



BALLYMENA

ACADEMY

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

INFORMATION BOOKLET
2021



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This Information Booklet should be read in conjunction with the General Prospectus



BALLYMENA ACADEMY

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Voluntary Grammar School (Non-Denominational)
 Boys and Girls
 Enrolment No. 1200, Admissions No. 176, Age Range: 11 - 18 years

Principal: Mr. S.W. Black, M.Sc., PGCE, PQH (NI)
 Chairman of the Board of Governors: Dr. D. Johnston, O.B.E., M.B., M. .Sc., M.Med.Sc., F.R.C.G.P



Ballymena Academy is a successful learning community in which young people are well cared for, where they enjoy their education in and out of the classroom and where they secure high quality outcomes in public examinations.

This brief summary cannot hope to capture the range and quality of day-to-day life in this busy and energetic school. Parents and children are encouraged to attend on "Open Nights" and to consult important sources of information, such as the Prospectus, Information Booklets and the website (www.ballymenaacademy.org.uk).

Enabling pupils to achieve high standards of learning and attainment is Ballymena Academy's core purpose. Our caring ethos and extensive co-curricular programme are integral to realising that vision and upholding a well-deserved reputation for excellence. A non-denominational Voluntary Grammar School, Ballymena Academy is proud of its long tradition of drawing pupils from all sections of the geographically and socially diverse community which it serves. That service has been a feature of Ballymena Academy since its establishment in 1828, through its evolution into today's progressive and forward-looking school on its spacious and well-equipped site. Commended in the recent excellent Inspection Report for its planning and self-evaluation, as well as for standards of pupil attainment, the school is committed to continuous improvement and to working with parents and pupils.

Year 8 pupils are helped to adjust to life in their new school with an Induction Programme. Experience shows they settle in quickly and well. Specific support is provided by a team of senior pupils who have been trained as mentors and by staff such as the class tutors, as well as the Head of Year and Pastoral Assistant.

Results in public examinations give one important measure of success. In 2020, 95% of Year 14 pupils achieved 3 or more 'A' Level passes with A* - C grades; at GCSE 100% achieved 5 or more passes at A* - C, the figure for 7 or more such passes, including English and Mathematics was 99%. Independent analysis by the A-Level Information Service (ALIS) shows Ballymena Academy pupils achieve better overall results than those obtained elsewhere by pupils of similar ability.

In addition to that outstanding results profile, this school has a long tradition of pupils achieving "top three" places at GCSE and 'A' Level. This means that the pupils are awarded first, second or third highest marks in Northern Ireland.

In co-curricular terms, the school's reputation as a centre of sporting excellence is well-deserved and internationally recognised. Sport is enjoyed alongside such other activities as the musical brilliance of the Spring Concert – held in The Braid Arts Centre. The width and quality of the co-curricular programme is an essential feature of school life. It includes music, drama and an extensive range of other sporting, cultural and recreational pursuits. A wide co-curricular programme enables pupils to develop themselves through participation in a range of sporting, cultural, environmental and community based activities. The school has a unique Physical Recreation Strategy – aimed at promoting exercise and healthy lifestyle choices.

The school provides a broad, balanced and coherent learning programme for all year groups. Provision goes well beyond the statutory requirements of the N.I. Curriculum or the Entitlement Framework; assessment and reporting are in line with best practice; curriculum content, and approaches to teaching and learning, are subject to on-going review, development and alteration as the needs of young people and society change. Choice and flexibility increase in Key Stage 4 and post-16 for Advanced Level studies, prior to entry as an undergraduate to a university or college of the individual's preference.



School Aims : Ballymena Academy

The school aims to provide a caring environment in which pupils can realise their full potential and pursue excellence in all their activities.

MORAL and SPIRITUAL

- To encourage the growth of moral and spiritual awareness so that our pupils may become responsible and tolerant citizens.

PERSONAL

- To develop in our pupils such personal qualities as confidence, respect and independence.

SOCIAL

- To help all pupils to live a fuller and more abundant life through forming relationships and participating in co-curricular activities.
- To enhance the links between the school and the home; and, the school and the community.

INTELLECTUAL

- To ensure that each pupil follows a broad and balanced curriculum which will be responsive to the needs of the individual.
- To provide for each pupil experiences which are enjoyable and challenging using methods and materials appropriate to the subject and level of study.
- To achieve high levels of success in public examinations.

VOCATIONAL

- To develop in our pupils the academic and social skills, concepts and attitudes which will enable them to cope with the demands of life now and in the future.

CULTURAL

- To foster within each pupil a sense of pride in Ballymena Academy.
- To develop an aesthetic appreciation – and an interest in and enthusiasm for creative and artistic endeavour.

REALISATION OF SCHOOL AIMS

Aspects of Curricular and Pastoral provision which help fulfil school aims are:-

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The school aims to develop the personal and social aptitudes of pupils by:-

- providing an induction programme for Year 8 pupils;
- providing a variety of school activities;
- encouraging the study of personal relationships;
- developing positive attitudes and skills relevant to adult and working life;
- adopting an active approach in teaching in order to encourage personal involvement and development in class;
- introducing them to their role within the community.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Through Religious Education the school aims to:-

- help pupils to have an informed understanding of the Christian faith as the main formative religious influence in our culture;
- introduce pupils to the religious diversity of Christian traditions and the major world faiths;
- encourage pupils to reflect on religious, moral and social issues in today's world;
- promote an enquiring, critical and sympathetic approach to the study of religions in the contemporary world;
- promote mutual understanding and respect for the multifarious religious (and non-religious) traditions in our culture.

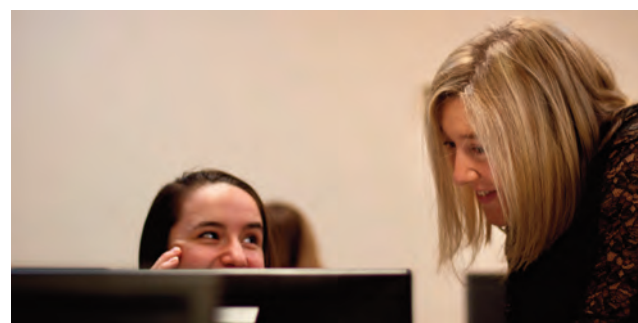
CAREERS EDUCATION

The provision of Careers Education in Ballymena Academy aims to help pupils to:-

- address the individual needs of each pupil by providing objective careers guidance which will allow them to fulfil their potential;
- develop knowledge and understanding of themselves as individuals – their strengths, personal qualities, interests, abilities, skills, potential, needs, attitudes and values;
- develop knowledge and understanding of the world of work;
- develop skills and personal qualities to manage their career development, including the ability to make informed choices, formulate and implement career plans;
- manage transition from school to adult life; Higher Education, Further Education, Employment, Training.

In support of the above the Careers Department will:-

- provide careers information and encourage pupils to make effective use of it.



STUDY SKILLS

The school aims to enable pupils to learn with efficiency and enjoyment by:-

- fostering an enquiring approach in all areas of the curriculum;
- developing in Years 8 - 14 the general skills of observing, listening, reading, writing and speaking;
- developing in Years 8 - 14 the particular skills required for the management of information from a wide range of sources including books, periodicals, audio-visual material and I.C.T.;
- guiding pupils in the application of these skills for coursework/Controlled Assessment and the preparation for examinations;
- preparing Sixth Form pupils for the study demands of tertiary education.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The school aims to give pupils a broad and balanced appreciation of the range of applications of computing by:-

- developing practical skills and encouraging enjoyment in the use of I.C.T.;
- giving a knowledge of the concepts of information and information processing;
- developing an awareness of the social, political and ethical problems associated with the expanding use of I.C.T.;
- fostering the ability to interpret information from any sources, but particularly from sources involving the new technology.



