metres.

Ballymena Academy brought home 7 trophies. The U13 (Year 8) Boys' team finished 2nd overall, the U14 (Year 9) Boys' team finished 1st overall, the U15 (Year 10) Girls' team finished 2nd overall. The U15 (Year 10) Boys' team finished 2nd overall and the U16 (Year 11) Girls' team finished 2nd overall.

Ballymena Academy Girls were placed 3rd overall and the Boys were placed 2nd overall. At the Ulster Schools' Athletics Championship Gold Medal winners were:- Etain McGuckian in the Junior Girls' 100m and 200m (Etain also secured 1st place in the Junior Girls' 100m Relay alongside Rachel Cochrane, Tory Hopkins, Elke Hamilton), Jonathan Cochrane in the Intermediate Boys' Triple Jump and Long Jump, James Wright in the Intermediate Boys' Javelin,

Pupil Achievements



Kirill Sakharov won the "Powerlifting World Championship" in Sweden.

Joseph Mawhinney in the Intermediate Boys' Discus, Jamie Paul in the Intermediate Boys' Pole Vault and Adam Kirkpatrick in the Senior Boys' Shot. The Intermediate Boys were crowned Overall Champions in Ulster for their age group, winning the Ulster Schools' Athletics Cup for the second consecutive year.

At the All-Ireland Schools' Track and Field Championships Etain McGuckian (Year 10) came 3rd in the 100m and 200m races. Conor Drain (Year 10) came 3rd in the Triple Jump. Jonathan Cochrane (Year 12) came 1st in the Long Jump and 4th in the Triple Jump.

Joseph Mawhinney (Year 12) came 7th in the Intermediate Boys' Discus and 4th in the Shot. James

Wright (Year 12) came 2nd in the Javelin. Jamie Paul (Year 11) came 8th in the Pole Vault and Adam Kirkpatrick (Year 14) came 6th in the Senior Shot Putt. The Junior Girls' Relay team consisting of Rachel Cochrane, Tory Hopkins, Elke Hamilton and Etain McGuckian. came 2nd in 4x100m race.

The school's overall medal tally consisted of: Gold – 1, Silver – 2 and Bronze – 3. Etain McGuckian, James Wright, Jonathan Cochrane, Joseph Mawhinney, Jamie Paul, Adam Lamont and Christian Drennan all represented Ulster in the Schools' Interprovincial Championships.

Hannah Woolsey was placed 4th in the Open One Metre Individual class out of 30 competitors at the

Inter-Schools' Showjumping Competition. The team of Myah McClean, Tori Surgeoner, Hannah Woolsey and Charlotte Wylie were placed 7th out of 18 teams. The Open Team was placed 3rd out of a strong selection of N.I. School Teams. The team was: Myah McClean, Hannah Woolsey, Tori Surgeoner and Charlotte Wylie. Tori was also placed 2nd in the 1 Metre 10 class.

The Show Jumping Team of Myah McClean, Hannah Woolsey and Charlotte Wylie was placed 3rd at the Meadows Inter-Schools Competition in the Open One Metre Class. In the previous competition Hannah was placed 4th in the Open Individual Class.

Jo Henry McCool, Tori Surgeoner, Hannah Woolsey and Charlotte





The Intermediate Boys were crowned overall champions in Ulster for their age group, winning the Ulster Schools Athletics Cup at the Ulster Schools' Athletics Championships.

Wylie were placed 1st in an Inter-Schools' Show Jumping Competition, out of 15 teams from across Northern Ireland. The team was placed 2nd overall in the Winter League Final out of 20 schools competing.

Oonagh Lamont (Year 10) won the 100m Breaststroke at the Ulster Long Course Swimming Championships.

The Ulster Schools' Swimming Gala took place in October. Some pupils were successful in reaching the Finals of various competitions and special congratulations go to Oonagh Lamont (4th in 100m Breaststroke) and Aaron Caskey (3rd in 50m Butterfly).

BA U.16 Football won the Mid-Antrim Schools' Cup after defeating Dunclug College 3-1.

Ethan McCormac was named RYA Young Sailor of the Year 2019, at the RYA Annual Dinner.

At the District Cross Country Championships held in Stranorlar, Donegal, two teams and two individual competitors were successful in qualifying for the Ulster Championships. Ana Martinez qualified in the Junior Girls' race, and Sophie McCluney qualified in the Intermediate Girls' race. The Mini Boys' team came 2nd overall, and the Minor Boys' team came 1st overall. Mini Boys' team: Ben Collins, Ollie Collins,

Charlie Hargy, Charlie Kelly, Lucas Kenny, Jack McCombe, Seth Park, James Robinson. Minor Boys' team: Thomas Evans, Samuel Francey, Peter Gamble, James Gregg, Robbie Mather, Fintan Steele, Tom Wylie.

Ballymena Academy was placed third overall in the NEBSSA Cross-Country Championships 2019, with several outstanding team and individual performances. The Year 8 Boys' team was placed 1st, with Lucas Kenny coming 3rd overall. The Year 9 Boys' team was placed 1st. The Senior Boys' team was placed 1st, with Owen Johnston coming 2nd overall. The Senior Girls' team was placed

Pupil Achievements



The Braid



Intermediate Swimming Team of Aimee Hill, Oonagh Lamont, Sophie Leetch and Samuel Wainwright who took part in the Ulster Schools Swimming Gala. A special congratulations to Oonagh Lamont who finished 4th in the 100m Breaststroke and Sophie Leetch who made her first final in the 100 Breaststroke.



Ethan McCormac, Young Sailor of the Year.

2nd, with Sophie McCluney coming 1st overall. Ana Martinez was 3rd in the Year 10 Girls' race.

Other Achievements

Andrew Nelson (Year 11) competed at the All-Ireland Pipe Band Championships in Lusk and won the Under16 All-Ireland Solo Champion Award.

Over the summer 2019, several students from Years 8 and 9 participated in the WTRA International Robotics Competition at Queen's University, organised by Sentinus. Arthur Church, Lydia Gregg, Reuben Hamill, Natalie McCullough, Lewis Miller, Rachel Steele, Jamie Sims, Jamie Stewart and Jessica Wilson were outstanding ambassadors for Ballymena Academy - high praise from the Chief executive of Sentinus.

Patrick Kerr (Year 11) was selected to represent the N.I. Sea Cadets in the Trafalgar Day Parade in London.

P.F. Martin Achievement Awards were presented to 40 pupils for achievement in Sport, Music, Drama and Science- related activities.

Mrs. Ann Laughlin and Mr. Ian McIlrath were the adjudicators at the Annual Queenie McMullan Public Speaking Competition, held in the school Boardroom. Amy Gregg won the Queenie McMullan Cup for the Best Overall Speaker.

Mercedez Faustin-Clenaghan was Highly Commended in the Overall Section. Jonathan Grimsley won the Linda Hunter Cup for Best Novice. Katie McDonnell was Highly Commended.

Ballymena Academy Chess Club members took part in the Ulster Schools' Chess Championships:- Thomas Arthur (Year 14) – 3rd in the U19 competition, William McCartney (Year 12) – 1st in the U16 competition, David Gordon (Year 11) – 2nd in the U16 competition, Alex Buchanan (Year 11) – 3rd in the U16 competition and Rebecca McCartney (Year 8) – 3rd in the U14 competition.

Alex Balmer, Ella Calderwood, Sam Frew and Jack Mills acted as radio presenters at Radio Cracker prior to the Christmas holidays. Representatives of Radio Cracker passed on thanks to the school and to the presenters, stating that they “showed a high degree of professionalism and organisation”. Radio Cracker raised £51,000 before Christmas for various charities.

The Senior Maths Challenge Team was placed 5th in the Belfast Regional Final out of an entry of 16 schools. Team members Katie Agnew and Ryan Irwin (Yr. 14),



Luke Gregg was awarded a place in the Ulster Youth Orchestra

Luke Gregg and Rachel McCartney (Yr.13).

Naomi Dickey (Year 13) won the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition held in the Braid Arts Centre. Alice Rodgers (Year 13) was placed 3rd.

Three Year 11 pupils, Beth Hanna, Jessica Livingstone and Rebekah Robinson qualified for the Semi-Final of the ABP Aberdeen Angus Youth Challenge Exhibition at Loughry College.

Ballymena Academy took part in the prestigious Bar Mock Trial at Londonderry Courthouse. The pupils competed against Lumen Christi, Thornhill College and Foyle College in the draw. Jonathan Grimsley (Year 10) was named as the ‘best witness’ on the day. The school team consisted of Linzi Bell, Georgia Carson, Mercedez Faustin-Clenaghan, Katie Glass, Megan

Gordon, Charlotte Gourley, Jonathan Grimsley, Matthew Grimsley, Anna Maybin, David McClintock, Joshua McIlhagga, Kathy McIlveen and Abbie Millar.

Luke Gregg (Year 13) was awarded a place in the prestigious Ulster Youth Orchestra, after successfully auditioning in December. Luke continues a tradition at Ballymena Academy of achieving places – he joins Cameron Olphert and Caoilin Olphert, who are already members of the U.Y.O.

The Ballymena Academy Chamber Choir swept the boards at Ballymena Festival, winning all the Senior Youth Choir Classes and taking home the prize bursary for Best Overall Performance. The Senior Strings, under the tutelage of Ms. Durston, was delighted to win 2nd place, 1st place and bursary for Best Overall Orchestra.

In Memoriam

Mr. Jimmy Boyle

The word legend has become overused and often misused in recent times. Sports teams are legends after one good season, film stars after one great movie and Reality T.V. stars simply declare themselves 'legends'. There are some people however, who truly deserve the title. For Ballymena Academy pupils and staff, Jimmy Boyle was without doubt a legend. Of course, Jimmy would have hated that title. He'd have been far happier recounting some of the local legends or historical stories he was so adept at telling. What a storyteller he was!

Jimmy entered the school as a pupil in 1950, returned as a teacher in 1963 and only escaped in the year 2000 upon his retirement. He used to joke that you could trace his life's decline in the sports pictures that hang on the corridor walls. In one sense this was true, as no man ever gave more to the wider life of Ballymena Academy than Jimmy Boyle. During his first five years as a member of staff, he assisted George Mitchell in coaching the 1st XV, before becoming the Head Coach himself and leading the Academy to a never-to-be-forgotten Schools' Cup victory in 1972.

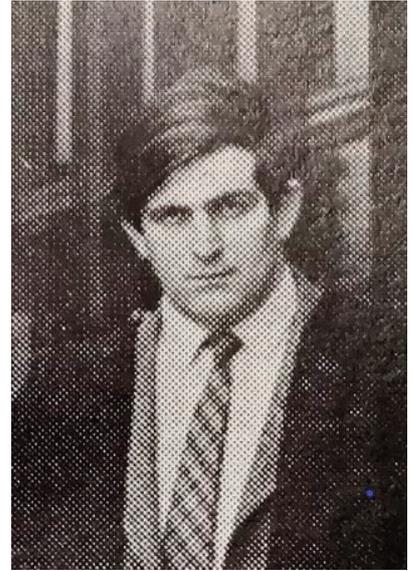
Remarkably he was also coach of the school 1st XI Cricket Team during the same period. It is worth remembering that he was actually employed as a full-time history teacher! Jimmy was a superb sportsman yet, like so many of his talents, he wore it lightly. He was never one to seek the limelight or praise, and was happiest enabling others to shine – perhaps that was why he made such an outstanding sports coach and history teacher? Throughout his long career in the school he continued to offer his coaching, refereeing and umpiring skills willingly. Even as he neared retirement, he would be found umpiring the U12 Boys' Cricket Team on a Saturday morning – weighed down by jumpers and chuckling to himself as the boys attempted to master that most complex of sports.

Jimmy was a simply outstanding historian. A voracious reader, he had

an in-depth understanding and knowledge of international events throughout the ages. As a local historian he was without equal and loved nothing more than sharing his wealth of stories about Ballymena and, of course, his beloved Buckna.

He was the person his colleagues would turn to for answers to their questions and inevitably his accurate response would be accompanied by some hilarious tale – not all of which could be repeated in the classroom. Jimmy was a teacher who could inspire the very best of minds, yet also connect with the most reluctant of young historians. He was at his finest when he was able to throw his feet up on the desk in Room 184, ask 'where were we yesterday?' and launch into his vast mental repository of historical knowledge and understanding. Jimmy was a true lover of History. He understood that the joy of the subject was in the characters and the stories. His A Level classes were spellbound by a mind that could teach the most complex of issues with clarity, eloquence and, of course, his customary good humour. Even those who struggled to stay fully alert in his class were never embarrassed by Jimmy – he would gently wake them when the others had slipped away. As a teacher, he was an inspiration to his colleagues and pupils alike. He had a love for his subject and for his students, and devoted immense time and energy to both.

During the height of The Troubles, Jimmy was at the forefront in the school's cross-community exchange programme with Carrick-on-Suir. He led countless trips to the South and revelled in welcoming the visitors to Ballymena – there was no better tour guide than Jimmy Boyle! For Jimmy it did not matter who you were or where you came from, you deserved his time and his attention. He valued and accepted people for who they were. Jimmy treated the highest dignitary with the same respect (or disrespect!) as the smallest pupil in his Form 1 class. He was not impressed by people who were



Mr. Jimmy Boyle

impressed by themselves. Jimmy modelled true kindness and respect. He was not only a great teacher; he was a great man. Those of us who were lucky enough to work with him consider it to have been an honour. There was no better part of your day than to sit down beside Jimmy in the staffroom because, within moments, your shoulders would invariably be shaking with laughter. Many of us also experienced his tenderness and his support when we faced life's challenges. Jimmy was a man of great sensitivity, empathy and kindness. He may have hated being called it, but there is no doubt that Ballymena Academy lost a legend in the passing of Jimmy Boyle. His face continues to look down on us from those countless team photographs on the walls of the school and he will always be in our hearts and minds.

N. Patterson

Mr. Clive Jackson

It is impossible to fully convey the contribution Clive Jackson made to the life of Ballymena Academy. Clive took on the role of Head of Classics in 1980, after moving from Coleraine Academical Institution. This was a position he was to retain for a further twenty years and, in addition, he held the post of Head of Psychology for



ten years. He also spent twelve years as Head of Year and eight as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Clive was appointed as a Senior Teacher and served on the Board of Governors, as a teacher representative and then throughout his retirement. With such a vast range of roles and responsibilities it is easy to see how Clive Jackson made a difference in this school. Yet, those of us who knew him as a colleague and friend know that it was the way that Clive fulfilled these roles that explain his true impact on Ballymena Academy.

Clive was meticulous. His attention to detail and efficiency were legendary. If a policy was being created in school, then Clive was the man to proof-read and improve it. I'm not sure any of us escaped the red pen grammatical corrections he would make to our Staffroom notices – although he did at least switch to using a green pen in later years. Clive had a superb grasp and love of words and language, with an eloquence to match. His report card comments were often works of art, as was his handwriting, and in a few sentences he could capture the very essence of a pupil's attitude and endeavour (or lack of it!). Re-read some of his old school magazine articles and you will appreciate how gifted a writer he was.

Clive was sociable. In his role as Chair of the Ballymena Academy Staff Association, Clive created an organisation that was way ahead of its time in providing a forum for communication and support. He invested huge time and effort into BASA and, under his leadership, the organisation became invaluable in enhancing the staff community. The fact that it continues to play that same, vital role today is testament to his vision and endeavour. This forum also gave Clive many opportunities to speak on behalf of the staff, as colleagues retired or moved on to new jobs. It was always a joy to hear Clive speak publicly, every word of his speech carefully crafted and delivered with precision and poise.



Mr. Clive Jackson

He had that great skill of making people laugh without ever offending.

Clive was hilarious – 'so to speak' (© C. Jackson) He possessed a dry wit and a sharp mind, meaning that every meeting he attended was, at some point, enlivened by one of his asides. Those who had the opportunity to accompany him on school trips were especially blessed. Clive was tremendous company and thrived on meeting new people. Most lucky of all were the pupils who got to be in 'Jacko's group' on these trips – could anything have been better than having Clive as your leader when visiting Pompeii or Rome?

Clive was a sportsman. I think anyone who ever met Clive would know that he loved cricket. Throughout his time at the Academy, Clive coached cricket with passion and skill. He led the 1st XI for many years and the last time Ballymena Academy won the Schools' Cup was under Clive's leadership. Not only did Clive coach with skill and insight, but he also brought a great sense of fun and camaraderie to the teams he led. No one has contributed more to the life of Ballymena Academy Cricket than Clive Jackson. Yet Clive was also passionate about the health and wellbeing of every pupil at the school. This is perhaps most evident

when he, and fellow Governor Maurice Crabbe, led the introduction of a visionary Physical Recreation Strategy for Ballymena Academy. Long before other schools began to consider the health and wellbeing of their students, Clive had initiated a whole school approach to physical and mental health.

Clive was caring. Individual pupils, and their worries and concerns, mattered to Clive. He was interested in them as people and took seriously his role in their lives. As a Head of Year, he was dedicated and compassionate. He put the welfare of his students first and many experienced his willingness to listen to and support them in their time of need. When Clive promised to help with an issue, he always followed through.

Clive was a teacher. As is so often the case, the impact of a great teacher is not simply reflected in the grades attained by their pupils but in the love of the subject which they can inspire. His irrepressible enthusiasm and sense of humour made him the most fantastic of teachers. I'm sure seeing Clive sweep up the corridor in his gown might have intimidated many a first-year pupil, but soon they came to realise that Jackson's classes were a place to learn and to laugh. He even occasionally held a 'joke period', where pupils and, of course, Clive himself got to share their favourite jokes. Even the returning of exam marks became an opportunity for joy and hilarity. He taught with a genuine passion for Latin and Classical Civilisation, inspiring many of his pupils to hold a similar lifelong love of these subjects. Clive established and led the Classics Society and the Debating Society, providing opportunities for students to expand their knowledge, understanding and skills. Clive Jackson loved teaching and loved Ballymena Academy – his contribution to both was immense. We will miss him greatly.

N. Patterson

In Memoriam

Mr. Terry Flanagan

It is with genuine fondness and a tremendous sense of loss that the BA family remember a well-respected former member of staff, who sadly died in January 2020. Mr. Flanagan taught Religious Education in BA for almost 17 years, firstly as a young teacher and then he progressed to Head of the RE department. As a pupil, he attended Regent House School, before commencing his undergraduate studies at Magee College, Londonderry and completing them at Trinity College, Dublin. After graduation, he studied for a PGCE at Queen's University, Belfast. He then taught English, Bible Knowledge and Sports for 18 months in Koelel High School in Kenya with his wife, Betty. On his return to Northern Ireland he taught for 6 months in Antrim High School, before he commenced his job in Ballymena Academy, when Mr. Mol was Principal. Mr. Flanagan was a highly respected teacher with an enthusiastic and committed attitude towards his pupils. He was caring and supportive to pupils and fellow staff at times of difficulty or worry. He encouraged pupils to think laterally and independently, to develop life skills beyond the classroom environment and he constantly challenged his pupils to think for themselves. In 1984, Dr. David Johnston, present Chairman of the Board of Governors, travelled with a small group of pupils from Ballymena



Mr. Terry Flanagan

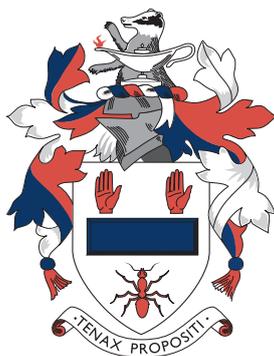
Academy Christian Union on a trip to Africa, which had been organised by Mr. Flanagan. The pupils and Mr. Flanagan worked in conjunction with SU Malawi for three weeks that summer. In addition to organising school trips, he established a cross-community educational exchange scheme with schools in Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary, which was a highly successful, unique initiative in those days.

As regards extra-curricular activities, he was in charge of the Christian Union in school and also coached Rugby. By the time he left the Academy to take up his new post as Principal of Lagan College in

1987, there were three well established Christian union groups in school; Junior, Intermediate and Senior Christian Union each had lively weekly meetings. After six years at Lagan College, Mr. Flanagan took up his final post as Headmaster of Rainey Endowed in 1993 and remained there until his retirement in 2002. Mr. Flanagan continued his deep interest in education during retirement when he became a member of the Board of Governors in Slemish College, Ballymena. He quietly provided leadership, support and vision for the Principal, staff, pupils and the local community.

Mr. Flanagan possessed an array of qualities and skills that now form part of his legacy – an ability to think outside the box, a desire to promote educational opportunities and equality of experiences for pupils and exemplary and visionary leadership, to name but a few. Indeed, the significant number of past pupils of Ballymena Academy who sought to reach out to Mrs. Flanagan after his death, is a testament to his influence on their lives and to his enduring legacy.

The Ballymena Academy school community send deepest sympathy to his wife, daughter, son and family circle.



School Notes

Welcome to the Braid 2020!

Admittedly, I could never have imagined the massive change in our world-wide circumstances that this year has brought. The coronavirus pandemic has impacted each of our lives to varying degrees, but it is clear that no-one has been left untouched by the far-reaching consequences of living through this moment of world history. Ballymena Academy, in line with government advice, closed its doors to pupils, except children of key workers, from Monday the 23rd of March. While the school building has been very quiet in the ensuing weeks and months, our sense of community and pupils' learning has not been stopped by this pandemic. Our classrooms may be online and the learning process looks very different to what it once did, but we are still all part of the Ballymena Academy family- a very special school family.

In this short letter at the beginning of the school magazine, I try to collate various achievements from the year that has just passed. But before I launch into my summary of all the wonderful and diverse accomplishments and accolades accumulated by the pupils in this past year, I believe an achievement that will long live on in Ballymena Academy's history is the care, dedication and perseverance shown by this school community in an unprecedented time. We were so disappointed that both our Year 12 and Year 14 pupils were not given the opportunity to say goodbye to their fellow classmates and friends before the Lockdown. For the Year 12, who are not planning to return to Ballymena Academy next year, but are pursuing other avenues of study and to our Year 14 who have left Ballymena Academy after seven years with us- every blessing to you all as you embark on the next stage of your life journey. Your Ballymena Academy family will always be here and we look forward to hearing all that you go on to achieve and all the ways you will endeavour to make others' lives better by using your gifts and skills in society and the workplace.

There have been numerous successes, both academic and co-curricular during the shortened year, with seventeen top exam score placements in Northern Ireland. For more details of these outstanding achievements, please refer to the Prize Day and Pupil Achievements sections.

In terms of sporting success, 2019-20 has proved to be an exceptionally good year in many respects. For more detail on individual and team successes in this arena, please refer to individual sport sections and the Pupil Achievements section.

In other areas of school life, our talented pupils and dedicated staff members continue to nurture their creative talents and gifts. From stunning performances at the School Carol Service in St. Patrick's to a multitude of awards at the Ballymena Festival, it is clear that our pupils are exceptionally gifted musically. During the Lockdown, several members of the Chamber Choir and Miss Wilkinson even participated in an Ireland wide "Blessing" which involved over 300 churches from across the island singing the stirring "Be Thou My Vision". The Chamber Choir also sang a moving rendition of

"Lean on Me" to accompany the 2020 Year 14 Leavers's video.

The School Players wowed crowds in November with the showstopping "Bugsy Malone", which was facilitated by hours of rehearsals and the dedication of the staff and pupils involved in all aspects of the production, not least Mrs Nelson, the Head of Drama, who worked tirelessly to ensure stellar rated performances.

In the Art Department, Matthew Jackson, now Year 13, had his G.C.S.E. Art and Design work exhibited at the prestigious True Colours Exhibition in the Ulster Museum. His piece highlighted issues facing young people at this time and in itself is a challenge to us all to engage with and seek to help those who are going through difficulties and not look the other way. What an achievement!

During the course of the coronavirus pandemic, caring for our neighbours has really come to be an integral part of survival and indeed many of those who were required to shield during Lockdown had to depend on the kindness of neighbours and friends to get them through this challenging time. This caring ethos has long been



Members of Ballymena Academy Chamber Choir with Miss Wilkinson who participated in the "Irish Blessing" during lockdown.



Ballymena Academy Cancer Research Committee 2019-2020.

embedded in Ballymena Academy with the Charity Committee, ably led by Miss Featherstone and Miss McAllister and the Cancer Research Committee, led by Mr. Blacoe and Mr. Ross. From donut sales, sponsored walks and a sell out 'Ballymena Academy's got Talent Show', the spirit of giving and generosity behind all these initiatives is a testament to the pupils and staff who make them happen.

The Millenium Volunteers Scheme continues to grow from strength to strength under the leadership of Miss Bassett. Volunteers gave their time to help in a wide range of contexts, from working in local care homes to volunteering in charity shops to taking part in mission teams abroad. I have no doubt that the pupils and those they were helping found this to be a blessing. The initiative certainly promotes the belief that we should seek to serve those around us with whatever gifts and talents we have been given. What an opportunity for our pupils to grow in character and selflessness!

There have been no retirements from the permanent staff this past year, however, Mr. Shields, left his position as Vice-Principal to take up a job in another field. We wish him all the best in his next career chapter.

Mr T. McLeister has taken up the reins as Acting Vice-Principal during this year.

Condolences must be extended to all those who have experienced bereavement in the past year. We pass on our heartfelt sympathies to Mrs. E. Stevenson on the death of her mother, Mrs. R. Reid, Mr. A. Moore and Mr. J. Andrews on the passing of their fathers. We were also deeply saddened to hear of the passing of past Ballymena Academy teachers during the year- Mr. Jimmy Boyle, Mr. Clive Jackson and Mr. Terry Flanagan. Our deepest sympathies go to their families and loved ones.

This past year has also heralded many "good news" stories- Mr. Munce married Kim last August, we wish them much happiness. Some families of our staff also grew throughout the year- Mr. K. Moore's baby daughter Lara arrived in late June 2019, Mrs Taggart welcomed her daughter Georgia in September, Mrs. Martinez welcomed a baby girl Ella in January 2020 and Mrs K. McCann and Mrs. A. Hannawin welcomed baby boys in May 2020 - both called Aidan! Every blessing to each of them and their loved ones.

This has certainly been an "interesting" year to edit and compile

the Braid magazine. The publication will look slightly different than usual, as we were unable to include official Team Photographs that are usually taken by Mr. J. McIlwaine. Thankfully, we have been able to include some that were taken during the Summer Term 2019. I would like to thank, as always, Miss M. Brown who helped me so much in co-ordinating the advertising side of the magazine and facilitating lots of other pieces of information being sent to me during "Lock down". Special thanks also to Mrs. R. Coulter, Miss H. Taylor, Mrs. J. Allen and Mr. D. Ross for all their efforts in collating the "Past Pupils" section for this year's magazine- not an easy task, given the circumstances.

I would like to thank Mrs. J. Connor and Mr. N. Patterson for their encouragement and moral support throughout this process and Mr. D. Ross for sourcing pictures.

Thanks as well to all the pupils who have submitted articles, artwork, poems, essays, speeches and pieces of media- without you this magazine wouldn't happen.

I hope you all have a blessed and safe summer 2020!

R. Hamilton.

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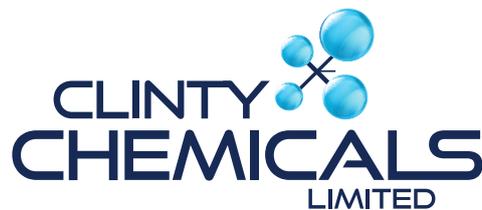
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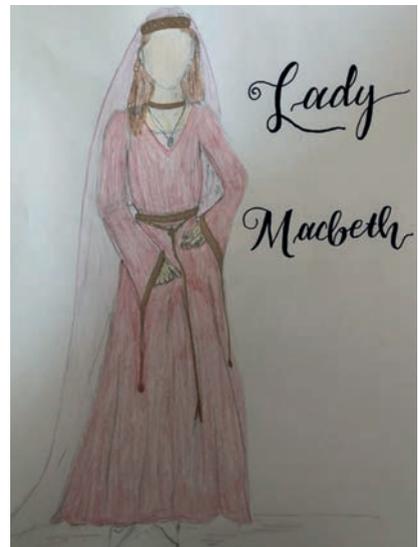
Welcome to Ballymena Academy



Ballymena Academy Cares for the Individual and Inspires Learning and Achievement.



The Braid

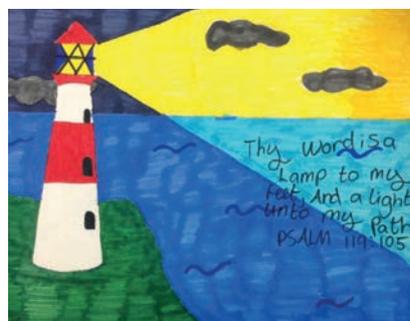




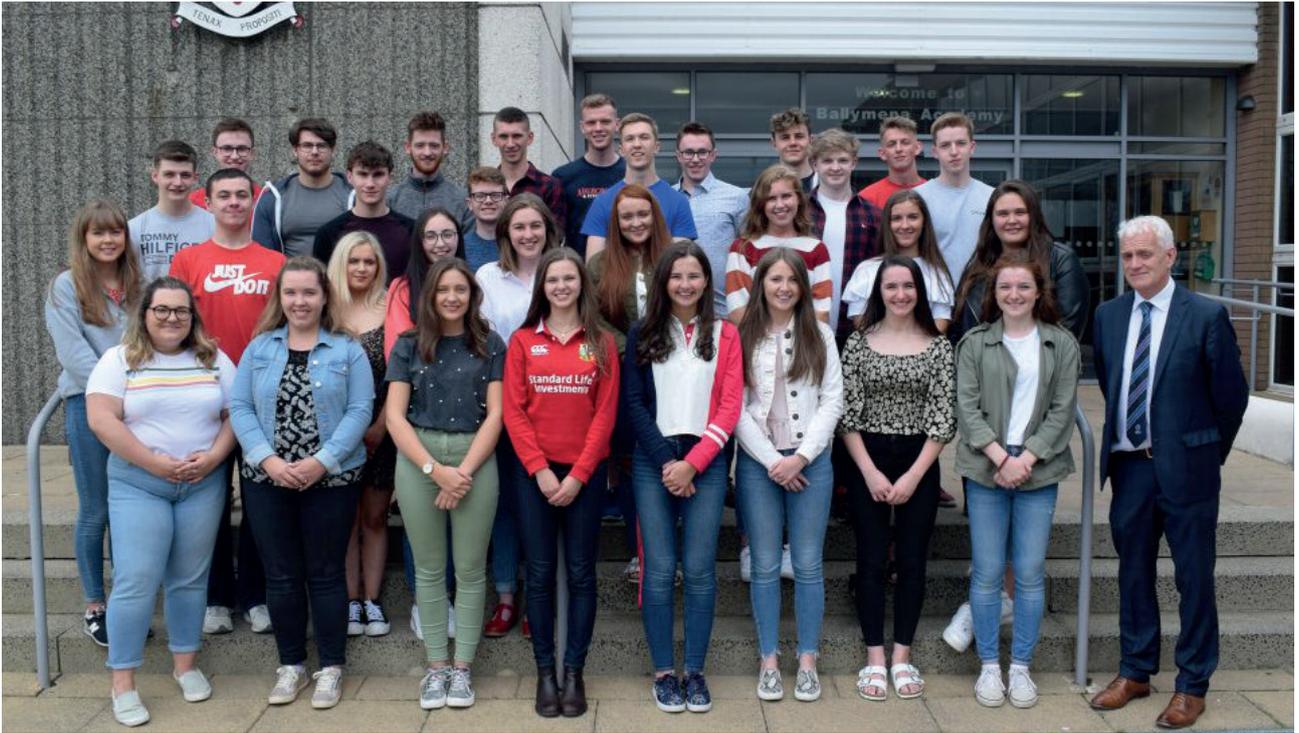

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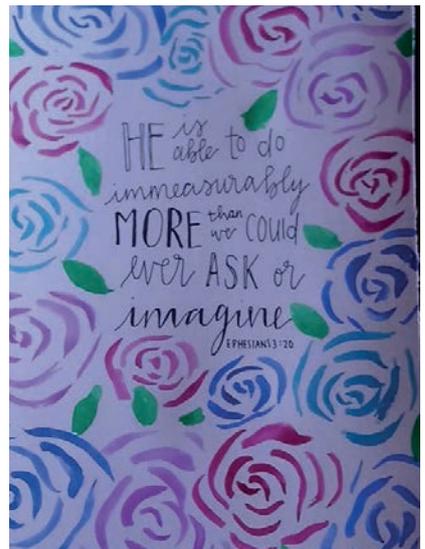
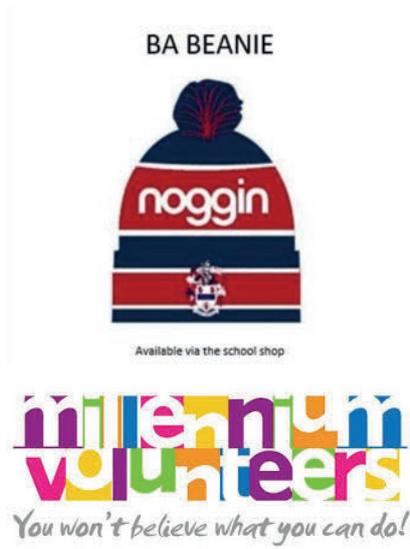
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The Braid



Prize Distribution

PRIZE DISTRIBUTION – FRIDAY, 25th OCTOBER, 2019.

Speech by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Dr. David Johnston, O.B.E.

Professor Grant, invited guests, fellow Governors, members of staff, ladies and gentlemen, pupils, - good morning/afternoon and welcome to the Ballymena Academy Prize Distribution of 2019.

We are particularly delighted that former Chairmen of the Board of Governors, Mr. James Perry and Mr. James McKervill are with us today. It is also a pleasure to have our former Principals, Mr. Ronnie Hassard and Mr. Peter Martin join us. As always, it is a great delight to renew acquaintances with former members of staff, former Governors and old friends.

At this point I would like to extend our warm congratulations to Mr. Hassard, who was honoured with the office of High Sheriff of County Antrim this year and also to Mr. Perry who has been appointed as one of Her Majesty's Deputy Lord Lieutenants for the County of Antrim.

Our guest of honour today is Professor Liz Grant or Liz Curry, as those of us of a certain vintage would have known her. Liz is Professor in Global Health and Development at The University of Edinburgh and recently, when I sent an email to her, the "Out of Office" message said she was attending the General Assembly of the United Nations, so you can imagine that I felt a bit inadequate as I struggled to maintain the health of the good people of Cullybackey and Ahoghill. Liz, you are very welcome. We thank you taking time out of your hugely busy schedule to be with us today and we really look forward to hearing from you later.

Ladies and gentlemen, when I spoke last year, I concluded by saying it was a time of challenge and huge uncertainty on many levels. If that was true, then I think you would all agree it is even more so at this time.

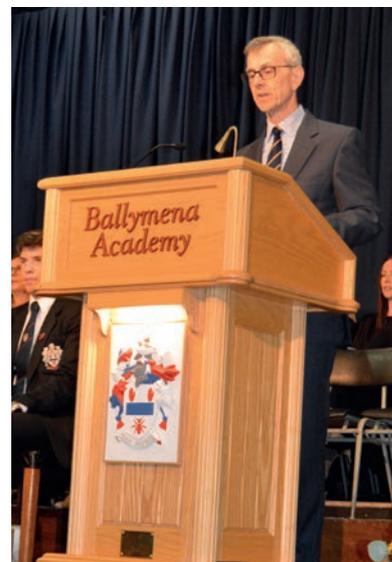
As we consider our future and the education of our children, it is difficult to know what to think and how best to advise them. Yet in a year that has seen significant anniversaries, it seems to me that some universal characteristics and skills will always be required, whatever the circumstances.

On the 6th of June this year, we remembered the 75th anniversary of the D-Day Landings and the beginnings of the liberation of Europe. I had a chance conversation with my 93-year-old father-in-law who, for the first time, told me in some detail about how, having just turned 18 a few weeks earlier, he was on board HMS Nelson on D-Day as they prepared to bombard enemy positions in Normandy. He was stationed at the very top of the ship's mast, looking out for enemy aircraft that might attack. As a young man, he took it all in his stride and got on with job. He, like so many others, is one of that special generation who served but did not boast.

Later in the year, on the 20th of July, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Moon landings - an incredible feat of engineering and bravery, that inspired future generations and laid the foundations of much that we now take for granted. Children at that time, myself included, all wanted to be astronauts. In fact, I think I still have a toy spacesuit somewhere at home.

Clearly, every generation must face its challenges and while these will be different in every age, the basic skills and characteristics needed to succeed are likely to be the same. The role of

Clearly, every generation must face its challenges.



Chairman of the Board of Governors, Dr. D. Johnston

a school, therefore, must be to prepare young people to be the best they can be and to equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to play their part in whatever challenges confront them and their generation.

Young people come to school to learn and develop academically, of course, but they also come to school to grow as people and in so doing, to build self-confidence and self-worth so they can flourish now and in the future, wherever life takes them.

The role of a school, therefore, must be to prepare young people to be the best they can be.

Ballymena Academy cares for the individual and inspires learning and achievement to enable every pupil to realise their potential. Our school aims to add value to the educational journey by instilling an ethos of mutual respect, purpose and

achievement, while also providing exceptional curricular and co-curricular opportunities. It should therefore be no surprise that success here has many expressions and takes many forms.

Our school aims to add value to the educational journey by instilling an ethos of mutual respect, purpose and achievement.



Junior School Prize Winners

One of the more inspiring items on the agenda of the monthly Board of Governors' meetings is "Pupil Achievements" and we regularly receive long reports of a very diverse range of successes spanning academia, sport, music, drama, dance and community activities. I will leave Mr. Black to address the academic aspects later but to give you a flavour of the last year we had reports of large numbers of pupils who achieved their Gold Millennium Volunteers' Award. The Senior Girls' team gained second place in the All-Ireland Cross-Country Championships. The Medallion Rugby Team were finalists in the Medallion Shield. Pupils and staff travelled to Birmingham and represented N.I. with distinction at the UK Finals of the "Tomorrow's Engineers" Competition and last term, Year 14 pupil, Kirill Sakharov became world champion in his class for Powerlifting at the World Championships in Sweden. I think that is definitely a first for the school!

This is only a very small selection of the reported successes but it serves as an illustration of the wealth of achievement of our pupils.

Of course our curricular and co-curricular excellence is only possible as a result of our dedicated and enthusiastic teaching and support

staff and so I want to publicly acknowledge our gratitude for all that they do. To Mr. Stephen Black, our Principal, to Mrs Julie Connor, our Deputy Principal, to our Vice-Principal, Mr. Richard Ross and to our recently appointed Acting Vice-Principal, Mr. Tom McLeister, and to all our teaching staff we say a sincere thanks and I wish Mr. McLeister well with his new responsibilities.

Congratulations are due to Mr. Black on his election to the Committee of the Irish Rugby Football Union, which clearly reflects his skill and the high esteem in which he is held, and we wish him every success in this exciting role.

My thanks to our staff who provide technical, laboratory or administrative support and to those who maintain our estate, ably led by Mr. Ken Storey and to our kitchen staff under the enthusiastic supervision of Mrs. Hazel Gordon.

I would also make special mention of Miss Margaret Brown, the Principal's secretary.

As ever, Margaret is a human dynamo who keeps us all on track. Personally I, and I know everyone associated

with the Ballymena Academy family was delighted when Margaret was awarded the BEM in The Queen's New Year's Honours list. No one could be a worthier recipient and we cordially congratulate Margaret on her well-earned distinction.

Mr. Black will refer to the various changes in staffing during the last year but I want to acknowledge the significant contribution made to school life by members of staff who have now left us. Mrs Maureen Carson retired after 38 years as a Mathematics teacher. Mrs. Julia Fielding moved to a senior teaching position in another school and Mr. Mark Shields moved to a new career outside teaching. We sincerely thank each of them for their contribution to this school and we extend our best wishes for their future endeavours.

The Board of Governors are the employing authority and have overall responsibility for strategic planning, good governance and financial probity within the school while the day-to-day management, of course, rests with the Principal. I want to thank my fellow Governors for volunteering their time and talent and for their contribution to the school which is invaluable.



The Platform Party

Back row, left to right: Mr. R. Marshall (Hon. Secretary of Board of Governors), Mr. S. Black (Principal), Mrs J. Allen (Vice- Chair of the Board of Governors)

Front row, left to right: A. McLeister (Head Girl), Dr. D. Johnston (Chairman of the Board of Governors), Professor L. Grant, C. Simpson (Head Boy)

Mrs. Jane Allen is Vice-Chair of the Board and Chair of the Establishment Committee and Mr. Richard Marshall is Honorary Secretary. I particularly thank them both for their support.

During the year Mrs. Jill Millar, who also acted as Designated Governor for Child Protection, stood down from the Board. We thank Jill for her really helpful input and for the

impact she made during her time with us and we wish her well in the future. We also welcomed new members to the Board, including Mr. Julian Henderson, Mr. Sam McLean and the Rev. Dennis Christie and we thank them for agreeing to contribute to school life in this way.

The work of the Board encompasses the whole life of the school and much of the oversight is undertaken in

several sub-committees, which then bring recommendations to the full Board. I have already mentioned Mrs. Jane Allen who chairs the Establishment Committee. The Education and Pastoral committee is chaired by Mrs. Helen Foster and Mrs. Ann Laughlin is our Designated Governor for Child Protection. At this point I would just make mention of "health and wellbeing", an ever more urgent and important topic for young



Teaching staff, Senior Management with the Head Boy and Head Girl and special guest speaker Professor Liz Grant.

people today. It is also one that is increasingly coming within the remit of schools so I do want to reassure you that whether the issues are physical, psychological or social, this school has a sustained focus and is fully engaged in trying to provide appropriate encouragement and support when necessary.

Time precludes me from saying much more about our work than this, but I do want to highlight a recurring theme of our deliberations this year, just as it was last year. That is of course the financial situation facing this school and the resultant challenges that lie before us. Following extensive media coverage, you will be aware of the difficult financial situation in education generally and Ballymena Academy is not immune from this. We have had an unprecedented reduction in resources in the face of rising costs each year for the last number of years, to the extent that if the funding allocation is not improved it

This school has a sustained focus and is fully engaged in trying to provide appropriate encouragement and support when necessary.

will be impossible to continue to deliver an education service at the current levels. It would appear inevitable that pupil to teacher ratios and class sizes will rise and the level of support we are able to deliver to pupils will decline. Increasingly we are moving to an unrealistic and untenable position and quite simply, without additional investment there is a clear and present risk to our children's education. Within this school we are doing everything possible to minimise this. The senior

leadership team have made a huge effort to re-organise timetables, resources and staff to maintain the quality of education. Through various bodies we continue to lobby for more of the funding allocated for education in Northern Ireland to be spent on direct education provision, on the front line, in our schools. Finally, in terms of income generation, we are looking to utilise our school estate and facilities. Another of our sub-committees, the Fundraising and Marketing Committee, energetically chaired by Mr. Aubrey Calderwood, is looking at opportunities to generate income by enhancing links with past pupils and friends or promoting our Education Enrichment Fund. Details of these activities and the newly launched "BA Foundation" are available via the school website. As the website tagline says "Help us to maintain excellence". Do please support these initiatives in any way you can and encourage others to do likewise.

Please be assured that everything possible is being done to protect our children's educational opportunity and experience.

In the meantime, please be assured that everything possible is being done to protect our children's educational opportunity and experience.

Earlier I spoke about past generations but today we celebrate the success of this generation of young people.

At the outstanding School Concert earlier this year the choir sang the song "A million dreams" from the film "The Greatest Showman". The inspirational lyrics included the lines "We can live in a world that we design... A million dreams for the world we're going to make".

Ballymena Academy's goal is to equip and enable every pupil to flourish and to achieve their dreams, whatever challenges they could face in the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your interest, patience, attention and attendance here today.

Ballymena Academy's goal is to equip and enable every pupil to flourish.

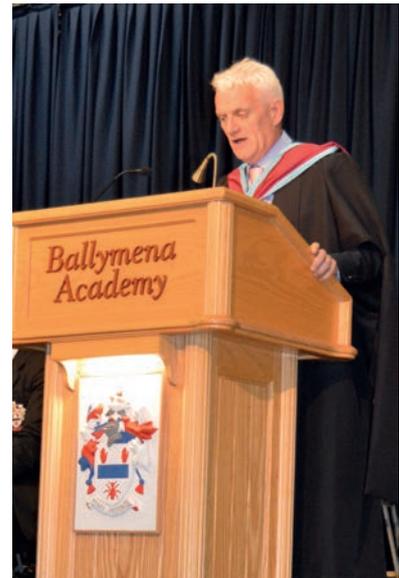
Principal's Report – Mr. S.W. Black

Professor Grant, Mr Chairman, members of the Board of Governors, guests, colleagues, pupils, good morning and welcome to our Prize Distribution.

For those with good memories, you may recollect that I began my Report last year bemoaning the fact that "education is not at the top of Theresa May's priority list and that the situation is even more grim in NI, where we have no-one prepared to make the decisions which need to be made in the best interests of our young people." While it is often stated that a week is a long time in politics, in NI one year on and nothing has changed, particularly in relation to prioritising education.

Our politicians seem intent to do nothing, to allow our young people to suffer and to ignore the lessons from across the world where education is pre-eminent in emerging nations, or even from our own past where Benjamin Disraeli remarked that "upon the education of the people of the country the fate of the country depends". Fortunately, excellent schools such as this, despite the innumerable challenges which we face, do something, and while our news is dominated by the backstop, Boris and Brexit, our daily focus is on ensuring engagement, empowerment and excellence for our pupils.

Prize Day provides us with the opportunity to celebrate the achievements and successes of our young people, to remind ourselves of the rich learning environment which exists here and to pay profound tribute to those who are responsible for the outstanding work which goes on day-in and day-out in Ballymena Academy. It would be impossible to acknowledge everyone and every event that has defined the past year, but nevertheless the contribution of everyone is valued and appreciated.



Principal, Mr. S. Black

Our daily focus is on ensuring engagement, empowerment and excellence for our pupils.

To evaluate the contribution which each member of staff has made would be an impossible task, but the predominant characteristic of Academy staff is their willingness to go the extra mile, giving freely of their time, to provide the very best for our young people both inside and outside the classroom. I hope that you as pupils, parents and governors, recognise just how good a team we have here. Ballymena Academy has excellent teachers, with an invariable ability to engage pupils, supporting and challenging them to achieve high standards. A similar dedication and pursuit of excellence is evident amongst our support staff, while our grounds and Dining Hall pay homage to the high standards pursued by our

The contribution of everyone is valued and appreciated.

maintenance and canteen staff, under the leadership of Mr. Ken Storey and Mrs. Hazel Gordon respectively.

The past year saw very few departures from within our permanent teaching and non-teaching staff. We were sorry to lose the services through retirement of a long-standing member of staff, Ms. Maureen Carson, a respected and valued member of the Mathematics Department since 1981. In addition to her teaching role, Maureen made a considerable contribution to the Academy as a Pastoral Adviser, a Teacher Representative on the Board of Governors and through various co-curricular activities, including Netball. This year also saw the departure of Mrs. Julia Fielding to take up the position of Head of Modern Languages in Strathearn School, after 12 years of service in the Spanish and Careers Departments. Many pupils have benefited from such a wealth of experience and knowledge; we acknowledge their considerable contribution and wish them well for the future. Similar wishes are extended to Mr. Mark Shields who, after 13 months as Vice-Principal, has taken up a post outside education, and to Miss Beth Davis, Mrs. Helen Clarke, Mrs. Rachel Craig, Miss Carla Vaughan and Mrs. Judith Weir who covered teaching vacancies within the school. We were also sorry to lose Mrs. Tammy Rogers, who provided Learning support, together with Miss Rebecca Macabe and Miss Leah Paul, who completed placements in the ICT and Physical Education departments. I wish to record my thanks to all of them and hope this in some way conveys our appreciation for all that they have done for Ballymena Academy.

We offer our best wishes to Mrs. Ruth Johnston and Mrs. Nikki Taggart, currently on maternity leave, and Miss Aoife Cuddihy, who has commenced a Career Break to undertake further study.

Following the retirement of Ms. Carson in March, Miss Anne Burke took up a post in the Mathematics Department while joining, or in some cases re-joining, us for this academic year are Mrs. Emma Borthwick (Mathematics), Mrs. Alba Martinez - Linares (Spanish), Mrs. Naomi McIlwaine (Physical Education), Mr. Danny Ross (History and Politics) and, through our relationship with the Confucius Institute, Miss Meiling Tu. We also welcome Mrs. Joanne Logan, Mrs. Becky Linford and Mrs. Lindsay Speirs, in Learning Support roles as well as sports placement students Mr. Scott Agnew and Mr. Matthew Orr. We wish them all well for the future as we do to other arrivals, baby daughters Carmen, Eden and Raya to Mr. Hayes, Mrs. Matchett and Mr. and Mrs. Johnston respectively. Our congratulations also go to Miss Burke (now Mrs. McCarry) and Mr. Munce on their marriages. On a sadder note, we extend our sympathies to those staff and other members of the Ballymena Academy family who suffered bereavement in the past year.

Any scrutiny of our examination results for 2019 would show that we have lived up to our commitment of "inspiring learning and achievement" with the results, in many measures, being the best ever results recorded in the Academy's history.

Beginning with GCSE, over 98% of the grades were at grade C or better, with over 97% of pupils achieving a minimum of 7 A*-C grades, including English and Mathematics, a figure almost 10% above the NI Grammar School average. There was an increase in the % of top grades with well over 60% of the examinations sat being A* and A grades, and remarkably 96% of our pupils achieved at least one A grade. Despite the reduction in the number of A* grades nationally due to the introduction of a new grading system, the % of A* grades obtained in Ballymena Academy at 20% remained much

more than double the national average.

As well as an excellent performance across the year group, there were many outstanding individual successes and today we recognise those 42 individuals who achieved nine A* or A in their nine full GCSE examinations. Six young people secured a stunning clean sweep of 9 A* grades: James Craig, Rachel Gillan, Rachel McCartney, Erin McCurdy, Eve Patterson and Hannah Reid.

Additionally another 36 pupils, Katie Alexander, Cameron Bailes, Tim Bailie, Holly Boyd, Patrick Browne, Richard Carson, Ashleigh Church, Jonathan Cochrane, Jackson Darragh, Naomi Dickey, Molly Drennan, Grace Francey, Matthew French, Megan Gordon, David Heaney, Oliver Hunt, Ellen Lackermeier, Andrew Lawther, Robert Mark, Sarah McBride, Anna McCaig, Jonathan McCullough, Joshua McIlhagga, Beth McIlrath, Kathy McIlveen, Lucy McKane, Hannah McKibbin, Abbie Millar, Grace Moore, Zara Mulholland, Kaden Patterson, Grace Reid, Hollie Stirling, Katherine Stronge, Tori Surgeoner and Rachel Wilson achieved a combination of 9 A* or A grades. A further 22 pupils achieved 8 A* or A grades.

Strikingly, in 25 individual subjects, the % of A*-B grades exceeded NI Grammar School averages, while in two-thirds of the subjects, the attainment at A*- B was more than 10% above grammar school performance, providing indisputable

In 25 individual subjects, the % of A-B grades exceeded NI Grammar School averages.*

evidence of excellent learning and teaching across the curriculum. It would be normal at this point to report on how the school has sustained its notable tradition of securing top 3 placings in Northern Ireland at GCSE. However, this year, we have yet to receive such information from the local examinations body, CCEA, and thus it is disappointing that we cannot recognise these exceptional levels of achievement today. As ever there have been some amazing performances including numerous full uniform marks with James Craig securing full UMS marks in three subjects, English Literature, Mathematics and Religious Studies (Short Course).

Every now and again there are exceptional achievements that one feels it will be difficult to surpass and so it was with our A Level results of 2019. The headline figure, used by DENI and ETI of the percentage of the year group attaining 3 or more A Level grades at A*-C, is 82% which is very pleasing in itself but that only skims the surface. It doesn't reveal that all examinations sat resulted in pass grades, over half of the grades were at A* or A, an amazing 20% of grades were at A* and that over three quarters of the year group achieved at least one A grade.

Nor does it tell the story of a year group which commenced Year 13 with 164 pupils and ended with 160 of them gaining 3 pass grades at A Level at a time where, across NI 3 out of every 20 Year 13 pupils do not even make it through to Year 14. It is particularly gratifying that independent analysis of the results conducted by the University of Durham reveals that our pupils achieved significantly better A Level results than those obtained by pupils of similar ability in other schools across the UK and that an increased number of pupils were able to access their preferred courses in the UK and Ireland's leading universities. This, together with the outcomes themselves, provides irrefutable proof that virtually all our

An increased number of pupils were able to access their preferred courses in the UK and Ireland's leading universities.

young people are enabled to achieve at a high level, with the very able also realising their exceptional potential.

There were, of course, many terrific individual achievements with 45 pupils achieving at least 3 A grades – Aaron Clinton and Michael Gregg achieved an astounding 4 A* grades while 7 students achieved a minimum of 3 A* grades – Michael Allen, Adam Dickey, Martyn Doherty, Jonathan Hogg, Rachael Macaulay, Jenny McAlister and Amanda Robinson. A further 36 pupils Ciara Anderson, Harry Bill, James Brown, Rachel Brown, Juliet Cameron, Susanna Crabbe, Timothy Day, Anna Doherty, Patrick Doherty, Crawford Fairfield, Alissa Forsythe, Anna Gordon, Beth Herbison, Ruth Hoey, Jonathan Hunter, Oisín Jordan, Sarah Logan, Lydia Manson, Sophie McAllister, Ellen McAuley, Elizabeth McCartney, Anna McGahey, Ruth McKane, Olivia McMaster, Sarah McNabney, Hannah L Millar, Adam Morrison, Michael O'Neill, James Poston, Ben Pyper, Suzanne Reid, Alex Richmond, Kirill Sakharov, Matt Smith, Anisia Tiplea and Jack Turner obtained three A*/A grades.

As at GCSE, there were numerous exceptional performances with Michael Gregg and Jonathan Hogg remarkably achieving full UMS marks in A Level Chemistry and Mathematics respectively. In another magnificent achievement, Amanda Robinson has received recognition as one of 125 recipients from across Ireland of the highly prestigious J P McManus Scholarship.

Realising such standards in learning and attainment is no accident and would not be possible without the excellent work of Heads of Department, Subject Leaders and all teaching and support staff, under the expert leadership of Mrs Julie Connor.

However, it would be inappropriate to omit the role of parents. We recognise the faith which you place in us to care for, develop and inspire your children – your support is an essential component of individual success. One of the most essential ingredients of education is effective parental/school partnerships – we thank you for that invaluable support and co-operation.

Ballymena Academy, despite maintaining its tradition of academic excellence, remains as it has been for close to 200 years, about much more than splendid examination results and it is often easy on these occasions not to give the pastoral aspect of the work of our staff the recognition that it deserves. I commend the Pastoral Team, led so ably by Mr Richard Ross, the Heads of Year, Pastoral Advisers and all our staff for putting into practice, even far beyond what would be seen as a normal school day, our mission statement "Ballymena Academy cares for the individual and inspires learning and achievement". Our pupils avail of an education that combines the acquisition of knowledge and skills with the development of character. We nurture and promote behaviours and values that equip them to contribute to a changing and challenging world: adaptability, persistence, resilience and integrity.

One of the most essential ingredients of education is effective parental/school partnerships.



Records of good attendance are an important factor for many employers and we applaud the impressive achievement of around 100 pupils who maintained full attendance last year, but especially the remarkable achievements of Simon Bennett in recording seven years' unbroken attendance in Ballymena Academy and Jonathan Hogg for full attendance over 14 years since commencing Primary School.

Volunteering thrives in the school and we were delighted that more pupils than ever participated in the Millennium Volunteer Programme, with 29 Sixth Form pupils receiving the top Gold Award for 200 hours voluntary public service.

Whether volunteering overseas or working within roles in school such as Peer Mentors, Digital Leaders or Numeracy Mentors or through raising money for charitable causes, I never cease to be amazed by the selfless nature of our young people. One prime example of this was Year 13 pupil, Emily Agnew, "Braving the Shave" for Macmillan to a packed Assembly Hall and it is praiseworthy that through events such as this, or the Talent Show (organised by the Cancer Research Committee), the "Read On" (organised by the English Department) the "MS Walk" or other events organised by the Charity Committee, well in excess of £25,000 was raised for various charities, while simultaneously providing much reflection within the school community.

While it isn't possible for all our pupils to attend today, we are very proud of all our young people and their achievements. There are challenges in educating over 1200 11-18 year-olds but our pupils want to

I never cease to be amazed by the selfless nature of our young people.

succeed and serious breaches of discipline are thankfully rare. Consequently, my interactions with our young people are, almost always, very pleasurable; encountering young people who are a privilege to work with.

I wish to pay tribute to all pupils who made valuable contributions in many ways, including last year's Head Girl, Ellen McAuley, and the Head Boy, Timothy Day for the outstanding way they conducted their duties. Their replacements Alex McLeister and Craig Simpson are already displaying similar qualities and they will now enlighten you with some of their experiences and highlight other school achievements.

Thanks to Alex and Craig. As they have described there have been many successes throughout the year. It would be impossible to recognise all those achievements in one day, so we regularly celebrate achievement in other ways, through the school magazine, the website, Assemblies and the P F Martin Achievement Awards.

However, reflecting upon the year, it is appropriate to make some observations – Music excels in the school, not only as proven today or in the major events such as the Spring Concert and the Carol Service, which continue to astound in the manner of their excellence and in the levels of participation with over 350 pupils taking part, but equally through the successes gained in the Ballymena Festival, where the school secured 23 first places and numerous major orchestral and choral awards. Individually there was recognition for Cameron Olphert, Caiolin Olphert and Anisia Tiplea in their selections for the Ulster Youth Orchestra and for Grace Moore for the National Scouts and Guides Symphony Orchestra. Interest in Drama also remains strong with over 100 pupils auditioning for the Academy Players' production of "Bugsy Malone", which we look forward to next month.

Our teams and individuals compete in wide ranging national competitions with considerable success. Lorre Nesbitt was crowned 'Ulster U16 Champion' in the Ulster Dance Championships, Louise McVicker and Alex Balmer were selected to represent NI in the Cinemagic International Festival in Los Angeles and Michael Gregg was one of the top achievers in the British Mathematical Olympiad.

The success for our STEM Club continues unabated; our Raising Robots team (Arthur Church, Lydia Gregg, Reuben Hamill, Natalie McCullagh, Lewis Millar, Zach Shaw, Jamie Sims and Jamie Stewart) represented NI in the UK final in Birmingham, where they were named as one of the top schools. A group of our Year 10 pupils won the prestigious 4CUR Future competition and were invited to join the Professor Brian Cox Summer School in July. At the NI Big Bang Fair our team of Stuart McDowell and Joel Murphy won the Department for Infrastructure Award for Best Practice in 2019.

Our sports team successes are, as ever, considerable. Today we wish to recognise all those who represent the school with distinction in a variety of sports and to celebrate the individual achievements of those who have received inter-provincial representative honours: Katie Craig, Anna Doherty and Alex Henry-McCool in Hockey, Ben Fry and Harry Wylie in Football and Tim Bailie, Patrick Browne, Jonathan Cochrane, Timothy Douglas, Joshua Drain, Matthew French, Adam Lamont, Joseph Mawhinney, Ross McKay, Jordan Millar, Henry Moore and James Wright in Rugby. There was further recognition for Katie Craig who received international honours and for two pupils who were honoured with the captaincy of Ulster teams - Patrick Browne, Ulster U16 Schools Rugby and Anna Doherty, Ulster U18 Hockey. Provincial team success came for the 2A XI who won the McDowell Shield and for our Medallion

75 team who won the Ulster Schools' Sevens. This was perhaps some compensation for a talented squad which had reached the Medallion Shield final but lost out narrowly to MCB, as we sought to retain the trophy. Coincidentally, in the run up to the final, our 2018 Medallion Shield winners were honoured at the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council for the outstanding schools' performance of 2018.

There were also exceptional achievements and national recognition in other sports: Joshua Hill won the Leinster, Connacht and English U16 Amateur Boys' Open Championships in addition to representing Ireland. Mark Hunter was successful in Shooting and Thomas Evans and Oonagh Lamont in Swimming. Kirill Sakharov became a World Powerlifting Champion at the World Championships in Sweden and Tom Coulter and Ethan McCormac competed for NI in Sailing, with Ethan winning the RYA NI Youth Championship, before being placed as runner up in the World Championships.

It was a fantastic year for both Athletics and Cross-Country with impressive results for individuals and teams. In the Ulster Schools' Cross-Country Championships, the Mini Boys' and Senior Girls' Teams were both placed, with an individual Bronze medal going to Katie Agnew. However, these levels of success were surpassed at the Irish Cross Country Championships, where our Senior Girls' Team of Katie Agnew, Rachel Brown, Sarah McCloy, Sophie McCluney, Lucy Millar and Chloe Robinson recorded the best Cross-Country team performance in our history, by being placed 2nd overall in Ireland.

Similar levels of excellence were displayed in Athletics with nine Gold medals being won at the Ulster Championships, including double individual success for Jonathan Cochrane and Etain McGuckian.

Interprovincial recognition also followed for Jonathan and Etain as it did for Christian Drennan, Adam Lamont, Joseph Mawhinney, Jamie Paul, Alice Rodgers and James Wright. Success in athletics did not end there as six medals were awarded in the All Ireland Secondary Schools' Championships in Tullamore. This included Gold for Jonathan Cochrane in the Long Jump, our Junior Girls' and Intermediate Boys' teams came runners-up in Ireland in their respective age groups following on from the success of the Intermediate Boys' team who won the Ulster Schools' Athletics Cup for the second successive year.

Many other activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, continue to flourish while the opportunities provided through school trips and educational visits were considerable.

It would require significant addition to my speech to outline the achievements of our past pupils, but one need only pay limited attention to public life to note the influence of their talents across all walks of life, locally and globally. We thank the PPA for their continued interest in the Academy which is shown in many ways, including the provision of financial support for our new website and fund-raising programme.

As I stated at the outset, education in NI continues to be a matter of low priority with the result that schools

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continue to be underfunded, the work of good teachers often undervalued, and the achievements of young people not fully recognised. It is good that Prize Day affords us the opportunity to address the latter two points today, but the funding of schools is a different matter. The late South African president Nelson Mandela stated that "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Nowhere is that truer than in NI today, where education holds the key to our country's prosperity and to enhancing our young people's prospects. However, the lack of priority given in NI to education has decommissioned its effectiveness.

It has been gratifying that the Westminster NI Affairs Committee in its investigation into the funding of NI schools, has indicated the need for urgent action to be taken. To put the challenges which we face in context, schools in England which continue to spell out their financial difficulties, on average, receive £1000 more per pupil from government than we do. Despite that funding difference of well over £1,000,000, we outperform them, both academically and through our co-curricular provision.

Sadly, without an increase in our income, either through the delegated budget or otherwise, the provision from which so many young people have benefited over generations is not sustainable. Schools like ours are being forced to make decisions which they would prefer not to make, but unless the financial imbalance is rectified, further inroads into what we, and other schools in the province, offer are inevitable.

Given all the challenges which face us, we owe considerable debt to our Board of Governors. Very few outside the Board appreciate the work that goes on and the success of this school is in no small measure due to the energy, expertise and enthusiasm



which governors devote to it. It is only proper to convey appreciation to you, Mr Chairman, and to your colleagues, past and present, for your willing sacrifice of time and for your knowledgeable guidance. It is much appreciated.

On a personal level, I would wish to thank all the staff for their support. Special gratitude goes to the Senior Leadership Team, Dr Catherine Donnelly, Mr. Stephen Johnston, Mr. Neal Patterson and Dr. Gavin Pyper and especially to those who work most closely with me, the Vice-Principals, Mr. Richard Ross and Mr. Tom McLeister and the Deputy Principal, Mrs. Julie Connor; these are first class people doing a first class job.

Similar words, and many more, could be used to describe the inestimable contribution made by the Principal's Secretary, Miss Margaret Brown. Undoubtedly, one of the highlights of our school year was the award to Margaret of the British Empire Medal for services far beyond the call of any duty. In echoing the Chairman's words, there could be no more deserving recipient.



Mr. R. Marshall, Mr. N. Patterson and E. Patterson at the Senior Prize Day afternoon tea.



Guest Speaker, Professor Liz Grant.

In concluding my Sixth Annual Report, it is perhaps remarkable in the current climate, that the success of the school continues unabated. We are blessed in this school to have parents, governors, support staff and teaching staff all making good things happen for our young people, sometimes without the young people even knowing it.

On a daily basis, I continue to be astounded by the accomplishments of our pupils and humbled by the

teachers who provide the climate for such excellence to prosper. The list of achievements outlined today provides evidence of how successful we continue to be in providing the very best educational opportunities for the young people of Ballymena Academy.

Please be assured that our focus remains to provide all our pupils with the knowledge and skills they require to change our world for the better.



Head Boy – Craig Simpson

Mr. Chairman, Professor Grant, Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow pupils. Without a doubt, my journey through Ballymena Academy has been fast-paced and action-packed – it is not one I would change for the world. I will cherish the Friday afternoons spent with Mrs. Church, Miss Wilkinson, Mr. Christie and the rest of the Senior Choir when I was able to discover my musical talent, if you can call it that! Neither will I forget the wonderful lunchtimes spent with Mr. Thompson, preparing for the main event, the Male Voice Chorus! All these practices paid off, culminating in the Carol Service at St. Patrick's, which was as magical as ever. The Spring Concert was a highlight for me as it really showcased the vast range of musical talent this school has to offer. A favourite for me was the Senior Choir's rendition of 'Proud Mary' as it (accompanied with some questionable dance moves) brought a memorable night to a close in high spirits.

Moving onto the sports field, I must mention the significant impact rugby has had on my life and many others at Ballymena Academy. From training on a bright summer's day to wading through muddy puddles, the team's dedication and eagerness was evident.

The First XV noted several commendable victories over old rivals, in particular, a hard-fought win

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against Campbell College in the pouring rain under the lights at Eaton Park, was certainly one to be proud of. The team progressed through to the Quarterfinals of the Schools' Cup after an admirable victory against BRA, only to be narrowly defeated by Armagh. Once again, our Medallion Squad showed great skill and dedication, reaching the Final of the renowned Medallion Shield Competition, where they lost to Campbell College by a narrow margin. Our U.13 team also performed impressively throughout the season, most notably through their tremendous victory in the Methodist College Tournament.

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Many pupils have benefited from and enjoyed the opportunity to go on numerous educational trips. Last October, I and several other Sixth Formers jetted off to Paris, where we visited a several sites such as the Eiffel Tower, L'Arc De Triomphe and the Palace of Versailles. We were able to put into practice our linguistic skills and immerse ourselves in the French culture and cuisine. This trip was indeed another of the many highlights that define my time at this school. I could continue for longer than you would wish on this theme, but I will now hand over to Alex who will share some of her highlights of school with you.



Head Boy, Craig Simpson

Many pupils have benefited from and enjoyed the opportunity to go on numerous educational trips.



Head Girl – Alex McLeister

Mr. Chairman, Professor Grant, Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow pupils. Without doubt, one of the highlights of school life for me is hockey. From my first early Saturday morning as an excitable, eager first year, to now as a member of the 1st XI squad, I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. This past year, Ballymena Academy hockey has welcomed some well-deserved success. Despite missing out on both the Cup and Plate, the 1st XI experienced many victories, ending the season as runners-up in the Derry and Antrim League. The 2A XI saw success in their respective Shield Competition, after beating Regent House in the Final. The junior teams also had a positive season, with the U13A and U12A squads being placed first in their individual Derry and Antrim Tournaments. At the beginning of the year the 1st XI and U14A XI headed off to Barcelona to enjoy a few days in the warm Spanish sun, playing against local teams, sight-seeing and training with international coaches. All the girls thoroughly enjoyed their time and will always remember this amazing trip. Netball was successful this past year; the Year 8 teams came 1st and 3rd in the Ballymena league, the Year 9s won the Northern Ireland Plate Competition and the Year 10 team reached the Semi-Final of the Northern Ireland Cup.

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Off the sports field, our Year 14 Cancer Research Committee had the united goal of raising money and

awareness for the work of Cancer Research UK. The team worked tirelessly to put together the unforgettable 'Talent Show', when they raised an outstanding £6,000. The Charity Committee devoted the year to raising money for a number of charities, through a range of events, from 'delicious donut sales' to the much-enjoyed Hallowe'en and Christmas Discos.

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The Christian Union at Ballymena Academy is something I hold very close to my heart, like many others. From the C.U. Weekends at Castlewella Castle, Tuesday lunch-time prayer meetings and weekly after-school meetings, I have accumulated memories that I will cherish forever. C.U. opens pupils to the opportunity of forming lasting relationships with not only fellow pupils, but with members of staff and most importantly allows them to grow stronger in their faith.

Throughout my school career I have gathered so many cherished memories. When preparing for today, Craig and I both agreed that what really means so much to us about Ballymena Academy is the fact that it goes a step beyond - in terms of the opportunities it provides in class and out of class. Both of us will be sad to leave, but as we move to the next stage of our lives, we will carry with us a wealth of knowledge, skills and many happy memories of Ballymena Academy. Craig and I, on behalf of the pupils, would like to thank all those who do so much for us and for the school community, so to the governors, Head Master and our teachers we just want to say - Thank you.



Head Girl, Alex McLeister

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A SUMMARY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS 2018/2019

UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PRIZES

The Governors' University Scholarship (2018): - Laura Craig

The William Gihon Memorial University Scholarship (2019): Michael Gregg

The Jane L. Fullerton Memorial University Scholarship: - Michael Allen

The Elizabeth Davidson Memorial University Scholarship: - Aaron Clinton

The John G. McCaughey Memorial University Scholarship: - Lucy McCormill

The Gaston University Engineering Scholarship: - Michael Allen

The Andrew and Gwendoline M. Watt Memorial University Scholarship: - Amanda Robinson

The William B. Cumming University Scholarship: - Martyn Doherty

The David Patton University Scholarship: - Martyn Doherty

2019 All Ireland Scholarship (3rd level Education Award): - Amanda Robinson

ENTRANCE TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Queen's University, Belfast – Michael Allen, Grace Bailie, Rachel Beckett, Calum Black, Neave Calwell, Aaron Clinton, Susanna Crabbe, Calum Crease, Martyn Doherty, Patrick Doherty, Crawford Fairfield, Nicole Gordon, Chloe Greer, Michael Gregg, Peter Hamill, Patrick Hargy, Beth Herbison, Jonathan Hogg, Jonathan Hunter, Hannah Johnston, Andrew Kennedy, Cara Knowles, Ellie Kyle, Joseph Kyle, Sarah Logan, Rachael Macaulay, Sophie McAllister, Ellen McAuley, David McCaughey, Matthew McCluggage, Rachel McCord, Lucy McCormill, Charles



Junior School Special Prize Winners

Back row, left to right: S. Stirling, E. Kelly, J. Grimsley, W. McCartney, A. Gregg.

Middle row, left to right: L. Cotton, E. Dickey, E. Bonnar, F. McCarroll, E. McDonald, K. McBride.

Front row, left to right: N. Mills, K. McDonnell, J. McCutcheon, H. Gunning, K. Armstrong.

McCready, Anna McGahey, Scott McLroy, Sarah McKeown, Mark McKibbin, Hannah L. Millar, Ethan Mullan, Michael O'Neill, Rebecca Orr, Nicole Pennie, James Poston, Ben Puper, Alex Richmond, Amanda Robinson, Matt Smith, Rebecca Wilson.

Stranmillis University College – Sarah Harris, Emma Martin, Craig McClintock, Ruth McKane, Hannah P. Millar, Erin Park, Suzanne Reid, Jessica Simpson, Amy Turner, Tori Warnock.

University of Ulster – Belfast Campus – Alice Campbell, Oisín Corr, Elizabeth McCartney.
University of Ulster - Coleraine Campus – Simon Bennett, Anna Cameron, Clara Dealey, Matthew Erwin, Laura Hamilton, Adam Hanna, Grace McBurney, Alice McFetridge, Bethan McLaughlin, Katie Moorehead, Claire Stirling.

University of Ulster - Jordanstown Campus – Rebekah Buick, Stephen Cull, Thomas Davison, Adam Fleming, Tom Harkness, Peter Kernohan, Danny Louw, Lydia Manson, Katie McAllister, Gary McDowell, Jack McLeister, Rachelle Mitchell, Ryan Moore, Ashleigh Robinson, Ben Savoury, Victoria Shaw, Joel Wallace, Morgan Wilkinson, Ben Wilson.

University of Ulster – Magee Campus – Lois McClintock

Trinity College, Dublin – Cian Mawhinney

Cardiff University – Ruth Hoey

University of Dundee – Emily Gillan, Chloe McGall, Cameron Muir.

Durham University – Timothy Day

University of Edinburgh – Rachel Brown, Alissa Forsythe, Sarah McNabney, Jack Turner.

University of Exeter – Alexander McGuckian, Niamh Watt.

University of Glasgow – Juliet Cameron, Olivia McMaster.

Glasgow Caledonian University – Erin Douglas

Harper Adams University – Sarah Reid

Kingston University – Lauren Francey

University of Leeds – Ciara Anderson, Harry Bill, Adam Morrison.

Leeds Trinity University – Charlotte Campbell

Leeds Beckett University – Adam Kernohan

Liverpool Hope University – Samantha Agnew



*Junior School Form Prize Winners
Back row, left to right: W. McCartney, H. Casson, J. Bradley, F. McCarroll.
Front row, left to right: C. Logan, S. McCutcheon, H. Gunning, K. Armstrong.*

Liverpool John Moores University –
Lukas Palcek, Brandon Wilson.

University of Liverpool –
Jenny McAlister

London School of Economics &
Political Science (University of
London) – Kirill Sakharov

University of Newcastle upon Tyne –
Harry Cooke, Matthew Kirk, Alexander
McKinney, Carly Wallace.

Northumbria University – Sophie
Gaston, Don Gillespie, Danielle
Thomson.

University of Nottingham –
Chloe George

University of Portsmouth –
Adam Smith

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland –
Ben McGarvey

University of St. Andrews –
Aimee Davenport, Adam Dickey.

University of Stirling – Holly
Donaldson, Ben Fry, Ben Johnston,
Joshua R. Logan, Adam Neilly, Evie
Rodden, Charlotte Stacey.

Belfast Metropolitan College (Titanic
Campus) – Emma Flanagan

CAE Flight Training Academy, Oxford
– Sophie Dennison

C.A.F.R.E. – James Dickey

Danske Bank School Leavers' Programme
& Ulster University – Abi Weir

Northern Regional College: -
(Foundation Degree Course) –
Amy Cubitt, Cameron Middleton,
Chloe Orr.

GAP Year – Christopher Allen, James
Brown, Anna Doherty, Anna Gordon,
Cara Steele, Anisia Tiplea.

THE 'A' LEVEL SUBJECT PRIZES

The Dorothy Frances and John Kyle
Memorial French Prize: -
Martyn Doherty

The Rev. Chancellor Craig Memorial
Prize for History: - Juliet Cameron,
Sophie Gaston.