CULTURAL HERITAGE AND EDUCATION FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The school aims to enable pupils to develop a sense of fairness and justice by helping them to:-

- develop good interpersonal relationships;
- develop a healthy self-image;
- develop good group/community awareness and relationships;
- broaden their horizons by exploring diverse cultural traditions;
- develop skills in co-operation;
- learn how to handle conflict.

ECONOMIC AWARENESS

The school aims to promote greater economic awareness among all pupils and greater economic literacy among older pupils by:-

- teaching personal money management and financial responsibility;
- fostering a spirit of enterprise by encouraging wider pupil participation in co-curricular activities concerning finance;
- promoting industrial/commercial links;
- promoting greater political and economic awareness of the wider world.

HEALTH EDUCATION

The school aims to make pupils aware of the choices available in the adult world for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. The school has an educational policy on Sex, Alcohol, Smoking and Drugs.

Sex Education

- The benefits to society of marriage and the implications of parenthood.
- The anatomical and physiological aspects of reproduction.
- The various methods of contraception.
- Sexually transmitted infections, with special reference to AIDS.

Substance Abuse

- The effects of alcohol and drugs on the various body systems and the serious social consequences of alcohol and drug abuse.
- Nicotine as a drug of dependence and the social, moral and ethical implications of this dependence.
- The effects of smoking-related diseases such as emphysema, chronic bronchitis, cardiovascular diseases and lung cancer.

GUIDANCE

The school offers a tutoring system from Years 8 - 14 which aims to:-

- ensure that every pupil is known in depth;
- assist pupils and parents with difficulties (academic or otherwise);
- create an atmosphere in which the pupil can fulfil his/her true potential.

DISCIPLINE

The school aims to sustain a well-ordered environment through:-

- respect for others;
- respect for benevolent authority;
- respect for negotiated formal rules and sanctions;
- provision of school rules for pupils' and parents' consultation.

School Organisation

Ballymena Academy is a Co-educational Voluntary Grammar School. Operating in accordance with the Scheme of Management, the school is administered by a Board of Governors representing the Department of Education, Subscribers of the school, the local Council, the Church, Parents and Teachers.

There are over 80 fully-qualified members of the teaching staff; appropriate support staff are also employed by the Governors.

There is a capital fee, currently £140 per annum, which is set by the Department of Education. In general the school provides books and equipment for use in delivery of the stated curriculum free of charge. A small annual charge is made at the beginning of each year for materials used in Art, Home Economics and Technology where a finished product is retained by the pupil. The Board of Governors has also established a School Fund to which parents contribute.

The wearing of school uniform is compulsory on all occasions during term-time.

Provision of meals and other refreshments

The school operates a cafeteria system in the Dining Hall in which pupils have the opportunity to select from quite an extensive menu. The School uses a cashless system utilising biometric data. This involves using the finger/thumb prints of students to pay for their food and drink quickly by scanning their prints at the point of sale. Pupils can credit money via revaluator machines at designated points in the school.

Food is also available to senior pupils in the Sixth Form Centre at break time and lunch time.

Packed lunches may be brought to school and eaten in the Dining Hall.

The school provides health education for the young people in our care, including detailed information on diet and healthy eating, in order that pupils may learn to make healthy choices.

The School Curriculum

Pupils are prepared for GCSE, GCE 'AS' and 'A' Level examinations. There is also an enrichment programme in the Sixth Form.

Instrumental tuition, for which a number of scholarships are awarded each year, is available to all pupils.

Religious Education is a component part of the Curriculum in each year group in accordance with statutory requirements. Parents may request withdrawal of their child(ren) from Religious Education and/or collective worship on grounds of conscience by writing to the Principal.

Home Preparation

Homework is an essential part of the school curriculum. The school seeks to work in partnership with parents who are encouraged to see that homework is completed with care. Each pupil has a 'learning organiser' in which parents may write comments. The school's homework policy may be discussed with the Principal if it is felt that the time regularly spent on homework is either insufficient or excessive.

Detailed reports on the work and progress of each pupil are sent to the parents or guardians.

Queries regarding the Curriculum

Ballymena Academy regards the partnership between parents and staff as fundamental to children's success. Parents may contact the Principal at any time should they have any concerns in regard to their child's progress at school. In addition, parents are invited to consultation meetings with teachers in every year group. Parents are encouraged to raise and discuss matters of curricular concern with the relevant Head of Department and/or Vice-Principal with responsibility for the curriculum. If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, then arrangements can be made to meet the Principal. Subsequently, parents may convey their concerns to the Board of Governors if they remain dissatisfied.

Daily Programme

The school operates a 10 period day (10 x 35 minutes) using a two-week timetable. One period per day is allocated to lunch. The school day commences at 8.55 a.m. with registration, followed by assembly or tutor meetings, and finishes at 3.20 p.m.

Complaints (other than those related to Child Protection matters)

Parental concerns should be expressed to the school through appropriate members of the Teaching Staff (e.g. Heads of Year, Senior Staff, Principal etc.) and efforts made to resolve the issues. Only when it has been proven impossible to make such resolution, the formal Complaints Procedure may be initiated. Copies are available, on request, from the Principal's secretary.

Pastoral Support

The school aims to provide a caring environment in which pupils are encouraged to realise their full potential and pursue excellence in all their activities.

There is a pastoral team in each year group comprising a year head, a pastoral adviser and class tutors to assist pupils and their parents with any difficulties, academic or otherwise, which may confront a pupil.

A wider network of pastoral support exists through taught programmes, provision of a school nurse, counsellor, peer and learning mentors, and access to information about relevant external agencies.

Procedures exist for early identification of pupils with special educational needs for whom appropriate provision is arranged in consultation with parents and, where necessary, other support agencies.

Child Protection – Procedure Summary

HOW A PARENT CAN EXPRESS A CONCERN IN THE CONTEXT OF CHILD PROTECTION.

IF

you, as a parent, have a concern
about your child's safety,

you may speak to the Head of Year
Telephone: 028 2565 2782

OR

you may speak
to the designated teacher for child protection,
Mr. R. Ross,
who is also Vice-Principal i/c Pastoral Care

OR

the Deputy designated teacher for child protection,
Dr. C. Donnelly
Telephone: 028 2565 2782

OR

you may speak to the Principal
Telephone 028 2565 2782.

If you are still concerned you may speak to, or write to,
the Chairman of the Board of Governors, c/o Ballymena Academy.

At any time you may talk to a Social Worker
Telephone: 028 2563 5640

OR

The Local Police Care Unit
Telephone: 028 2565 3355

The Curriculum

KEY STAGE 3

ESTABLISHING WORK PATTERNS and LEARNING ROUTINES

At this Key Stage pupils are inquisitive, responsive and enthusiastic. In Ballymena Academy, pupils encounter a stimulating range of teaching methods, class groupings and engaging learning activities across a broad range of Learning Areas.

Pupils quickly develop strong 'learning style' preferences and establish the work patterns and learning routines which will be the basis of academic success. Pupils benefit from our Assessment for Learning programme which identifies what they know and understand as well as what they need to learn and improve on. This helps inculcate the work-ethic and study habits needed to become self-motivated and independent learners. The learning environment is supportive and caring.

Pupils expect to be set purposeful assignments which arise from classroom activities and out-of-school learning such as Geography or History Field Trips. Pupils undertake group and individual research projects and particularly enjoy those making use of e-learning resources.

Key Stage 3 provision reflects the N. Ireland Curriculum Framework. The timetable is managed flexibly so as to ensure that pupils have varied experiences across each learning day and week.

During Years 8, 9, 10 pupils will have carefully planned opportunities to study the listed subjects and to acquire essential skills and personal capabilities such as Communication, Using Mathematics, I.C.T., Managing Information, Thinking Skills, Problem Solving, Decision Making, Being Creative, Self-Management, Working with Others. GCSE subjects are chosen at the end of Key Stage 3.

LEARNING INTENTIONS, TRACKING PUPIL PROGRESS

Pupils should recognise the importance of every lesson. Academic progress is monitored closely and effective use is made of baseline data on entry to the school which allows challenging personalised targets to be set and monitored. Common Assessment Tasks are recorded on an electronic tracking system to ensure pupils are progressing and to target additional learning support.