The Hill Gaston Memorial Prize for
Mathematics: - Jonathan Hogg

The Dr. C.J.K. Orr Prize for Biology: -
Adam Dickey

The Cara G. McCarroll Memorial Prize
for German: - James Poston

The Cara G. McCarroll Memorial Prize
for Religious Studies: -
Susanna Crabbe

The Lily Kyle Memorial Prize for
Physics: - Michael Gregg

The J.P. McGuckin Cup for 'A' Level
Physics: - Michael Gregg

The Ruth Hamill Cup for 'A' Level
Spanish: - Martyn Doherty

The Rev. Stronge Memorial Prizes for
Secondary Education and Religious
Knowledge: - Jenny McAlister and
Jonathan Hunter

The Houston Cup for English
Literature: - Lucy McCormill

The Anne Liggett Nutrition and Food
Science Cup: - Grace McBurney

The Livingstone Cup for 'A' Level
Music: - Timothy Day

The Northern Bank Cup for 'A' Level
Economics: - Harry Bill

The Classics Prize for 'A' Level
Classical History and Civilisation: -
Alex Richmond

The 'A' Level Further Mathematics
Prize: - Michael Gregg

The Wilson and Kelly Cup for 'A'
Level Media Studies: -
Elizabeth McCartney

The Gary Speir Memorial Prize for
Art: - Sarah Reid

The Kennedy Cup for Chemistry: -
Michael Gregg

The Leckie Silver Salver for Business
Studies: - Harry Bill

The 'A' Level Health and Social Care
Cup: - Jenny McAlister

THE 'AS' SPECIAL PRIZES

The Jagoe Cups for the top achievers
in three subjects in Year 13:

Science: - Katie Surgenor
Non-Science: - Chloe Robinson

The Ian Johnston Cup for Sixth Form
Biology: - Chloe Robinson

The Arnold Carson Cup for Sixth Form
Chemistry: - Katie Surgenor

The Mrs. Audrey Reid Cup for Sixth
Form Physics: - Jacob Buchanan

The Livingstone Prize for Sixth Form
Mathematics: - Stuart McDowell

THE G.C.S.E. SUBJECT PRIZES

The John Alexander Memorial Prizes:
- Hannah Reid, Cameron
Bailes

Prize Distribution



Senior School, Special Prize Winners

*Back row, left to right: C. Bailes, J. Cochrane, J. Craig, P. Browne, D. Pyper.
Middle row, left to right: J. McIlhagga, R. McCartney, M. Orr, G. Moore, R. Greer
Front row, left to right: M. Drennan, H.Reid, E. McCurdy, E. Lackermeier, A. Harkness,
K. Stronge*

The Mrs. Cameron Memorial Prizes: - Erin McCurdy, James Craig

The John Wilkinson Memorial Art Prizes: - Kathryn McKay, Joshua McIlhagga

The M. Christie Cup for Chemistry: - Hannah Reid

The Rita Armstrong Memorial Prize for Mathematics: - James Craig

The W.W. Preston Prize for Geography: - James Craig

The G.E. Russell Prize for Physics: - James Craig

The John Dunwoody Cup for English and English Literature: - Joshua McIlhagga

The Mol Cup for Music: - Grace Moore

The Soroptimist Cup for Food and Nutrition: - Hannah Reid

The Mary B. Gibson Memorial Cup for French: - Rachel McCartney

The George Taylor Cup for History: - Joshua McIlhagga

The Tom Kirkpatrick Memorial Cup for Spanish: - Jonathan Cochrane

The Denis Orr Memorial Cup for German: - Ellen Lackermeier

The Flanagan Cup for Religious Studies: - Ashleigh Church

The Ina Bamber Cup for G.C.S.E. Controlled Assessment in Home Economics: - Erin McCurdy

The Walker Cup for G.C.S.E. Drama: - Annabel Harkness

The Walter Cameron Cup for Media Studies: - Rachel McCartney

The Woolwich Building Society Trophy for G.C.S.E. Digital Technology – Multimedia: Rachel McCartney

The G.C.S.E. Digital Technology – Programming Cup: - Robert Greer

The Brock Trophy for Biology: - James Craig

Ballymena Business Centre Salver for Business Studies: - Katherine Stronge

The Classics Cup for G.C.S.E. Classical Civilisation: - Molly Drennan

The French Department Cup for Proficiency in Spoken French: - Joshua McIlhagga

The Berean Cup for Religious Studies (Short Course): - Rachel McCartney

The Mary B. Gibson Memorial French Prize (Most Improved Pupil): - Daniel Pyper

The William Preston Memorial Award for greatest improvement shown in the Middle School: - Jacob Natalicio

The Northern Regional College Cup for Construction: - Matthew Orr

The Wallace's GForce Cup for P.E.: - Patrick Browne



Senior School Form Prize Winners

*Back row, left to right: M. Gregg, M. Poston, J. Buchanan, J. Craig.
Front row, left to right: A. Robinson, C. Robinson, K. Surgenor, H. Reid.*





Year 14 Special Prize Winners

Back row, left to right: O. Jordan, M. Doherty, A. Clinton, J. Poston, C. McCreedy.

Middle row, left to right: J. Hunter, M.O'Neill, L. McCormill, G. McBurney, H. Bill, J. Hogg, M. Gregg.

Front row, left to right: E. McAuley, J. McAlister, A. Richmond, S. Reid, A. Robinson, S. Crabbe.

The Aberdeen University Prize: - James Craig

SPECIAL PRIZES

The Sam Alexander Cup for KS3 Geography: - Sarah Stirling

The Taylor Memorial Cup for Year 10 English: - Natalie Mills

The Livingstone Prize for KS3 Mathematics: - Ellen McDonald

The Lyle Cup for Junior Music: - Hanna Gunning

The Cara G. McCarroll Memorial Year 10 French Prize: - Emma Dickey, Katie McBride

The Cara G. McCarroll Memorial Year 9 French Prize: - Eva Kelly

The Year 9 German Cup: - Scarlett McCutcheon

The Year 9 Spanish Cup: - Emma Bonnar

The Margaret Currie Shield for the best Girl in Year 8: - Kaitlyn Armstrong

The Margaret Currie Shield for the best Boy in Year 8: - Finlay McCarroll

The Cara G. McCarroll Memorial Year 8 French Prize: - Leah Cotton

The Hassard Award for Creative and Artistic Contribution: - Timothy Day

The Computing Excellence Cup: - Michael Allen

The Cara G. McCarroll Memorial Christian Union Prize: - Grace McBurney

The Queenie McMullan Cup for Public Speaking: - Amy Gregg

The Edgar Graham Cup for Junior Public Speaking: - Katie McDonnell

The Linda Hunter Cup for Best Novice Public Speaker: - Jonathan Grimsley

The Blackwell Debating Cup: - Adam Dickey

The G.W. Burton Magazine Prize: - James Poston

The Walter Cameron Cup for Creative Use of Modern Media: - James Poston

The Herbert C. Carson Memorial Cup and Prize for Contribution to Drama: - Charlie McCreedy

The RAF Trophy for outstanding contribution to the school: - Ellen McAuley

The Paul Hetherington Memorial Trophy: - Oisín Jordan

Principal's Attendance Award for 7 Years' Unbroken Attendance: - Simon Bennett, Jonathan Hogg
The P.F. Martin Achievement Awards are being presented to pupils marked with * or **

THE FULLERTON FORM PRIZES

Year 14: - Amanda Robinson*, Michael Gregg*

Prize Distribution

Year 11: - Chloe Logan,
William McCartney

Year 10: - Hanna Gunning,
Jacob Bradley

Year 8: - Kaitlyn Armstrong,
Finlay McCarroll

THE SCHOOL FORM PRIZES

Year 13: - Science – Katie Surgenor,
Jacob Buchanan

Non-Science – Chloe Robinson,
Matthew Poston

Year 12: - Hannah Reid**, James Craig*

Year 9: - Scarlett McCutcheon, Henry
Casson

MEDALLIONS

Ballymena Academy Past Pupils'
Association Medallions (presented to
pupils who have performed with
outstanding distinction in a school
activity): -

Alex Balmer, Mark Hunter, Ethan
McCormac, Hannah McVicker, Kirill
Sakharov

The Fullerton Medallions awarded to
the Head Girl and Head Boy: -
Alex McLeister, Craig Simpson

PRIZE LIST 2018/2019

YEAR 14: Michael Allen**, Ciara
Anderson, Harry Bill**, James Brown,
Rachel Brown, Juliet Cameron, Aaron
Clinton*, Susanna Crabbe*, Timothy
Day*, Sophie Dennison, Adam



Senior School Winners of Past Pupils'
Association Medallions.
Left to right: A. Balmer and H. McVicker

Dickey**, Anna Doherty, Martyn
Doherty*, Patrick Doherty**, Crawford
Fairfield, Alissa Forsythe, Ben Fry,
Jonathan Gallagher, Sophie Gaston,
Anna Gordon, Peter Hamill, Laura
Hamilton, Beth Herbison*, Ruth Hoey,
Jonathan Hogg*, Jonathan Hunter,
Oisin Jordan, Matthew Kirk, Adam
Kirkpatrick, Sarah Logan, Rachael
Macaulay*, Lydia Manson*, Jenny

McAlister**, Sophie McAllister, Ellen
McAuley*, Elizabeth McCartney**,
Lucy McCormill, Gary McDowell, Anna
McGahey, Alexander McGuckian, Ruth
McKane, Olivia McMaster**, Sarah
McNabney, Katie Moorehead, Adam
Morrison, Michael O'Neill, James
Poston, Ben Pyper, Sarah Reid,
Suzanne Reid, Alex Richmond,
Charlotte Rodgers, Kirill Sakharov,
Matt Smith, Anisia Tiplea, Jack
Turner*.

YEAR 13: Katie Agnew, Jessica
Beverland, David Boriceanu, Sarah
Carroll, Cara Dunlop, Rachel Fleck,
Jill Forsythe, Matthew Grimsley,
Callum Hamill, Emma Hoey, Ryan
Irwin, Lauren Malcolm, Megan
Malfatto, Georgia McClelland, Stuart
McDowell, Alastair McKee, Andrew
McLarnon, Alex McLeister, Kirsten
McLeister, Hannah McVicker, Kezia
Mitchell, Joel Murphy, Adam Paul,
Jessica Quail, Hannah Richmond,
Matthew Shaw, Angus Steele, Jessica
Swann, Ben Walsh, Alex Wilson,
Michael Wilson.

YEAR 12: Katie Alexander, Harry
Andrews, Brooke Arbuthnot**,
Cameron Bailes**, Tim Bailie, Holly
Boyd, Patrick Browne, James
Cahoon, Richard Carson, Ashleigh
Church, Jonathan Cochrane, Odhran
Cosgrove, Amy Cunningham, Jackson
Darragh, Esther Davison, Naomi
Dickey, Molly Drennan, Daniel
Elliott, Grace Francey, Matthew
French, Rachel Gillan**, Katie Glass,
Megan Gordon, Robert Greer, Luke
Gregg, Jack Guild, Ailsa Hamill,
David Heaney**, Sarah Holland,
Oliver Hunt, Rachel Kennedy, Sophie
Kennedy, Ellen Lackermeier, Andrew
Lawther, Jacob Loughridge, Robert
Mark, Sarah McBride, Anna McCaig,
Rachel McCartney*, Jonathan
McCullough, Erin McCurdy**, Emma
McGahey, Joshua McIlhagga*, Beth
McIlrath, Kathy McIlveen**, Lucy
McKane, Hannah McKibbin, James
McLean, Abbie Millar, Grace
Moore**, Zara Mulholland, Maria
Olteanu, Eve Patterson*, Kaden
Patterson, Daniel Pyper, Grace Reid,
Alice Rodgers, Hope Snoddy, William
Snowden, Katie Stevenson, Hollie
Stirling, Rebekah Strahan, Katherine



The Fullerton Medallions awarded to the Head Girl and Head Boy.
Left to right: Alex McLeister, Craig Simpson



Senior School Special Prize Winners
Right to left: J. McIlhagga, J. Craig,
R. McCartney, H. Reid

Paul Cunningham, James Currie, Christian Drennan, Katherine Duff, Amy Houston, Alexandra Irvine, Lois Kirkpatrick, Christopher Leitch, Connor Louw, Lucy Magee, Erin Marrs, Brandon McCaughan, Katie McCaughey, Rachel McCaughey, Sophie McCluney, Kathryn McLean, Thomas Millar, Kerry Moore, William Simpson, Chloe Smyth, Eabha Steele, Ana Stinson, Sarah Taylor, Bethany Turtle, Rhiannon White.

YEAR 10: Danni Blair, Rachel Cochrane, Emma Dickey, Adam Gardiner, Maisie Gibbs, David Gordon, Caitlin Graham, Amy Gregg, Amber Hoey, Katie Lacknermeier, Katie McBride, Katie McCullough, Ellen McDonald, Natalie Mills, Erin Moore, Rebekah Neilly, Kadie Orr, Anna Patterson, Lauren Ramsey, Sarah Stirling, Louise Surgenor, Amy Weir, Erin Weir, Matthew Wilson, Alexandra Workman, Kate Wylie.

Bristow, Maddie Carter, Gemma Clyde, Katie Dael, Imogen Devine, Erin Donaghy, Cameron Eagleson, Joshua Gallagher, Rebekah Gordon, Daniel Gribben, Jonathan Grimsley, Sarah Jackson, Eva Kelly, Leah Kenny, Zara Kernohan, Lydia Logan, Lana Madden, Amy Millar, Jessica Millen, Nina Moles, Alysha Ramsey, Scott Ritchie, Lily-Mae Torrington, Samuel Wainwright, Elle Anna Wilson, Jorja Wilson.

YEAR 8: Charlotte Agnew, Evie Arnold, Sara Beggs, Rebekah Calderwood, Leah Cotton, Olivia Drain, Eric Gamble, Ella Graham, James Gregg, Grace Gunning, Zoe Kirkpatrick, Zoe Love, Lucy McAllister, Isaac McClintock, Luke McCorrison, Erin McGivern, Caitlyn McIntosh, Connor McKenna, Evie Millar, Lewis Millar, Luke Millar, Poppy Millar, Ella Mulholland, Jessica Redmond, Zach Shaw, Jonathan Skelly, Rachel Steele, Hannah Thompson, Ruby Thompson, Naomi Turtle.

Stronge, Tori Surgeoner, Rachel Wilson, Hannah Wylie.

YEAR 11: Callum Anderson, Andrew Boyd, Chloe Cotton, Aaron Craig,

YEAR 9: Jo-Jo Andrews, Emma Bonnar, Ellie Bradley, Stevie



M. Gregg with his impressive collection of awards!

Prize Distribution



Year 13 Form Prize Winners
Left to right: J. Buchanan, C. Robinson, K. Surgenor,
M. Poston.



Sixth formers ready to welcome guests to Prize Day!



Catching up with past pupils at the post-prize day afternoon tea.
Left to right: Mrs. C. Harris, M. Gregg, Mrs. S. Monteith, C. Fairfield, J. Hogg.





*Relaxing after Prize Day!
Left to right: Mrs. J. Allen, Dr. D. Johnston, Professor L. Grant.*



Former Ballymena Academy teaching staff member Mr. M. Livingstone catching up with Mr. T. Heaney after Prize Day at the delicious afternoon tea.



B. Fry, Mrs. R. Hamill, M. Poston and J. Poston enjoying the afternoon tea in the Dining Hall.

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The Braid

From the Forms

Public Speaking

“Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

At Ballymena Academy, pupils are encouraged to use their voices to make a difference – to challenge and inspire their listeners.

To Bee or not to Bee – without bees are we in trouble?

I want you to picture this: you see a man, a man on a mission. A mission involving life or death. No, he's not one of the contestants on the latest series of *The Apprentice*, but a cave dweller, living many, *many* years ago. About to go on a hunting expedition, he needs some sort of sustenance to keep him going as he chases four-legged prey. So, what would be his meal of choice? Well, for the Palaeolithic man living in Southern Africa the choice is somewhat surprising. You see, for these cave-dwellers, honey was a guaranteed, instant calorie boost, supplying enough energy for a long day's work. We still depend on bees for this healthy solution.

We see here the beginning of mankind's relationship with the honeybee, and since then, bees have played a significant role in the works of civilisation. The art of beekeeping was well established along the River Nile by 2400 BC, and records tell us that Rameses III made an offering of nearly 21,000 jars of honey to the Nile god.

For the Greeks, honey was called the 'food of the gods' and the Roman poet Virgil had all the tips and tricks required for best beekeeping practices. Who will ever forget the words of Ireland's most respected poet, W B Yeats, who longed to be in Innisfree with "a hive for the honeybee, and live alone in the beeloud glade."

What roles do our 'buzzing buddies' play for us today? It would be wrong not to mention the last meeting of the



Close up of Year 9 Textile piece

Royal Geographical Society of London, when a group of experts declared that bees were the most important living creatures on the planet. Surprised? Well, just in case you do not trust the well-respected 'Earth watch Institute', allow me to explain why these master pollinators deserve the title.

Each honeybee uses the entirety of its half-inch body collecting pollen and nectar to sustain their colony, yet the bees also help to ensure the survival of many of our plants, which rely on cross-pollination to reproduce, and bees fulfil this job. In fact, many flowers adapt naturally to benefit from the pollination process. Many are brightly coloured and scented to attract the bees and lots of flowers even have 'nectar guides' – these are lines on their petals that direct the bee to the nectar.

To further demonstrate my point, 'The Science Times' recently reported that 70% of the world's agriculture depends exclusively on bees. In the UK alone, bees pollinate at least 38 different crops, and farm animals, which provide meat and dairy products also feed on plants that have been pollinated. Ladies and gentlemen, bees certainly play an important part in environmental sustainability.

Despite our clear reliance on bees for the food industry, recently they have been declared an endangered species. Alison Benjamin and Brian McCallum in their book, 'A World Without Bees', have recorded that almost 90% of the bee population has disappeared in the past few years. The blame for much of this decline falls on an overuse of pesticides.

Surely now that we know the central role bees play in our daily lives, this drastic decline in their numbers should worry and anger us. If my words cannot convince you, perhaps the words of a well-known genius may. Albert Einstein once said, "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then mankind would only have four years of life left." It is time for us to do something.

Alarm bells are ringing, and we need to respond to them. Whether we simply plant 'bee-friendly wildflowers' in our garden, or commit to owning a beehive, we must do something to prevent further disappearance of our tiny friends.

Our bees need protection and without them we truly are in trouble. What will YOU do to resolve this serious problem?

Naomi Dickey,
Year 13

From the Forms

Sweatshops – Are we responsible for their creation?

Laden down with bags, I am walking through the centre of Belfast, just having visited a large department store, bearing the strapline “Keeping up with latest looks without breaking the bank”. So where to next? What are you wearing right now or what is in your wardrobe?

You may not like to believe it, but the use of sweatshops to create clothing is more common than you think. According to ‘UNICEF’, an estimated 250 million children (aged 5-14) are engaged in child labour throughout the world. Since the beginning of this year, tens of thousands of working hours have been completed by young children throughout the world. In the world’s poorest countries, slightly more than 1 in 4 children are engaged in child labour. A sweat shop is defined as, “A factory or workshop, especially in the clothing industry, where manual workers are employed at very low wages for long hours and under poor conditions.” How can anyone justify this? How has this horrible situation been created?

In a world where fast fashion has become our priority, companies are forced to source the cheapest forms of labour. Recruiters for jobs in the the ‘sweatshop industry’ make very unrealistic promises such as; a well-paid job, comfortable accommodation, three nutritious meals a day and opportunities for training and schooling. In reality this could not be further from the truth.

Typically, sweatshops exploit workers who are unable to obtain employment in traditional work environments. In sweatshops they are pushed to work excessive hours of back breaking work in appalling conditions. Very often this could be 80 or 90 hours a week, without any additional compensation for overtime. This is forbidden by law.

Child labour is a horrible issue within the industry, as children suffer the most, because much of the supply chain often requires low-skilled

labour and some tasks are better suited to children than adults. According to ‘UNICEF’, between 2000 and 2012 child labour decreased by 30%. However, in 2020, 11% of the world’s children are still deprived of the right to go to school.

The minimum wage job here pays more in a week than an average sweatshop worker makes in a year. We cannot imagine the life of those who are trapped in the sweatshop trade, with wages being so low that they barely cover essential needs. Sweatshops do not alleviate poverty. They aggravate it. Each family depends on the meagre pay the children bring home.

The Evening Standard produced a documentary to expose the sweatshop trade. One worker said, “Sometimes we get major orders in and we have to work really quickly. I get paid a few rupees for finishing a garment, but on a good day I can make 60p.” This worker was a 9-year-old boy.

The work environment itself endangers the health of the workers, as typically sweatshops do not have air conditioning in the summer months and do not have heat in winter months. Often there is no proper ventilation to ensure that workers are

breathing clean and safe air, and they are not protected from chemicals used in the manufacturing process. No-one cares! Profit comes first!

The improper clean-up of food, chemicals or byproducts can pose all sorts of health problems. Furthermore, many sweatshops have rodent or pest problems, which cause serious illnesses for the workers.

Equipment and machinery are generally in poor dilapidated condition, which poses a constant danger to the worker.

Beside one-room houses and self-made shacks where workers live, numerous multi-storey factory blocks tower into the sky. Clusters of steel-reinforcing rods poke out from the high rooftops, as yet another floor for sewing machines is built. This industry will continue to grow if we continue to fuel it.

Do we ever think of the consequences of our actions? We are the ones who continue to buy these products. We are part of the problem, as we have created a market for cheaper clothes over many decades. This is a serious worldwide issue.

When you are out shopping, please consider the lives of those slaving to



Naomi Redmond, G.C.S.E. Art and Design

make your clothes on the other side of the globe. As the strapline in the window stated, we are utterly consumed by our desperation to keep up with the latest 'trend', but at what expense? We might not be breaking the bank, but we are destroying young peoples' lives in poorer countries.

Alice Rodgers, Year 13

Personal Writing

"Write what should not be forgotten." Isabel Allende

Writing provides a unique opportunity to catalogue memories that can be treasured forever. Enjoy these two perspectives on the first day at Ballymena Academy.

My First Day at Ballymena Academy

The day I had been waiting for all summer was about to begin. My mind was in a whirl with so many unanswered questions- Who would be in my class? What would teachers be like? Would I get lost? As I wakened, I was aware of the light shining through my curtains and I could already feel the butterflies fluttering in my stomach. After putting on my smart Ballymena Academy uniform, I quickly dashed down the stairs in my newly polished shoes. I tried to eat some breakfast, but could not eat much as I was worrying about the day ahead. I said goodbye to my family and got into the car.

The drive twisted and turned up to my new school and as I looked out the window, all I could see was the bright green carpet of grass, brown crispy leaves on tall trees and some rugby pitches. I said goodbye to my Mum and walked in through the front doors, where some friendly prefects took me to the Girls' Gym. It was filled with the loud noise of everyone chatting nervously and I met up with some of my primary school friends.

The Head of Year, Miss Forsythe, entered the gym and everything fell silent, except for my heart which was pounding loudly like a drum. I listened very carefully for my name when the classes were being called out. I was in 8E, which meant that I had to wait until just before the end to hear my name and class. I hoped I was in a class with some of my primary school friends. Luckily, two of my closest friends were called to my class and I was as pleased as punch!

We were taken to our form rooms by our tutors, Mr Andrews and Miss Hamilton and I spoke with my friends. I also met pupils from other primary schools, and we exchanged names. We had a tour of the school, which seemed enormous! – so many corridors and doors. Then the bell rang, and it was soon break-time. I had not eaten much breakfast so the melon in my lunchbox tasted delicious! After break we got our new textbooks, folders, P.E kit and homework diaries. My homework diary felt firm and unused, but I knew that would not last for long! Before I realised the time, I heard the bell and it was the end of our first morning.

My first day at Ballymena Academy was over and it was brilliant! That night when I climbed into my warm, welcoming bed, I realised that I couldn't wait to go back the next day to study new subjects, play lots of sport and get to know other pupils in my year and all my teachers. My adventure had begun!

Hannah Ramsey, Year 8

My First Day at Ballymena Academy

On Thursday 29th August at 7am, I woke up to the sound of my blaring alarm and the thought that it was my first day at Ballymena Academy. I was so excited! I jumped straight out of my warm bed and pulled on my new uniform. It was extremely difficult to fasten my tie for the first time, so I had to get some help from my mum!

Time for breakfast. As I walked into the kitchen, the smell of warm bread filled the air. I ate my delicious breakfast as quickly as I could so I wouldn't be late for the first day at my new school. I said goodbye to my dad, who was helping my two little sisters to get ready for school. I jumped into the car and my mum drove for a few minutes until we finally reached Ballymena Academy. We drove up the long, winding drive with tall trees on either side. I had arranged to meet some of my primary school friends at the entrance, so we would feel more comfortable walking in together. Some friendly sixth year boys (who were giants!!) walked us to the Girls' gym. As we walked along the maze of corridors, I thought I would never be able to find my way around such a massive building. The corridors all looked the same to me! Once we arrived at the gym and were waiting for everyone else to arrive, we chatted about all the fun we had over the summer holidays.

When everyone was settled, Miss Forsythe walked up to the front to inform us about Year 8 classes. Lots of thoughts were going through my head what form class would I be in, would I know anyone in my form class and what would my teachers be like? When my name was read out, I breathed a sigh of relief as I knew two girls in my form class. My legs were like jelly as I walked nervously to what is now known as the 8E form room. Our four helpful peer mentors gave out the books that we would need throughout the year. We played a game where we had to walk around and ask everyone to sign our piece of paper, so we could try to learn everyone's name. We were also given lots of information about Ballymena Academy. The 12 o'clock bell rang and it was time to go home. I talked the whole way home in the car about how amazing my day was and how glad I was that I knew a couple of girls in my form class.

Sophie Charleton,
Year 8.

From the Forms

Creative Writing

“Writing is the painting of the voice!” Voltaire.

At Ballymena Academy, pupils are encouraged to explore their imaginations and create characters and plots to engage their readers. Enjoy these pieces from Junior School.

Glork!!

This story begins in a cave. This cave was dark and damp. It was not a pleasant cave at all. It was cold and smelt like rotten fish. There were thorn bushes hiding the cave mouth, so that no one could get in. No one even knew it existed. This cave was not a normal cave, it was a goblin's home. This goblin was called Glork. Glork was a very ugly goblin. He had two eyes, but one was slightly smaller than the other. He had very sharp teeth and long, sharp horns. He had an unbelievable number of warts and hands as big as a giant. Not only did Glork have huge hands, he had very tiny feet. Glork was also very fat. All Glork did was eat and sleep. The most disgusting thing about Glork was his hair. It was really greasy and tumbled down his shoulders in curly green locks. He never showered and hated getting wet. Glork never changed out of his clothes. He had one cape and a rotten fish-smelling grey tunic. He had a rope on his cape to which he attached his dagger. His dagger was chipped and bent- he only used it for emergencies. Glork moved very slowly, since he had such tiny feet. He liked shuffling. He found it easier than taking proper steps because his tiny feet made it so difficult. Glork had a very deep voice and he was not afraid to shout. He talked very loudly and as soon as he started talking, he found it difficult to stop.

Lois Campbell, Year 8

'IT' – the evil Goblin.

I am here, to tell you about someone, no, something (IT does not deserve recognition as a living being), that thankfully, lived long ago. It terrorised

the lives of many, and not just its enemies but its own species. You can only really understand how such things could ever possibly happen, in cases such as these, by knowing of the exact context surrounding the tale.

The context for our specimen is very bleak. (I shall not call him, sorry, it, a Goblin, in case I offend the few vicious Goblins left in these parts). In the time before the famous Bilbo Baggins met the Goblins, who inhabited the misty mountains in his tale, “There and Back Again”, there existed a small and very weak settlement of creatures. They had been exiled, due to a rather serious problem with a dragon in the Goblin-infested southern mountain ranges. Due to overpopulation, they were kicked out, and had to search for a safe home.

They eventually reached the Misty Mountains. The tunnels they dug quickly linked with tunnels made long, long ago, by some unknown creatures, who are said to lurk in the shadows to this day. These tunnels encouraged population expansion and over time, they became the biggest settlement in Middle Earth. The goblin – dwarf war changed that. The territory they occupied was much sought after, and they soon made enemies with the Goblins who dwelt in the mountains of Mirkwood, who tried to inhabit the Misty Mountain tunnels. Unfortunately, in this war the ‘Mirkwood Goblins’ lost eighty-five percent of their settlement. They had to excavate new tunnels, as the old ones were full of traps and some actually collapsed.

That is the reason for the atrocities committed by this particular being. The explanation of context is complete so I will continue my story.

It was born three years after the war broke out. As goblin mothers are very odd, and do not talk of the name of their child until he or she comes of age, we do not know his name, only his nicknames. Here are a few: IT, The Shepherd and the Marshal. IT was in an unbelievably bad place during childhood (which may have influenced him to plan these horrible things). Starvation was everywhere, creatures had very few places to live, as the tunnels had been destroyed years before. This gave our least favourite

entity a permanent condition, as IT was withered by the age of 15 and slowly deteriorated over time. I do not wish to describe the creature in detail, but here is a description from when IT was 18 years of age. IT had withered legs, pale grey, crusty skin wrapped over thin knobby bones which were so brittle, they could snap with every step. His arms became too weak to move, with stumps at the end, unable to grow due to calcium starvation, and his elbow was really distorted. His head was unable to turn due to a broken neck and spine and was fixed in an eternal drooping, crooked state. His eyes were nothing but specs of wrinkled white colour, in the deep blackness of the eye sockets. His speech was slurred and unrecognisable, like a constant groan, in fact, the only thing that IT even mildly resembled was Gollum, who was still an innocent hobbit at this point of time. You should be incredibly glad you never had to see IT in real life, as he was a gruesome sight indeed.

Before he had become that, in his childhood, as we call IT, there was a huge push for a larger workforce to dig tunnels. Over time, a party of creatures formed and challenged the existing leader. Our little entity was quick to join them, as from a young age, he thought the upper classes were superior to the lower class. They managed to storm the inner heart of the mountain and slay the existing king of the Goblins (which marked the end of the first monarchy of the Mist Mountain Goblins). The first act of business for them was to implement a new working system, which was radically different to anything these goblins had seen before.

They used other goblins as slaves. They were not paid or provided with good living conditions. Slave labour was a new thing for goblins, who surprisingly were relatively decent folk at that time. Soon, IT (the Marshal) was put in charge of this operation, as he was a young enthusiastic recruit. I will now describe this operation in detail, to show you his wickedness.

When a lower ranking Goblin gave birth, the baby goblins would be taken in the dead of night to a prison, where





Elle McCord, G.C.S.E. Art and Design

they would live until they could wield a heavy iron tool. Living conditions were horrible, as the prison was built under a lake (by orders of the Marshal). Water and mud ran down the walls, and the soggy, soft soil made it impossible to sleep on the bog they called a floor. Food was delivered once a day, just a slice of stale bread (though they decided to stop this after a while, as it proved too costly). The slave goblins were beaten, starved, physically and mentally mutilated by their masters. It is not appropriate to give further details of this brutality to my readers.

The Marshal tightly controlled this cruel and wicked process. He enjoyed the power. I know that you feel sorry for these innocent goblins, but my tale ends rather strangely.

You may expect the Marshal to stand and give loud speeches at mass rallies. You may be imagining someone like Hitler from our own world, (you cannot deny the similarities). But no, the Marshal ended up being a victim of his own success. You see, I did not mention the fact that the Marshal invented the wicked slave system, then left it to his most trusted goblins to operate it. The Marshal remained in

his rotting state for years in a cold dark room, eventually having no interaction at all with the outside world. One dreadful day, his own trusted apprentice goblins walked into his retreat, beat him severely and ground him down to tar. The cruelty abruptly came to an end.

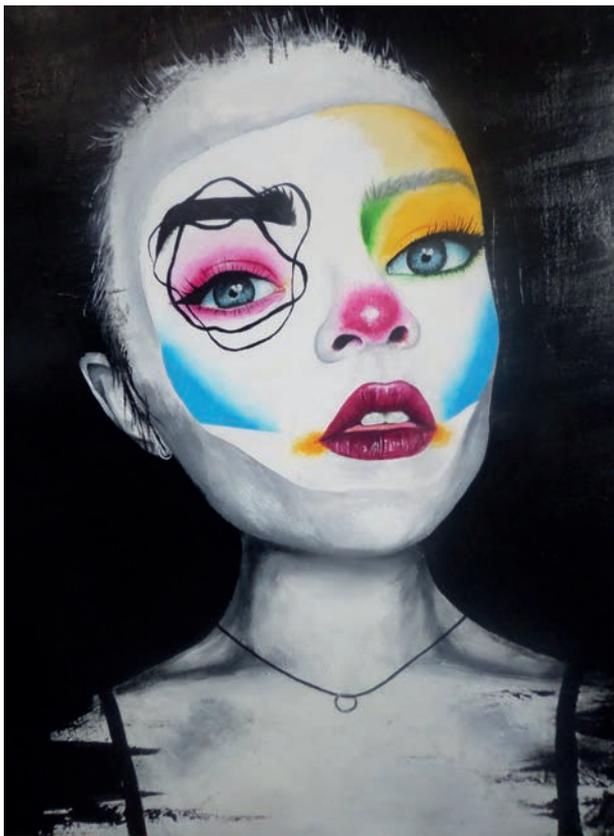
The reader might feel sorry for IT in this instance. However, his atrocities are too many to forgive. Fortunately, that is the end of my tale.

Thomas Allenby,
Year 8

From the Forms



The Braid



Alex Balmer, A.S Level Art and Design



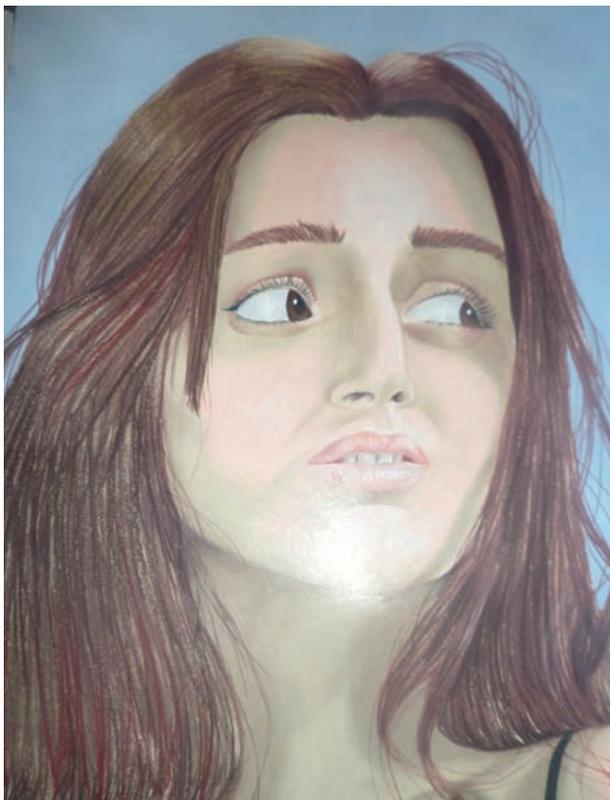
Year 9 Ceramic Tiles



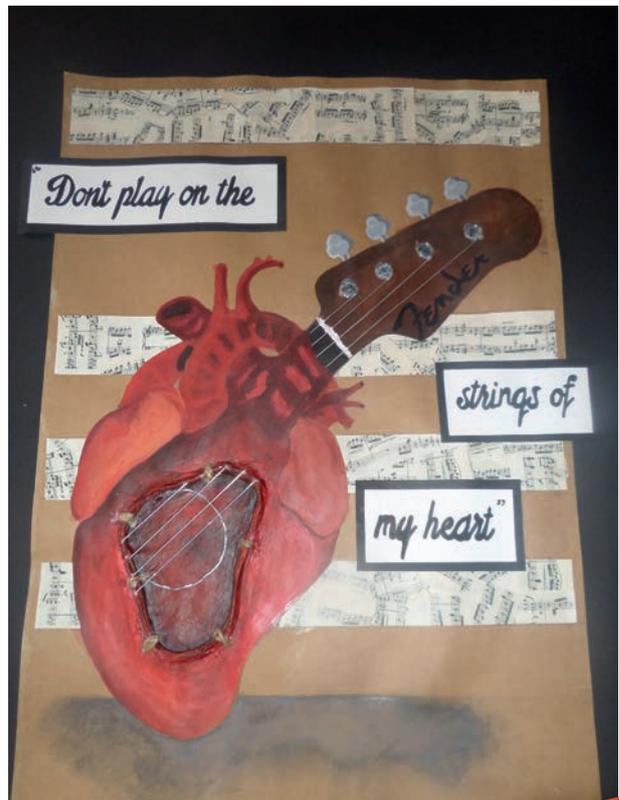
Lois Kirkpatrick, G.C.S.E. Art and Design



Rachel Johnston, G.C.S.E. Art and Design



Andrew Boyd, G.C.S.E. Art and Design



Lexie Irvine, G.C.S.E. Art and Design

From the Forms

The Pocket Watch

It was a time of war, long ago before technology and the comforts of the modern world. There lived a group of friends, who set out on a mission to aid their brothers and sisters engaged in the battle. The journey was long and treacherous with little or no help offered en route. This is not a tale of the battle. It is a story about what happened when they arrived at the battlefield.

The group arrived at the battlefield, but there was no welcome, no recognition they had reached the end of the road, nor was there sight nor sound of their brethren. All they saw was a field stained with blood of persons unknown, blood in pools and gullies, enough to suggest that many had died there.

Unknown to this little band of friends, their brethren had been betrayed, for there was a traitor in their midst, an individual who had informed the enemy; that despicable band of creatures known as 'The Trolls'. Standing in a field of blood, the stench besieging their nostrils and turning their stomachs, they began to be haunted by a gnawing doubt, which preceded a rising tide of sorrow about the well-being of their kin. The fear of the unknown turned to distaste and then to rage as they sought to find their brethren, but it was late and before they could find peace, they had to set up camp and seek solace in a troubled slumber.

That night Micah, the youngest member of the group was chasing sleep, but he could not find that sweet place, where he could simply rest and fall into the darkness that surrounded him. His dreams, however fleeting, were filled with visions of what had happened on this field, in this place. He saw the field; he saw his brethren. They were eating. He could hear them chatting and making plans for war, but also distant footsteps, people he could not see and then a horrible screech, an unfamiliar language, a battle cry.

His brethren picked up their

weapons, but it was too late! The bloodcurdling screams of his friends and family echoed around the corners of his mind, interrupted by the sound of metal blades clashing and blood splattering on the ground.

The disembodied footsteps, the voices and the unfamiliar language belonged to the Trolls. The stench of their breath, their blood splattered faces and the predominant feeling of death were too horrible for Micah to bear. He woke up with a start and staggered out of his tent, across the field, mindlessly wandering away from the images in his mind. He saw a scratched and bloody plank lying unevenly on the ground, but there was something underneath. Micah lifted the plank of wood to find his cousin's teddy bear. Tears filled his eyes and he fell to his knees, clutching it to his chest and lost in happier memories, until he heard a movement, a scuttling behind him. He turned slowly with his eyes tightly closed, but not tightly enough as he was still able to see 7 bloodshot eyes looking at him and through him, following the outline of his bones into his heart and his soul.

Despite the chill emanating from these eyes, windows to a soul so alien and different from his own, Micah managed to stagger back to the campfire. By the light of the flickering embers, Micah saw that these eyes were set into a body, a physical body so large as to defy logic, yet recognisable like a scorpion.

This scorpion was covered in wounds and there were numerous swords sticking out of the rock-hard shell covering its body. The blades of these weapons had become trapped in the body armour of this arachnid, by warriors long since departed. The Trolls went to 'The Deceased Forest', where many horrible things could be found and made a deal with the scorpions, who agreed to help them in battle.

Micah was furious. He swung his sword at the beast, piercing the

scorpion's skull, but the sword broke. Micah managed to pull a sword out of the scorpion's torso. It was a weapon of great beauty and craftsmanship, with a leather hilt and gold cross guard, decorated with a stunning ruby. It had a silver blade, inscribed with the shape of a single man facing an entire army.

Micah's friends woke and asked him what had happened. Micah explained and they congratulated him on taking down the evil scorpion, but he ignored them and told them of his visions. The dreams of their family, the slaughter, the betrayal and the Trolls.

In the morning they searched the area and found 3 dead trolls and two troll caves. The caves were abandoned, but there were some signs of recent activity just before they arrived.

That night, Micah heard a faint whispering beside him. He drew his sword and there, on the blade, the inscribed pattern started to move and whisper. The man on the blade pointed at the corner of the trolls' cave. Micah went to the corner and found an old, silver, scratched pocket watch. As he lifted the glass of the watch, a section of the wall beside him slowly opened. Micah cautiously walked down into a dark cave. He heard a cackling in the shadows.

The wooden torches that lined the cave walls lit up and a man was hanging in the darkness. His wrists were bound by chains connected to wooden stakes. The man's body was battered, bruised, bloody and incredibly skinny. Words were scratched on a stone in front of him: 'You never should have betrayed your clan and even if one or two survive, they will never accept you'. Micah screamed. The group heard him, broke down the wall and released him. Micah clutched the watch tightly, determined to keep it for his descendants. He kept the watch for years and eventually it was passed down through his family line until it reached Fred, a boy who was eleven years old in 2020.



Fred and his friend Tim loved to play 'hide and seek' in the cellar. They had stopped playing tag in the field near the old farmhouse, because of rumours about a boy who had disappeared there many years before. The only thing that was found was a metal sign which read 'curiosity killed the cat but in this instance, curiosity killed you'. Tim was going to stay over with Fred that night but they would not do an 'all-nighter' like other kids because of another rumour about a man dressed in a suit and top hat, who appeared in your room at night and stared at you with his black and red narrow-slit eyes.

The next morning, while they were playing downstairs, Fred produced the watch, showed it to Tim and said, "It is not working but is still kind of cool, don't you think?" Tim tapped the glass 6 times and a faint red glow shone from the watch face. Some lightbulbs burst, except for the one directly above them. Suddenly they heard a groan from the darkness and a horrific, rotten hand reached from the darkness and dragged Tim away. "Aghhh, help me please....," came a faint scream. The creature stepped into the light and its body was grotesque, horrible and diseased. It started to screech in a horrible, groaning voice, "IT IS ALL YOUR FAULT. YOU SHOULD HAVE COME QUICKER. WE WOULD HAVE WON THE BATTLE AND SURVIVED. NOW YOU WILL NOT SURVIVE!"

This creature was a fallen soldier from the battle years before. Fred screamed, turned to run but he tripped, and broke the watch. He was dragged back into the darkness and never seen again.

Now there are many rumours about frightening cellars. Are they true? Are there multiple creatures waiting for the right time when their victim is unprepared and vulnerable? Maybe as you are reading this story a door will creak open and another creature will creep in, ready to **STRIKE!**

Michael Darragh, Year 8

Functional Writing

"To send a letter is a good way to go somewhere without moving anything but your heart."
Phyllis Theroux

In Year 9, pupils embark on the study of a novel based on war; they also analyse various examples of war poetry. The following "letters from the trenches" are pupils' creative responses to their study and show their capacity to imagine what life was like for those who fought in World War One.

Dear Mum and Dad, 21st August, 1918.

I am writing this letter from my bunk in Trench 36NW1. It is evening and instead of seeing the pinkish glow of the sunset, I can see the orange flares of distant bombs. The air smells of smoke and sweat. The mud in our trench is churned up and has a horrible, reddish tinge to it. The walls have shell holes like great, gaping mouths in them.

So far, I have managed to avoid Trench Foot but my friend Robert, a soldier in my unit, has recently returned to England to have a toe amputated. I sincerely hope I return with all ten toes still attached to my feet. The lice are also causing a problem called Trench Fever, another disease I would like to avoid.

Yes, Mum, I am eating enough. The food here is bland and slightly rat-nibbled but it could be worse. My bunk is hard, but I think conditions could be worse. No, I am not settled in. I am constantly uneasy and every tiny noise brings me leaping to my feet, gun in hand. That one, tiny noise could be signalling a gas attack, which could mean the difference between life and death. I have also become a light sleeper- I definitely won't be able to sleep through Dad's snoring when I get home!

The real reason I am writing is because of something that happened

a few days ago. We had been marching for hours and were all exhausted. I stood wide awake though when I heard the shout, "Gas, gas! Quick boys!" My helmet was clumsy and airtight, but I was grateful for it as the green gas closed around us, like vultures around a dying animal. I barely got it fitted in time but one man, however, was not so lucky. He plunged forward through the thick mud, his frantic eyes pleading and desperate, his arms outstretched as if to say "Someone help me, please!" but all we could do was watch as he took his last excruciatingly painful breath. His face was still contorted with pain and terror as we lifted him onto a cart. I cannot close my eyes without seeing his face. It will be forever engraved into my memory like a terrifying nightmare.

We are told it is sweet and fitting to die for your country. That man's death was neither sweet nor fitting, yet I have great respect for those who die for the freedom of their country. Because of them, Britain will stay strong and proud and live to see another day. I hope I have not upset you by telling you this, but I just had to tell someone. Say hello to the family for me! I will see you soon.

Love from your son.

P.S. Some chocolate would be greatly appreciated.

Zoe Love, Year 9

12th November 1917.

Dear Mother and Father,
Since I last wrote, I thought the war would be over and I would be back home safe and sound, but instead I am still here fighting in this horrible war. I miss you even more now, I want to be home. The horror this war has caused is scary. I am sick of it! Last week, were trudging on to our next base when suddenly there was a gas attack! We all grabbed our gas masks, except for one of my closest friends.

From the Forms

Sadly, poor Thomas did not get his on in time. He looked like he was drowning in a green sea. It was a painful sight. Thomas was panicking as if he was on fire. We stared at him in despair, but sadly, there was nothing we could do. Absolutely nothing.

I am currently in the trenches with my regiment. We don't have to go to fight on the front line until Monday, so I have some time off to rest and prepare. It's so wet and cold, the dampness is blanketing my body as I write to you. My toes are now touching the endless, wet, sinking mud below me as my boots have hardly a sole left in them. These trenches are very noisy. I continually hear gun fire, bombs exploding and lots of men shouting...but then there is the silence, the terrifying silence! I see the injured and more often, the

dying soldiers being carried on stretchers to the field hospital. There are also lots of scurrying rats, boldly trying to eat our rations. The rations are horrible, the powdered milk is like wallpaper paste. I smell gunpowder day and night. Worse still, I can smell the stench of dead bodies everywhere in the trenches. Although I have some time off, there is no escape from this war. I am so nervous and frightened. I don't want to let the British army down. I'm worried in case there is another gas or bomb attack. What if I end up facing the same fate as my friend Thomas? The sight of his face constantly haunts me.

I'm sure you've constantly heard the saying, "Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori" which means, "it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country".

How could this be true? I have seen the consequences of war and the pain and suffering. It's unbelievable to think someone would say such a thing! It's all a lie, wars are cruel and give false impressions. Thomas didn't die with dignity; it was a horrible death. Thomas won't be remembered as a hero. I'll only remember his wretched face. War has scarred me; all the frightening and traumatic images will stay with me until the day I die.

I want to say I will see you again soon when this is over, but I can't. I don't know if I'll make it.

Sending all my love,
Albert

Alex Suitters, Year 9



Year 9 Textiles



Poetry

“Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words.”

Robert Frost.

I hope you enjoy this selection of poems which express pupils' views and emotions on various facets of life. Some of our Year 12 pupils have contributed pieces of poetry written when in “Lock down”. At this unprecedented time in our national history, their poems communicate thoughts and feelings that will resonate with many.

Is There Hope?

BOOM! I wake up, look around,
thinking, “Where is my mother?”
Then I see her ...lying...dead!
A hunter beside her!
Who will look after me now?
Am I next?

What hope is there for a tiny,
scared baby snow leopard like me,
out here all alone?
I need to get away, so I run,
Anywhere!
Anywhere at all!

It is dark now,
The sky is as black as coal,
Just when I think I have lost him,
I hear crunching through the snow!
Which way do I go now?
BANG! Too late!

Maybe there is hope for a tiny,
scared baby snow leopard like me.
Maybe I won't be all alone now,
In this big bad world.
Maybe this snow leopard will care for me
and let me join his leap!

Maia Malcolm, Year 8

I am The Tree

I am the tree,
Towering over the meadow,
Scattered with buttercups
and bluebells in bloom.

I am your elder,
Branches long and leafy,
Full of harvest fruits
free for all.

I am your resource,
The wood shaping your lives,
Lower your heads!
I say to the proud.

I am the father,
The father of the wildlife,
A shelter for birds,
and food for beavers.

I am the watcher,
Of those who cut too much,
Hurting my person,
Destroying the habitats.

I am your provider,
Eternally happy to give,
Strive to preserve my people,
Fight for my rights!

I am wise,
You can be too,
Reuse and recycle,
And protect all things green...
Especially the trees.

John Oluteye, Year 8

Animal Kingdom

Who am I you ask, well listen and see,
Worms and bugs flee,
When they see me!

My worst enemy is a sly fox,
I live in a coop, just a fancy box,
I have wings but do not fly,
I wish I could flutter my tiny wings up high.

When I lay an egg, I let everyone know by saying cluck,
I roam about in the fields and muck,
because I am a free range
CHICKEN.

Jessica Alexander, Year 8

My Dream Lives On

I had a dream
To live in an undivided world
Where I wouldn't have to sit at the back.
Where I would not be shot in the streets
I fought for peace
I fought for equality
You can trap me in cells, but, once again
I will come back.
I had a vision

From the Forms



Claire Murdock, G.C.S.E Art and Design



Year 9 Ceramic Tiles



Georgia Stevenson, G.C.S.E. Art and Design



Erin Marrs, G.C.S.E. Art and Design

That my kids could have an education
 That they would not be judged by the colour of their skin.
 I made my speech, I made my mark,
 They killed me
 but my dream still lives on.

Monya Ahmed, Year 9

A Picture's One Hundred and Ninety Words

I am La belle Ferronnier, in the Louvre museum,
 Do you know who I am, have you any idea?
 I have been stuck behind glass for years and years,
 and staying here forever would bring me to tears.
 To the Louvre everyday thousands come,
 They don't notice me, not a single one.
 There is just one painting they all crowd around.
 The attention she gets, leads me to count down
 the hours until all the lights are flicked off.
 Finally, there's silence, not even a cough.
 Behind these locked doors we all come to life,
 And I can hear Leonardo's wife.
 Talking of how each person would stop and stare,
 At her beautiful smile and her smooth looking hair.
 I know that nobody remembers my name,
 And I'm constantly aware of Mona's fame.
 Every day, I pray as people walk past,
 That even one of them would stop at long last,
 for more than a second in front of my frame,
 But every day it's just the same.
 More people ignore me and walk right by,
 I'm jealous of Lisa, and that is no lie!

Amy Baird, Year 9

Harry the Hedgehog

Hi! I am Harry the happy hedgehog
 And I'm as happy as can be,
 Running around all night
 Resting beneath my shady tree.
 You'd hardly know I'm there -

Though don't step on my sharp spikes.
 Having short, stumpy legs means
 Everywhere is such a hike!

Hibernating when it's cold
 Every single year,
 Dreaming of that time again when
 Green leaves shall appear.
 Eating slimy slugs and snails
 Hunting for juicy worms too,
 Oh! the life of a hedgehog is wonderful
 Great adventures for me to do.

Evie McKeown, Year 8

Still I Wander

I'm lost.
 Lost in my mind through which I
 wander,
 I wander, my spirit refuses to be
 conquered.
 My eyes shift,
 My palms sweat,
 Still I wander.

Still trapped.
 Trapped in my head where I can
 wait no longer,
 No longer can I sit and stay and
 ponder.
 Time ticks on,
 Life goes on,
 Why do I still wander?

Heart thumps.
 Thumps as I notice a light that
 shines,
 Shines through the darkness of
 my mind.
 My head lifts.

Ana Stinson, Year 12

On This Time

Fear that floats through the air
 The elephant in the room
 Through this time, no one's too cool to care
 You do not want it to be you who meets your doom.

Stay inside! It's for a reason...
 Do you think this is just going to go?
 Meet the commands! We could be free like birds for the
 summer
 Escape from your mind with punishing cardio!

Going to the beach? Is that what you crave?
 Surely you cannot be so selfish!
 Just think you could save your beloved granny.
 This is not the time for your last wish!

Dream of seeing your favourite people and places again...
 Feel the cold seawater on your feet as you walk along the
 shore
 Dream of the good times ahead, my friend.
 When we will laugh once more.

Peter Bristow, Year 12

From the Forms

Strength in Adversity (Covid 19)

The time has come,
the challenge is here.
We don't know where it's from,
Still it's the cause of our fear.

Few rules to follow, some say it's from afar.
Home is where you should stay,
So that the old man around the corner
Will live another day.

This will be overcome,
If we all fight as one.
Standing together, no matter where we're from,
Two metres apart, so Covid-19 claims none.

You know what to do
Now, let's get it done!

Stay home, Stay safe!

Ayesha Darragh, Year 12

The Inert Journey

What of all would warrant this keen malaise?
Perplexed by illness, his shadow cast.
Nations adjourned, order turned sideways.
Our turmoil; immeasurable and vast -
Families separated,
Freedom dictated.
Confused and pained collectively: yet
Wounds of the vulnerable, left untended.

But with this diminished dignity,
Comes opportunity, recovery, vitality -
As a phoenix, flourishing through infringement.
Finding order in the chaos,
Purpose in the stillness. Freedom -
We write our future, we know where it lies.

Jack Hermin, Year 12



Bethany Turtle, G.C.S.E. Art and Design



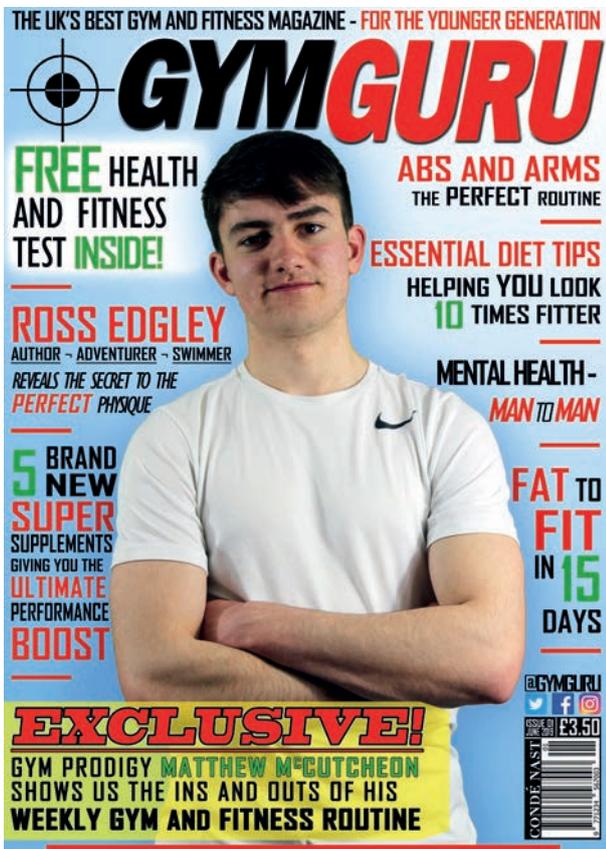
G.C.S.E. Media Studies Productions



Emmie Booth, G.C.S.E. Media Studies Production.



Amy Houston, G.C.S.E. Media Studies Production.



Finn Henderson, G.C.S.E. Media Studies Production.



Kurtis Williamson, G.C.S.E. Media Studies Production.

SUMMER 2020

A.S. Media Studies Productions

The Braid



Amy Cunningham, A.S. Level Media Studies Production.



Grace Reid, A.S. Level Media Studies Production.



Aaron McCullagh, A.S. Level Media Studies Production.

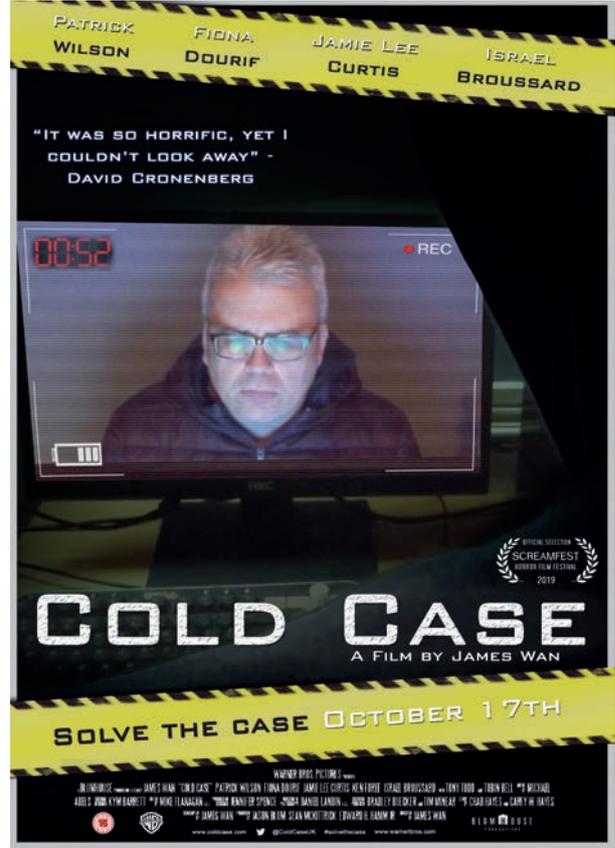


Andrew Lawther, A.S. Level Media Studies Production.

A-Level Media Studies Productions



Timothy Brown, A-Level Media Studies Production.



Adam Cunningham, A-Level Media Studies Production.



Hannah McVicker, A-Level Media Studies Production.



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 Middle row, left to right: A. McClarnon (Peer Mentor), J. Andrews, C. Kirkpatrick, R. McCullough, J. Whitley, A. Caskey, B. Collins, J. Worthington, S. Church, J. Turnock, C. Moody (Peer Mentor)
 Front row, left to right: L. McKillop, L. Bill, G. Millar, B. Robertson, L. Murdock, K. Duddy, K. Gardiner, M. Mawhinney, E. Livingstone, N. Hall, K. McCormick, Z. Hamill, C. Beresford.



8B
 Back row, left to right: K. Agnew (Peer Mentor), S. Maxwell, R. Clarke, A. Mitchell, F. Arbuthnot, J. McGugan, R. Parker, J. Paterson, G. Campbell, K. Bonnes, J. McMaster, M. Corr (Peer Mentor), J. McMnamin (Peer Mentor)
 Middle row, left to right: A. Downey (Peer Mentor), N. Skrobakova, R. McKnight, O. Collins, C. Hargy, J. Casson, M. McCullough, M. Blair, L. Kenny, J. Turner, R. Noble.
 Front row, left to right: M. Kirkpatrick, M. Caldwell, A. Wilson, E. Dunlop, A. Aitcheson, M. Brown, N. Fisher, F. Henry-McCool, S. Livingstone, E. Robinson.



8C
 Back row, left to right: J. Mills (Peer Mentor), M. Stevenson, K. Wilson, A. Wylie, R. Burnett, J. McCombe, C. MacDonald, R. McCartney, L. Cromie, S. Patton, S. Preston (Peer Mentor).
 Middle row, left to right: C. Thompson (Peer Mentor), J. Penney, R. Clyde, D. Hickey, N. Manson, P. Thomas, J. Robinson, A. Napier, D. Holden, M. Vercoe - Rodgers, S. McCready, B. Millar, C. McCurdy (Peer Mentor)
 Front row, left to right: R. Chambers, A. Coleman, S. Harbison, C. McLaughlin, C. Gordon, E. Kyle, C. Campbell, E. Sloan, A. McCormac, R. Murray.





Back row, left to right: F. Winning, H. McKay, J. Alexander, G. Gillespie, M. Malcolm, R. Graham, E. McKeown, N. Roddy, E. Armstrong.
 Middle row, left to right: A. Snowden, O. Warwick, P. Cochrane, C. Neilly, A. O'Hara, M. Marks, A. Beckett, W. Chambers, F. Eddis, M. Lowry, R. Berry.
 Front row, left to right: J. Brown, J. Oluteye, J. Galloway, B. Cruickshank, H. Moore, N. Murray, R. Thompson, C. McNeill, J. McCausland, J. Rhodes.
 Absent: D. Edris
 Peer Mentors for this group- not pictured: A. Paul, G. Redmond, D. Millar, K. Surgenor

8D



Back row, left to right: R. Glass (Peer Mentor), J. Beverland (Peer Mentor) Z. Moore, S. Charleton, N. MacCorkell, M. Darragh, P. Harkness, J. Allen, W. Coffey, Z. Ramsey, C. McNeill (Peer Mentor), A. McKee. (Peer Mentor)
 Middle row, left to right: B.J. Scullion, D. Grimsley, C. Ballantine, C. Kelly, R. Ozturk, A. McKee, J. Richmond, T. Allenby, G. Witherspoon, O. Laird, P. Thompson.
 Front row, left to right: C. Browne, I. Wainwright, H. Ramsey, S. Burnside, S. Speirs, G. Henry, H. Fisher, G. McClintock, L. Campbell, G. Marshall, L. McDonnell.

8F



Back row, left to right: J. Quail (Peer Mentor), C. Backus (Peer Mentor), R. Carson, M. Bishop, J. Gwynne. E. Mewha, H. Lamont, A. Shirley, C. Ritchie, M. Hayes (Peer Mentor), C. Logan. (Peer Mentor)
 Middle row, left to right: S. McClintock, B. Foster, R. Pedlow, M. Matysek, C. Baillie, A. Mui, A. Waide, T. Scullion, J. Christie, S. Park, B. Makaveckas, Z. Hemphill.
 Front row, left to right: H. Anderson, K. Gamble, O. Moody, I. Workman, A. Natalicio, A. Pittam, K. Allen, R. McDowell, D. Timuc, H. Ballantine, H. Quinn.

Music in School



Academy Chorale

At Ballymena Academy, we have a wide range of choirs and ensembles/orchestras. One of the choirs is the Academy Chorale. Pupils from Years 8-11 rehearse every Monday from 3:25 to 4:15pm. We sing at the Carol Service and the Spring Concert. Mrs. Church and Mr. Thompson lead the choir and over the past academic year, we have practised enthusiastically.

The annual Carol Service was very special. Both the afternoon and evening services were excellent last December. The Academy Chorale sang 3 pieces at the services: 'Journey of the Angels', 'A Christmas Lullaby', and 'What Child Is This?'

Teachers and pupils in The Music Department were devastated when we heard that the annual Spring Concert was postponed, as we had been working hard preparing our three songs. We were particularly looking forward to singing 'Like a river in My Soul', accompanying the Chamber Choir.

Last year's Spring Concert was great, and we trust that we will be able to enjoy singing together soon.

Ben O'Hagan Year 9.

Traditional Group

Jigs, reels, hornpipes, polkas, airs, strathspeys, mazurkas, marches... You name it and we have played it this year in Traditional group.

On the first Friday morning in October, the 'Traditional Group' members were eager to meet in Music Room 1, to practise new pieces and reconnect with old friends. We arrived each Friday, knowing that music would brighten our mood, as we left each rehearsal with a catchy tune in our heads.



Our first engagement this year was the Annual Christmas Concert.

Having increased our repertoire, we had a wide range of typical Christmas melodies to play alongside traditional Irish, Scottish and English tunes. Everyone certainly enjoyed the festive music.

Post-Christmas we met again and finalised our 2 favourite pieces to practise for the Spring Concert. Firstly, we picked Mrs Jamieson's Favourite- this was a slow and emotive air that the 'Trad Group' had grown to love. Combined with lyrics from an Irish Blessing (sung by Joshua McIlhagga) and a haunting cello solo (performed by Luke Gregg), this was sure to be a tearjerker at the Spring concert. Then we had the difficult choice of picking our favourite reel. In the end we decided that it was too difficult to choose only one piece of music, so we paired a reel and a hornpipe, 'The Fairy Dance' and the 'King of the Fairies', into a set.

To celebrate St Patrick's Day, 3 members and Miss Wilkinson were invited to attend an Irish music and language day, with Liz Weir and Aodán 'Jaff' Mac Seafraidh, in Larne Town Hall. It was a unique experience





to hear a blend of traditional stories and music from the uilleann pipes and Irish Whistle.

Teachers and pupils were heartbroken when we discovered that the Spring Concert had been postponed, as this means we don't get to play with our talented Year 14 musicians again. Rachel McCartney and I have really enjoyed the experience and the responsibilities of leading the 'Trad Group' this year and we feel privileged to have been asked to do so.

We look forward to meeting again for more toe-tapping tunes in the new school year. To close, I'll leave you with some words of our Irish blessing: "Warm be the sun that shines upon you. Soft be the winds as they breathe on you. Smooth be the roads that rise before you. Keep you in peace 'til we meet again."

Grace Moore Year 13.

Junior Wind Band

Every Thursday after school, pupils from Years 8 - 10 came together for Junior Wind Band. We are a large, diverse group of young musicians who share a common love of music. Given the age and ability range, Miss Wilkinson really works wonders with

us during our time together and turns this group of young people into something we are all proud to be part of!

We started off the year with our first piece, 'As Eagles Soar', which was composed by James Swearingen. This was a bold and uplifting piece of music and we enjoyed the musical challenge.

As Christmas approached, we got into the festive spirit and enjoyed playing many of the traditional carols, including 'O Come All Ye Faithful' and 'Away in a Manger'.

After the Christmas break, we continued with 'As Eagles Soar' and another fun piece of music, 'Big Band Superhits', which everyone really enjoyed playing. Highlights included Miss Wilkinson's percussion impressions!



Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to perform at either the School



Music in School



Christmas Concert or the Spring Concert in the Braid. It was disappointing for us not being able to share our music with family and friends, but we can assure you, we sounded great!

Overall, it has been an amazing year for the band. We had fun, learned new skills and thoroughly enjoyed our time together.

As we older members move on to the Senior Windband, I would encourage the new Year 8 musicians to join next year. Junior Wind Band has been a great, fun experience and we send special thanks to Miss Wilkinson for her expertise and patience with us.

Emma Weir Year 10.

Junior Strings

Junior Strings meet every Thursday afternoon from 3.30-4.15pm and is conducted by Mr. Thompson, sometimes assisted by Ms. Durston.

Junior Strings is a very welcoming group of musicians from Year 8 to 11, studying from grade 1 to grade 6. In September we began by practising 'Fields of Gold', a traditional Irish tune. Later in Term 1 we practised many well-known Christmas tunes for the Christmas Concert, which sadly

couldn't be held, due to unforeseen circumstances after the storm.

When we came back to school in January, we played many pieces, from ABBA tunes to 'California Dreamin' by the Mamas and the Papas, and we eventually chose 'Lord of the Dance' and 'Brandenburg Concerto No.3', composed by Bach. We were all very excited for the Spring Concert but sadly, it too had to be cancelled.

On behalf of all the members of Junior Strings I would like to thank Mr. Thompson for his amazing conducting and always believing in us.

Scarlett McCutcheon Year 10.

Senior Wind Band

What would have been another explosive year for Senior Wind Band was tragically cut short by the coronavirus outbreak. Nonetheless, the group had a great year of rehearsals, even without the Spring Concert to showcase our determined effort. Each after-school practice had a lively energy, led by the talented Mr. Murray. Our first piece, 'Pacifica', showcased the band's wide range of talents, with sparky staccato sections followed by sweeping crescendos. One of the many highlights of the piece was the impressive saxophone solo, played by Joel Murphy. Our second piece, "Jitterbug!" was an energetic big band piece, reminiscent of the style of Glenn Millar or Tony



Bennett. This lively crowd-pleaser was bound to get the audience tapping their feet, and was easily one of my favourite pieces we've rehearsed in four years as a member of the Senior Wind Band. Thankfully, the band was able to showcase our talents during the winter months, when we performed at the annual Christmas Concert for P7 pupils from primary schools in the local area. This year we performed the upbeat Christmas hit "Underneath the Tree" by Kelly Clarkson, featuring a dazzling saxophone solo by Joel Murphy and vocalists from the Chamber Choir.

This year we also had the pleasure of performing a stunning rendition of the 'Snowman' theme from the 1982 animated classic. The band gave a stellar performance, full of grace and wonder, and will long remain one of my best memories of Ballymena Academy.

Kezia Mitchell Year 14.

Chamber Choir

With thanks to the leadership and the much-needed patience of Miss Wilkinson and Mrs. Church, the Chamber Choir has enjoyed another successful year. Rehearsals this year were reduced to Monday evenings, most likely due to the outstanding natural talent of the new recruits! This year's members were a diverse bunch,



from artists to agricultural enthusiasts, singing together in perfect harmony to produce one angelic voice. Despite the ever-apparent union between the vocal sections, there were distinct differences in the vocal groups that gave the choir its character.

Sopranos: They somehow made it possible to sing the melody of Away in a Manger incorrectly ...

Altos: Also known as the female bass, they were perhaps the quietest section, inspiring the chant "can you hear the altos singing" to which the response was usually no.

Tenors: Confidence over quality is a fitting way to describe this section. Although they stood out from the rest of the choir, this was generally because they were singing the wrong notes.

Basses: When fully concentrated, these men were by far the strongest and most clinical section in the choir. When not, they were seldom on the correct page. This lack of concentration could be down to the bass section also comprising of the choir's funniest members.

(Editorial disclaimer from Mrs Church and Miss Wilkinson: Please note the views above reflect the opinions of the Bass section writers of this article only, who, as you can tell (questionably) consider themselves the talented comedians of Chamber Choir! Although it might be argued by some that the descriptions above could easily apply to the basses (yes indeed boys), our professional judgement is that all the sections were talented, dedicated, brilliant, good-looking and equally funny as the Basses. Back to the boys ...)

The Annual Carol Service was undoubtedly the event of the year for many members, singing Jennings' very technical, "I Saw Three Ships" followed by the impressive, "O Radiant Dawn" by James MacMillan, ending the evening with the favourite "Carol of the Bells" by Pentatonix. We were also given the opportunity



to perform for Prospect Nursing Home residents, which we hope was as enjoyable an experience for them as it was for us. Another festive activity was our annual appearance on the prestigious 'Radio Cracker'.

Returning in January, we began our preparation for Ballymena Music Festival, which was a great success. We competed in three classes; Senior Youth Choir Open, Confined and Hymn Singing. We won all three sections, against tough competition. I might add that while the adjudicator offered a little "constructive criticism" for some of our high notes she had nothing but praise for the 'low rumbles'. Completing the treble was an amazing achievement and one which awarded us two cups and an enormous shield.

In January we began preparation for the Spring Concert. We were all devastated when we heard it had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus. The Spring Concert is our favourite event of the year and we were so disappointed to miss our last performance ever in the choir.

Being a member of the Chamber Choir has been a hugely

Music in School



rewarding part of our time at Ballymena Academy and we would urge anyone to audition for it or join any other choir in school. We would like to thank the dedicated teachers who gave up their time to organise the choir and our fellow pupils for making it so enjoyable and worth staying in school until six o'clock each Monday.

Jack Aiken and Scott Ashcroft
Year 14.

Senior Choir

What could be a better end to a busy school week than attending choir practice with friends? In fact, over one hundred and sixty pupils meet each Friday after school until 4:30pm, to sing together as part of the Ballymena Academy Senior Choir, under the leadership of Mrs. Church and Miss Wilkinson, accompanied by the very talented pianist Mr. Christie. Senior Choir has always been a significant part of co-curricular life at school and the choir is a real showcase of the talent, hard work and

dedication of both the pupils and teachers at Ballymena Academy. As you can understand, it takes a lot of concentration to prepare for two major events in the school calendar - the Annual Christmas Carol Service and Spring Concert.

Last December, the Carol Service was once again a great success, with St. Patrick's Church full to capacity for both services. As ever, there was a sense of unity as everyone's favourite Christmas carols were sung by Ballymena Academy's choirs, accompanied by the congregation. Our repertoire told the familiar Christmas story beginning with J.Wachner's arrangement of 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel', with solos from Year 13 pupils Annabel Harkness and Joshua McIlhagga. This was followed by an uplifting arrangement of, 'O Wondrous Night', to the well-known melody of the Londonderry Air. The congregation enjoyed the spine-tingling lyrical choices of, 'The First Noel', 'There is Faint Music', and 'Silent Night'. The Senior String ensemble and Ms. Durston joined the

choir for the traditional 'Ding Dong merrily on high'. The services ended with the moving chords of Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus,' a definite favourite of both staff and pupils.

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Spring Concert was cancelled this year. We had practised a wide range of musical genres, ranging from religious and gospel music such as, 'Amazing Grace,' and 'Total Praise,' to modern pop music such as Billy Joel's, 'And So It Goes' and the famous Queen hit, 'Don't Stop Me Now'. However, despite the circumstances, we did get an opportunity to perform Richard Smallwood's, 'Total Praise,' for Mrs. Connor, a personal favourite of hers.

As she is sadly retiring, we'd like to thank her for all the support and encouragement she's given to the Senior Choir over the years. Sincere thanks to Mrs. Church, Miss Wilkinson and Mr. Christie for their musical expertise, guidance and dedication throughout the past year. What a challenging yet memorable year! As Year 14 students, we say most sincerely, that Senior Choir has given us many special memories of our time in Ballymena Academy, memories we will treasure forever.

Alex Wilson and Alicia Downey
Year 14.

Male Chorus

Under the watchful eyes of Mr. Thompson, Mr. Christie and Mrs. Church, the Male Voice Chorus has enjoyed yet another year of great music.

Our annual school Carol Service is always an uplifting night of worship, providing an inspiring way to commence the Christmas season and no service is complete without the classic hymn 'O Holy Night'. The Male Chorus sang with enthusiasm and undeniably displayed their musical talent in the performances.

The Temptation's 'My Girl' and the 2011 World Cup anthem 'The World in Union' were prepared for the Spring



Concert. They boasted complex harmonies along with emotional swells and the occasional key change.

As Year 14 musicians practising for our last Spring Concert, we were devastated to find out that, due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to perform.

I have really enjoyed every moment singing in the Male Voice Chorus, including the busy fun practices under the expert tutelage of Mr. Thompson and the exciting performances throughout the year.

Matthew Poston Year 14.

Senior Strings

During our time at senior strings under the tutelage of Ms. Durston, we took part in many events, including the formal and informal Christmas concerts and the Ballymena Music Festival. We also prepared for the Spring Concert and are very sad we are missing it this year. At the Ballymena Festival we were delighted to win a 2nd place, 1st place, and bursary for Overall Best Orchestra. We feel very proud of that success! Our prepared pieces were the lively

Rakoczy March, 'An English Suite' by Parry, 'Concerto Grosso in D minor' by Handel and the lovely 'Neruda Concerto in Eb'. Cameron Olphert played the trumpet solo. While many of these pieces were challenging, we grew to love them, particularly the Neruda!

We were privileged to be led by Grace Moore this year and rehearsals certainly were busy and fun filled. From Ms. Durston's vigorous 'bow exercises' to me knocking over a stand in a particularly quiet interlude at the Christmas Concert, there are many moments that made Senior Strings very special for me. I will certainly miss the fun and I have many fond memories of the past year.

Jedidah Shanks Year 14.