Pupils are shown how to focus on the learning process as well as outcomes. Information is shared with learners through learning intentions and agreed success criteria. There are opportunities for active learning, peer and self-assessment and self-evaluation.

ALIS and Midyis programmes bench-mark public exam results against a sample of UK schools. Together teachers, pupils and parents devise enabling strategies which strengthen commitment, enhance learning and improve achievement.

Pupil endeavour and success is recognised and celebrated in the classroom and through internal bulletins, school websites and magazine, Assemblies, Achievement Awards, Prize Day, local and regional Media.



The Curriculum 2019/2020

Period allocations shown per fortnight.

(a) YEARS 8 & 9

Area of Learning	Contributory Elements	YEAR 8 Periods	YEAR 9 Periods
Language and Literacy	English and Media Education	12	8
Mathematics and Numeracy	Mathematics including Financial Capability	12	8
The Arts	Art and Design Drama Music	4 2 4	4 2 4
Environment and Society	Geography History	6 6	6 6
Modern Languages	French German OR Spanish	8 0	7 8
Science and Technology	Science Technology and Design	8 4	12 4
Learning for Life and Work	Home Economics Learning for Life and Work	4 4	4 1
Physical Education	Physical Education and Games	8	8
Religious Education	Religious Education	4	4
Additional Studies	Digital Technology	4	4

JUNIOR SCHOOL (KEY STAGE 3) ORGANISATION

KEY STAGE 3	Eng./Maths/Drama/ Geog./Hist./Lang./L.L.W./R.E.	Sc./Tech./P.E./Art/ Music/Digital Technology/H.E.
YEARS 8/9	6 groups of 29 or 30	8 groups of 22 or 23

JUNIOR SCHOOL (KEY STAGE 3) YEAR 10 CURRICULUM 2019/2020

Period allocations are per fortnight.

Area of Learning	Contributory Elements	YEAR 10 Periods
Language and Literacy	English with Drama and Media Education	12
Mathematics and Numeracy	Mathematics including Financial Capability	11
The Arts	Art and Design Music	3 3
Environment and Society	Geography History	6 6
Modern Languages	French German OR Spanish	6 6
Science and Technology	Science Technology and Design	12 4
Learning for Life and Work	Employability } Local & Global Citizenship } Personal Development }	2
	Home Economics	4
Physical Education	Physical Education and Games	6
Religious Education	Religious Education	4
Additional Studies	Careers Education	1
	Digital Technology	4

* Alternate weeks

JUNIOR SCHOOL (KEY STAGE 3) ORGANISATION

KEY STAGE 3	Eng./Maths/Drama/ Geog./Hist./Lang./L.L.W./R.E.	Sc./Tech./P.E./Art/Music/ Careers/H.E./Digital Technology
YEAR 10	6 groups of 29 or 30	8 groups of 22 or 23

Classes are generally unstreamed throughout Key Stage 3

GCSE SUBJECT CHOICE

9 boxes should be ticked

LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION

☒ English Language

CHOOSE ONE

☐ English Literature

☐ Media Studies

USING MATHEMATICS

☒ Mathematics

CORE AREAS OF STUDY

Careers Education
Learning for Life and Work
P.E. & Games
Religious Studies

CHOOSE ONE

EITHER

☐ French

☐ German

☐ Spanish

OR

☐ Occupational Studies
and
Study Support

SCIENCE

CHOOSE ONE

☐ Single Award

☐ Double Award Science
Tick Double Award Science if

☐ Biology

☐ Chemistry

☐ Physics

Parental Signature _____ Date _____ February _____ June _____ (Review)

Name _____
Careers Teacher _____

CHOOSE ONE

ARTS / ENVIRONMENT & SOCIETY

☐ Art & Design

☐ Business Studies

☐ Classical Civilisation

☐ Drama

☐ Economics

☐ English Literature

☐ Geography

☐ History

☐ Music

☐ Religious Studies

**SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY
ENGINEERING & MATHS**

☐ Agriculture

☐ Biology

☐ Double Award Science 2*

☐ Chemistry

☐ Construction

☐ Digital Technology

☐ Food & Nutrition

☐ Further Mathematics

☐ Physics

☐ Technology & Design

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

☐ Physical Education

MODERN LANGUAGES

☐ French

☐ German

☐ Spanish

Feb _____ June _____ NC _____

Subject		Period Allocations per fortnight:-
English Language with English Literature/Media Studies		17 periods
Physical Education		2 periods - Year 11 / 3 periods - Year 12
Games		4 periods
Religious Studies (Short course) / LLW		4 periods
Careers Education		1 period
Double Award Science		18 periods
Agriculture & Land Use Art & Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry Classical Civilisation Construction Digital Technology Drama Economics Food and Nutrition French Geography German History		Mathematics Further Mathematics Music Occupational Studies Physical Education Physics Religious Studies Science Single Award Spanish Technology and Design

SIXTH FORM PROGRAMME 2019–2021

The Year 13 Programme 2019 to 2020 is composed of GCE Advanced Subsidiary ('AS' Levels), Level 3 BTEC Certificate courses and a minority time programme. It is designed to provide depth and breadth of study.

Pupils will take four subjects and the enrichment programme in Year 13. Pupils will select three of these subjects which they intend to continue with as A2/Subsidiary Diploma subjects in Year 14 - thus completing three full 'A' level programmes. The fourth subject will be studied in Year 13 only and taken as an 'AS' level or BTEC Level 3 Certificate. In some cases, pupils may opt to take all four subjects to A2 level, providing they meet the set criteria. Since the purpose of the structure is to provide a course which has breadth and balance, it is recommended that one of the Year 13 subjects should be in a contrasting discipline.

Subjects offered:-

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| ◆ Agriculture (BTEC Subsidiary Diploma/Certificate) | Further Mathematics |
| ◆ Art and Design | Geography |
| Biology | German |
| ◆ Business Studies | ◆ Government & Politics |
| Chemistry | ◆ Health and Social Care (Applied) |
| ◆ Classical Civilisation (Linear qualification) | ◆ History |
| ◆ Construction – BTEC Subsidiary Diploma/Certificate | ◆ Mathematics |
| ◆ Digital Technology | ◆ Media Studies (Linear qualification) |
| ◆ Economics | ◆ Music |
| ◆ Engineering – BTEC Subsidiary Diploma/Certificate | ◆ Nutrition and Food Science |
| English Literature | ◆ Performing Arts |
| ◆ Environmental Technology | ◆ Physical Education |
| French | Physics |
| | ◆ Religious Studies |
| | Spanish |
| | Technology & Design |
- ◆ Subjects marked in this way may be taken without previous GCSE study. See subject information for entry requirements.



The Enrichment Programme - dependent on a pupil's subject combination and time-tabling.

This may consist of:-

Year 13 2 periods per fortnight of Careers Education
 4 periods per fortnight of Games
 Study Periods

Year 14 2 periods per fortnight of Careers Education
 4 periods per fortnight of Games
 Study Periods



Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

Ballymena Academy gives full recognition to the importance of Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance as part of the general personal development of the pupil.

An integrated programme of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance aims to develop knowledge, skills and personal qualities which will enable pupils to manage their career development effectively, to make informed choices at transition points, to formulate and to implement personal career plans.

Independent surveys indicate a very high level of satisfaction with the Careers programme on the part of parents and pupils and the most recent Inspection Report confirmed its high quality.



Pupils in the middle and senior school follow a structured time-tabled programme of Careers Education taught by a team of Careers teachers. Using a variety of strategies and resources pupils are given an opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of themselves, the world in which they live, and the employment and career opportunities that are available so that they can effectively manage transition from school to adult life, further and higher education, employment and training.

Formal careers guidance interviews are an important component of the school's careers programme. All pupils at 'transition points' i.e. Years 10, 12 and 14, have the opportunity to benefit from careers interviews which are conducted in school by their careers teacher, and/or the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) Careers Adviser. They are impartial, carefully planned and include advice focused on the career needs of individual pupils. Careers teachers and the Careers Adviser are available throughout the year for consultation.

Pupils have ready access to careers information of good quality and breadth (including interactive computer programs and Internet resources) as an integral part of their Careers programme. It is held in a purpose-built careers suite comprising four interview rooms and a well-stocked careers library. All pupils have the opportunity to take advantage of the short term borrowing facility.

The careers programme is enhanced by purposeful links developed with staff from Further and Higher Education, the Department for Employment and Learning and employers.

Careers information is supplemented by a careers convention and by visiting speakers from further and higher education, the DEL and occupations which reflect a full range of the career interests of the pupils.

Pupils in Year 13 have the opportunity to spend a period of time work shadowing which informs their decision-making in relation to their general vocational and specific occupational interests.

Throughout the Sixth Form pupils attend university and college open days.

In Year 10 parents can discuss options available for GCSE with a member of the Careers Department at a Parents' Consultation Evening. In August, after the publication of GCSE results, Year 12 pupils and their parents are invited to discuss post-GCSE options with a careers teacher. Information evenings are held for the parents of pupils in Year 11 and Year 13, focusing on transition post-GCSE and post-16 respectively. Other opportunities to meet with careers teachers and the DEL careers adviser arise during Parents' Evenings and the Careers Convention.

Many subjects have the potential to make valuable contributions to each pupil's general vocational development and emerging occupational interests. The cross-curricular components of careers which flow naturally and realistically from the content and methodology of each subject help pupils to appreciate the coherence of their total curriculum.

Personal Career Planning is very much a central part of the school's Careers Education and Guidance Programme. This is a continuing and evolving process - introduced in Year 10 - involving documented self-awareness, decision-making, planning and research pertinent to the pupil's individual needs. A summary of the personal career plan, giving main details of the pupil's intended career path, may be incorporated in the Progress File.

Ballymena Academy has received a major national award in recognition of its provision for Careers Education, Advice, Information and Guidance. The National Quality in Careers Standard has been awarded to the school at the highest level (Gold). This accreditation was attained after a rigorous process of evaluation and assessment carried out by Prospects, a leading national and international provider of careers information, advice and guidance for young people and adults. Ballymena Academy is the first school in Northern Ireland to receive this award and one of very few schools nationally to attain the gold standard.

EXAMINATION RESULTS 2020

The school continues to subscribe to the 'A' Level Information System. This service, known as ALIS, is well-established and highly respected and allows the 'A' level results of Ballymena Academy pupils to be evaluated in terms of those obtained by pupils of similar ability across the United Kingdom. In the case of Ballymena Academy, the outcome continues to be positive – pupils did better overall than pupils of similar ability elsewhere, demonstrating the benefit which pupils obtain from attending Ballymena Academy.

The 'A' level outcomes show a pleasing continuation of the trend noted in recent years and reflect the ability and effort of the pupils, the careful work of teachers and the support of parents.

G.C.E. 'A' LEVEL SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF PUPILS IN YEAR 14 – 2020

No. of pupils in Year 14	No. of pupils taking 3+ 'A' Levels	% achieving 3 or more at A* - C	% achieving 2 or more at A* - E
161	161	95	100
N.I. G.S. Average (2018-19)		80	100

G.C.E. 'A' LEVEL PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS (TREND DATA) 2016/17 – 2018/19

	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	School	N.I. G.S. Average	School	N.I. G.S. Average	School	N.I. G.S. Average
% achieving 3+ 'A' Levels at Grades A* - C	84	77	78	78	81	80
% achieving 2+ 'A' Levels at Grades A* - E	100	100	100	100	100	100

- Excludes pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- The 'A' level figures for Northern Ireland include pupils who achieved qualifications deemed by the Department of Education to be equivalent to G.C.E. 'A' Level.



G.C.E. 'A' LEVEL SUMMARY OF SUBJECT RESULTS OF PUPILS IN YEAR 14 – 2020

Cumulative % Achieving Grades							
SUBJECT	No. entered	A*	A	B	C	D	E
ART & DESIGN	12	33	67	92	100	100	100
BIOLOGY	65	17	51	82	95	100	100
BUSINESS STUDIES	15	0	13	53	93	100	100
CHEMISTRY	37	38	78	89	100	100	100
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION	15	13	67	100	100	100	100
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY	13	31	62	85	100	100	100
ECONOMICS	10	0	30	80	100	100	100
ENGLISH LITERATURE	19	16	53	95	100	100	100
ENVIRONMENTALTECHNOLOGY	12	0	8	42	100	100	100
FRENCH	3	0	100	100	100	100	100
FURTHER MATHEMATICS	1	100	100	100	100	100	100
GERMAN	4	50	100	100	100	100	100
GOVERNMENT & POLITICS	7	0	29	43	100	100	100
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	44	0	50	100	100	100	100
HISTORY	38	24	63	89	100	100	100
MATHEMATICS	50	18	50	72	88	98	100
MEDIA STUDIES	28	4	36	79	93	100	100
MUSIC	4	0	25	75	100	100	100
NUTRITION &FOOD SCIENCE	14	7	21	50	86	100	100
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	6	0	17	33	83	100	100
PHYSICS	27	11	22	67	89	96	100
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	18	11	61	94	100	100	100
SPANISH	6	0	67	100	100	100	100

Cumulative %				
	No. entered	Distinction*	Distinction	Merit
CONSTRUCTION	23	74%	93%	100%
ENGINEERING	16	94%	94%	100%

Top achievers at 'A' Level were as follows:-

One pupil attained 4 A* grades – **Jacob Buchanan**

One pupil attained 4 A*/A grades – **Hannah McVicker**

A further **nine** pupils obtained a minimum of 3 A* grades – **Katie Agnew, Sarah Carroll, Callum Hamill, Ryan Irwin, Joel Murphy, Chloe Robinson, Katie Surgenor, Ben Walsh and Alex Wilson.**

A further **forty-nine** pupils obtained a minimum of 3 A*/A grades – **Emma Adair, Lois Anderson, Jessica Beverland, David Boriceanu, John Boyd, Ella Calderwood, Megan Cole, Robyn Cupples, Matthew Davison, Alicia Downey, Cara Dunlop, Roslyn Fenton, Rachel Fleck, Jill Forsythe, David Fullerton, Ben Gilmore, Charlotte Gourley, Matthew Grimsley, Mark Hayes, David Henry, Emma Hoey, Luke Kennedy, Nina Kennedy, Graham Leetch, Caleb Logan, Lauren Malcolm, Megan Malfatto, Chloe Martin, Bethany Mauger, Laura McCaig, Georgia McClelland, Stuart McDowell, Alastair McKee, Harry McKillop, Andrew McLarnon, Alex McLeister, Kezia Mitchell, Adam Paul, Matthew Poston, Jessica Quail, Grace Redmond, Hannah Richmond, Ross Shields, Craig Simpson, Jack Spence, Angus Steele, Connor Thompson, Megan Wilmot and Michael Wilson.**

G.C.S.E. SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF PUPILS IN YEAR 12 – 2020

No. of pupils in Year 12	No. with a Statement of Special Educational Needs	No. of eligible pupils entered for 7+ GCSEs	% of pupils achieving 7+ GCSEs at A* - C [Incl. English and Maths.]	N.I. Grammar School Average 7+ GCSEs (2018-19) [Incl. English and Maths.]	No. of eligible pupils entered for 5+ GCSEs	% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs at A* - C [Incl. English and Maths.]	N.I. Grammar School Average 5+ GCSEs (2018-19) [Incl. English and Maths.]
178	1	176	99	91	178	100	94

G.C.S.E. PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS
(TREND DATA) 2016/17 – 2018/19

	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	School	N.I. Grammar School Average	School	N.I. Grammar School Average	School	N.I. Grammar School Average
% achieving 7+ GCSEs at Grades A* - C (including English and Mathematics)	97	90	97	90	97	91
% achieving 5+ GCSEs at Grades A* - C (including English and Mathematics)	98	94	98	94	99	94

- Excludes pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- The G.C.S.E. figures for Northern Ireland include pupils who achieved qualifications deemed by the Department of Education to be equivalent to G.C.S.E. level.