Perk

Ballymena Academy's own unique percussion ensemble 'Perk' is proud to announce another successful year of performances. This is undeniably linked to the dedication and leadership of Mr. Callum Aiken.

After a few months of practising, Perk was certainly well prepared for the Primary Schools' Christmas concert in

December. 'Here Drums Santa Claus', arranged by Philip Gregory, containing a medley of popular Christmas songs, was much appreciated by the primary school pupils.

After the success at Christmas, 'Perk' began preparation for the annual School Concert. Coldplay's 'Viva la Vida' and Queens's 'Somebody to love' were enthusiastically practised and enjoyed by the ensemble.

All Year 14 percussionists regret this is our last year of performing in 'Perk', an ensemble which has developed our musical performance skills and given us countless happy memories. We wish the younger members much success in the future.

Sincere thanks from all of us to Mr. Aiken for his excellent tuition, support and patience over the past years.

Jack Spence Year 14.

Due to the ongoing situation, our music photographs were taken at the annual Christmas Carol Service in St. Patrick's by James Poston.



The Chamber Choir who won all the Senior Youth Classes at the Ballymena Festival and took home the bursary for overall best performance. Pictured with Miss Wilkinson and Mrs Church.

Drama in School

Bugsy Malone

'This is Fat Sam's Place...
Fat Sam's Grand slam...
the liveliest joint in town!'

Words from the cast

Personally, I must say that Ballymena Academy's production of "Bugsy Malone" 2019 has been one of the most memorable and extraordinary experiences for me.

When I was given the lead female role (Blousey Brown), many emotions overwhelmed me: happiness, excitement, and fear as I wondered if I would ever be good enough. Thankfully, with the teachers' expertise and an encouraging cast, I surprised myself with an inner confidence and determination I never realised I had.

What a fantastic way to end my last year at Ballymena Academy, doing something I love, expressing joy in my acting, singing and dancing. It was a privilege to work with other amazing young performers as well as the talented staff. Even though there were a lot of stressful times, like the auditions and extra evening rehearsals, the buzz and exhilaration of the show has left my fellow cast members and me with very fond memories.

Chloe Backus, Year 14.



Chloe Backus as Blousey



Ella Calderwood as Tallulah

I had the wonderful opportunity last year to be in a production of "Bugsy Malone". I already was a fan of the movie and was ecstatic to perform at Ballymena Academy. My chorus parts were a Flapper girl and an undertaker, but my biggest role was 'Captain Smolsky', a character I absolutely loved!

Switching from character to character certainly kept me on my toes and the rehearsals were busy and exciting. It was super to act with pupils from other year groups and we made new friends in the process.

I have some brilliant memories working with the teachers and



Emily Nelson as Luella

students, trying on our wacky costumes and performing the dances! I will never forget the experience.

Annabel Harkness, Year 13.

I absolutely loved being part of the school production. It gave me the opportunity to make new friends and I now have so many fun memories. Mrs. Nelson and the rest of the staff were really helpful in creating a brilliant production. I recommend auditioning for the next school play to anyone who is interested!

Faye Eagleson, Year 12.



Dandy Dan with members of his gang!



Gavin Kerr as Fizzy



Jack Berry as Dandy Dan



Jonathan Grimsley as Fat Sam



The beautiful flappers!



Joshua McIlhagga as Bugsy Malone



Fizzy shines Bugsy's shoes in a pre-show rehearsal.



Matthew Cahoon as Knuckles

Drama in School

A word from the director.

"Bugsy Malone" is a 1976 musical, gangster, and comedy film, written and directed by Alan Parker. The film was Parker's feature film directorial debut and it features child actors playing adult roles, with Jodie Foster, Scott Baio, John Cassisi, and Martin Lev in major roles. The film tells the story of the rise of "Bugsy Malone" and the battle for power between "Fat Sam" and "Dandy Dan".

Set in Chicago, it is a gangster movie spoof, substituting whipped cream (or silly string) "guns" for machine guns firing bullets. The film is based loosely on events in New York and Chicago during the Prohibition era, specifically the exploits of real-life gangsters such as Al Capone and Bugs Moran. Parker lightened the subject matter considerably for the children's market.

'Bugsy Malone' premiered at the 1976 Cannes Film Festival, where it competed for the Palme d'Or. The film was a commercial success in the



Fat Sam with two of his gang members!

UK. It received acclaim from critics for its screenplay, musical numbers, unique narrative and performances of the cast (particularly Foster's).

In 2003, 'Bugsy Malone' was placed nineteenth on a list of the hundred greatest musicals, as chosen by viewers of Channel 4 in the UK. In

2008, Empire ranked it 353rd on their list of 500 greatest movies of all time. The film received eight nominations at the 30th British Academy Film Awards, including Best Film, and won three: Best Supporting Actress and Most Promising Newcomer to Leading Film Roles for Foster and Best Screenplay for Parker. The film also



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Rehearsal time!



Dance rehearsals for the show!

received three nominations at the 34th Golden Globe Awards including Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy.

However, beneath its frivolity, ‘Bugsy Malone’ actually does quite a lot; casting kids as gangsters and having them wage silly string warfare shows gang violence up for the ludicrous and childish activity it is. ‘Bugsy Malone’s’ dramaturgy is really tight. Its characters all dream of escape – Fizzy of dancing, Blousey of acting, Leroy of boxing – but they’re all bogged down by their reality.

Set against the backdrop of the Prohibition era, as it nudged into the Great Depression, it is reflecting a time of austerity from our history. Despite its historical setting it keeps pinging with little moments of resonance, particularly in terms of rising up against big authority figures that are in the way. Back against the wall, Bugsy ends up leading the so-called “down and outs” in an all-out revolt against the two head honchos, Sam and Dandy.

In the finale, the cast all stand singing to the adults in the audience: ‘You don’t have to sit around complaining ‘bout the way your life has wound up.’ It’s a call to arms – just as long as they only shoot silly string.

So, it was with some trepidation that I advertised the auditions for the musical “Bugsy Malone”. It had been several years since the last musical production and I was concerned that the interest would not be there. I didn’t need to worry as the interest in the play was overwhelming! Once



Dandy Dan and the lovely Luella!

again, our tremendously talented pupils made life very difficult for Mrs. Craig, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Murray and myself to choose a cast, as pupil after pupil performed the audition song, dance and monologue to exceptionally high standards.

With the cast in place, rehearsals began in June, picking up after the summer break in August. The commitment of the predominantly junior cast was incredible; they faced the challenges of dancing, singing and acting with enthusiasm, dedication and good humour. We certainly put them through their paces and they did everything that was asked of them without complaint.

As usual, the final week of rehearsals was an anxious time for us all, however all the hard work paid off. The production was excellent and I was delighted that the audience

showed their appreciation of the talent and commitment of the cast by giving them a standing ovation.

I have thoroughly enjoyed returning to “Bugsy Malone”, which was the first musical that I directed at the Academy. It was an ebullient production, made only more fun by the youthful energy of the cast. Obviously, it is very gratifying that the pupils’ achievements were acknowledged by a standing ovation.

What is most pleasing, for all the staff involved, is to witness the bonds of friendship that are formed during the weeks of rehearsals, to see the shy pupils blossom on stage and to know that wonderful memories of a truly special time have been made for all involved.

Mrs. L. Nelson.

Clubs and Societies

Fullerton Library

It has been another busy year in the Fullerton Library. The library was re-configured last summer. No structural changes were made as such, but classes can now come in and make use of the Library computers in a classroom style setting. Another pleasing aspect of the changes is that the Librarian's desk has been moved providing a much better overall view of the facilities. Year 8 pupils are regular visitors to the library; this is pleasing to note as many research and study skills are developed through a love of reading. It is always a pleasure to get to know the enthusiastic young readers who borrow books. As always, the Library is a busy place at breaktime, lunchtime and after school. The annual Scholastic Book Fair unfortunately had to be postponed this year but hopefully it can be re-scheduled.

Millennium Volunteers Programme

Large numbers of senior pupils undertook a wide range of activities throughout the year, encouraged through assemblies and tutor groups. They served in their local community and in various projects throughout the world.

During #iwill week in November, all pupils in Years 13 and 14 who volunteered had their photos displayed in the Sixth Form Centre and it was incredible to see over 157 pupils serving as volunteers. Pupils were asked to list the organisations they had chosen; it was inspiring to see their responses to questions posed about why they volunteer and the benefits they received:

- I have improved my organisational and communication skills.
- It is rewarding to see the difference you can make
- I am more confident in speaking in front of other people
- I met new people and made new friends

- It has given me insight into working in a commercial industry
- I feel positive about myself and I gave back to the community
- I have learned more about first aid
- It has helped to develop my Christian faith
- I have become more independent
- Working with enthusiastic children has made me smile!
- I now realise the importance of little things...
- I have seen others gain confidence by helping them
- Volunteering makes me happy!
- I am better at managing my time
- I have gained a new perspective on different ways of life
- I have learned to appreciate school more
- I am more patient
- I feel I have contributed to the local community
- It has taught me to be thankful for

- everything I have
- I have had lots of fun!
- I have learned to communicate better with my parents
- I have developed ICT skills
- Encouraging others has benefited me
- I am learning to be more selfless
- I have gained an appreciation of and interest in other cultures.

Awards of Excellence Presentation

Thirty-six pupils from Years 13 and 14 gained 'Gold 200 hours' awards this year. Unfortunately, the awards ceremony which was scheduled for the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Belfast in March was postponed but hopefully it can be arranged for a later date.

'Gold 200 Hours' Awards:
Chloe Backus, Jessica Beverland,
John Boyd, Alicia Downey, Fiona Duff,



Some pupils who won the Millennium Volunteers 200 hours award.



Jess Quail, Nicole Quinn, Hannah Richmond, Jedidah Shanks, Rebecca Smyth and Abi Weir.

The school presentation of awards was scheduled for April 2020. It is now hoped that successful pupils will receive their 100 hours and 50 hours certificates early in the Autumn term.

Millennium Volunteers 200 Hours Award Winners 2020

The following pupils wrote about their chosen activities during the year.

Jessica Beverland Year 14

Rose Court Care Home
Happitots Playgroup
Northern Health and Social Care Trust
Women's Aid
Within School - Peer Mentor
- Learning Mentor

Rose Court Care Home- I facilitated activities for the service users to engage with one another. I helped the service users at mealtimes to make good nutritional choices.

Happitots- I took part in one to one activities with the children to help ensure their academic needs were met. I also recorded observations which were given to the child's Key Worker to create progress reports.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust- I was paired one to one with 3 boys over 2 weeks, during their "Summer Superstars scheme". I made sure the boys remained safe in the setting and when on outdoor activities. This involved playing games with the boys and building up a rapport with them.

Women's Aid- During the summer scheme my role was to ensure the children felt comfortable in the setting and engaged in the activities with other children. In the weekly Homework Club, I worked with a small group of children aged 7-12 and supported them in their homework activities.



Some pupils who won the Millennium Volunteers 200 hours award.

Rachel Fleck, Rachel Gillan, Rachel Glass, Luke Gregg, David Henry, Sam Hill, Matthew Jackson, Nina Kennedy, Caleb Logan, Rachel McCartney, Rachel McCloy, Sarah McCloy,

Courtney McCurdy, Ben McKane, Alex McLeister, Laura McNally, Lucy Millar, Jack Mills, Josh Mills, Nathan Nelson, Samara Nicholl, Eve Patterson, Adam Paul, Matthew Poston, Sarah Preston,

Clubs and Societies



#iwill week, November 2019



#iwill week, November 2019

Peer Mentor- I helped in registration and tutor groups 3 times a week. This involved being present during registration, reading announcements and helping with the tutor group activities.

Learning mentor- once a week I worked one to one with a pupil in Year 10 and helped with schoolwork.

Through volunteering I learned a range of skills. During the Summer scheme I completed training in Makaton, epilepsy awareness and basic first aid. I

also learned how to communicate with those who were unable to speak, to ensure their needs were met.

In Women's Aid I underwent Level 2 Domestic Violence Awareness training which helped me understand the effects of DV in a household.

In Rose Court I learned about the effects of dementia and how to aid those who suffer with it. In Happitots I learned how to help young children with their early academic development.

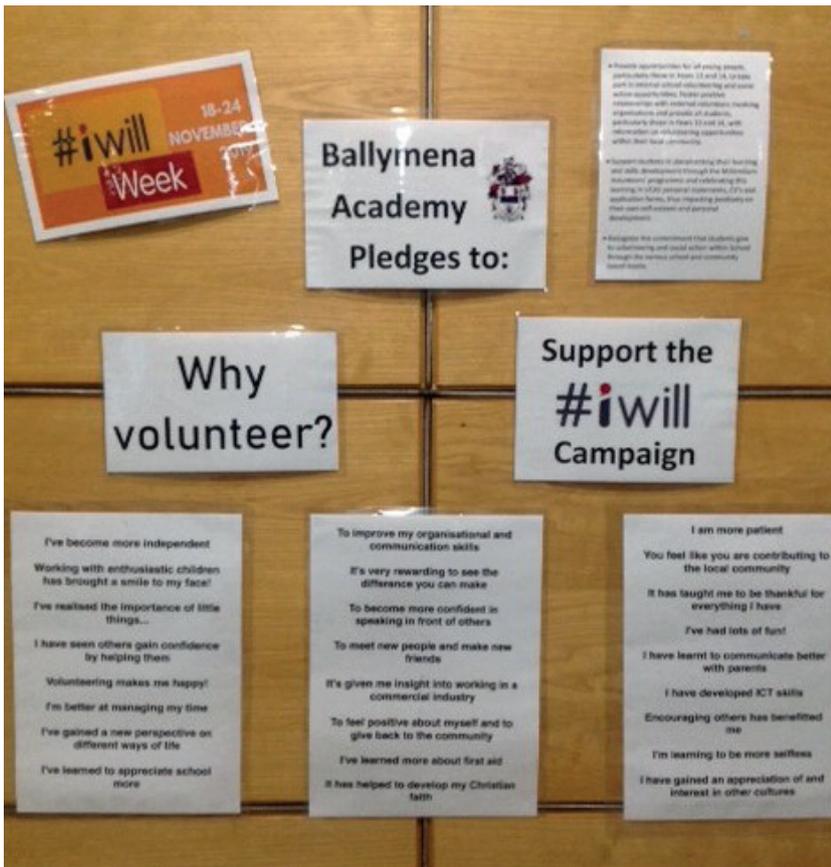
I volunteer to benefit the wider community no matter what the age group. I also find it rewarding as I can see the benefits of homework clubs for children.

Hannah Richmond Year 14

- Ballykeel Nursery School
- Belfast Photo Festival 2019
- Ballymena Academy Cancer Research Committee
- Ballymena Academy Anti-Bullying Team
- Ballymena Academy Literacy Support Team
- I provided educational support to children and young teenagers through delivering lessons/story time.
- I assisted large groups of nursery children on educational trips throughout the year.
- I manned stalls at fundraising events.
- I marshalled and acted as a tour guide for physically impaired/elderly people.
- I helped at numerous fundraising events.
- I delivered presentations on various topics to raise awareness and liaised with others to urge action to be taken to improve areas where it is needed.

Over recent years, I have engaged in various volunteering opportunities, as it has provided me with beneficial skills and assets through a hands-on approach, developing my emotional responses and my social skills. It has provided me with valuable experience, which I can now apply to various situations in my personal life and I feel I gained as much from my volunteering activities as the children I helped. I have found volunteering to be an easy way to use skills or qualities that may come naturally to oneself and in turn, adapt these to help others who may struggle in these areas.





#iwill week, November 2019

Rachel Gillan Year 13

CEF Ireland, Ballee Baptist Church, Ballymena Academy Junior CU and Charity Committee.

I participated in volunteering, particularly aimed towards working with children and young people in the local community. Last Summer, I volunteered with CEF in a '5- day club' week for children in local estates and completed a training course in children's work to help me volunteer more effectively. Each Wednesday I volunteered at Junior CU: I organised activities, chatted to, and encouraged younger pupils in school. At Church, I volunteered mostly with young people and children, by organising activities for them, allowing relationships to form and grow while benefiting others. Being a member of 'The Charity Committee' has enabled me to help others in school, while also raising money for worthwhile causes such as Children in Need.

I enjoy seeing the impact that our time can make on someone else's life

and I have learnt to give up more of my free time to help others who need help. Volunteering has developed my confidence while working as part of a team, as we strive to make a significant positive impact on others' lives. That fact alone makes it worthwhile, when you see the happiness that is brought to them through simple acts of kindness.

Nina Kennedy Year 14

In High Kirk Presbyterian Church I look after the children whose parents are attending English language classes. I play games with them, organise and complete 'arts and crafts' activities or help with homework.

I am involved because I understand it must be difficult to move to a country where everything is foreign to you. I wanted to support the families as they integrate into the local community and I enjoy working with children. So far, I have learned that making friends and getting to know others from different

backgrounds from yourself can open your mind to the diversity of other cultures. This can develop our understanding of others and how they think and feel.

Rachel Fleck Year 14

Girls' Brigade
Exodus team to India.

I am a sub officer with the explorers at GB, where I help the girls with craft activities and teach them Bible stories. I volunteered at an orphanage in India for 2 weeks last summer, where we played games with the children and ran kids' clubs in their school. We also met leprosy sufferers and gave them food supplies.

I am involved in volunteering as it is really rewarding to help others. Since my visit to India I have learned to be more thankful for everything we have in this country as some people have so little.

Sarah Preston Year 14

Boys' Brigade, Ignite (Holiday Bible Club) and Youth Club.

I prepared and delivered Bible stories, craft and games in BB and Holiday Bible Club. I organised a Fun Day and co-led the Ignite team.

I enjoy working with children in these organisations, especially BB, as it has been personally rewarding to witness the boys grow in confidence and take in everything that is being taught. I have gained confidence in preparing activities and speaking in front of people.

Alex McLeister Year 14

Girl's Brigade, Sunday School, Youth Club, Holiday Bible Club, Spark, Summer Sports Camp, Ballymena Academy Christian Union and Cancer Research Committee.

Within church (GB, Sunday School and HBC) I assist in leading stories, games and crafts with primary school children. I also help to organise and co-ordinate various events through the Cancer Research and CU committees in school.

Clubs and Societies

Within these organisations, I have been given the opportunity to develop my teamwork and leadership skills. I appreciate the importance of volunteering for myself and others and I hope to continue to volunteer in the future.

Jess Quail Year 14

Ballymena Academy Junior CU

I take part in leading worship with the pupils, by sharing a Bible verse or a thought of the day. I help during games and craft activities and lead bible study groups. This develops their personal knowledge of the Bible and the Gospels.

I love volunteering and I have personally benefited from serving others. Volunteering is a way for me to give something to others and helps to create special bonds and friendships, that positively impact my social life. Volunteering gives me joy, because I see the impact that my influence can have on others, so encouraging me to continue to help others grow spiritually. I have learned that giving up your time provides lots of enjoyment for yourself and others and is a great way to de-stress from academic commitments. I have also learned that we are all unique, with different personalities and this knowledge has helped me develop as a person.

John Boyd Year 14

Sunday School, Boys' Brigade, Ballymena Academy Christian Union

I taught a Sunday school class I helped as a leader for the junior section in Boys' Brigade. Volunteering has developed my leadership and organisational skills. Being able to think on the spot, improvise and adapt to different situations that arise while volunteering, has helped me develop those skills. I have learnt how to work with and respond to peers and leaders in Boys' Brigade and Sunday school.

David Henry Year 14

The Salvation Army

I restocked shelves and rails, hoovered, generally tidied the stock

room, operated the till and served customers.

I completed volunteering for my Bronze Award in 2017 and my Silver Award in 2018. I really enjoy volunteering. It has developed my self-confidence as I like interacting with customers and volunteers of all ages. I think it is important to help others.

Ben McKane Year 14

Exodus and West Church, Ballymena.

I enjoy interacting and playing with the young people, praying for them and distributing food. I play music at church and organise games at youth club. It feels good to do something that is not all about myself. I enjoy helping others as much as possible.

Caleb Logan Year 14

BA Junior CU, Abernethy Adventure Camp, BB and SPARK

Jr. CU - I help to lead worship and monitor small groups.
Abernethy - I am an activity group leader with small groups (outdoor activities like canoeing etc.)
BB - I'm a junior helper every week. I set up activities and deliver some talks.
SPARK - I participate in a week of practical volunteering in the Ballymena area.

I have learnt to be patient, particularly with younger children and have also greatly developed my leadership skills. I like to help people and create a fun, enjoyable environment.

Lucy Millar Year 14

Ballykeel Primary School- classroom assistant
Ballymena Academy- Prefect and Peer Mentor
St. Patrick's Rainbows- a group leader

Ballykeel PS - I attended school trips, led reading groups, took art classes, helped at sports' day and played with young pupils at lunch and break time.

Ballymena Academy - break time duties, assembly duties, Year 10 peer mentor. I helped at Open Days, P7

transfer tests and one of the school play days.

Rainbows - I organised craft activities, played with the kids and completed different badges.

I volunteered to meet new people and make new friends, as with Rainbows I am getting to know the local community. It allows me to feel valued and part of a team and I have also gained in confidence and self-esteem.

Rachel McCloy Year 14

Girls' Brigade, Ahoghill In Mission, Sunday School Helper

I have been involved in painting fences, doing people's shopping, preparing Bible lessons, and preparing sport and craft activities. I enjoy meeting new people and working as part of a team.

Jedidah Shanks Year 14

High Kirk Presbyterian Church, Ballymena Free Presbyterian Church
I played piano, played educational games with the children, taught English and helped on my church bus route.

I really enjoy volunteering because it makes me feel as if I am using my skills. I have learned to help others. From my volunteering experience, I have learned that kindness can go a long way. I have also learned how to be patient.

Courtney McCurdy Year 14

GB, Spark, BA Senior CU, Cancer Research Committee.

I led games, craft activities and talks within the GB. At Spark I spent the week gardening in Portglenone and led kids' clubs. As part of the Senior CU committee, I organised and led meetings periodically, gave my thoughts at the beginning of meetings and organised events throughout the year. Finally, as a Cancer Research committee member, I helped to organise a range of events such as a Valentine's Day Delivery Service and Academy's Got Talent. This was to raise money for Cancer Research UK.



Volunteering enables me to get to know more people in society, who I might never have met. I also volunteer to give something back to my community and to widen my experiences with individuals of all age groups. Volunteering helps me develop my 'people skills'.

Jack Mills Year 14

Exodus Mission Team to India and Ballymena Academy Junior CU

Exodus - Kids' clubs, helping with a leprosy colony, and helping around the orphanage.

CU - Media team, taking small groups and leading meetings.

I find volunteering extremely rewarding as I get to see others grow through the work of volunteering. During my volunteering, I have learned to become more appreciative of many things and have learned how to further my skills in becoming a better person for everyone around me.

STEM Club

Sentinus R&D

Year 13 Sentinus R&D pupils enjoyed the projects this year as they have linked with Hyster – Yale to complete the work. This local yet global company, manufactures forklift trucks and our senior pupils thoroughly enjoyed seeing this world class engineering venture. The teams met their link engineers and relished the opportunity to discuss their team projects and chosen solutions with them. The pupils carried out research, before developing a chosen solution for two engineering problems. During the workshop days at QUB, they designed, programmed and built working prototypes and models to demonstrate how their chosen solutions worked. Having collated all the information, they produced a detailed scientific report, which they presented to Hyster- Yale and Sentinus judges. The final presentation day was scheduled for the Ballymena Braid Arts Centre in April 2020.

PwC Digital Enterprise and Innovation Workshop

In November 2019, as part of Global Enterprise week with Mid & East Antrim, some Year 11 pupils joined pupils from Dunclug and St Louis to attend a PwC Digital Enterprise and innovation workshop at the Braid.

Pupils worked in groups to design a real-life solution, using design thinking methods presented by PwC. The day finished with the pupils presenting their app creations. The App prototypes were created with help from Sentinus. Thanks to Mid

and East Antrim, PwC and Sentinus for the fun and informative day. New friends were made, and everyone enjoyed the day.

4CUR Future Live

Year 9 pupils were invited to attend a "4CUR Future Live" Careers event at Ulster University, Jordanstown.

During the day, the pupils completed 9 tasks, in order to start building individual career passports. Thanks to all the companies involved and 4CUR Future for inviting us. It was an informative and interesting day.



Year 9 pupils enjoying the 4C UR Future Event at Ulster University, Jordanstown.



Year 9 pupils enjoying the 4C UR Future Event at Ulster University, Jordanstown.

Clubs and Societies

'Brian Cox Summer School'

A group of local students attended the prestigious Science Summer School at St Paul's Way Trust School, London, hosted by world-renowned physicist Brian Cox. This unique event aims to inspire young people to avail of the exciting opportunities available in science, engineering and manufacturing industries. Six prize winners from Ballymena Academy took part in interactive workshops, lectures and experiments, with 400 other students from London and the North of England. The inspiring lectures covered everything from 'Black Holes' to 'When Baking meets Engineering' with interactive workshops as diverse as 'Robotics', 'The People's Moon', 'Meteorology' and 'Augmented Reality'.

The students won the opportunity to attend the Science Summer School, as part of the Year of Engineering Initiative, hosted by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Manufacturing Task Force (MTF).

The Taskforce was formed in the wake of the economic loss of Michelin, JTI-Gallagher and other local industries in recent years. A key focus of the MTF is to enable young people to make informed career choices within the manufacturing sector.

Erin Moore, Year 10 said it was amazing: "The Science Summer School has been so much fun and really opened my eyes to the varied careers you can explore in the manufacturing and engineering sectors. It was so good meeting Brian Cox as well; he is such a nice man and he makes the topics exciting. I feel incredibly lucky to have enjoyed this prize thanks to the MTF competition, organised by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council."

NCSC Girls' Competition

Last January, 16 Year 9 girls participated in the NCSC Cyber first girls' competition. Round one was an online round of problem-solving challenges. From this online round, Amy Baird and Sara Beggs qualified



Year 9 girls who participated in the NCSC CyberFirst Girls' Competition.



Sara Beggs and Amy Baird who were semi-finalists in the CyberFirst Girls' Competition

for the UK semi-finals. On Saturday 8th February Amy and Sara attended Allstate Headquarters in Belfast, to compete against the other 144 UK semi-finalists. This involved 4 hours of continuous cyber problem-solving challenges. Both girls learned a lot and even gave an interview for the BBC. They were hugely inspired by this wonderful opportunity, organised by NCSC and Allstate NI.

Robotics Forklift Challenge

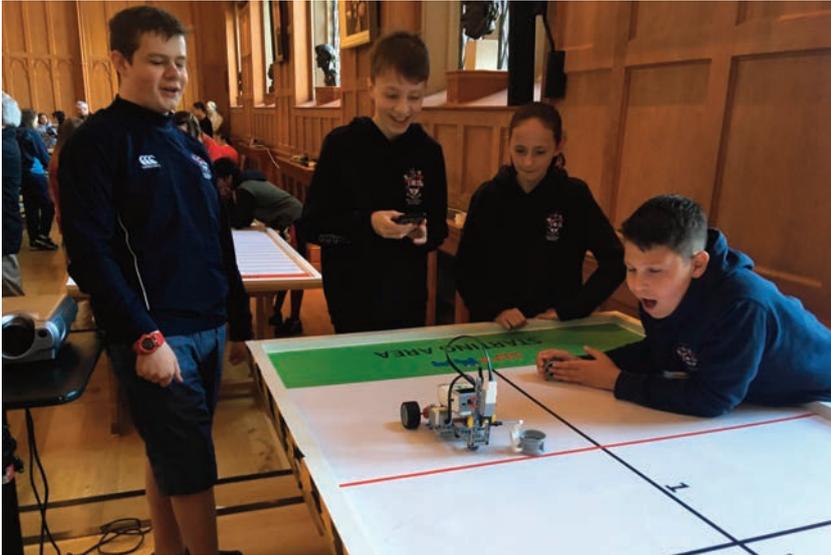
Nine Ballymena Academy pupils attended the Sentinus event, and each was awarded a medal for achieving a place. They greatly enjoyed the day.

Lewis Millar, Lydia Gregg and Reuben Hamill gained 1st place in the international Robotics Forklift challenge. A fabulous achievement for the trio!



Lewis Millar, Lydia Gregg and Reuben Hamill who won first place in the International Robotics Forklift Challenge.





Pupils enjoying themselves at the International Robotics Forklift Challenge, held at Queen's University Belfast.

Visit to Microsoft HQ.

In June 2019, twelve pupils from the STEM Club concluded the year, with an amazing trip to the Microsoft HQ Dream space workshop in Dublin. With their hosts Niamh and Ben, they enjoyed a fabulous tour around the facilities of Europe's largest Microsoft office.

The facility tour included state of the art technology, a tech shop, a Pilates/ yoga room, various refreshment stations, Michelin chefs in numerous restaurants and various meeting spaces, including breath-taking views across Dublin from the Microsoft rooftop terrace. During the



School STEM club visiting Microsoft HQ, Dublin.

workshop, we completed some AI facial recognition, micro- bite programming and engineering problem solving activities. After the tour and Q&A session, we participated in the Dream-space workshop.

Next, we had a few group photos taken at the company's digital waterfall, followed by the challenge of the M50 Dublin traffic as we headed home. It was a fabulous day and sincere thanks to our hosts Niamh and Ben. Final special thanks to Mr. Headden for his great company and awesome taxi driving.

BP Ultimate Challenge

Some Year 8 pupils completed the BP ultimate STEM Challenge. They designed a future, wearable, technology device. The pupils had to explain their design concepts and sketch the key features of their ideas, before entering the BP national competition. They received certificates for their creative designs.

Stem club Eco- Innovators

KS3 pupils designed new future charging points for e-vehicles. They entered the national 'Eco Innovators Competition' and the pupils received certificates for their superb efforts.

Kainos – hour of coding

A representative from Kainos came to our school to work with STEM Club pupils to complete an 'hour of coding'. This event explained coding and showed pupils how to programme. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience. They learned new skills and received a certificate of participation from their instructor Adrian.

EEP Raising Robots Programme

This year Aaron Caskey, Charlie Crawford, Lydia Gregg, Matthew McCullough, Natalie McCullough, Lewis Millar, Zach Shaw, Jamie Sims and Sebastian Smyth participated in the EEP Raising Robots Programme.

Clubs and Societies



Year 8 achieving their BP Ultimate Challenge Certificates for their entries and ideas in the BP Wearable Tech Competition.



Key Stage Three Eco- Innovators.



Pupils who participated in the hour of coding with Kainos.



EEP Robotics Team 2020.



Certificate and trophy for the EEP Robotics Challenge



Stuart McDowell and Joel Murphy being presented with the Department of Infrastructure prize for Best Practice at the Sentinus Young Innovators Event.



Pupils who attended the Sentinus Young Innovator's Event at The University of Ulster, Jordanstown.

The team met every Wednesday from October until February and learned how to build and programme “Lego mind storm Robots”. Their robot nicknamed ‘Captain Kerby’, was programmed to carry out specific tasks, focusing on speed and skills. The team also spent considerable time carrying out research into recycling options. Elaine Kerr spoke to them from International Synergies - a company supported by invest NI to help other local companies effectively recycle their waste products. It acts like a ‘waste dating agency’ and encourages entrepreneurs to use waste materials from other companies to create new products.

The team also interviewed Clare McCallum from Bryson Recycling, who shared information on the work her company does to promote reducing, reusing and recycling waste. Bryson collects our household and commercial waste. We heard how currently, Bryson recycles glass bottles to form new glass, paper to make egg boxes, and plastics to make pipes.

Bryson designed the Kerby box for homes in towns across NI. The boxes are used to collect materials from our homes on a weekly basis. There are different coloured boxes to collect different materials, but Bryson still find that some people, especially with visual disabilities, struggle to use the boxes correctly. The team finally came up with a robotic solution in the form of Captain Kerby. Captain Kerby is an automated robot, that would help each household identify which box to use for recycling and have the kerby boxes at the collection points, on time for Bryson to collect.

Following the four months of preparation for the four Robotics challenges, the STEM Club won the EEP SENTINUS robotics mat challenge. The regional final was held at CITB, Nutts Corner.

Young Innovators’ Report 2019
12 pupils from Ballymena Academy presented their projects at the Sentinus Event, held in the University

of Ulster, Jordanstown on Monday 24th June 2019. The pupils enjoyed networking with various company engineers and scientists. The teams had the opportunity to present the results of their individual STEM Projects. Ballymena Academy pupils assisted Sentinus by demonstrating the new LEGO ROBOTIC CHALLENGE to other visitors at the exhibition. Year 13 pupils Stuart McDowell and Joel Murphy won the Department of Infrastructure prize for best practice.

Public Speaking

The first event in the Public Speaking calendar was the Queenie McMullan Public Speaking Competition, held on Thursday 10th October 2019. The adjudicators were Mrs. Ann Laughlin and Mr. Ian McIlrath. Amy Gregg

(Year 11) was the Chairperson on this occasion. Ten pupils spoke engagingly on topics ranging from Jaffa Cakes to the Classics.

Congratulations to Jonathan Grimsley (Year 10) who won the Hunter Cup for Best Novice and Katie McDonnell (Year 10) who won the Edgar Graham Cup for Junior Public Speaking. Amy Gregg (Year 11) won the Queenie McMullan Cup for the Best Overall Speaker while Mercedes Faustin-Clenaghan (Year 14) was Highly Commended in the Overall Section. The Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition was held in The Braid Museum and Arts Centre on Thursday 7th November 2019. Congratulations to Naomi Dickey (Year 13) who won the competition and Alice Rodgers (Year 13) who was placed 3rd. Naomi



Mr. Black, Naomi Dickey (Year 13) who won the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition and Alice Rodgers who was 3rd and Mrs Hunter.



Amy Gregg (winner of the Queenie McMullan Cup for the Best Overall Speaker) at the Queenie McMullan Public Speaking Competition with adjudicator Mr. I. McIlrath.



Jonathan Grimsley who won the Linda Hunter Cup for The Best Novice at the Queenie McMullan Public Speaking Competition with adjudicator Mr. I. McIlrath.

Clubs and Societies

went forward to attend the N.I. Final, held in Hillsborough Village Centre on Saturday 8th February 2020. The Business and Professional Women's Public Speaking Competition, due to take place on Tuesday 12th November, was cancelled.

Alice Rodgers (Year 13) entered the Edgar Graham Memorial Public Speaking Competition, due to be held on Wednesday 18th March in The Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, Stormont but unfortunately the competition had to be cancelled.

Mrs Hunter.

Junior Christian Union

This year at Junior CU our theme was "God's Big Picture". We covered many different topics, such as, Creation, the Fall, Kings, Prophets, Jesus (God's rescue plan) and the Church. Visiting speakers included Steven Curry on the topic of Creation, Peter McClelland on Prophets and Billy Abwa on The Importance of Fellowship and Being Friendly. Other activities included photo challenges, treasure hunts, games days, small group Bible Studies and Prayer and Praise Days. At this year's Junior CU weekend, Steve McGall was our speaker. He shared his thoughts and teaching on four kings from the Old Testament; King Saul - A good king turned bad, King Jeroboam - A bad king who was a bad influence, King Manasseh - A bad king turned good and King Josiah - A good king who followed God's Word. It was an action-packed weekend with quizzes, team games, good food, Hunt the Leader and even a murder mystery before an ice cream supper. We enjoyed much fun and laughter.

Throughout the year, we have been supporting various causes. Our 'Present Aid Christmas Gifts' to the staff on the Senior Leadership Team were presented in the New Year - the junior pupils were so generous we were able to give Mr. Black 5 mosquito nets and a safe place to



Year 10 pupils Daniel Gribben, Zara Jackson, Sara Jackson, Jonathan Grimsley and Katie Gamble presenting Christian Aid gifts to Mr. Black and the Senior Leadership Team in December.



Some girls enjoying the beautiful Castlewellan scenery at the Junior C.U. Weekend.



The wonderful Sixth Form Leaders who helped make the Junior C.U. weekend possible.





All pupils and staff at the Junior C.U. Weekend!

shelter, Mr. Ross clean water and a turkey, Mrs. Connor antibiotics for a clinic and a tailor-made course and Mr. McLeister some chickens and a safe place to sleep. We also packed gift bags and created salvation bracelets and bookmarks for seafarers, which were given to Colin Jenkins, the port missionary in Cork. Pupils and their families also support the work of SUNI's E3 worker in Ballymena, Rachel Sheppard, by voluntary donations.

We had 2 evening events – an 'Eternity Social', which was provided without cost to Junior CU and also our Big Event, which took the form of a 'Chalenj'. We were delighted to have guests from Cambridge House, Cullybackey College and Slemish College. Four junior pupils from the 3 schools shared how worship songs and Bible verses have helped them face challenging times. That certainly was daunting in front of such a large audience.

Again, our thanks must go to our superb team of Senior Helpers, who have really blessed both the staff and the junior pupils, by using their talents to help make Junior CU a welcoming and fun place to be. They have also supported and encouraged

the juniors to pray, and we now have 20 pupils attending our Thursday morning prayer meeting on a regular basis.

Unfortunately, the fight against Coronavirus and the subsequent closure of school has cut our programme short, but we remember our young people in prayer as they continue their learning remotely.