G.C.S.E. SUMMARY OF SUBJECT RESULTS OF PUPILS IN YEAR 12 – 2020

		Cumulative %						
SUBJECT	No. entered	A*	A	B	C*	C	D	E
ART AND DESIGN	25	16	52	68	92	100	100	100
BIOLOGY	57	37	79	95	100	100	100	100
BUSINESS STUDIES	48	10	48	81	95	98	100	100
CHEMISTRY	60	27	70	82	88	100	100	100
CONSTRUCTION	42	43	90	95	95	100	100	100
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY	26	19	39	69	88	96	100	100
ENGLISH LANGUAGE	177	10	48	83	97	100	100	100
ENGLISH LITERATURE	77	31	78	94	97	100	100	100
FOOD & NUTRITION	45	18	64	91	96	100	100	100
FRENCH	80	23	64	85	93	99	100	100
GEOGRAPHY	39	13	64	79	95	100	100	100
GERMAN	42	21	40	55	67	90	100	100
HISTORY	100	32	73	89	96	100	100	100
MATHEMATICS	178	24	71	93	98	100	100	100
MATHEMATICS FURTHER	51	39	75	94	98	98	100	100
MUSIC	9	44	77	100	100	100	100	100
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	24	17	58	75	96	96	100	100
PHYSICS	63	37	70	86	100	100	100	100
RELIGIOUS STUDIES (F.C.)	37	51	89	97	97	100	100	100
SCIENCE (S.A.)	13	39	62	77	92	92	100	100
SPANISH	54	26	59	76	87	100	100	100

Cumulative % of pupils entered achieving Grades												
SUBJECT	No. entered	A*A*	A*A	AA	AB	BB	BC*	C*C*	C*C	CC	CD	DD/DE
SCIENCE (D.A.)	99	13	39	59	69	84	91	97	98	98	99	100

Cumulative % of pupils entered achieving Grades								
SUBJECT	No. entered	A* - A equivalent		B equivalent	C* equivalent	C equivalent	D	E
		9	8/7	6	5	4	3	2
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION	10	20	50	80	100	—	—	—
MEDIA STUDIES	99	5	47	89	95	100	—	—

High Achievers

Five young people achieved 9 A* grades – **Christian Drennan, Chloe Logan, William McCartney, Katy McLean** and **Eabha Steele**.

Thirty-nine pupils achieved a minimum of 9 A*/A grades – **Callum Anderson, Ross Barr, Alex Bonar, Andrew Boyd, Aaron Craig, Chloe Cotton, Paul Cunningham, James Currie, Katherine Duff, Alex Hamill, Finn Henderson, Amy Houston, Lois Kirkpatrick, Christopher Leitch, Megan Logan, Connor Louw, Lucy Magee, Evie Magill, Erin Marrs, Courtney McAuley, Brandon McCaughan, Katie McCaughey, Rachel McCaughey, Matilda McClelland, Sophie McCluney, Katie McCullough, Thomas Millar, Ellen O’Hara, Niall Pogue, Holly Ritchie, Rebecca Robinson, William Simpson, Chloe Smyth, John Stevens, Ana Stinson, Sarah Jane Taylor, Naomi Thompson, Bethany Turtle** and **Rhiannon White**.

They were closely followed by a further **twenty-one** young people with a minimum of 8 A*/A grades – **Emmie Booth, Alexander, Campbell, Jonathan Campbell, Rachel Clinton, Amelie Gardner, Calum Gatt, Aimee Hill, Mark Hunter, Lexie Irvine, Ben Laverty, Sophie Leetch, Zoe Madeley, Harry Marcus, Sam McDonald, Kerry Moore, Emily Nelson, Abby Simpson, Tammy Spence, Niamh Vercoe-Rogers, Adam Watterson** and **Robbie Wilson**.

Finally, **twenty-one** pupils obtained a minimum of 7 A*/A grades – **Sam Booth, Andrew Donald, Faye Eagleson, Hannah Galbraith, Flori Gardan, James Gordon, Joel Grimsley, John Kennedy, Joel Logan, Ella McKay, Ryan McKenna, Callum McKibbin, Adam McLaughlin, Katie McNeill, Lily McVicker, Shania Murphy, Samantha Nelson, Robby Smith, Georgia Stevenson, Holly Swann** and **Lewis Wharry**.

DESTINATION OF LEAVERS IN YEARS 12, 13 AND 14 AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Leavers destinations		% of leavers going to					
No. of leavers		HE	FE	Another school	Jobskills/ Training	Employment	Other/ Unknown
Year 12	19	—	63%	16%	2%	—	16%
Year 13	2	—	100%	—	—	—	—
Year 14	161	93%	—	—	1%	2%	4%
GRAND TOTAL	182	82%	8%	2%	1%	2%	5%

Attendance

No. of possible attendance sessions	No. of sessions Attended	% Attendance
292602	267048	96.7



MUSIC EXAMINATIONS

Trinity Guildhall and The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM)

Music Exams could not take place in the March or June sessions due to “lockdown” and closure of schools and Examining Bodies, resulting in a much reduced cohort of entries and results.

Clarinet	Grade 4 Grade 6 Grade 7	1 Pass 1 Merit 1 Merit 1 Pass 1 Merit
Double Bass	Grade 3	1 Merit
Flute	Grade 2 Grade 5 Grade 6 Grade 7 Grade 8	2 Merit 1 Merit 1 Pass 1 Merit 2 Merit 1 Merit
Piano	Grade 2 Grade 6 Grade 7 Grade 8	1 Pass 1 Merit 3 Pass 2 Merit 1 Distinction 1 Pass 2 Merit 1 Pass 2 Merit
Saxophone	Grade 2	1 Distinction
Singing	Grade 2 Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6 Grade 8	1 Pass 2 Merit 1 Pass 1 Merit 1 Merit 1 Pass
Viola	Grade 4	2 Pass
Violin	Grade 3 Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6 Grade 8	4 Pass 2 Pass 1 Merit 2 Pass 2 Merit 3 Merit 2 Distinction 1 Merit

RGT (Registry of Guitar Tutors)

Rock School

<div>Grade 3 1 Merit</div> <div>Grade 5 1 Pass</div>	Bass Guitar	Grade 4	1 Distinction
		Grade 8	1 Distinction
	Drumkit	Grade 2	1 Merit
		Grade 4	2 Merit
		Grade 6	1 Pass
		Grade 8	1 Distinction

ACTIVITIES

SPORT (GIRLS)

HOCKEY (2019/2020)

1st XI	Quarter-finalists in the Senior Schools' Cup Runners-up in Derry and Antrim League
2nd A XI	Semi-finalists in the McDowell Cup Runners-up in the Derry and Antrim League
3rd XI	Reached the Quarter-Final of the Gibson Cup Competition
4th XI	Runners-up in the Ulster Schools' 4th XI Cup Competition
U.13 A XI	Winners of the Derry and Antrim League Winners of the Derry and Antrim Year 9 Tournament
U.13 B XI	Runners-up in the NEBSSA Year 9 Tournament
U.12 A XI	Runners-up in the Derry and Antrim Year 8 Tournament Runners-up in the NEBSSA Year 8 Tournament Other teams with regular fixtures were U14B XI, U12B/C/D XI and U15 XI, U14C XI and U13C XI played in the Ballymena League.



Representative Honours:

Katie Craig	-	Ulster/Irish U.18s
Alex Henry-McCool	-	Ulster U.16s

ATHLETICS (Girls and Boys)

Due to COVID-19 the Schools' Athletics season did not happen. However, a number of our pupils did compete, later in the season, for their respective clubs in the Northern Ireland and Ulster Championships on Saturday, 12th September at the Mary Peters' Track.

Congratulations to the following pupils:-

- Sam Booth (Year 13) won Silver in the U18 100m race and Bronze in the 200m.
- Jamie Paul (Year 13) won Gold in the U17 Pole Vault.
- Alice Rodgers (Year 14) won Gold in the U19 100m and Bronze in the Senior 100m.
- Jonathan Cochrane (Year 14) won Gold in the U19 Long Jump and Gold in the U19 Triple Jump. Jonathan also won a Bronze medal in the U19 100m.

CROSS-COUNTRY 2019/2020 Highlights (Girls and Boys)

NEBSSAs:

Ballymena Academy was placed 3rd overall.

Year 8 Boys' Team: 1st	Lucas Kenny: 3rd overall
Year 9 Boys' Team: 1st	
Senior Boys' Team: 1st	Owen Johnston: 2nd overall
Senior Girls' Team: 2nd	Sophie McCluney: 1st overall
Year 10 Girls' race:	Ana Martinez: 3rd overall

Districts:

Mini Boys' Team: 2nd
Minor Boy' Team: 1st

Ulsters:

Minor Boys' Team: 4th Fintan Steele: 10th overall

Irish Championships: Fintan Steele: 32nd



School Sporting Performance of the Year in the Borough was won by the Senior Girls' Cross-Country Team (2nd in the 2019 Irish Cross-Country Championships).

NETBALL

Years 9 and 10 age groups each had two teams competing in either the Ballymena League or NEBSSA League Competitions. Year 8 had three teams playing throughout the year with two teams competing in the Ballymena League and one in the NEBSSA League. The Year 9 and 10 teams also played in the Northern Ireland Netball League and Cup competitions. Our Year 11 team competed in the Ballymena League. Year 8 and 11 teams won the Ballymena League and the Year 8, 9 and 10 'A' teams won their NEBSSA Leagues which is the second year in a row these teams have had a clean sweep of these titles. The Year 10 team have won the NEBSSA League for three years in a row. The Year 9 team reached the Semi-final of the Northern Ireland Cup competition and the Year 10 team reached the Semi-final of the Northern Ireland Bowl competition.

SHOWJUMPING

The following pupils represented the school in the Tri Equestrian Inter Schools' Open Team Showjumping League – Jo Henry-McCool, Myah McLean, Tori Surgenor, Hannah Woolsey and Charlotte Wylie. The team competed against tough competition where, after six weeks, they finished the League in second place with 133 points, just a few points behind the winners.

SWIMMING

In October, Ballymena Academy pupils took part in the Swim Ulster Schools' Swimming Gala at Bangor Aurora. Year 8 pupils Aaron Caskey, Harry Lamont and Amelie Pittam kicked off the weekend representing the school and raced extremely well. They made the 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 consisting of Thomas Evans, Cole French, Gemma Clyde, Molly Liggett, Amelie Pittam and Isabel Wainwright had an early start and some great Personal and Seasonal best performances. Molly Liggett was a finalist in both 100m Breaststroke and 100m Fly.

Our Intermediate Team consisting of Aimee Hill, Oonagh Lamont, Sophie Leetch and Samuel Wainwright did not disappoint; all posting good times and qualifying for the Finals. Special congratulations to Oonagh Lamont, who finished 4th in the 100m Breaststroke, and Sophie Leetch who made her first Final in the 100m Breaststroke.

At the Ulster Secondary Schools' competition held in January, it was a family affair for the Wainwrights, with Samuel and Isabel both competing and Samuel making the Final in a superb six second personal best in the 100m Butterfly event. It was also the first time that Rowan Murray and Alex Suitters represented the school in swimming competitions.

SPORT (BOYS)

RUGBY (2019/2020)

1st XV

The 1st XV maintained a lot of their personnel from the previous season but were still a relatively young squad with the bulk of the team being made up with Year 13 boys. Eleven of the squad represented Ulster Schools' U18 in the summer Interprovincial Festival and came back to school fit and ready to get started the season. This gave the group fantastic confidence and they went on to record notable wins against R.B.A.I., Wallace High School, Campbell College and then won the Young Cup –v- Methodist College on the Millar/McBride pitch.

The 1st XV squad travelled to Merchiston College, Scotland for a Tri-Nations Tournament involving teams from Scotland, England and Northern Ireland. The early season form brought a sense of excitement and expectation for the Tournament, but experience proved to have a long-lasting impact with several key players sustaining injuries.

The squad were again seeded in the top 8 schools and entered the Danske Bank Ulster Schools' Cup competition in the 4th Round draw. Ballymena Academy faced a tricky away fixture at Down High School. After a successful win and a very encouraging performance, the team played Royal School Armagh, a repeat of last year's Quarter-Final, with Armagh progressing to the Semi-Final at the Kingspan Stadium.

2nd XV

The second XV established themselves again among the top seeds for their Cup competition playing regularly every Saturday against all the top schools totalling up 11 wins, including a victory against Coleraine Grammar School,

Larne Grammar School, Antrim Grammar School and Rainey Endowed 1st XV's. The team had recorded only two losses all season as the draw for the Second XV Cup was announced.

The Second XV Cup competition started with an away win against Bangor Grammar School (52-12), a game played in dreadful conditions at a neutral venue. The Quarter-Final was an away trip to Royal School, Armagh which we lost 8-0.

3rd and 4th XV

Senior rugby is thriving in the school and the 3rd and 4th XV gives boys opportunity to train and play the game in a very enjoyable environment, holding onto a lot of the core values of the sport. At the start of the season we fielded both 3rds and 4ths for the first time in a few years right up until Halloween. Lack of fixtures and a few injuries meant we couldn't sustain both teams, however, it established a very strong panel for the Cup campaign. The first round was an away tie to ERGS and the "mighty 3s" recorded a comfortable win. The Quarter-Final was played against a strong Methodist College (MCB) 4th XV and the boys battled hard to record a win, taking the team one step away from the Final. The Semi-Final against R.B.A.I. was a cracking fixture with the lead changing hands several times, Sam Henry kicked the winning penalty to take his troops into the Final against MCB 3rd XV. The game was played at Roughfort playing fields with a big crowd there to support both teams. MCB won the fixture, but again the enthusiasm and character of "the mighty 3s" was a testament to rugby at this level.



Medallion XV

The Medallion Squad developed into a very strong team and again was placed as a seeded team for the Danske Bank Ulster Schools' Medallion Shield competition. Their first encounter was against Belfast High School and the away trip allowed coaches to give the squad experience of Cup competition as the team recorded a comprehensive win to progress to the Quarter-Finals. The draw threw up a difficult tie away to Royal School Armagh, played at Armagh RFC on a very difficult Friday evening, the team lost by a narrow margin to exit the competition.

U14 XV

The U14s fielded A and B teams regularly, winning against all the "big schools" throughout the season. Having won the MCB Tournament in the previous year the next big test was the R.B.A.I. Tournament. The boys travelled with a full squad and did not disappoint, winning the prestigious trophy amongst all the top teams in Ulster. This is a very exciting group of players who play a fantastic brand of rugby. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the "O'Kane Tournament" did not run at the end of the season.

U13 XV

Ballymena Academy U13s had a tough season as they played fixtures against the other big schools and for this team, who are physically quite small in comparison, wins were hard to come by. They recorded several notable performances at some of the "blitzes" organised throughout the season and as the year progressed the gulf in size started to reduce. There is no doubt this team will prove to be a good outfit as they catch up physically on their counterparts.

Year 8

The Year 8 boys started their rugby career at Ballymena Academy during the second week in September. Large numbers of boys attended every Saturday morning developing skills, making friends and having fun. The group fielded three teams in the 12-a-side format, unfortunately for this squad their games were limited due to the restrictions imposed.