Senior Christian Union

Chairperson- John Boyd, Vice Chairperson- Courtney McCurdy, Secretary- Alicia Downey, Worship Co-ordinators- Sophie Kennedy and Grace Francey, Evangelism Co-ordinators- Josh Mills and Jack Aiken, Prayer Co-ordinators- Matthew Poston and Ailsa Hamill, Small Group Co-ordinators- Alex McLeister and Jonny McCullough. This year at CU our theme was, "We believe", where we aimed to delve deeper into God's Word as Christians, whilst trying to promote a real sense of outreach at CU this year, in order to share what we believe with others. We looked at the topics of, 'We believe... God exists, in the power of prayer, in Heaven and Hell, in the virgin birth, the Bible is from God, and in

miracles,' through various speakers, whilst we also studied the book of James within our own small groups. As always, the highlight of the CU calendar was the annual trip to Castlewellaan Castle. We kicked off the weekend with Josh and Jack's, 'Big Fat Friday Night Quizian Union Quiz,' the only proper way to start off any BA CU weekend! Matthew Houston, our speaker, continually challenged us during the weekend through three talks. Matthew taught us the characteristics of Jesus. His love and justice, humility and boldness and obedience but not compliance. The committee led seminars on Saturday afternoon, providing a good opportunity to focus on the themes of evangelism and personal faith, as well as boys' and girls' seminars. We can't forget the game of, 'Hunt the Committee: Where's Wally? Edition,' where lots of fun and laughter was had by everyone in the famous Castlewellaan maze. As always, the Saturday 'late night worship' was the highlight of the weekend for many.

Some other CU highlights for this year included our Tea, Toast and Testimony (TTT) days and our Teacher Panel. In November we held an Acoustic Night, with

Clubs and Societies



Sixth Form girls enjoying the Senior C.U. Weekend at Castlewellan Castle.



"Where's Wally?" - fun at the Senior C.U. Weekend!



Fellowship at the Senior C.U. Weekend.

proceeds going towards the charity 'Friends of VisPa'. £326 was raised to support the provision of education and housing for children in Kenya.

Obviously, this year at CU did not go quite as planned due to unforeseen circumstances. The, 'We believe Jesus

died and rose again,' talk and the joint schools' outreach worship night were cancelled. Understandably this has been heart-breaking for all of us at CU, especially the Year 14 pupils.

We trust God has a plan for our good in this unsettling time. God has



Devotional time at the Senior C.U. Weekend.

blessed us time to be still and reflect on how great He is.

Senior CU could not operate without the advice and guidance of our teachers, who we thank dearly for all their support. Despite the circumstances, God has blessed us richly this year at CU and He deserves all the glory.

As Year 14 pupils, CU has played a massive part in all our lives and especially in our walk with Christ. We are thankful that we can look back at our time in Ballymena Academy with such fond memories of CU. God bless you all.

Alicia Downey (Secretary)

Charity Committee

"Your greatness is not what you have, it's what you give."

In the current situation we can now appreciate how essential it is to be 'kind and giving' in our society. As a Charity Committee, we believe that we have a responsibility to care for others and to help those less fortunate than ourselves.



Under the leadership of Miss Featherstone, along with Year 13 pupils Abbie Millar, Hannah Reid and Year 14 Rachel Fleck, the Committee has successfully completed another year of fundraising for various charities. At the end of the 2019 Summer term, Year 8 pupils raised a staggering total of £5750.95 in aid of Action MS, Northern Ireland's Multiple Sclerosis Charity.



Miss C. Featherstone and pupils attended the Action MS Awards Luncheon. Ballymena Academy raised the highest amount in the Northern Area.

We started off the new school year by hosting a staff coffee morning for Macmillan Cancer Support and we were able to raise £350 from this event. One of our favourite organisations to support is Children in Need. The Charity committee raised money through a donut sale on Friday 15th November, as well as selling badges. In total we raised over £600 for Children in Need. In November, the charity committee sold poppies to students to support the Poppy Appeal.



Members of the Charity Committee helping at the very popular Donut Sale.

On the run up to Christmas we decided to raise funds for Cancer Fund for Children, a charity close to many of our hearts. We raised money through the Junior Christmas Disco in December, our popular candy cane delivery service and the non-uniform day on the last day of Autumn term.

Friday 21st February brought another highly anticipated donut sale. Donut sales prove to be extremely popular, particularly with the junior school. A superb total of £420 was raised for Guide Dogs NI. At the end of February, Guide Dogs NI came in to visit our Year 8 Assembly, when they told us a little bit about their work and we presented them with a cheque from the proceeds of our donut sale.



A representative from Guide Dogs NI visiting Year 8 Assembly.

This has been a really successful year, thanks to the generosity of pupils and teachers. We really value and appreciate your support throughout the year.

Anna Sampson and Luke Gregg - Year 13

Clubs and Societies

Junior Debating

It has been another fun-filled year in Junior Debating Society which is held on alternate Fridays from 3:30-4:30pm in Room 7. There has been a marked increase in numbers attending the society, which is always a delight to witness. Numerous topics have been debated, from the light-hearted 'Kermit versus Elmo', to more serious issues affecting young people, like the influence of social media. It has been an absolute joy to watch so many young people grow in confidence, as they delivered their opinion in front of an audience.

Audience 'Question Time' is always thought provoking and stimulating. Questions are well thought out and show that the speakers have been listened to intently. Special thanks must go to the Junior Debating Society Committee, under the leadership of Jonathan Grimsley (Year 10). As a committee, they worked very effectively together this year and have shown such maturity in how they managed the advertising, organised the debates and promoted the society to their peers. Thanks also must go to Anna Patterson, our resident Debating Mentor, who attends the meetings and gives helpful and constructive feedback to the speakers after each debate. I'm sorry that due to the Coronavirus situation, we didn't get a chance to complete all the debates we had planned (or have our summer party!) but all being well, we shall be up and running again in the not too distant future. I look forward with anticipation to hearing many more lively debates and watching as you grow even more in confidence as you speak and listen to each other.

Miss Hamilton

Senior Debating

2019/2020 has been another exciting and successful year for the Senior Debating Society. The Debating Society has members from Y11 to Y14 and meets on a Monday afternoon until 4.30. The Society was extremely well organised by an excellent

committee, led by Co-Chairs Graham Leetch and Sophie Smyth.

Throughout the year we have hosted many challenging, controversial and sometimes humorous debates, including motions such as: 'This House believes that God does not exist', 'This House believes that Brexit was a mistake' and a very emotive debate on Northern Ireland's change in abortion laws. We also debated on the success, or otherwise, of the Presidency of Trump – one of the more humorous debates. The society has welcomed brilliant audiences, who came prepared with passionate rebuttal from the floor, encouraging a breadth of opinion. Our speakers have been brave and well prepared for the debates and have showcased themselves and their argument admirably.

We were again involved in the prestigious Northern Irish Schools' Debating Competition and two teams were entered. Year 14 pupils Ben Gilmore and Mercedes Faustin Clenaghan put in an excellent performance during Round 1 but were narrowly beaten by a superb team from St Columb's College. Mercedes was however sent forward to the final (which did not take place due to the Coronavirus pandemic), as an outstanding individual speaker.

Year 14 pupils Sophie Smyth and Adam Wilkins were extremely successful and reached the semi-final, which was to be held on Wednesday

25th March, but was also unfortunately cancelled due to Coronavirus pandemic. Sophie and Adam had successfully proposed the motion "This House believes that money which the government is spending on international aid is squandered and should be used more wisely" against a very strong team from Thornhill College in the quarter-final. They had also successfully debated against Royal School Dungannon, Abbey Grammar School and Foyle College in the earlier rounds. The debates were on a range of motions, including the benefits of introducing water charges in Northern Ireland, the role of a Citizens' Assembly in Northern Ireland and the idea that it is wrong to encourage students to skip school – a debate about which they had very strong feelings. Both Sophie and Adam had researched the numerous topics for hours and I was delighted and extremely proud of their enthusiasm and dedication to each debate. It was wonderful to watch them grow in confidence and skill throughout the competition and I have no doubt they would have acquitted themselves very well during following rounds.

After a very abrupt ending to the debating year, I will end by saying it is a privilege to chair the debates and listen to the passion, knowledge and humour of our pupils as they debate.

Mrs Hannawin



Sophie Smyth and Adam Wilkins seen here with the judges of the Northern Ireland Debating Society Competition.



Maths Competitions

The pupils in Ballymena Academy Maths Department have been busy again this year, with entries in various Maths competitions and we also hosted a new competition.

In November, 15 pupils from Years 12 to 14 took part in the Senior Maths Challenge. Ryan Irwin Year 14 was awarded a Gold certificate and won a place in the Senior Kangaroo competition. 3 Silver and 4 Bronze certificates were also awarded.

15 pupils from Years 10 to 12 took part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge in February 2020. 5 Silver certificates and 2 Bronze were won and Andrew Boyd from Year 12 was awarded a Gold certificate. He also won a place in the Pink Kangaroo follow-on round; however, the competition was cancelled due to the outbreak of Coronavirus.

This year, the Senior Team Maths Challenge changed venue to Saint Malachy's, Belfast on 8th November 2019. Ryan Irwin and Katie Agnew (both Year 14), along with Luke Gregg and Rachel McCartney (both Year 13) made up the team and were placed 5th.

On 6th December Ryan Irwin and Stuart McDowell (Year 14) and James Craig and Daniel Puper (Year 13), participated in a Maths competition held at Queen's University, Belfast. The questions posed in each round were very challenging, but the boys enjoyed the day and felt it would be worthwhile taking a team again next year.

For the first time, Ballymena Academy hosted a Primary Team Maths Challenge for our feeder primary schools, using questions set by the UK Mathematics Trust. 12 schools took part in a fun and action-packed morning on 31st January 2020, facilitated by our fabulous team of Maths Mentors. While some of the questions were tricky enough for Primary 7 pupils, all the staff, who



Katie Agnew, Rachel McCartney, Ryan Irwin and Luke Gregg took part in the UKMT Senior Team Maths Challenge at St. Malachy's College, Belfast.



Primary School Maths Challenge teams having fun!

responded to a questionnaire at the end of the morning, indicated that they would enter a team next year and would recommend the event to other local schools. The feedback from the event was extremely positive and sincere thanks were extended for "organising an engaging, fun challenge!"

- 1st place – Kells & Connor
- 2nd place – Antrim
- 3rd place – Buick Memorial

Annual Careers Convention

Ballymena Academy held its Annual Careers Evening on Thursday, 6th February, 2020. This successful and well-attended event has become an important part of the school's calendar. It is aimed at pupils in Year 10 and their parents, prior to making GCSE subject choices, and is one aspect of the school's programme of Careers Education, Advice, Information and Guidance.

Clubs and Societies



Pupils enjoying the Annual Careers Convention.



Careers Convention 2020.

Parents and young people alike benefit from the opportunity to discuss career options with practitioners in the various fields.

In this instance, the focus is on the young people making the transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. The intention is to enable them to identify the GCSE subjects most appropriate for their individual strengths and aspirations. Many former pupils, or parents of pupils at the school, each one prominent in his or her chosen profession or business, accepted an invitation to come along. Each participant gave a 20-minute

presentation about their work, potential career progression, rewards in terms of job satisfaction, salary and relevant academic requirements. The presentations were followed by an open forum, giving young people and their parents the opportunity to question the speakers.

There was a wide range of talks, covering a variety of careers and occupational areas. Those taking part included:- Miss Judith Coleman (Accountancy), Mr. Chris Bell (Architecture), Dr. Frances Weldon (Almac – Careers in Chemistry), Mr. Paul Jenkins (Computer Programming), Mrs. Laura Jones

(Dentistry), Miss Judith Thompson (Dietetics), Mr. Paul Davison (Engineering - Chemical), Mr. Gavin McFarland (Engineering - Civil), Dr. Robert McMurray (Engineering - Electrical/Electronic), Dr. Chi-Wai (Engineering - Mechanical), Mr. Sean Boyle (Film Production), Mr. Gareth Dickey (Graphic Design & Illustration), Miss Megan King (Healthcare Professions), Dr. Ashley Harris (Languages), Miss Laura Barron and Mr. Jacob Gray (Law - Solicitor), District Judge King (Law – Judicial), Dr. Alastair Aicken (Medicine – General Practitioner), Dr. Jenny Hughes (Medicine – Paediatrician), Miss Erin Fullerton (Music Performance, Production and Technology), Miss Emily Boyd and Mrs. Liana Montgomery (Nursing), Dr. Paul McCague (Pharmacy), Mr. Stephen Reid (Photography), Mrs. Judith Wright (Physiotherapy), Mr. Mark Beattie (Primary Teaching), Mrs. Amanda Cherry (Social Work), Mrs. Sheryl Jenkins (Speech & Language Therapy), and Mrs. Rosalind Craig (Veterinary Medicine). A Careers' Convention followed the presentations, which was open to all pupils, from Year 10 to Year 13, and their parents. They had the opportunity to find out information from the exhibitions and the representatives attending the convention. As well as the careers mentioned above, many others were represented, including C.A.F.R.E., Army, Banking, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Radiography, and various Higher Education institutions.

Both parts of the evening were very well-attended and greatly appreciated by those who were present. Young people and adults alike acknowledged the benefits of the speakers' direct experience, the cutting-edge information and the "inside knowledge", which only practitioners can acquire. They appreciated the opportunities to ask questions and commented on the extensive range of careers covered by the speakers and exhibitors and on how much information was condensed into one well-organised evening.



The 86 pupils who received their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award at the annual Award Presentation held in the W.H. Mol Assembly Hall on the 11th of June 2019.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

This renowned Award is many things to many people: a life-changing experience, a fun time with friends, an opportunity to discover new interests and talents, a tool to develop essential skills for life and work and a recognised mark of achievement respected by employers. In these unprecedented times, the thought of getting up and doing something exciting and worthwhile is worth more than we can imagine!

At the time of completion of the Award, pupils will have developed the skills and attitudes needed to become more accomplished, confident adults. These qualities are certainly respected by colleges, universities and employers. By completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award, pupils are investing in their future.

Involvement in the Award programme means personal development in the following areas:

- Self-belief and self-confidence
- A sense of identity
- Initiative and a sense of responsibility
- A real awareness of individual strengths
- New talents and abilities fostered
- The ability to plan and use time effectively
- Learning from and giving to others in the community
- Forming new friendships
- Problem solving, presentation and communication skills
- Leadership and team-working skills.

During this year, pupils have continued to be involved in a wide range of activities both in school and out.

In the skill section of the Award, many pupils have opted for activities such as baking or completion of an art project. Many pupils used their music lessons, participation in choirs and music groups, along with other opportunities, to complete this section.

Opportunities for participation in physical activities are plentiful at Ballymena Academy, with pupils taking advantage of varied sports. Rugby, hockey, football, netball, cross-country and circuit training are very popular indeed. Our pupils have certainly whole-heartedly engaged in a wealth of physical activities.

Opportunities to become involved in volunteering projects have been well received by our pupils. Pupils have volunteered in Folds, Anchor Boys, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade and Sunday Schools.

Clubs and Societies

Others have guided junior sporting teams in tennis, rugby, hockey and football.

In the Expedition section, all 109 pupils successfully completed the training and subsequent assessment in various locations in the Antrim Hills during May and June 2019. In August 2019, 23 students all completed their Gold Expedition in Wicklow. Each enjoyed the experience and managed exceptionally well, in what were very challenging conditions.

The Annual Bronze Award Presentation was held on 11th June 2019. The ceremony was well attended by pupils, parents and staff, with 76 Awards and certificates presented on the day. Our current Year 12 pupils; Phoebe McLroy, Jonathan Campbell, Ayesha Darragh, and John Kennedy made excellent presentations about the differing sections of their Bronze Awards. Phoebe spoke about her musical achievement for the 'skill' section, while Jonathan spoke about using his computer skills, supporting an organisation for the Volunteering section. Ayesha spoke of her sporting and personal development for her Physical section and John enthusiastically explained the enjoyable experiences on the Expedition. After distribution of the Awards, Mr. Ross congratulated the pupils on their achievements and explained the value of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff who help with the Award scheme in school. Without their help, support and energy, the scheme would not be as successful as it is. Thanks also to parents and guardians, who do so much in the background to help their young people work towards achieving this Award. Finally, thanks to the young people, whose energy and interest leads to the dynamism of the Award Scheme in school and its continued success.

Mr. Reid

Young Environmentalists' Society

This year has been a great year for the Young Environmentalists' Society. We began the autumn term with a huge harvest of last year's produce that had been growing in the polytunnel: carrots, parsnips, onions, potatoes, grapes and so much more. We also enjoyed many different walks, pond dips and talks about the local wildlife. One of the major events of the year in Y.E.S. is the organisation for a stall at the annual Christmas fair. Some of the crafts for

this event included pyrography, wreath making, planting of hyacinths and Mr. Warwick's popular wooden reindeer. This year we raised the fantastic amount of £750, which will be used to buy seeds and materials for the Society. We also played our part in helping to care for the environment by planting trees around the beautiful school grounds. A massive thanks to Mr. Warwick for organising the Society every week and to Mrs. McFarland and Mr. Pedlow for their assistance.

Calum Cavanagh, Year 14



Members of the Young Environmentalists' Society making lovely wreaths for the Past Pupils' Association Christmas Fair.



Y.E.S. prepare for the Christmas Fair!



Summer Games

Cricket

U13 Cricket

The Under 13 Cricket team had an excellent year. They started with a tie from the jaws of defeat against Ballyclare HS, Henry Casson recording an amazing 'Hat-trick'.



Henry Casson, who took a "Hat-trick" against Ballyclare High.

They comfortably beat Limavady and Coleraine to get to the final of the North West tournament, where unfortunately, inclement conditions and a bowl-out prevented a deserved Cup victory. That the boys managed to perform so admirably was a testament to their enthusiasm and dedication to practice and each other, traits which will serve them well in this sport in future.

Mr. Shields



U15 Cricket Team

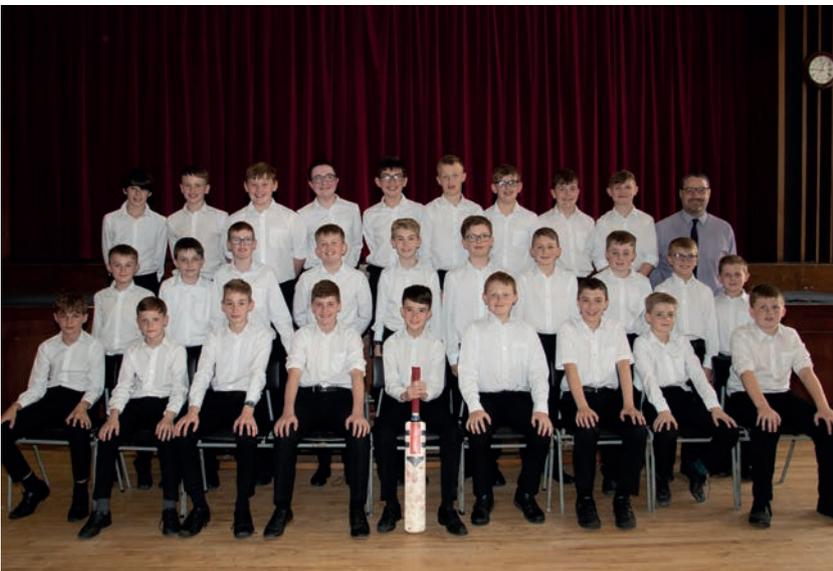
Back row left to right: Alex Campbell, Adam Thompson, Conor Louw, Henry Roberts, Harry Caithness.

Front row, left to right: Caleb Murdock, Ryan Mckenna, Euan Watt, Sam McDonald, Adam Watterson.

U12 Cricket

The season began with the traditional indoor practices and it was exciting to see almost 40 Year 8 pupils keen to learn the sport. Most of the boys had never played cricket before, so there was plenty of hard work put in to master the art of 'keeping your arm straight' or 'pointing your left elbow', alongside lots of hectic games of hit and run. By the time the season started, we had a large squad of talented and keen cricketers, all eager to represent the school.

Nigel and I believed that as many boys as possible should play in the matches and that it was important for all the players to get an opportunity to bat or bowl. As a result, we did not necessarily prioritise winning every game and it was a little disappointing to come up against some schools, where the same 2 or 3 boys did all the bowling and batting. Our approach allowed all the boys to improve their cricketing skills, knowledge and understanding tremendously.



U12 Cricket Team with coach Mr. N. Patterson

There were a number of outstanding individual performances with the ball – Luke McCorriston was unplayable when on target, Samuel Bailie and Tom Wylie bowled with pace and accuracy and Dan Patterson and Peter Simpson had some excellent spells of bowling. Lots of other boys made their bowling debuts this year and showed great promise for the future. Our batting was less consistent, although there were notable innings from Fintan Steele, Tom Wylie, Dan Patterson, James Gregg, Peter Simpson, Conor McKenna and Matthew Wright. Our fielding had moments of brilliance, usually from the excellent James Gregg, Luke

Summer Games

McCloskey or Zak Fleming. We had some very promising contributions from Lewis Millar, Jordan Stinson, Finlay McCarroll, Harry Weir and Evan Andrews.

The boys won their League match v Coleraine but lost to Limavady Grammar and Foyle College. In the Centenary Cup, they lost to Limavady Grammar and unfortunately lost to Wallace High School in the Plate Competition. They competed in the NEBSSA Year 8 Tournament at Coleraine Grammar, finishing 2nd in their Section.

The boys played with great character, determination and sportsmanship. They were a credit to the school and to their families, and we both wish them well in their future cricketing careers.

Mr. Patterson and Mr. Simpson.

Athletics Report 2019

NEBSSA

On Wednesday the 15th May, Ballymena Academy competed in the

NEBSSA Athletics Finals at the Antrim Forum, against 31 other schools. Roughly 45 athletes, from Years 8 - 11, took part in a range of Athletic Events, achieving some outstanding results and bringing home 11 gold, 8 silver and 9 bronze medals. Ballymena Academy pupils won 7 trophies:

- The U13 (Year 8) boys' team finished 2nd overall.
- The U14 (Year 9) boys' team finished 1st overall.
- The U15 (Year 10) girls' team finished 2nd overall.
- The U15 (Year 10) boys' team finished 2nd overall.
- The U16 (Year 11) girls' team finished 2nd overall.
- The girls were placed 3rd overall and the boys were placed 2nd overall.

Well done to all who took part. A special mention must go to Etain McGuckian, who equalled the competition record for the U15 Girls' 200m race, running it in 26.20 seconds.

Districts

The District Athletics Championships took place at the Antrim Forum on Wednesday 8th May, with 105 pupils taking part in a range of events from Hurdles to Relay and Triple Jump to Discus.

A special mention should go to Jonathan Cochrane, James Wright, Adam Lamont, Joseph Mawhinney, Freddy Young, Conor Drain, Etain McGuckian, Katie Agnew and Adam Kirkpatrick, who came first in their respective events.

A total of 25 individual athletes and 6 relay teams qualified for the Ulster finals on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th May, 2019.

Ulster Schools' Athletics Championships 2019

This year's Ulster Secondary Schools Athletics Championships were held on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th May at the Antrim Forum athletics track.

Ballymena Academy had an impressive representation of 25 individual athletes and 6 relay teams.



Athletics Summer 2019





Junior Girls' Rugby, Summer 2019



Junior Boys' Tennis, Summer 2019



Junior Girls' Tennis, Summer 2019

Summer Games

Medalists include:

Etain McGuckian – 1st in the Junior Girls' 100m (12.66 secs)
1st in the 200m (26.16secs)

Katie McCullough – 3rd in the Junior Girls' 1200m walk (8 minutes 22 seconds).

Junior Girls' Relay – 1st (53.15).
This is the third year in a row that the girls have won at Ulster level.

*Rachel Cochrane *Tory Hopkins
*Elke Hamilton *Etain McGuckian

Conor Drain - 3rd in the Junior Boys' Triple Jump (10.88 metres).

Freddy Young - 2nd in the Junior Boys' Javelin (33.85 metres).

James Wright - 1st in the Intermediate Boys' Javelin (50.65 metres)

Jonathan Cochrane - 1st in the Intermediate Boys' Long Jump (6.21 metres)

1st in the Triple Jump (12.87 metres).

Jamie Paul – 1st in the Intermediate Boys' Pole Vault (2.20 metres).

Intermediate Boys' Relay – 2nd place (45.18)

*Taylor Adger *Adam Lamont
*Jonathan Cochrane *James Wright

Joseph Mawhinney - 1st in the Intermediate Boys' Discus (34.88 metres)

2nd in the Shot (11.72 metres)

Adam Kirkpatrick - 1st in the Senior Boys' Shot (12.18 metres)

The athletes collected a total of 14 medals:

Gold medals – 9
Silver medals – 3
Bronze medals – 2

Overall Awards

The Intermediate Boys were crowned overall champions in Ulster for their age group, winning the Ulster Schools' Athletics Cup for the second consecutive year, with a points' tally of 75 points, with second place scoring 49 points. This meant that Ballymena Academy Boys were placed 3rd overall in Ulster when you combined the totals from all age groups.

Irish Schools Athletics Champions 2019

Saturday 1st June marked the end of the schools' athletics calendar with the All-Ireland Schools' Track and Field Championships at Tullamore in County Offlay. 7 individual athletes and 2 relay teams qualified for the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships at Tullamore Athletics Arena. The results from the day are as follows:

Junior Girls Year 10
Etain McGuckian - 3rd in the 100m with a time of 12.59sec.
Bronze medal in the 200m with a time of 25.55secs.

Junior Boys Year 10

Conor Drain - 3rd in the Triple Jump with a jump of 11.14 metres.

Intermediate Boys Years 11 and 12
Jonathan Cochrane - 4th in the triple jump with a best jump of 12.95 metres.

1st in the long jump with a jump of 6.87 metres.

Joseph Mawhinney - 7th in the Intermediate boys' discus with a throw of 33.31 metres and 4th in the Shot with a throw of 12.48 metres.

James Wright - 2nd in the Javelin with a best throw of 53.27 metres.



J. Wright and Mr. S. Johnston

Jamie Paul - 8th in the Pole Vault with a jump of 2.40 metres.

Senior Boys' Shot Put

Adam Kirkpatrick - 6th with a throw of 12.35 metres.

The Junior Girls' Relay Team performed exceptionally well coming 2nd, in the 4x100m relay, with a time of 52.43 seconds. This is the second year in a row, when this group of girls have come second in Ireland. Well done to Rachel Cochrane, Tory Hopkins, Elke Hamilton and Etain McGuckian.

Overall medal tally:

Gold – 1
Silver – 2
Bronze – 3



*Intermediate Boys' Team at the Ulster Schools' Athletics Championships:
A. Lamont, J. Wright, J. Cochrane, T. Adger*





Junior Girls' Relay Team at the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships. Left to right: T. Hopkins, E. Hamilton, R. Cochrane, E. McGuckian.

Junior Girls and the Intermediate Boys came second overall, on points, in their respective age groups. Etain McGuckian, James Wright, Jonathan Cochrane, Adam Lamont, Joseph Mawhinney, Jamie Paul and Christian Drennan were selected to represent Ulster at the Tailteann Irish Schools' Interprovincial Championships at Santry, on Saturday 22nd June 2019.

- Etain McGuckian – 4x100m relay.
- James Wright – 100m, Javelin, 4x100m relay.
- Jonathan Cochrane – Long Jump, Triple Jump, 4x100m relay.
- Adam Lamont – 4x400m relay.
- Joseph Mawhinney – Shot and Discus.
- Jamie Paul – Pole Vault.
- Christian Drennan – 100m (Reserve)

Interprovincial and International Athletics Competitions

Following the success of Athletics last season (2017-18) Jonathan Cochrane, Alice Rodgers and James Wright were selected to be a part of the interprovincial and international schools' team. Their achievements are listed below:

Jonathan Cochrane competed as an intermediate athlete last season aged 15 (Year 11).

English U17 Championships in Bedford

6th in U17 triple jump

UK school games at Loughborough University

5th in U17 triple jump

Alice Rodgers competed as an intermediate athlete last season aged 15 (Year 11).

Ulster Secondary Schools' Championships

1st in IG 100m

1st in IG 200m

Irish Secondary Schools' Championships

3rd in IG 100m

4th in IG 200m

Interprovincial Championships

2nd in IG 100m

1st in IG 200m

Schools' international Championships in Scotland

6th in U17 100m

6th in U17 200m

English U17 Championships in Bedford

Competed as part of the Northern Ireland and Ulster team but didn't qualify for the finals

UK school games at Loughborough University

5th in U17 100m

Ulster Secondary Schools' Championships

1st in IB triple jump

2nd in IB long jump

Irish Secondary Schools' Championships

5th in IB triple jump

Interprovincial Championships

2nd in IB triple jump

7th in IB long jump

Schools' international Championships in Scotland

6th in U17 triple jump



J. Cochrane and J. Wright pictured at the Tailteann Irish Schools Interprovincial Championships.

Summer Games



C. Drain at the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships.

James Wright competed as an intermediate athlete last season aged 15 (Year 11).

Ulster Secondary Schools' Championships
1st in IB javelin

Irish Secondary Schools' Championships
9th in IB javelin

Interprovincial Championships
3rd in IB javelin

UK school games at Loughborough University
5th in U17 javelin

Sports Cups 2019

Old Boys' Cup
(Year 11 Girls' Champion)
Sophie McCluney

Ballymena Athletics Club Cup
(Year 11 Girls' 100m)
Georgina Kidd

Caruth Cup
(Year 11 Boys' Champion)
Christian Drennan

Buchanan Cup
(Year 11 Boys' 100m)
Christian Drennan

Kyle Cup
(Year 11 Boys' High Jump)
Jamie Paul

Ballymena Athletics Club Cup
(Year 11 Boys' 1500m)
Kyle Johnston



E. McGuckian at the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships.

Kelly Cup
(Year 10 Girls' Champion)
Isabel Henderson

Adrain Cup
(Year 10 Boys' Champion)
Conor Drain

Elizabeth Kyle Cup
(Year 9 Girls' Champion)
Anna Duffin

Charles C Wilson Cup
(Year 9 Boys' Champion)
Mark Glenn

William Preston Cup
(Year 8 Girls' Champion)
Clara Marcus/Cassie Liggett

Joyce Turner Cup
(Year 8 Boys' Champion)
Tom Wylie

John Coulter Cross Country Cup (Boys)
William Francey

S.D. Barr Cross Country Cup (Girls)
Sophie McCluney

Minor Boys' Tennis Cup
Jamie Simms

Junior Boys' Tennis Cup
Ethan Simms

Cadet Boys' Table Tennis Cup
Noah Stewart

Senior Boys' Table Tennis Cup
Michael Allen

Bell House Cup
(Junior Rugby Year 9)
Knocklayde

Morton House Hockey Cup
Trostan – collected by
Rhiannon White

DZ Crookes Cup
(Diligence and enthusiasm in PE)
Ryan McDowell

David Allen Cup
(Outstanding contribution to co-curricular activities)
Rachel Brown

Lamont House Cup (Best overall house)
Trostan – collected by Abby Simpson

OVERALL HOUSE POINTS

Trostan	963 points
Knocklayde	869 points
Slemish	796 points
Lurigethan	783 points



Junior Girls' Relay Team on the podium at the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships.



Winter Games

Table Tennis

Large numbers of pupils attended the Table Tennis club every Friday afternoon during the Winter and Spring terms. Under the supervision of Miss McNeill, Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Munce and Mr. Huston, players were able to improve their skills and develop their match technique. With such big crowds, especially from Year 8, it was necessary to split the year groups over two weeks this year.

The Ulster Schools' Team Cup was hosted at Lisburn Racquets Club on Wednesday 5th February. Ballymena Academy entered Under 15 and Under 13 teams. The teams performed admirably throughout the day, against very experienced opposition.

Although, both teams lost out in the early rounds of the Cup Competition, they thoroughly enjoyed their day. A special thanks to Mrs. Douglas, who helped both teams on the day. Unfortunately, the Ulster Schools' Individual Championships in early April had to be cancelled. As a club we look forward to future tournaments.

A big thanks to those who represented the school in all the competitions this year. Thanks to those who turned up consistently every week to practise and enjoy the sport. Finally, thanks to the staff for their commitment throughout the year, including the Year 10 pupils with their help in setting up the tables every week without fail. This was greatly appreciated.

We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

Mr. Huston

Netball

Netball continues to be a popular after school activity for girls. With so many Year 8 girls attending, we had three teams playing during the season. Two teams were entered in the Ballymena League. The B team was only beaten by our A team and St Killians.



Year 8A Netball Team- NEBSSA League Winners



Year 9A Netball Team- NEBSSA League Winners

The A team won all their matches comfortably in this league. They also took part in the NEBSSA League and again were victorious, beating Magherafelt High School 16:8 in the Final.

The Year 9 B team took part in the Ballymena League playing against A

teams. Wins were recorded against Cullybackey College, St Patricks and Slemish.

The 9 A team played in the NEBSSA League, recording wins over Magherafelt High, Ballyclare High, Ulidia College,

Winter Games

Antrim Grammar and Sperrin. A win over Magherafelt in the Final saw them retain the championship they won as Year 8 pupils.

The girls also had an excellent run in the Northern Ireland Cup, reaching the Shield Semi-Finals, losing in a hard-fought match to Glenlola Collegiate.

The Year 10 B team took part in the Ballymena League, with wins over Cullybackey and St Patrick's. They lost two matches.

The Year 10 A team competed in the NEBSSA League, with wins over Magherafelt, Sperrin, Ballyclare High, Carrickfergus Academy, Antrim Grammar and Parkhall.

A comfortable win in the Final again saw them retain the Championship that they have held since Year 8.

In the Northern Ireland Bowl Competition, the girls played extremely well to reach the Semi-Finals. A below par performance saw them beaten by Thornhill.

Overall, it was an excellent year for the girls, who train hard and play well in their competitive matches.

Mrs. Campbell

Year 11 Netball

The Year 11 Netball Club began the year as a non-competitive, social club under the supervision of Mrs. Borthwick. The girls had played Netball enthusiastically in the Junior school and wanted to continue playing together as a team. It soon became apparent that the girls were driven and talented. Consequently, they were entered into the Ballymena League. The team faced three other schools in some challenging matches. Firstly, they beat St Patrick's College 22-7, followed by a win against Slemish College 22-9. Cullybackey College forfeited their game and awarded our team the points. This resulted in a clean sweep, with our girls taking the title. A wonderful result for a determined and dedicated



Year 10A Netball Team- NEBSSA League Winners



Year 11 Netball Team- Ballymena League Winners.

group of girls. We look forward to seeing them again in Sept 2020!

Team members were: Kady Orr, Robyn Fullerton, Penny Sheridan, Kate Wylie, Caitlin Graham, Hanna

Gunning, Shannon Warwick, Kerri McIlveen, Emily Church and Leah Nicholl.

Mrs. Borthwick



Hockey

1st XI

From start to finish, the 2019/20 season was exciting and enjoyable for the 1st XI hockey team. Scoring a total of 72 goals, with Rhiannon White as top goal scorer, the team had a good win rate this year within their different competitions.

The first of the season was the Super League, which started with wins against determined Glenlola, Coleraine and Dalriada sides. With just one defeat to Rainey, we finished the group in second place, reaching the quarterfinals against Banbridge Academy. Unfortunately, despite a hard-fought game we lost, and our Super League run came to an end.

However, in reaching this point of the competition meant we would enter the Schools' Cup in the 3rd round.

Our Schools' Cup run kicked off in early January with an away game to Regent House. The team felt prepared and were determined to succeed. The game began with high intensity and the girls worked well together. We were able to win a penalty corner, which resulted in a crash ball from Alex McLeister being deflected into the net by Grace Lavery. This boosted the girls' confidence and led to another fantastic goal from Grace Lavery from the post. The match ended with a 3-0 win, after a final goal coming from Rhiannon White.

We were excited that we were progressing to the quarter finals, as the school had not reached this level since 2015. Our quarter-final match was another away game against Omagh Academy. After a long journey, we arrived in Omagh and were eager to get started. From beginning to end, the girls played with great passion, remaining the more resolute side for most of the game. Regrettably, our opponents were able to squeeze two goals and despite an outstanding reverse stick goal from Rhiannon, we narrowly lost and our time in the competition had ended. We were understandably



1st XI Hockey Team- Runners up in the Derry and Antrim League.

heartbroken, but we knew we had done everything we could, and we were proud of our effort.

The season came to an end with our final league match against a local Cambridge House team. After goals from Grace Lavery (x2), Lucy Millar and Alex McLeister, the game ended with a 4-1 victory, leaving us runners-up in the Derry and Antrim League.