GOLF

The Senior Team competed in the Ulster Schools' Scratch Competition played at Kirkistown Castle Golf Club in October, 2019. The team, comprising of Mark Hayes, Joshua Hill, Cameron Lappin and Andrew McLarnon, finished 7 strokes ahead of Bangor Grammar School with a combined score of 217 shots from the best three cards to claim the title.

Representative Honours:

Joshua Hill

**Irish U18 Team
Great Britain and Ireland U18 Team**

Joshua represented Ireland U18 at the Home Internationals Tournament held in Wales and recorded an amazing six from six wins in each of his matches. He also represented Great Britain and Ireland U18 who played the Continent of Europe in the Jacques L glise Trophy held at Aldeburgh Golf Club, England at the end of August, 2019. This team selection came off the back of his excellent season in 2019 where he won the Leinster, Connacht and English Open U16 titles; a superb achievement which quite rightly saw him claim the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Junior Sportsman of the Year Award 2020.

MUSIC

In September the year started off as usual with rehearsals resuming for our numerous ensembles, and lessons resumed for around 200 pupils receiving instrumental and vocal lessons every week with the school's eleven visiting peripatetic tutors. Nine Grade exam sessions were undertaken: three for each of the Exam Boards - Rock School, Trinity Guildhall and ABRSM and RGT exams were also undertaken. Our three teaching staff are each involved in at least four ensembles each, ably assisted by Mr. Christie (accompanist). Tutors Ms. Rebekah Durston, Mr. Graham Murray and Mr. Callum Aiken each continued to head up ensembles in their specialist fields.

Hundreds of pupils were involved in Junior and Senior Choir, Chamber Choir, Junior and Senior Wind Bands, Junior and Senior Strings, Senior String Ensemble and String Quartet, Junior and Senior Percussion Ensembles, Senior Orchestra, Jazz Band and the Male Voice Choir rehearsed after school, before school, during lunch times, evenings and even weekends under the direction of Music Department staff and specialist instrumental tutors. Traditional Group also met, under the leadership of senior pupil Grace Moore, practising diligently every Friday morning before school.

In October, fitting performances were given by the Academy Chorale and Chamber Choir at the Annual Prize Giving Ceremonies. From September, Choirs and Ensembles were preparing for Christmas Carol Services, Primary Schools' Concerts and the Annual Spring Concert.

In November our Primary Schools' Workshops initiative saw GCSE and 'A' Level Music students participate in Orchestral Workshops and concerts at Buick Memorial, Carniny and Clough Primary Schools, alongside Ms. Durston, Mrs. Church and Mr. Thompson. These were a great success and beneficial to our own pupils as much as the hosting schools. It was a great opportunity to strengthen links and share creative resources with these feeder schools.

The Primary Schools' Christmas Concert at the start of December presented festive music with accompanying animations on screen. In two well received concerts, hundreds of Primary School pupils and teachers experienced the Senior Strings, Senior Wind Band, Chamber Choir, Brass Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, Flute Trio and Jazz Band. The children particularly enjoyed educational and interactive aspects and the carol sing-a-long. For the first time this concert ran again in the evening to enable the wider community of family and friends to enjoy the programme. The evening was well attended and very well received, and was the first event where the newly formed Parents' Association had involvement in providing refreshments.

December also included annual appearances at Radio Cracker and Prospect Nursing Home for the Chamber Choir and various pupil ensembles and performances at the Past Pupils' Christmas Fair but St. Patrick's Carol Services again crowned the close of the year. The large Senior and Academy Chorale Choirs, Chamber Choir, Male Voice Choir, Strings, Brass and tuned Percussion created a spine-tingling atmosphere, singing beautiful old and new arrangements of Christmas carols alongside powerful, favourite extracts from 'The Messiah' and rousing joint choir and congregational pieces. The evening service continues to be filled to capacity, necessitating ticket-only entry, while the afternoon service grows year-on-year and saw the church well filled with congregants, fast becoming an annual fixture for family members and the wider community alike. The Parents' Association once again supported the event by providing refreshments.

Due to school closure, caused by the storm damaged roof, the annual 'in-school' Carol Services did not take place for the first time in memory.

In January, Chamber Choir members Sophie Kennedy and Jack Spence lent their vocal talents to the production of a new 'Co-curricular Song' video, which was showcased at the 'Open Nights', promoting the vast opportunities at Ballymena Academy outside the classroom.

In February the school was very commendably represented at Ballymena Festival accumulating a very large number of orchestral, chamber and small ensemble 1st, 2nd and 3rd places, resulting in the school winning several bursary awards and Overall Festival 'Best Instrumental School Award' for highest instrumental marks across categories and Overall Festival 'Best Vocal School Award' for highest vocal awards across categories. Several bursaries and major awards were also taken by the Chamber Choir, including the Dinsmore Shield for best overall Senior Choral performance.

Just a week before 'Curtain Up', with the full programme prepared, and over 400 pupils involved, the massive annual event which is our Spring Concert was stopped in its tracks by the global pandemic. This was a devastating blow for all involved in the months of planning and preparation, but particularly difficult for those in Year 14 for whom their last Spring Concert is so significant. In the final days before lockdown, the Senior Choir members remaining in school gathered to record 'Total Praise', an arrangement of Psalm 121 - both significant and apt in the circumstances, which Senior Choir had prepared for the Concert. It had also been chosen as one of Deputy Principal, Mrs. Connor's favourite songs from Senior Choir repertoire, to mark her retirement and last concert. The video went on to accumulate over 22,000 views on Facebook.



In May the Chamber Choir recorded a specially written arrangement of 'Lean on Me' to accompany the Year 14 leavers video and a number of the group represented the Ballymena Academy (the only school in Ireland to do so) in the recording of 'The Irish Blessing' which has gone on to have over 1.2 million views around the world.

Staff and pupils look hopefully towards the return of Musical events within the school which carry such a valuable and valued ethos to all involved in school, and to many in the community

Final mention must be made of the ensembles which represented the school throughout the year at various events, and also of the individual achievements of the following pupils who continued in the prestigious Ulster Youth Orchestra: Cameron Olphert (Year 14) and Caoilin Olphert (Year 12) who were joined by Luke Gregg (Year 12) and Grace Moore (Year 13) who continued in the National Scouts and Guides Orchestra of Great Britain. Recognition must also be given to Andrew Nelson (Year 11) for his outstanding achievement in The All-Ireland Pipe Band Championships held in Dublin last year, where he was awarded the 'All-Ireland Under 16 Solo Piping Champion' title.

(E. Church – Head of Music)

DRAMA: SENIOR and JUNIOR

It was with some trepidation that I advertised the auditions for the musical "Bugsy Malone" on 2nd March, 2019. I didn't need to worry as the interest in the play was overwhelming! Once again our tremendously talented pupils made life very difficult for Mrs. Craig, Mrs. Browne, Mrs. Murray and myself to choose a Cast as pupil after pupil performed the audition song, dance and monologue to an exceptionally high standard.

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.

We were also delighted to hear fabulous news from past pupil Mark McIlhagga who, in July 2019, while performing

in a production workshop in the Lyric Theatre for a new environmentally friendly show aimed at Primary School aged children, was approached by Frantic Assembly's Jess Williams to audition for 'Ignition' run by the theatre company. Mark completed an audition in Edinburgh without having to attend a trial session. He was selected to be part of the company and attend the 'Ignition' course in London. On the strength of Mark's participation in this sell-out production, Frantic Assembly have entered into partnership with the Lyric Theatre for a year and there were very big plans for 'Ignition' 2020 in Northern Ireland.

The Drama Department had further good news in June 2020 when Annabel Harkness, Year 14, was accepted to the prestigious National Youth Theatre. Annabel, who starred as Lieutenant Smolsky in Ballymena Academy's production of '*Bugsy Malone*', was one of a handful of Northern Ireland teenagers and young people to be accepted onto the National Youth Theatre's summer scheme. Past alumni of NYT include Dame Helen Mirren, Daniel Craig, Sir Daniel Day-Lewis, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Colin Firth, the list goes on.