During this season, many young players on the squad have developed into key players. Year 11 players Ellen McDonald and Katie McCullough grew in confidence and developed into very skilful team players, creating many scoring opportunities for the team and taking their chances when they entered the circle. Eabha Steele and Alex Henry-McCool eased into the defensive line, continually protecting the goal and saving the team from fast counter attacks from opposing teams. Eabha's strength in her tackles that she made consistently throughout the season, prevented the opposition getting into the circle. Alex Henry-McCool, despite suffering an injury, represented Ulster U16, who went on to win the Interprovincial Tournament in 2019. She also received an Ireland U16 trial from this and she is currently a member of their training



Alex Henry-McCool- Ulster Under 16 Hockey team.

panel. She is a vital player in a centre back role, who is always protecting the centre of the pitch. Her close control and attacking runs got the team out of trouble on countless occasions. Rhiannon White is a key member of the squad with her mesmerising close controlled 3-D skills, creating countless goal scoring opportunities. She scores many goals because she can strike a ball from any angle on the reverse, which has proved difficult for many opposing teams. Emmie Booth has also proved herself to be a key player in the squad. Her strength in the

Winter Games

midfield line held off fast counter attacks from opposing teams. For a young member of the squad, her confidence and skills were outstanding and her improvements from the start to the end of the season, displayed her determination and her potential for upcoming years. Year 13 players Danielle Foster, Alice Rodgers and Kathy McIlveen were all key players in this year's First XI. Kathy played a vital role in midfield and her link up play between the forward line and the defensive line proved difficult for many teams. Her close control was extremely important and gave the squad countless goal scoring opportunities. Returning from injury, Alice Rodgers grew in confidence throughout the season and was a key player in the midfield line, because of her lightning speed and strength, which many could not handle. Danielle Foster and her undeniable pace ensured that there was always a passing option for the midfielders and defenders. Her determination and hard work proved to be a problem for many defenders in opposing teams. Year 14 Sarah Preston displayed versatility throughout the season and her skills allowed her to eliminate players with ease. The ability to play a ball over distance, led to many goal scoring opportunities throughout the season. Grace Redmond proved her determination throughout the season when both attacking and defending. Her attacking runs from defence showcased her strength, which many teams struggled to handle. She tackled with confidence and strength, meaning many attackers could not get past her, saving the team on many occasions. Her ball control was solid and her communication and organisation from defence was vital in all the games played throughout the season. Samara Nicholl must receive special credit for her commitment and dedication. She has performed spectacular saves throughout the year, keeping us safe in many games and she had an outstanding game against Banbridge. Captain Alex McLeister continually protected the goal and made crucial tackles, to obstruct the opposition

from scoring. Her accurate, fast paced hits relieved the pressure off our defence on many occasions, as well as scoring many wonder goals from her position of striker in our short corner attack. Alex led by example as captain, through her committed and determined performances in every game. Grace Lavery proved to be a key player in the forward line, with her determination to chase anything and anyone down. She scored some great goals from her precise deflections within penalty corner attacks, which many teams could not defend. Her goal celebrations are becoming legendary! Lucy Millar, who also played in the forward line, worked tirelessly throughout the season. Her lightning pace allowed her to eliminate players with ease and create passing options all over the pitch. Her work rate was tremendous, as she continually put pressure on opposing defenders, which caused a lot of trouble for many teams. Katie Craig was a vital player in the defensive and midfield line. Despite injury, she provided attacking runs using her close controlled skills, to create scoring opportunities and her strong tackles that she delivered, prevented many opposition fast counter attacks. Congratulations go to Katie as she represented Ireland U18 this year in a three-match series against England.

The Year 14 players will be deeply missed, as they have all



Katie Craig-Ireland Under 18 Hockey team.

demonstrated huge commitment to Ballymena Academy hockey over the years.

On behalf of the whole team, we want to sincerely thank our coach, Miss McNeill. Her commitment and care for each individual player, helped us develop our skills and inspired us to play to the best of our ability. Special thanks go to Andy Linford for his assistance this season, through umpiring matches and coaching the goalkeepers.

It is safe to say this season has been very successful for the 1st XI squad and a great end to our 7 years of school hockey. We wish the remaining members of our team every success for next year.

Katie Craig and Alex McLeister
(Year 14)

2nd XI

What a season it has been! This year has been a very successful season for the 2XI, only conceding goals in 4 games and scoring 64 goals in 25 matches! Although we had a relatively new squad this year, after a few training sessions and matches we began to gel and work well together, setting us up for an incredibly good season ahead.

With such a new team, the first few matches taught us how to play together, leading to some big wins later in the season. The confidence of the younger players grew as we played more friendlies, which would contribute to our success in the League and Cup. With a disappointing first league match against Rainey, it taught us that communication would be vital in future matches. We faced our fair share of challenges along the way, from pitches beginning to freeze in the 3rd round of the Cup, to coming up against some 1stXI teams. All these challenges made us stronger and tougher.

We faced one of our biggest challenges in the Quarter-Final of the McDowell Cup against BRA. We



2A XI Hockey Team- Runners up in the League with coach Mrs. B. Linford.

knew it would be a tough match, as we had played them earlier in the season. We went 1-0 up in the second quarter and had to keep our heads down, as we could not become complacent. BRA won a series of penalty corners threatening our lead, with one resulting in a goal, which was fortunately disallowed. This gave us the drive we needed to keep fighting until the end, as we saw how easily they could equalise. Nevertheless, we managed to keep our lead until the end, securing our spot in the semi-final against Ballyclare High.

This was the most challenging match of the season, as we were up against a strong side. We knew the result could have gone either way, but no matter how hard we fought, unfortunately this time we were on the receiving end of having a goal disallowed and the match finished 1-0 to Ballyclare. Despite our disappointment in the semi-final, the team played well together this season and showed great determination to finish the season on a positive note. We finished runners- up in the league to Rainey Endowed, after a 4-0 win against Antrim Grammar, 7-0 win against Coleraine Grammar and 5-0 win against Cambridge House.

On behalf of the entire team, we would like to thank our coach

Becky Linford for all the hard work she has put into coaching us and for putting up with us 4 days a week. We would also like to thank Andy Linford for umpiring our matches this season and supporting us along the way. We thank all the parents and supporters for coming along to our matches this year. Sarah, Courtney and I would also like to thank the rest of the team for making our last year of hockey so enjoyable. We will miss all of you at training sessions. We have had lots of laughs, a few tears and made many

new friends over the past season and we will miss everything about it (even counting the hockey balls)! Finally, we wish the 2XI success for next season and hope that you do not miss us too much!

Emma Hunter and Sarah Carroll
(Year 14)

3rd XI

The 3XI team have had a great season with many victories. It has been a time of fun and enjoyment but also hard work. Our team was diverse, with players from Year Groups 11-14. Training on Monday afternoons along with Saturday morning matches, allowed us to bond as a team and learn how to play together.

Our Cup run this year was successful, with the group stage consisting of 3 wins. It began with a 1-0 victory against Friends, before an outstanding victory against Larne Grammar, where we won 10-0. Finally, we defeated Regent House 6-0 and as a result we reached the quarter-final, where we faced Ballyclare High. We started strongly, creating many chances and maintaining a solid defence.



3rd XI Hockey Team.

Winter Games

Unfortunately, despite giving everything we had and encouraging each other the whole way to the end, the match did not go our way.

On behalf of all the girls I would like to make a special thanks to our coach, Erin Harpur for all her hard work. Her determination, patience and encouragement have had a great impact on our hockey skills and ability to work effectively as a team. It has been a privilege to play with such a great team and I wish them all success for next season.

Chloé Robinson (Captain)

4th XI

The 19/20 season was a very successful one for the 4th XI. We defeated Regent, Omagh and Strathern, which saw us become finalists of the 4th XI Cup, for the second consecutive year. We were up against a strong Methody team in the final but unfortunately, after a hard fought game, in which we had the majority of possession, we conceded a goal from a Methody penalty corner, in the second quarter. Despite the fight and determination of every player, we were narrowly defeated 1-0. The girls have worked extremely hard this season and should be very proud of what they have accomplished, I know that I am so proud of them.

This has been an emotional season for myself and Rebecca, as it was our last one. We have loved playing as part of this team and we want to thank the girls for making our hockey experience so enjoyable. We also thank our coach, Erin Harpur, for all her hard work, that enabled us to improve as a team and therefore reach the final. We also thank her for putting up with us three days a week. She deserves a medal for her patience. Rebecca and I wish the 4th XI all the best for next season. Don't miss us too much and remember we will be at the sidelines cheering you on!!!

Nicole Quinn (Captain)



4th XI Hockey Team- Runners up in the 4th XI Cup.

U14A

I would like to begin by thanking my team for the effort they have displayed throughout the past season. It was a great season and all players were dedicated to both matches and their training. Many thanks to Mrs. McIlwaine for her support and teaching us new skills, which we found useful in our games. Throughout the year, we put to good use the new skills and had fun both on and off the pitch. We had many laughs along the way and grew stronger and closer as a team. Our top goal scorers this season were Maya McGovern and Emma Weir, scoring 6 goals each.

We competed in the Ulster Schools' Junior Hockey Cup against Banbridge Academy. Even though this was a tough draw, we played well, with

some great link up play but just could not get a goal to put the pressure on Banbridge. We then moved into the Junior Plate, where we met Belfast High. We scored our goal early on and dominated most of the game, however Belfast High defended well, and we could not get a second goal. Late on in the game, we conceded a goal and the final score was 1-1. We went on to penalty runs, but unfortunately, we did not make it through to the next round. This season of hockey has been a great one. I have enjoyed being captain and being able to lead the team during tough matches. One highlight for me this year was towards the end of the season, when we played against Methody and beat them 1-0. I enjoyed this game as it was a very tough match, and everyone played amazingly well, with



U14A Hockey Team.



great link up play in all areas of the pitch and a strong performance from our defence. Another highlight for me was playing Larne Grammar, which was Mrs. McIlwaine's old school. Knowing this gave us the determination to go out and win 3-2. We were delighted with this result.

On behalf of the whole team, I would like to thank all our friends and families who cheered us on from the side-lines throughout the season. It was so encouraging to have the support, especially on those cold winter mornings. Next year as we move up to Senior Hockey, we look forward to playing with new teammates and the challenges this will bring.

Emma Weir (Captain)



U14B Hockey Team.

Under 14 B

15 matches played
9 wins
4 draws
2 defeats

This year I was proud to be captain of the U14B team. I feel that our friendships off the pitch showed on the pitch, as we always played as a team and fought hard for every result.

A highlight of our season was the local derby against Cambridge House, which is closely contested

every year and we were able to come away with a superb 2-0 win. The girls trained hard every Tuesday after school and during Games on Thursdays, and it was this commitment which helped the team achieve the fantastic results.

Congratulations to the whole team for the effort and commitment shown throughout the season and a special mention to our top goal scorer, Rayann Edris, who scored eight goals. Well done!

Erin Bonar (Captain)

Under 13 A

19 matches
17 wins
2 defeats
79 goals scored

The season started well when we won the Derry and Antrim tournament, which was held on our home pitches. It was a very tight final against a strong Dalriada side, but the Ballymena Academy team played well, and we were delighted when our centre-forward Lucy McAllister scored the winner in the last minute of the game. Our League campaign began with a hard fought and decisive 2-0 victory against Rainey in Meadowbank Arena. We went on to win all our other league matches, winning the Derry and Antrim League outright! Lucy McAllister was our top goal scorer this season with a superb total of 31 goals, followed closely by Rebekah Calderwood with 21 goals.

Also, well done to Charli Henry-McCool and Zara Kernohan, who were selected for the Ulster U15 talent development squad coaching sessions. Apart from the cold snowy mornings, our team has



Under 13A Hockey Team- Winners of Derry and Antrim Tournament and League.

Winter Games

really enjoyed our season, especially the 'sing-along' bus journeys and fun training sessions, thanks to Mrs. Glass. We are all looking forward to next year and hope to do well in the Junior Cup.

Thanks to all the girls who trained and played with such commitment and enthusiasm. Thanks to all our supporters every Saturday and thanks very much to Mrs. Glass for coaching us for the last two years.

Olivia Drain (Captain)

Under 13B

13 Matches played
9 wins
1 defeat
3 draws

The U13 B hockey squad were happy with our season. I would like to thank all the players who showed great spirit, whether we were winning or losing. One of the highlights was when we were runners-up in the NEBSSA U13 tournament, competing against 'A' teams from other schools.

Throughout the year, our players have bonded with each other and played very well as a team. We shared lots of laughs on the bus journeys to and from matches and worked hard in our practice sessions to improve our skills and gameplay. I would like to thank Miss Gillespie for coaching us after school on Thursdays and Mrs. Glass for taking us on Saturdays for our matches. I would also like to thank Miss McNeill, who organised our matches and always made sure we could play, even on those chilly Saturday mornings.

I would like to congratulate the entire team on a successful and very enjoyable year.

Evie Millar (Captain)



Under 13B Hockey Team- Runners up in the NEBSSA U13 Tournament.



Year 8 Hockey Team Adidas



Year 8 Hockey Team Osaka



Rugby

1st XV

There were huge expectations as to what might be possible this year. The squad of 33 players had a strong sense of purpose and were highly motivated, both on and off the pitch. The season as such started for us in May of last year with pre-season training. That was when we set our first goal; not to lose any home games this year.

First fixture was away to Ballyclare High, we had a convincing win of 0-47, clearly setting down a marker for what was to follow.

Next up was a home fixture against a much-fancied Wallace High. Again, we gave of our best and secured a well-deserved 31-27 victory. Momentum was starting to build.

We continued this winning run with victories over Methodist College, Bangor Grammar and Belfast Inst. Mid-season an invitation was extended by Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh to partake in their prestigious Tri-Nations Tournament; Ballymena Academy being the de-facto Irish representatives. As one would expect, the standard of rugby was extremely high and we equipped ourselves admirably throughout against all opposition, albeit it took a

heavy toll on the squad; we returned to Ballymena with 11 players carrying injuries.

We then faced our toughest opposition of the season against a touring team from Kirkham Grammar School, Lancashire, who were unbeaten this year in England. It was a tense and tight game which ebbed and flowed, with the visitors narrowly finishing on top. It was cold comfort to be acknowledged by them as the best team they had played during the season.

We took the positives from the game, recognising that it would serve us well for the upcoming Danske Bank Ulster Schools' Cup in the new year. Pre- and post-Christmas, we knuckled down into a tough training regime to get us ready for the battles ahead.

The new year kicked off with an away fixture against Wallace High School, which as expected, proved to be a tough game, with the home side narrowly edging it on the score-line. So, we had one victory and one defeat against Wallace during the year.

Next up was a home fixture against a strong Royal School Armagh, where we again established our credentials by putting in a convincing performance winning 23-14.

This was it, Schools' Cup knock-out rugby! We were drawn away to Down High who had successfully come through the preliminary rounds. We played into a very strong head wind in the first half, which Down High used to their advantage and which helped to keep the score line close, albeit with BA leading throughout. In the second half we played some of our best rugby of the season as Ballymena Academy won the game 12-51.

We heard the news of the quarter-final draw on the bus back from Downpatrick ... We would be facing Armagh again at home!

A massive shift was put in by all 30 plus boys and 9 coaching staff, as we prepared for the game.

BA supporters love Schools' Cup rugby as was evident by the huge turnout; 3 deep along the side lines.

We truly believed we could defeat Royal School Armagh, having recently done so only a few weeks before, but alas it wasn't to be, as the final score against RSA was 14-17. This was a tough one to take for a squad, who rightfully believed we could have gone all the way this year.

Since May 2019, the squad had worked hard in sessions both on and



1st XV with main coaches Mr J. Andrews, Mr G. Murray and coaching staff.

Winter Games



Ballymena Academy pupils who represented Ulster at U18 Clubs, U18 Schools and U19 level in the Interprovincial Championships were presented with jerseys.



Ross McKay, Paddy Browne, Joseph Mawhinney and James Wright represented Ballymena Academy at a Training Camp for the Irish Schools U18s. Pictured with Mr. S. Black and Mr. J. Andrews.

off the pitch, playing great rugby that we can all look back on with pride and knowing that we gave of our best.

On behalf of the 1XV Senior Squad I would like to offer up a massive thanks to, head coach, Mr. Andrews, backs coach Mr. Murray and team manager Mr. Black. They were ably supported by Mr. Johnston, Matthew Orr, Scott Agnew, Ryan Keating, Patrick Hargy and Nikki Andrews. All the players are indebted to them for their dedication and hard work throughout the season.

On a personal note it has been an absolute privilege and highlight of my school career to lead the boys on what has been an incredible year of rugby!

Tenax Propositi
Matthew Corr (Captain)

2nd XV

Senior Rugby, at Ballymena Academy, has not seen as much strength and depth, in the last decade, as it did this season. With 4 senior teams fielded every weekend,

Ballymena Academy had nearly 75 players, on the roll, playing senior rugby. This meant that the quality of players playing was high and the 2nd XV team was no exception.

The quality of the 2nd XV team was first realised on Saturday 7th September during a round-robin tournament against Antrim Grammar School's 1st XV and Foyle College 1st XV team. Ballymena 2nd XV won 26-0 against Foyle and 10-0 against Antrim. The following weekend, Ballymena defeated Wallace High School convincingly by 55 points to 3. This was followed up with a mid-week fixture, at home, against Larne Grammar 1st XV team winning by 53 points to 7. Ballymena continued this run of good form, recording wins at home against Belfast Inst (19-0), away to Bangor Grammar (44-7), home to Coleraine Grammar 1st XV (36-12), home to Methodist College (35-15), home to Campbell College (33-5) and away to Rainey Endowed 1st XV (7-5).

Before the Christmas break, the Ballymena team took part in another round-robin tournament against Campbell and Lurgan College 1st XV. Ballymena did not play their best rugby and as a result lost narrowly to the hosts, Campbell College, by 7 points to 0 and lost to Lurgan College 1st XV by 10 points to 0.

The New Year saw a return fixture against an improved Wallace High School team. The home side had improved greatly, since the start of the season, and as a result played their part in a 33-17 win for the Ballymena side. The next game saw Ballymena play at home against a very well-organised Royal School Armagh side. Conditions were poor for both teams, with Armagh's superior lineout being the difference between the two teams. As a result, the visitors beat Ballymena by 21 points to 7.

Saturday 25th January saw Ballymena Academy enter the 2nd XV Cup in the fourth round as a seeded team. Ballymena had been drawn against



2nd XV Rugby Team with coach Mr. S. Johnston

Bangor Grammar, at home, with the Ballymena team running out eventual winners by 52 points to 12. This set up a quarter final clash away to Armagh on Saturday 1st February. Ballymena played exceptionally well during this game and were unfortunate to be on the wrong side of a few very close calls. Ballymena lost narrowly, by 8 points to 0, in what was a fiercely competitive game.

The players were, understandably, very disappointed. However, no one could fault their effort and resilience against a side that had beaten them convincingly just two weeks previously. This result, although disappointing, does bode well for next season, as the majority of the team was made up of Year 12 and 13 players.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents for their unwavering support through the good times and the challenging times throughout the season. I would also like to thank Mr. Andrews for his help and leadership with senior rugby along with Mr. Murray. Thanks also to Mrs. Andrews and Mr. Agnew who put in a tremendous amount of time with the players in strength and conditioning. Sincere thanks to Mr. Matthew Orr for volunteering to help with the 2nds during the business end of the season. Finally, I would like to

thank the players. Even though the season may not have ended up as everyone had hoped, it was still a very enjoyable season with a lot of fun and laughter. Thank you for all your hard work and I wish you well, especially those Year 14 players who have been a tremendous asset to rugby at Ballymena Academy and will no doubt continue playing at Senior Club level.

Mr. Johnston

3rd XV

The 3rd XV, more commonly known as the 'mighty threes' was a team that,

in the words of Darren 'Smithy' Smith 'could go all the way.' Throughout the season, the 3rd XV had many impressive challengers who all fell short of victory. With the assistance of Captain Sam Henry and the tremendous coaching efforts of Matthew Orr the team reached the coveted 3rd XV Cup Final.

The season started with a well-deserved win against Ballyclare away. Next in the rugby calendar was Belfast Inst. After a tough game, the Ballymena side, surprisingly, came out on top. It is simply impossible to mention all the wins of the season. First up in our Cup run was Enniskillen Grammar School. Their attempts were quickly shrugged off after magnificent tries from Ramsey, Henry and Crabbe. This made 'The Mighty Threes' hungry for more and meant that they were to face Belfast Inst. in the next round. It was a sunny Wednesday at home. What more could you want? The Inst. players put up a good fight after conceding 2 early tries from Wharry and Cranston, but a late penalty won it for the Ballymena men.

This resulted in 'The Mighty Threes' playing Methody 4's in the semi-final.

The 3s were desperate to win this one to avoid it being a Methody vs



3rd XV Rugby Team with coach Mr. M. Orr and Mr. S. Agnew. Runners up in the 3rd XV Schools' Cup.

Winter Games

Methody final. The Ballymena players rose to the challenge with a significant win putting them through to the 3rd XV Schools' Cup Final. Here, the Ballymena side met a well drilled Methody 3rd XV team, at BRA playing fields. The Ballymena players battled hard, but unfortunately missed out on the trophy.

Mr. Orr and Sam Henry (Captain)

Medallion XV

As the Medallion squad for the 2019/2020 season came together in August for pre-season training, it was clear that a free flowing, ball playing brand of rugby would be the order of the day. Where this team lacked sheer size and brute force, it brought deft handling and a natural rugby ability in key positions across the park.

The season started well with a 29-17 win at home to Ballyclare High School. This was followed by two tough fixtures away from home, losing 10-0 to Belfast Inst at Osborne Park and a fixture at Wallace HS that finished all square. Two high points of the season soon followed with a convincing win over Methodist College Belfast and a hard fought 20-20 draw at Clongowes Wood College, Dublin. Captain Alex McBurney's last minute penalty to level the scores in Dublin, demonstrated not only Alex's kicking ability, but a desire and fight in this squad to go 'toe to toe' with some of the top teams in the country.

After Christmas, all eyes turned to the Medallion Shield, where the team drew Belfast High School in the 4th round. After navigating a tricky wind and a 'vocal' home support, the team showed their class and scored a number of high-quality tries, running out comfortable winners. This was a true team performance, with 1 – 15 each playing their part, however, notable mentions must go to Conor Drain and Marshall Robinson, whose powerful running in the 10 and 12 jerseys proved too much for the Belfast High team to handle.



Medallion XV Rugby Team with coaches Mr A. Moore and Mr. D. Ross



BA Medallion XV vs Sullivan Upper School.



Medallion Team players during their clash with Sullivan Upper School in December.



The team then progressed to the Quarter Final of the competition and were tasked with a tough away fixture in Armagh. Heavy rain in the week leading up to the game resulted in a postponement and a rescheduled date was set for the following Friday night under floodlights. Scoring early and retaining the lead at half time, the team took to the field in the second half, confident in their ability to see out the remainder of the game. Unfortunately, half time proved to be a momentum shift, with Armagh's clever kicking game putting pressure on the Ballymena Academy side from the start of the second half. Armagh chipped away at the Ballymena Academy lead and clinched victory by a score. The boys fought valiantly to the end but unfortunately the shield run was over for another year with a Quarter Final exit.

As coaches looking back on this year of Medallion rugby, we would like to thank you, the players and your parents for making this season the success it was. From the early morning condition sessions to after school training, we hope you enjoyed playing as much as we enjoyed coaching you. We would like to wish you the very best as you move to the senior squad and hope that you will look back on your Medallion year with fond memories.

Player Profiles: Forwards

Lewis Mewha - Led from the front, a strong scrummager and ever improving ball-carrier.

Ben Fleming - Super ball carrier in the loose, had a turn of pace that caught many an opponent off guard.

Caleb Comisky - Caleb proved to be a solid scrummager come Shield time; learning more about the game each week.

Ethan McKillen – An excellent communicator and organiser on the pitch, great in the line out.

Conor Crabbe – The workhorse of the pack. Strong in defence and excellent work rate.

Reece Williamson – Reece came up from the U14 team early in the season. A strong tackler, who gave 100% in every game he played.

Freddie Young - A powerful athlete - superb in defence.

Tommy Brown – Fearless, fit as a fiddle, with a tremendous attitude and work-rate. Great over the ball, always worth a jackal or two.

Sam McClurg – A very mobile forward, Sam was a valuable member of the squad and played a lot of the season both in the front and back rows. He was a keen and committed player. He trained and played with a smile on his face.

Rory Campbell – Rory was a strong scrummager, who was a valuable member of the medallion squad. He was excellent in the Clongowes game.

Jacob Bradley - Played well when called upon off the bench - dedicated trainer and all-round good guy!

Joshua Gallagher – Joshua was a fierce competitor on the pitch, stepping up from the U14 side. Unfortunately, injury hit at the wrong time of the season.

Conan Scullion – Conan joined the squad later in the season, but he did not take long to make his presence known on the pitch. A hard worker, phenomenal in defence.

Backs

Hugo Eddis - Hugo developed massively as a scrum half as the season progressed. Calm on the ball and loved a snipe!

Conor Drain - An all-round athlete. Conor was a fantastic organiser, a devastating ball carrier and an elusive runner in space.

Jamie Watt - Loved a chop tackle, a skilful player who unfortunately was hit with injury at key times throughout the season.

Marshall Robinson – Arguably our

player of the season. A powerful runner, great over the ball - set an example in how he played.

Alex McBurney – In his second season with Medallion, Alex captained the side throughout the season. A skilful ball player with a proper rugby brain. Alex's attitude was exemplary. He always led from the front.

Daniel Thompson – Started in the second row, finished on the wing. A powerful and direct runner, with the ball in hand.

Dan Vercoe Rogers – Dan came up from the U14 team. He is an all-round rugby player with superb handling skills, could play anywhere on the park! A great addition to the squad.

Tom McMaster – Up to the shield, Tom was ever present. He was very unfortunate with injury, a true fullback, secure under the high ball, with a number of key covering tackles in big games.

Mark Glenn – Mark came up from the U14 team and strengthened the squad immediately. Quick and powerful with fast feet, he played both in the centre and on the wing.

Conor Corr – Conor is a versatile back who covered a number of positions across the season. He spent most of his time on the wing, a skilful player and good organiser.

Tom Guild – A keen rugby player, who was extremely dedicated to training. Tom was a popular member of the squad and made a Medallion Shield appearance against Belfast High School.

Robbie Buchanan – Robbie was keen trainer, who clearly enjoyed his rugby. A versatile player, who could cover both the scrum half and wing positions.

Mr. A Moore and Mr. Ross

Winter Games

Under 14 Rugby

The season of 2019/20 was an extremely successful one for this hugely talented group of players. With so much competition within the team, finalising the team sheet each week proved challenging, but having lost a couple of players to the medallion it made things 'easier' from a selection point of view. Throughout the season, the team lost only three matches- a tremendous achievement. The Belfast Inst tournament was the highlight of the season. We had just come off a good run of form and had a full team to choose from. The group stage proved fairly difficult, and with games only being 10 minutes, there was no room for error. Thankfully, with two wins and a draw we were through to the semis, where the boys really started to show how far they had come this year. In the semi-final we came up against a strong Wesley team, who had been playing an extremely successful tournament. From the KO we gave them no time to breathe, putting them under pressure until the ball had been turned over. Once we had possession it was not long until the team took control and ran out a comfortable 12-0 victory.

Belfast Inst were our final opponents, a team we had lost to earlier in the season. The defeat back in October, was still fresh in the memory of the players and wasn't something they had planned on experiencing again. What happened next was incredible, Inst hadn't a chance. Ballymena showed commitment, desire, aggression and most important of all, heart, to win 12-0. The team took the trophy home, without conceding a point throughout the tournament, which was an incredible achievement, regarding the teams they had faced throughout the day.

Unfortunately, the team never got to host the O'Kane tournament, but if they had, we were confident of securing the double this year. We look forward to watching these players in the years ahead.

Mr. K Moore



Under 14 Rugby Squad- winners of the R.B.A.I. Tournament.

Under 13 Rugby

The boys had a very enjoyable and competitive season, with the A squad having a game nearly every Saturday, with the odd midweek fixture and the B squad followed suit with a game most Saturdays as well. The boys had a tough run of fixtures to start off the season. However, this allowed the coaching staff to see the ability of the talented Year 9 boys. Even though it was a tough start to the season with the results reciprocating, the boys improved massively as the season went on and so did the results. The forwards started carrying ball a lot better and the main priority and objective for the season was for them to improve their defence, in particular their tackling. It is safe to say that the goal was met, as forwards like Luke McCluskey and Matthew Wright put their bodies on the line and barely missed a tackle.

The backs also improved as the season went on, with their handling and spatial awareness being the main two skill sets that saw a massive improvement. Backs like Peter Bailie led the line in every defensive set, putting in big tackles and pushing the opposition back behind the gain-line. Tom Wylie found space everywhere on the pitch, stepping

past and running over every defender in his way, ultimately scoring multiple tries as he did every single Saturday.

Every player of the Under 13 squad should take massive pride in how they conducted themselves throughout the season. Their eagerness to improve in training was hugely impressive, and it showed as their playing ability progressed every time they stepped on the pitch. They were a delight to be with this season and I, as their coach, am very proud of everyone of them. Hopefully, they can start their Under 14 season just as well as they finished this year. I wish them all the best for the future.

Mr. Agnew

Year 8 Rugby

The Year 8 boys started their rugby careers at Ballymena Academy on the second week of September. Around 75 boys turned out to train in very testing weather conditions over the first month. There was a mix of abilities, some of the boys had never touched a rugby ball before but showed a real desire to learn the rules, while a handful of boys were desperate to expand their knowledge and develop their skills from previous mini rugby careers.





Under 12 Rugby Squad

At the start of term, we were taught the rugby basics and over the following few weeks, everyone worked extremely hard trying to perfect them. The teaching staff, led by Mr. McKay, then split the players, based on our confidence levels, into 4 teams. These teams were called Ulster, Leinster, Munster and Connaught. After a month of training and preparation, we were ready for our first match at home against Ballyclare High. For the Ulster team it was a tough, closely fought victory as we proved too strong for Ballyclare. The Leinster, and Munster teams also had success and we all sang on the bus journey home, enjoying our first taste of victory.

Our next challenge was a match against Larne Grammar away on the 8th November. Everyone was very excited on the bus to Larne, but we had to switch off the music and concentrate on the game. All three teams had success once again and overall, it was a successful and entertaining day for everyone.

On the 6th December we travelled away from home to play Royal School, Armagh and Wallace High School in a blitz played at Wallace. First, we played Armagh and all four B.A. teams, Ulster, Leinster, Munster and Connaught, came out on top. Then came the match against Wallace

High School. The Ulster team conceded a try but then came from behind and ended up winning by 2 tries to 1. The Leinster team lost. The Munster and Connaught teams won.

Three teams then travelled to our toughest game yet, away to Campbell College. We knew it would be a tough match, but we fought hard and the Ulster team drew 4 tries to 4, after some strongly contested phases of play. The Leinster squad won 8-6, but unfortunately the Munster team lost by a few tries.

The next challenge we encountered was a home match against Belfast Royal Academy. The Ulster team battled to a well-earned victory by 9 tries to 3 but Leinster and Munster regrettably came up short. However, they fought with great determination.

We next had a long journey to Coleraine but all the hard work in training paid off as the Ulster team enjoyed a convincing win by 13 tries to 0. The Leinster team triumphed, winning 8 tries to 5.

Next up was Methodist College. These were particularly challenging, tough matches for all the teams. After a very entertaining game, the Ulster team came out on top with a win of 5 tries to 4. Similarly, both Leinster and Munster fought well, with the

Munster team undeservedly losing but the Leinster team was successful with a very convincing win.

Unfortunately, the annual NEBSSA tournament was cancelled due to a prolonged spell of wet weather. The annual Coleraine Tournament was moved to BRA, where a smaller number of teams took part. In a really tough group of BRA, MCB, RSD and RBAI, the Ulster team gave a really good account of themselves but sadly didn't progress to the knock-out stages. The Leinster team fared slightly better winning 2 and drawing 2 games in their round-robin blitz.

All the boys are incredibly grateful for the time and effort everyone has put into Year 8 Rugby. Special thanks go to Mr. McKay, Mr. Patterson, Mr. Ross, and Finn Henderson, assisted by Mr. McCready, Mr. Collins and Patrick Hargy and the other parents and teachers in the coaching group. Whatever the weather, these coaches gave their time to organise sessions and matches.

Overall, our rugby skills have developed, we have made new friends but most importantly, we all had so much fun.

Seth Park Year 8

Winter Games



Under 16 Football Team- Winners of the Mid Antrim Schools' Cup.

UI9 Boys' Basketball

For the second year running Ballymena Academy competed in the Northern Ireland Schools' UI9C league and, while the first competitive win remained elusive, the season proved a success in terms of individual player and overall team improvement. Indeed, the 2019-2020 school year saw the growth of an enthusiastic basketball culture amongst some in the senior school. Most of those who played last year were back playing better than before, while a few others made their competitive debut on the basketball court.

The season opener was a trip across town to St Patrick's College, eventual play-off finalists, and a much more competitive match than last season's encounter, ending 56-21 to the hosts. Muir McFadden, Alistair Laird and Jack Spence led the scoring for the Academy with 7, 5 and 5 points respectively, while Stuart McNeill and Adam Paul also got on the scoresheet. The most impressive aspect about the Academy performance was the much improved defensive organisation and intensity, which cut St Patrick's points total from last season almost in half – a remarkable achievement against a team that had only lost one player from last year.

At the end of October, it was time to travel to last year's champions, St Ronan's College, Lurgan where the team's improvement continued. This time the Academy boys made gains on both ends of the court, holding a strong opposition offence to just 40 points for the game – a 10 points-per-quarter total that would meet the defensive targets set by any team at any level of the game. Additionally, the Academy increased its own scoring total to a season-best 28 points.



UI9 Basketball Squad

The third game of the season took the Academy boys to Newry, to face a strong Abbey Grammar side in the toughest game of the year. Despite losing by 64-21, the team gave a good account of themselves and competed well defensively through long stretches of the game but, in the end, the Newry school's offence proved too clever to be contained by our 1-3-1 zone for long. On offence, the Academy continued to show much more of a threat than they had done last year, with Muir McFadden again led the scoring on 7 and Alistair Laird and Jack Spence close behind on 6.

The last regular season game, and ultimately the last game for us, was against another strong Newry school, St Colman's College. Despite giving another good account of themselves, the boys ultimately were defeated by more experienced opposition, that included one representative level player in their ranks.

Overall, this past season was a hugely enjoyable one, from road trips and running on McDonald's fuel, to Wednesday games grudge matches and Thursday afternoons trying to master 'Spear' and 'North Carolina'. As a sporting season, it has been made all the more special for the fact

that it was the last time 8 of the 12-man squad will take to the court in the navy, red and white of Ballymena Academy.

I would like to sincerely thank the boys who have played this season and in previous seasons, for their dedication and willingness to learn and improve. I would also like to say farewell to what are a group of fantastic young men who have played their last as a team; it has been a pleasure to coach you all, and I wish all of you who are going on to new things the very best of luck. For the rest of us, it will be time to rebuild next year.

Squad:

PG – Adam Paul (Year 14)

In his final year in school, Adam became a key player and team leader as the starting point guard in every game he played. Adam leads by example with his work ethic on defence and has developed into a safe pair of hands in possession, comfortable advancing the ball up the court even against defensive pressure. The team's de facto captain, Adam will be a big loss to the squad next year and we wish him well in the future.

PG – Alex Campbell (Year 12)

Alex joined the U19 team from a year group which has not had any previous school basketball experience. He displays excellent shooting form, all the more impressive for being self-taught, and is another comfortable dribbler and selfless player, making him a natural point guard. Although never a starter, Alex picked up good minutes off the bench this season and made great improvements to his game. Alex has become more attack-minded, quicker and stronger when advancing the ball and beating defenders, and as a result he has taken advantage of open shots more often.

PG – Matthew Feeney (Year 13)

Matthew missed the start of the season but re-joined the team mid-season and was another valuable player off the bench at the point guard position. His speed and tenacity are the hallmarks of his

game and his good dribbling ability mean he is also comfortable on the ball under pressure. Coupled with this, his passing and reading of the game put him in the frame for the starting PG position next season.

SG/PG – Alistair Laird (Year 14)

One of the team's two most skilful offensive players and scoring threats, Alistair is an attack-minded guard with a change of pace that often catches defenders flat-footed. He has become very effective on drives to the basket and often catches the eye in training with his reverse lay-ups and other elaborate finishes. Alistair has the potential to become a good NI senior club player and we hope that he will continue in basketball wherever he finds himself next year.

SG – George Weir (Year 14)

This year George showed great composure on the ball – a potentially lethal development when combined with his incredible pace – and his defensive work ethic was second-to-none. With another season of school basketball, George would undoubtedly have improved his finishing and become a tough fast-break threat for opposition defences to contain. George's enthusiasm made him a cornerstone of the team for the past two years and he will be missed by all of us.

G/F – Toby Davidson (Year 13)

Another integral member of the squad over the past two seasons who has another year to play, Toby's game continues to improve on both ends of the court. Like all the others, he has benefited from the exposure to competitive basketball and has improved his shooting and ball-handling, becoming a more aggressive attacker in the process. Toby is one of the most dedicated players in the school and his many hours of individual practice are really beginning to pay off.

G/F – Muir McFadden (Year 13)

The team's most skilled player and best scorer, Muir has been a starter in every game of the past two seasons and his best is yet to come.

Muir is another player, who has shown incredible dedication through hours of individual practice and can often be found on the outdoor court or in the gym by himself working on his game. This year Muir has raised the intensity of his defensive game to match his offence and, with continued practice and increased aggression, he has the potential to be one of the best players in the entire league.

G/F – Stuart McNeill (Year 14)

A player who is as comfortable playing inside as on the perimeter, Stuart brings a natural athleticism and sporting intelligence that have made him a vital player for the team throughout the season. Even the games he didn't start are a testament to his adaptability, giving Mr Hayes a range of options as the 'sixth man' and first player off the bench. Stuart made an important impact in every game and joint-top scored in the game against St Patrick's. Another enthusiastic personality, he has helped make the season so enjoyable and we hope he will stay in the game after leaving school.

F – Sam Hill (Year 14)

A new addition to the team this year, Sam came on board at an important time, providing extra cover in the forward position. Sam's game was characterised by committed defence in the key and he was a solid passer and rebounder for the team on both ends of the court. It was pleasing to see Sam find his way into the squad this year and hopefully he will continue to enjoy the game of basketball in the future.

F/C – Jack Spence (Year 14)

This season, Jack started every game in which he played and played in every quarter with a faultless level of intensity. While his offensive game has improved from last season, chipping in with important scores and serving as a good high-post passer, it was for the less spectacular parts of the game that we needed Jack. His defensive hustle, rebounding and screening made him the unsung hero of this much-improved team.

Winter Games

We wish him all the very best with his post-Academy plans.

F/C – Niall Magee (Year 14)
Niall's shooting ability has improved tremendously, adding to the physicality he brings to the game on offence and defence. Niall could always be relied upon to make his opponent work hard in the post and, even in training, his ongoing rivalries with Spence, McNeill, Weir, or anyone else who challenged him were sure to lift the intensity of our scrimmages. Niall will be a welcome asset to any club team he joins.

C – Thomas Moorehead (Year 14)
Like Stuart McNeill, Thomas is another Year 14, who played his first real competitive basketball this year and became instantly indispensable to the team. His height, reach and athleticism provided a crucial three-way rotation in the post with Spence and Magee, something that the team badly lacked last year. His contribution to the offence was significant as passer and screener, while he was an imposing presence under the basket on defence. Everyone was delighted to have Thomas on board, no-one more so than the coach! He may have started late, but I hope he will continue to play elsewhere.

Mr. Hayes



Niall Magee makes an important block against Abbey.

Under 13 Girls' Basketball

This year, due to overwhelming demand, basketball practice was introduced at U13 girls' level, with a view to forming a team. In early 2020, a group of girls in Year 9 led by Ella Graham, Aimee Hamill, Olivia Dan and others, approached me with a 'petition' with over twenty signatures asking for the opportunity to play basketball. Then, in the weeks that followed, I was approached by countless others asking if it was true. In the face of such overwhelming enthusiasm, there could only be one response and, in the first week after half-term, the first ever girls' basketball practice was held in Ballymena Academy. The attendance at this first session was incredible, with almost thirty girls crammed into the gym and eager to get started. Although the huge numbers reduced the amount of actual playing time each player could get that day, the commitment of the girls did not waiver in the slightest and the turnout remained high for practice in the following weeks.

The skill level of so many of the girls was incredibly high for a group who have never played basketball before, and I was particularly impressed with a number of individuals, especially Carys Worthington, Clara Marcus, Rebekah Calderwood, Erin McGivern, Lucy McAllister, Helena Graham, Ella Graham, and Jessica Redmond. There are simply too many more good players to mention them all here in this short article, but this entire group of Year 9 girls have the potential to be a good school basketball team next season.

I would like to personally thank all the girls who turned out for basketball this year and were so dedicated for the short time that it was able to run. It was disappointing that our training was cut short by the social-distancing measures and school closures caused by the coronavirus, but I hope to see you all back safe and well to continue our basketball adventure in September. Back stronger BA!

Mr. Hayes

Cross Country

NEBSSA Championships

At the NEBSSA cross country championships Ballymena Academy was placed third school overall, with several outstanding team and individual performances.

Unfortunately, due to internal Junior School examinations we were unable to enter a Year 9 Girls' team. The Year 8 Boys' team was placed 1st, with Lucas Kenny coming 3rd overall, the Year 9 Boys' team was placed 1st, and the Senior Boys' team was placed 1st, with Owen Johnston coming 2nd overall. The Senior Girls' team was placed 2nd, with Sophie McCluney coming 1st overall. Year 8 Boys' Team: Ben Collins, Charlie Hargy, Charlie Kelly, Lucas Kenny, Jack McComb, James Robinson.

Year 9 Boys' Team: Reuben Allen, Thomas Evans, Samuel Francey, Peter Gamble, Fintan Steele, Tom Wylie. Year 10 race: Ana Martinez, 3rd place. Senior Boys' Team: Anier Campbell, Harvey Flint, Kyle Johnston, Owen Johnston, George Kenneway, William McCartney.

District Championships

At the District Cross Country Championships held in Stranorlar, Donegal, 2 teams and 2 individual competitors were successful in qualifying for the Ulster Championships which take place soon at Belfast Playing Fields, Mallusk. Ana Martinez qualified in the Junior Girls' race, and Sophie McCluney qualified in the Intermediate Girls' race.

The Mini Boys' team came 2nd overall.

Mini Boys' team: Ben Collins, Ollie Collins, Charlie Hargy, Charlie Kelly, Lucas Kenny, Jack McCombe, Seth Park, James Robinson.

The Minor Boys' team came 1st overall.

Minor Boys' team: Thomas Evans, Samuel Francey, Peter Gamble, James Gregg, Robbie Mather, Fintan Steele, Tom Wylie.





Cross Country Club 2019/20

Ulster Championships

The Ulster Championships were again held at Belfast Playing Fields, Mallusk, where conditions were poor underfoot, and the course had to be changed. The Mini Boys' team ran well, but inexperience saw them well down the field at this event, as a tight course made overtaking difficult. The Minor Boys' team performed very well, narrowly missing out on a place at the Irish Championships. They were placed 4th overall. Individually, Fintan Steele came an excellent 10th place overall. In the Intermediate Girls' race, Sophie McCluney came 26th overall.

Irish Championships

Fintan Steele was the sole representative from the school at the All Irelands' this year. He had a super race, though unfortunately, it was fraught with difficulties. After being pushed and tripped at the start, he battled through the race, eventually taking 32nd place overall. Losing a shoe halfway through the race certainly makes this result more impressive!

Mid and East Antrim Sports Awards

At the Mid and East Antrim Sports Awards ceremony on Thursday 5th March 2020, our Senior Girls' CrossCountry team won the School Sporting Performance of the year

award. This was following their performance at the 2019 All Ireland Cross country championships, where they came 2nd in Ireland. Katie Agnew represented the school at the Awards and later presented the Trophy to the school. Congratulations to team members Katie Agnew, Rachel Brown, Sarah McCloy, Sophie McCluney, Lucy Millar and Chloe Robinson.

Mr. Turtle



Katie Agnew represented the Senior Girls' Cross-Country Team, who won the "School Sporting Performance of the Year" award at the Mid and East Antrim Sports Awards.

Swimming

Ballymena Academy pupils took part in the Swim Ulster Schools' Swimming Gala at Bangor Aurora. Year 8's Aaron Caskey, Harry Lamont and Amelie Pittam kicked off the weekend representing the school and raced extremely well on Saturday afternoon. They made finals and gained some Irish schools' qualifying times. Special congratulations to Aaron Caskey who won a Bronze medal in a nail-biting finish of the 50m Butterfly final.

Our junior team, (Thomas Evans, Cole French, Gemma Clyde, Molly Liggett, Amelie Pittam and Isabell Wainwright), had an early start on Sunday morning and achieved some great personal and seasonal best performances, with Molly Liggett a finalist in both 100m Breaststroke and 100m Fly.

Rounding off the busy weekend of racing was our intermediate team of Aimee Hill, Oonagh Lamont, Sophie Leetch and Samuel Wainwright. They did not disappoint, with all posting good times and gaining final spots too. Special congratulations to Oonagh Lamont, who finished 4th in the 100m Breaststroke and Sophie Leetch, who made her first final in the 100m Breaststroke.

Winter Games

At the Ulster Secondary Schools' competition held in January, it was a family affair for the Wainwrights, with Samuel and Isobel both competing and Samuel making the final in a

superb 6 second personal Best in the 100m butterfly event.

It was also the first time Rowan Murray and Alex Suitters represented

the school.

Congratulations to all competitors.

K. Wylie



Pupils who represented Ballymena Academy at the Ulster Schools' Swimming Competition.



A. Caskey, Bronze medal winner at the Swim Ulster, Ulster Schools' Swimming Gala 50m Butterfly Final.



Junior School pupils who participated in the Swim Ulster, Schools' Swimming Gala at Bangor Aurora.



Intermediate Swimming Team who participated in the Swim Ulster, Schools' Swimming Gala.

School Trips

History Trip 2019

In June 2019, Year 10 pupils, accompanied by staff, travelled to France and Belgium on a trip to study the history of WWI. We visited many breath-taking memorial sites, where we both paid our respects and learned about the triumphs and horrors of the past. We also went on adventures to picturesque towns and fun-filled theme parks.

On the first day of our journey, the 20th June, we gathered at school, and it was clear that everyone was buzzing with excitement. We set off for Dublin Airport. After a brief stop at Applegreen Services, we arrived at the airport with lots of time to spare. We bought snacks for the flight and made our way to our gate, eagerly enthusiastic for our trip. Upon arriving at Beauvais-Tille Airport near Paris, after a rather humorous minor incident involving a forgotten suitcase at security, we eventually arrived at our hotels for our first evening in France.

On Day 2 we visited the Ulster Tower and Thiepval Wood. Ulster Tower is a memorial for the Northern Ireland regiments who fought in WWI. We were given interesting information about the history of the area and a vivid description of what the area looked like during WWI. This gave us an insight to the extent of the trenches and battlefields. At Thiepval



Listening carefully to the tour guide in Thiepval Wood.



A group of pupils and staff in front of the Beaumont Hamel Newfoundland Memorial.

Wood, we saw a section of the front-line trench as it would have appeared in 1916. The amazing tour guide provided us with lots of information and personal stories from soldiers. Hearing those horrific tales about the brave men who fought, gave us a deeper understanding of what they had to endure.

Thiepval Memorial was next on the itinerary, so we made our way to the amazing memorial for those who were never found after the Battle of the Somme. This was a most memorable experience; the huge array of names of missing men really put into perspective how many

families never got to know what happened to their loved ones. We were even able to locate our distant relatives, using a special book of names.

At Beaumont Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, we were given an informative guided tour of the battlefields and trenches on the Western Front, in their preserved natural state. What a fantastic start to our history trip! We then travelled to Chateau d'Eblinghem, where we stayed for a few nights. The staff welcomed us with a delicious dinner, and we were even given the opportunity to sample 'snails' (if we



Walking through reconstructed trenches!

School Trips



Mr Thompson and his group at the Beaumont Hamel Newfoundland Memorial Park.



The Thiepval Memorial.



Tyne Cot Allied Cemetery.



Pupils listening attentively to the tour guide at the Ulster Tower.



A group of pupils and staff in front of the Beaumont Hamel Newfoundland Memorial.



The Ulster Tower.



Beautiful poppies which now cover the Battlefields.



Vimy Ridge Memorial.

dared!). After the meal, Sarah and Matt, our guides for the next part of our trip, hosted a selection of entertaining games for all of us.

On Day 3 we travelled to the Passchendaele Memorial Museum in Belgium. We walked through trenches, observing artefacts from that time, and this gave us a very personal, realistic experience about life in the trenches. We then visited the Tyne Cot Cemetery, a beautiful burial site for the allies. We felt very emotional as we looked at the vast number of graves, adorned with flowers in vibrant colours. Everyone was given time to silently walk around, paying respect to the soldiers who lost their lives. This was a truly special place which left the group very moved.

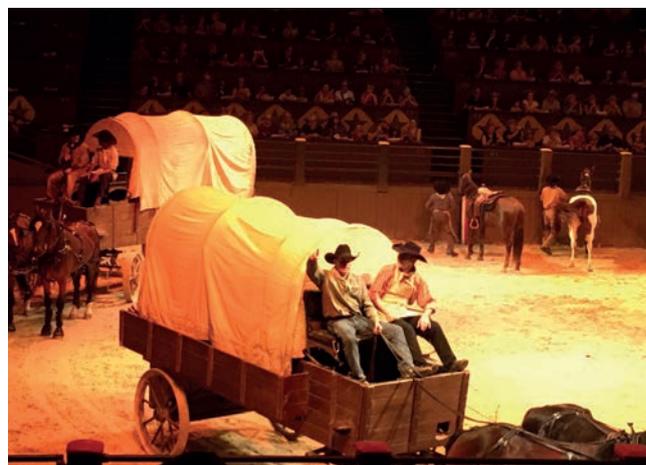
In stark contrast, our next stop was the Langemark German Military Cemetery, which was definitely a very sterile environment. There were many mass graves, simply marked with a slab of stone and the site

lacked any colour or adornment. This was also a very moving experience, leaving many of our pupils feeling empty.

On arrival in Ypres, we visited the 'In Flanders Fields Museum', where we participated in an interactive historical experience and retrieved information about life in the trenches and living conditions for the soldiers. Our next destination was the famous Ypres chocolate shop. Pupils and teachers really enjoyed the delicious chocolate, after standing in such a long queue outside. Last on the itinerary for Day 3 was a sad occasion- the daily 'Menin Gate Ceremony'. We will never forget the experience of hearing the poignant playing of the 'Last Post' and reading the many names of fallen soldiers on the walls of the memorial.



Girls walking through re-constructed trenches at the Passchendaele Memorial Museum in Belgium.



Disney Land Paris- enjoying Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show!

School Trips



Beautiful and brightly coloured flowers at Tyne Cot Cemetery.

On day four we visited Vimy Ridge, which is Canada's largest overseas national memorial. It was a truly breath-taking monument, constructed in memory of Canada's unknown dead from World War One. Each of the statues on the monument commemorated the fallen in a unique way. We were truly overwhelmed by the size and beauty of the structure.

Next was Wellington Quarry, which gave us a real insight into the horrific living conditions that the soldiers had to endure. In the depths of the cold Quarry, we were able to witness the dark, damp, cramped environment for ourselves. That evening the Chateau hosted a disco, and many of us danced into the night. What a perfect way to say 'Au revoir' to Chateau d'Ebblinghem.

Our fifth day theme park trip to Parc Asterix was exciting for all of us, even though some were drenched on an enjoyable boat ride. After an action-packed day of rides, log flumes and rollercoasters, we finished with a delicious pizza treat! Later, we headed to the 'Premiere Classe Saint

George Hotel'. Later on, we had an extremely competitive quiz night. It was truly a fun-filled evening. On the penultimate day we visited Disneyland Paris. We arrived early in the morning and raced for the amusements before the queues got too long. We took many entertaining rides, and even had a mini photoshoot in front of the castle, all before lunch. After lunch, we had time to meet up with friends and visit shops. Our tickets allowed us to hop between the Disneyland Park and the Walt Disney Studios Park, thus maximising the fun. Dinner was consumed at a venue called 'Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show'. We ate classic barbecued food and then thoroughly enjoyed a lively Wild West show near our seats. This was followed by more rides and a very colourful night-time show beside a castle with lasers and fireworks. It was a magical evening!!

Before we knew it, the last day of the 2019 History Trip had arrived, or so we thought. First on the schedule was a coach tour of Paris, including the Champs Elysees and the Eiffel Tower.

We journeyed around Paris and saw all the iconic landmarks that most of us had only seen in pictures, and soon we arrived at the Eiffel Tower. There we took lots of photos of, arguably, the most famous landmark in the world with our friends, a once in a lifetime experience for many of us. The next exciting activity was a River Seine boat cruise. This was the most relaxing activity during the trip, as we sat back and enjoyed the stunning Parisian views that passed us by.

After the river cruise ended, it was straight off to the shopping centre so that we could spend our remaining Euros and do some retail therapy before flying back home. We got to the airport, finally ready to see our families after a week of fun, until we discovered that due to a tour operator booking mix up, some of us would be delayed in travelling home.

Once Mrs Coulter had told us, everybody started to deal with it in their own way. Some of the year group were lucky enough to get on the flight that we had originally intended to board, but for the rest of us, we had to go to the Charles de Gaulle Airport and sleepover until we could get another flight the next day. However, an initially upsetting event turned into a fun and memorable one. From 'Mrs Coulter's spa experience' to a free McDonald's breakfast, things definitely began to turn around for the better, and before we knew it, we were boarding flights back to Dublin airport. From there, it was just a two-hour drive until we were back at Ballymena Academy to meet our families.

Overall, the History Trip was an exciting and educational experience that allowed us to create memories that will last a lifetime. Whether we were paying our respects to those tragically killed by the war, or hopping on fast-paced rollercoasters, we had a great time. Even though it ended in an unexpected way, it is definitely a trip to remember.

Hanna Gunning, Year 11



Art and Design - Events and Trips

A level Study Trip

Mrs. Reid, Mrs. Hallam and Year 13 and 14 Art students gathered at Belfast International Airport for the 05.45 flight to London for a day excursion to explore and be inspired by the city sights and galleries. Our first stop was The Tate Modern, which did not open till 10.00 so we walked the scenic route from Charring Cross, over the bridge and along the embankment, taking in the River Thames, National Theatre, Hayward Gallery and some great graffiti art under the Hayward. An eventful journey indeed, as we were told off by some skateboarders and arrived with really wet feet!! The Tate Modern is a spectacular building, with its huge Turbine Hall housing a modern take on a fantastic fountain, which addresses slavery. The 4 main areas are not catalogued in movements or chronologically, but in themes, a first in the gallery world.

Pupils were given the morning to explore their own areas of interest, take photographs and make sketches and notes on inspirational pieces. The students were equally impressed and confused by one of the best aspects which was an installation in one of the corridors between the floors, which flooded their world in yellow



Year 13 and 14 Art and Design students in London.

light. Afterwards we headed into China Town, getting soaked in the process, for an 'all you can eat buffet' (some chose pizza!). We then visited the British Museum, another amazing building, with its circular foyer and a fantastic collection of Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Syrian artefacts. By this time, the students were starting to flag as energy levels were running low, yet Mrs. Reid and Mrs. Hallam were in their element. Our final visit was a cultural and culinary visit to Neal's Yard and Covent Garden, to embrace London lifestyle, shops, restaurants and entertainment. We boarded the train at Victoria station to catch the Gatwick express.

Exhausted, we finally arrived back in Belfast International late evening and were greeted by our parents. It had been a super, busy and very thought-provoking day.

Royal Ulster Academy Exhibition, Ulster Museum

Mrs. Reid and Mrs. Hallam took the A-level students to Belfast to view the RUA Annual Exhibition. This takes a similar format to the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in London, in that anyone can enter a piece of Art in any discipline for selection, ranging from lino printing, painting ceramics to installation art.



Year 13 and 14 Art and Design students outside the Tate Modern in London.



The Royal Ulster Academy Exhibition at the Ulster Museum.

School Trips



Pupils undertaking studies at the Royal Ulster Academy Exhibition at the Ulster Museum with Mrs. Reid.



Mrs Hallam with some A-level Art and Design students outside the Ulster Museum.

It was a super opportunity for students to see what artwork is being produced in our country, the diversity of styles, techniques and subject matter. We had a two-hour session of sketching and discussing art. After eating a quick snack and a visit to the Botanic Gardens greenhouse, we travelled back to Ballymena.

True Colours Exhibition 2020

On Thursday 16th January Matthew Jackson, his parents and sister, and other family members travelled to Belfast's Ulster Museum for the launch of the True Colours Exhibition.



Matthew Jackson at the True Colours Exhibition at the Ulster Museum, Belfast.

This showcases the talent of GCSE, AS and A2 students, as selected by moderators and teachers. Matthew's Year 13 AS Final Outcome was selected, addressing issues within humanity, from mental illness, depression and isolation, using himself as model. He used a combination of media, initially charcoal and chalk, building up with acrylics and spray can. It was an amazing evening; the work was outstanding and wide ranging from seascapes, abstract installation, portraiture and equestrian exhibits. The Art department took all GCSE and A level students to the exhibition in February to celebrate Matthew's success.



Matthew Jackson with his family at the True Colours Exhibition 2020.

Songbird Ceramics Workshop

Year 11 Art and Design students from both GCSE classes accompanied Mrs. Hallam to Songbird Ceramics based at Galgorm Castle. They enjoyed a two- hour workshop on how to throw cylinders and bowls. Students were shown how to centre the clay, then how to throw a bowl and cylinder. After wheels were allocated and clay distributed, the students quickly learned the basic techniques. Laura, who runs Songbirds, and her assistant were brilliant facilitators and guided the pupils in the creative process. After two hours, everyone

had produced four vessels and learned valuable skills that were taken back to the classroom to extend into their coursework. The vessels were bisque fired and await our return to learn glazing techniques.

Throughout January and February our Art Department and school were enthralled with the progress of one of our former pupils, Claire Murdock who is a fabulous art ambassador for Northern Ireland. Claire demonstrated impressive skills in her own ceramic work and reached the semi-finals of

the Channel 4 Great Pottery Throw Down competition. Three of her pieces were chosen: her Coffee set, chess set and pitch firing pieces. She is an inspiration to our present senior school art pupils and the BA Art department, where she studied until A-Level. Claire progressed to a Foundation Course in Art and a Ceramics Degree at the University of Ulster. We wish her all the best in the future and are so proud of her achievements.

Art Department Trip reports thanks to Mrs. Hallam.



Throwing pots at Songbird Ceramics, Galgorm.



Year 11 learning the art of throwing pottery at Songbird Ceramics.



Year 11 pupils enjoying the learning process at Songbird Ceramics.



Focus and attention needed to produce good pottery!

Past Pupils' Association

Committee

President:

Kathryn Collie, M.A. (Hons.) Cantab.

Senior Vice President:

Nicola Weir B.A. (Hons.) and B.A.J.

Junior Vice- President:

Harold Johnston

Hon. Life Vice- Presidents:

Mr. P.F. Martin, B.Sc., Mr. R. Hassard,
M.A., B.Ed., D.A.S.E., Ad. Cert. Ed.,
P.Q.H. (N.I.)

Hon. Treasurer:

Samuel McClean, B.A. (Hons.)

Hon. Secretaries:

Rosemary Coulter, B.A., P.G.C.E.
and Jane Allen

Committee Members:

Katherine Allen, B.A. (Hons.),

Rachel Bristow, B.Ed. Mus. (Hons.)
M.A.,

Aubrey Calderwood, B.Sc. (Hons.)

M.R.I.C.S.,

Dr Gary Craig, M.Sci., PhD, B.A.,

Colleen McClean UJJ Level 4

Counselling,

Chris Perry B.Sc., M.Sc. (FCIPD),

Daniel Ross, L.L.B., M.A., P.G.C.E.,

Sally Ann Roddy, B.D.S., M.F.D.S.,

M.Sc., M.Orth.

DAVENPORT Aimee

DAVISON Thomas

DAY Timothy

DEALEY Clara

DENNISON Sophie

DICKEY Adam

DICKEY James

DOHERTY Anna

DOHERTY Martyn

DOHERTY Patrick

DONALDSON Holly

DOUGLAS Erin

ERWIN Matthew

FAIRFIELD Crawford

FLANAGAN Emma

FLEMING Adam

FORSYTHE Alissa

FRANCEY Lauren

FRY Ben

GALLAGHER Jonathan

GASTON Sophie

GEORGE Chloe

GILLAN Emily

GILLESPIE Don

GORDON Anna

GORDON Nicole

GREER Chloe

GREGG Kerri

GREGG Michael

HAMILL Peter

HAMILTON Laura

HANNA Adam

HARGY Patrick

HARKNESS Tom

HARRIS Sarah

HERBISON Beth

HOEY Ruth

HOGG Jonathan

HUNTER Jonathan

JOHNSTON Ben

JOHNSTON Hannah

JORDAN Oisin

KENNEDY Andrew

KERNOHAN Adam

KERNOHAN Peter

KIRK Matthew

KIRKPATRICK Adam

KNOWLES Cara

KYLE Ellie

KYLE Joe

LOGAN Joshua R

LOGAN Joshua TS

LOGAN Sarah

LOUW Danny

LYTTLE John

MACAULAY Rachael

MANSON Lydia

MARTIN Emma

MAWHINNEY Cian

McALISTER Jenny

McALLISTER Katie

McALLISTER Sophie

McAULEY Ellen

McBURNEY Grace

McCARTNEY Elizabeth

McCAUGHEY David

McCLINTOCK Craig

McCLINTOCK Jonathan

McCLINTOCK Lois

McCLUGGAGE Matthew

McCORD Rachel

McCORMILL Lucy

McCREADY Charles

McDOWELL Gary

McFETRIDGE Alice

McGAHEY Anna

McGALL Chloe

McGARVEY Ben

McGUCKIAN Alexander

McILROY Scott

McKANE Ruth

McKEOWN Sarah

McKIBBIN Mark

McKINNEY Alexander

McLAUGHLIN Bethan

McLEISTER Jack

McMASTER Olivia

McNABNEY Sarah

McPHERSON Ethan

MIDDLETON Cameron

MILLAR Hannah L

MILLAR Hannah P

MITCHELL Rachelle

MOORE Ryan

MOOREHEAD Katie

MORRISON Adam

MUIR Cameron

MULLAN Ethan

NEILLY Adam

O'NEILL Michael

ORR Chloe

ORR Rebecca

PALCEK Lukas

PARK Erin

PENNIE Nicole

POSTON James

PYPER Benjamin

REID Sarah

REID Suzanne

RICHMOND Alex

ROBINSON Amanda

ROBINSON Ashleigh

RODDEN Evie

RODGERS Charlotte

SAKHAROV Kirill

SAVOURY Ben

New Life Members

AGNEW Samantha

ALLEN Christopher

ALLEN Michael

ANDERSON Ciara

BAILIE Grace

BECKETT Rachel

BENNETT Simon

BERRISFORD Finn

BILL Harry

BLACK Callum

BROWN James

BROWN Rachel

BUICK Rebekah

CALWELL Neave

CAMERON Anna

CAMERON Juliet

CAMPBELL Alice

CAMPBELL Charlotte

CLINTON Aaron

COOKE Harry

CORR Oisin

CRABBE Susanna

CREASE Calum

CUBITT Amy

CULL Stephen



The Braid

- SHAW Victoria
- SIMPSON Jessica
- SKELLY Sophie
- SMITH Adam
- SMITH Matt
- STACEY Charlotte
- STEELE Cara
- STIRLING Claire
- THOMSON Danielle
- TIPLEA Anisia
- TURNER Amy
- TURNER Jack
- WALLACE Carly
- WALLACE Joel
- WARNOCK Tori
- WATT Niamh
- WEIR Abi
- WILKINSON Morgan
- WILSON Ben
- WILSON Brandon
- WILSON Rebecca

Overview 2019-20

The first event of the Autumn Term was the ‘Autumn Gathering’ at Eaton Park on Friday 4th October. Guests were welcomed by an array of live musical talent before enjoying a hog roast. The evening ended with dancing to “Southbound Train”.

In November, the committee was represented by Kathryn Collie, who laid a wreath on Remembrance Day as part of the commemorations.

550 daffodil bulbs were presented to the school and Year 8 pupils enjoyed planting during the Autumn term.

December rolled around quickly and, once again, the Christmas Fair



A fun evening at the “Autumn Gathering”, Ballymena Rugby Club!



Christmas Cake Judging!



P.P.A. Christmas Fair 2019!



Delicious afternoon tea at the P.P.A Christmas Fair 2019!

Past Pupils' Association



Catching up at the BA Big Bash at Ballymena Rugby Club.



BA Big Bash 2019!



BA Past Pupils reunite at the Big Bash 2019.

was a hugely successful event on Saturday the 7th December. A range of stalls selling crafts, jewellery, art, food and antiques filled the W.H. Mol Assembly Hall. In addition, Ruby 67 Boutique provided a fashion show, while stars of the Ballymena Academy Players' performance of "Bugsy Malone" and members of the Music Department provided a musical accompaniment to the busy Christmas shopping atmosphere.

Shoppers had a variety of food options: traditional scones and tea provided by Jane's Kitchen, hog roast by Richard Montgomery and PK's Pizza. As usual, the standard of cakes entered for the Christmas Showstopper Cake Competition was extremely high and all visitors to the fair were left in awe at the cakes on display.

Despite the rain, most of the Boxing Day sporting fixtures went ahead and hardy crowds gathered to cheer on the cross-country runners, hockey and rugby teams. The hockey match resulted in a draw between a recent Past Pupils XI, captained by Anna Doherty, and our current 1st XI, captained by Alex McLeister. In the rugby match, experience trumped youth when the Over 23XV, captained by Peter Wallace, won by 25 to 20. The cross-country senior race was won by Danny Marshall, with Charlie Kelly taking the honours in the junior race.

The crowds escaped the rain by enjoying the refreshments, which were provided in the D.B. Jago Sixth Form Centre. Inside, everyone had the opportunity to renew friendships and to catch up on a year's worth of news.

Eaton Park was, once again, the venue for the 'Big Bash' on Thursday the 27th December, when recent leavers had a chance to get together, enjoy dinner and dance to "The Best Men".



Little did we know that, due to the Corona virus pandemic, our Quiz Night would be the last event of the season as so much more had been planned, but at least we finished with a flourish.

The quiz was attended by over twenty teams, who competed fiercely to take the winning honours.

The PPA was delighted to support various initiatives throughout the past year:

Ballymena Academy (to support fundraising and marketing) – £5,500
 Ballymena Road Club – £250
 Riding for the Disabled – £300.

There is no longer a cost to join the P.P.A. so if you'd like to become involved or be kept up-to date with events please check our website (you will find a link on the Ballymena Academy website- ballymenaacademy.org.uk) or join us on Facebook or Instagram.

If you would like anything to be included in next year's report please contact Rosemary Coulter at rcoulter125@ballymenaacademy.org.uk

Ballymena Academy Past Pupils' Association Golf Society

Results for 2019 Outings.

Swann / Hanna Cup

Friday, 24th May, 2019 at Galgorm Castle Golf Club.

Winner – Ian Stewart. 40pts.

2nd – Gregor Bailie. 38pts.

3rd – Dr. Peter Dick. 36pts.

Front Nine – Michael Burton 18pts

Back Nine – Malcolm Mc Ilroy 17pts.

Visitor Prize – Wilson McVeigh 38pts.

Nearest Hole – Dr. Robin Dick.

President's Day

(President Dr. Robin Dick)

Friday 6th September, 2019 at Galgorm Castle Golf Club.

Winner – Jonathon Murray 39pts.

2nd – Andrew Collins 30pts.

3rd – Dr. Peter Dick 30pts.

Front Nine – Maurice Blelock 17pts.

Back Nine – Lester Davidson 14pts.

Visitors Prize – Peter McMullan 34pts.

Due to the Corona virus pandemic the Society awaits government guidance on the remainder of the 2020 outings.

Past Pupils who would be interested in joining us for the outings, please

contact David Watt Secretary/ Manager 07808361698

Lady Golfers' Report

The ladies enjoy three outings a year, in April, July and September.

The first outing of 2019 was at Lisburn Golf Club. Twenty ladies enjoyed playing that day.

1st Sylvia Murray

2nd Jenny Parkhill

3rd Robina Wilson.

Ballyclare was the venue for the second meeting.

1st Beth Moore

2nd Joanne Turkington

3rd Maureen Clements.

Lady Captain's Day was 9th September at Massereene Golf Club, home club of our Captain, Mrs. Mary Rea. Fifteen ladies played.

1st Laura Fleck

2nd Joanne Turkington

3rd Heather Mc Garry.

The winner of the Kernohan Huey Plate for 2019 was Joanne Turkington.

New members would be most welcome in the club.

For further information please contact Joanne Turkington at drcjstewart77@gmail.com.

Marriages

30th March, 2019

14th June, 2019

20th June, 2019

11th July, 2019

9th August, 2019

10th August, 2019

17th August, 2019

24th August, 2019

12th October, 2019

6th December, 2019

20th December, 2019

- Emma Small to Andy Fooks
- Hannah Miller to Reuben Luke
- Amy Graham to Timothy Small
- Jessica Duncan to Daniel Ross
- Beatrice Kane to Michael McKelvey
- Lisa Jackson to Gareth Marcus
- Will Hogg to Louise McGivern
- Sara Calderwood to Ricardo Braganza
- Melissa Campbell to Andrew McCracken
- Ashley Dunbar to Calum Boal
- Lauren Aiken to David Stevenson

Births

3rd May, 2019

22nd June, 2019

23rd June, 2019

12th September, 2019

18th September, 2019

15th October, 2019

23rd January, 2020

20th February, 2020

- To Lauren (née Hicklin) and Chris Hutchinson – a daughter
- To Helen (née Nicholl) and Patrick Judge – a son
- To Victoria (née Torrens) and David Walker – a son
- To Louise and Andrew McBurney – a son
- To Esther (née Dunlop) and Andrew Stevens – a daughter
- To Alice (née McClintock) and Alan Nesbitt – a son
- To Jill (née Sinclair) and Gareth Gracey – a son
- To Victoria (née McDowell) and Jonathan Heaney – a daughter

Past Pupils' Association

- 12th April, 2020 – To Kerry (née Bamber) and Pavel Lapinski – a daughter
- 21st May, 2020 – To Dawn and Trevor Barr – a daughter
- 28th May, 2020 – To Rachel and Robert Bristow – a daughter

Deaths

- 21st May, 2019 – Ian Worthington
- 13th June, 2019 – Robert (Bertie) McNeice
- 12th July, 2019 – Joey Erwin
- 19th July, 2019 – Desmond Pielou
- 19th July, 2019 – James Wilson Stevenson
- 24th July, 2019 – John Edward Leslie
- 15th August, 2019 – Patricia (Pat) Moffitt (née Pepper)
- 15th November, 2019 – Joan Murdock
- 22nd November, 2019 – William Arthur (Willie) Gribben
- 9th January, 2020 – Michael Munnis
- 18th January, 2020 – James (Jimmy) Boyle (Former member of staff)
- 24th January, 2020 – Terry Flanagan (Former Member of Staff)
- 12th February, 2020 – James Alexander Moore McCloy
- 27th February, 2020 – Howard Allen
- 25th March, 2020 – Stanley Johnston
- 29th March, 2020 – Dr Robin King
- 7th April, 2020 – Brian Mawhinney MBE
- 5th May, 2020 – James Steel Mercer
- 10th May, 2020 – Clive Jackson (Former Member of Staff)

Graduations 2019

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation, Queen's University and Ulster University this year were not able to provide their usual lists of past pupil graduates. A full list of graduations (Summer 2019) from Queen's University and Ulster University will be included in The Braid magazine 2021.

Brunel University

McCleery, Byrony Ann
L.L.B Law 1st
(Winner of Criminal Defence Solicitors Evidence Award for highest overall result in the year)

Ulster University (Coleraine Campus)

McCleery, Niall James
History 1st
(Winner of Thompson Memorial Prize for best overall result in final year of study)

University of Aberdeen

Maxwell, Rebecca
Master of Arts (Hons) Education 2.1

Queen's University
Aiken, Katherine
MB BCH BAO with Honours

Bruce Houston Matthew Rea
Angus Kernohan Andy Warwick
Luke Marshall

Past Pupil Achievements

Sport:

Alan Crockett campaigned in his 2.0 16v Corsa to win the super-modified 2100 cc class in his first year of rally cross. In addition, he picked up awards for: Best Newcomer, Overseas Driver and Autosport International Best Presented Car.

Callum Patterson was awarded Player of the Year at Cornish Pirates.

Azur Allison, Angus Kernohan and Stewart Moore represented Ireland U20 at the U20 World Cup in June 2019. Ian McClrath was at the World Cup also, in his role as President of the Irish Rugby Football Union.

The following all played for Ulster in PRO14:

Azur Allison Stewart Moore
John Andrew Marcus Rea

Neve Jones played for the Ulster Women's team and was selected in the Ireland squad for the 2020 Six Nations. She was also named as 'Rising Star' in Women's AIL at AIL Awards Ceremony.

Katherine Smyth (née Maybin) continues to dominate Woman's cycling in Ireland, winning The National Road Series in Cork, September 2019.

The IRFU Ulster Branch unveiled the Syd Millar CBE Pathway at the Kingspan Stadium, in recognition of the incredible contribution that Syd has made to the game of rugby at club, provincial, national and international level.

Congratulations to Willie John McBride CBE, Ireland, British and Irish Lions, who celebrates his 80th Birthday on 6.06.2020



Other Areas:

Mr. James Perry MBE has been appointed deputy Lieutenant for Co Antrim.

Lord Alderdice was appointed 'Deputy Chairman' in the House of Lords.

Claire Murdock reached the semi-final of the "Great Pottery Throwdown" on Channel 4. Her fabulous creations wowed judges and viewers alike throughout the competition.

Dr. Claire McCabe, who owns Craemill Veterinary Clinic, was awarded "Farming Life Vet of the Year 2019".

Dr. A.J. Mitchell was the recipient of the Prestigious Institute of Policy and Science "Young Tall Poppy" Award, which is presented to outstanding early career scientists with excellent communication skills.

Harold Johnston, along with his sons Mark and Jack, were awarded the Overall Ulster Grassland Society Farmer of the Year Award.

Queen's Birthday Honours 2019:

Professor Amanda Amos O.B.E. for services to Public Health

New Year's Honours 2020:

Cheryl Lamont C.B.E. for services to Criminal Justice

Ian McIlrath B.E.M. for services to Sport.

Reunions

The 20-year and 40-year reunions took place during the year. The 20-year reunion was held in October in Tullyglass House Hotel. The event was very well attended, and an enjoyable evening was had by all. Thanks to Julie Ann Aitchison and Ben Morrow for organising the event. Ballymena Academy's Class of '79



Congratulations to Mr. James Perry MBE on his recent appointment as Deputy Lieutenant for Co. Antrim.



Dr. Claire McCabe BVSc MRCVS has won 'Farming Life Vet of the Year 2019', presented at an awards ceremony in La Mon Hotel & Country Club.



Dr. Alan-John (AJ) Mitchell was recently the recipient of the prestigious Australian Institute of Policy and Science 'Young Tall Poppy' award.



Junior Vice President (PPA) Harold Johnston and his two sons Mark and Jack were presented the Overall Ulster Grassland Society Farmer of the Year Award.

Past Pupils' Association



Wonderful display created for the Reunion of Ballymena Academy Class of 1999.



Amazing cake at the 20-year School Reunion.

celebrated their 40th Reunion at Eaton Park on Friday 8th November 2019. 65 members of the year group attended a brilliant night of fun, food, and friendship. Many had travelled from England, Scotland, and Dublin, with Susheel Surpal travelling the furthest from Paris to catch up with his old classmates.

After introductory speeches from Ann Laughlin and Ian Kerr, everyone was served a delicious buffet by Jane's Kitchen. All present agreed that this had been the best reunion so far. Old school photos and memorabilia were on display. Everyone had their own name badge and picture from the 1979 senior school photograph.



Friends catching up at the 1999 Reunion!



Enjoying the '79 School Reunion!



Catching up with friends.



Fun at the '79 Reunion!



Year 8 pupils planting daffodil bulbs donated by the P.P.A.



The Braid SUMMER 2020