(L. Nelson – Head of Drama)

PUBLIC SPEAKING : SENIOR

Naomi Dickey (Year 13) won the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition in November and **Alice Rodgers (Year 13)** was placed 3rd.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme in school continues to grow each year with more and more students enrolling.

At Bronze Award level students are required to undertake a period of volunteering in the local community, participate in some form of physical recreation, develop a skill and complete a challenging expedition.

At Gold Award level students are required to complete the same sections as at Bronze level, but for a longer period of time. In addition to these areas, students must also complete a five-day residential programme.

BRONZE: Rachel Black, Aoibhin Cosgrove, Patrick Kerr, Emma Kinney, Sam McClurg, Lewis Mewha and Jamie Watt.

GOLD: Christopher Allen, John Boyd, Mairi Dundee, Chloe Greer, Peter Hamill, Jonathan Hogg, Stefan Kennedy, Sarah Logan, Elizabeth McCartney, Sarah McClean, Ben McGarvey, Connor Thompson and Lucy Whann.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, many pupils have been unable to complete all of their activities at this time. In addition, we have been unable to offer the Bronze Expedition during 2019/20. To this end, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award has brought in The Certificate of Achievement. This is a formal recognition, by the DoE of pupils' dedication to their programmes and everything they have achieved through these three sections, Volunteering, Physical and Skill as well as their resilience in coping with ongoing uncertainty.

Pupils who have received this certificate to date are:

BRONZE: Chloe Alexander, Joshua Ballantine, Jacob Bradley, Lennox Kirkpatrick, Jonathan Martin, Catherine McDonnell, Johnny McGarel, Lewis Mewha, Harvey Pearson, Kathryn Penney, Olivia Reid and Emma Wilson.

GOLD: John Boyd, Matthew Poston and Jessica Quail.



BALLYMENA ACADEMY

Games Provision

Aim

In promoting and developing skills, fitness and enthusiastic participation, the school aims to develop excellence in a wide variety of physical activities, including sports and games as well as non-competitive pursuits, with the emphasis on fitness and healthy lifestyles.

Thanks to the commitment, enthusiasm and expertise of the teaching staff, and indeed a number of involved parents and former pupils, the school is able to offer a wide and varied selection of physical activities, in line with the Co-Curricular Physical Recreation Strategy.

As part of the Curriculum throughout the school, physical education and general fitness are encouraged with P.E. and Games allocated at least three periods per week for all pupils in Years 8 – 13.

P.E. and Games develop fitness, overall co-ordination, perception and strategic awareness along with personal and social skills. The interests and needs of pupils are accommodated through a wide range of activities – indoor, outdoor, individual, team, competitive or purely recreational – each offering the opportunity for pupils to fulfil their potential. Although traditionally the major sports in Ballymena Academy have been hockey and rugby, ample opportunity is available to participate in and explore many other activities including Aerobics, Athletics (track and field), Badminton, Basketball, Canoeing, Cheerleading, Circuit Training, Conditioning, Cricket, Cross-Country, Dance, Dodgeball, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Golf, Gymnastics, Handball, Health and Fitness Club, Netball, Soccer, Squash, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis and Zumba.

Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of loyalty and commitment to the school and those selected to represent the school, whether as individuals or as members of a team, are expected to make themselves available for training and matches, including those played on Saturdays.

On-site facilities

Ballymena Academy's own on-site facilities include two gymnasias, Minor Hall, three all-weather hockey pitches, two grass football pitches, six rugby pitches, three cricket squares, five tennis courts and three outside netball courts. Three brand new multi-purpose floodlit AstroTurf pitches were opened in 2015.

Off-site facilities

Pupils have opportunities to enhance their games skills not only in school but also at the Seven Towers Leisure Centre, Fitness First, Ballymena Rugby Club, Ballymena Ladies' Hockey Club, Ballymena and Antrim Athletics Club, Ballymena Tennis Club, Ballymena Cricket Club, Ballymena Swimming Club, Churches' League Badminton – depending on their specialism(s).



Sportsmark and Goldmark Awards

The school has been awarded the Sportsmark Award and the Goldmark Award in recognition of its outstanding progress in fulfilling sporting aims and the high level of commitment given to developing sport in partnership with the local community.

Pastoral Care

YEAR 8:

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS for OUR NEW PUPILS

- Year 8 Form Assembly instils a sense of community
- Each Year 8 Tutor Group is assigned two Designated Staff and four Sixth Form Mentors
- Year 8 pupils share a lunch period with Year 9 pupils only
- Personal Health and Social Education programmes are delivered by specialist teachers
- Specific Induction activities ensure inclusion of all and foster friendships

FRIENDLY and CARING SCHOOL

Though Ballymena Academy is a large modern school, it is friendly and caring. If a pupil is anxious or in difficulty someone will help: Peer Mentors, Classroom Teacher, Form Tutor, Pastoral Advisor, the Head of Year, School Nurse, School Counsellor, Pastoral Vice-Principal.

Parents are key pastoral care partners. They are strongly encouraged to contact the school if in any way concerned about their child's well-being: for example, about bullying, or anxiety about the impact of a pupil's workload or other factors outside school which may be affecting their child psychologically or physically.

Pastoral issues are discreetly and sensitively addressed in the context of both school situations and broader health, personal and social circumstances.





All Teachers share in Pastoral Care. They provide a safe environment in which pupils can grow. They set behavioural standards and have clear expectations. They are demanding – but fair.

Our Pastoral Care Programmes exhort pupils:

- to be respectful and considerate
- to show emotional intelligence in their dealings with others
- to demonstrate self-discipline in school and in life

POSITIVE and ENABLING DISCIPLINE

In keeping with our positive ethos and the good relationships which characterise our school, we encourage children and young people to act responsibly and with respect for others.

Rules and regulations are kept to a minimum, clearly stated and published to pupils and parents.

SPECIAL NEEDS and CONCERNS

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS [SENco]

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator ensures that in co-operation with NEELB personnel, the special requirements and learning needs of identified pupils are appropriately addressed. This is done through individualised support programmes devised by classroom teachers, Heads of Subjects, Literacy and Numeracy co-ordinators.

PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMME

- provides induction information for all 'new' pupils
- provides daily support: Class Teachers, Form Tutors, Pastoral Advisors, Heads of Year, Peer Mentors



- fosters self-discipline through Tutor Programmes, Assemblies, Codes of Conduct
- strives to eradicate bullying through education, support and care
- influences attitudes and behaviours through PSHE
- avails of external support – e.g. the Counselling Service in times of difficulty or trauma
- provides an enriching co-curricular programme throughout the year
- facilitates parental contact: Open Nights, Information Evenings, Interviews, Reports
- provides parents with Pastoral Care policies: e.g. Child Protection, anti-Bullying

PASTORAL CARE SYSTEM

- Heads of Year co-ordinate the work of Form Tutors
- Pastoral Advisors liaise with Pastoral, Vice-Principal, Heads of Year and Tutors
- Pastoral Advisors support pupils and link with class teachers and parents
- The Pastoral Vice-Principal meets with Heads of Year, Pastoral Advisors
- The Pastoral Vice-Principal supports and sustains each Pastoral Team
- Designated Staff support on matters of Child Protection
- A school Care Team liaises with outside Agencies
- Staff help pupils to develop their self-management and organisational skills
- A professional Counsellor is available for pupil consultation
- Helplines and Counselling Services contact details are displayed on Advice Boards
- The School Nurse and School First Aid Team respond to health or injury concerns

HEALTH EDUCATION and GENERAL WELL-BEING

Well-informed teachers discuss issues such as Drugs Awareness, Sex Education, Obesity, Social Networking, Online Gaming and Responsible Driving. Pupils are prepared for the challenges and responsibilities of teenage and adulthood life. A Health Education programme also enables pupils to engage with environmental factors which threaten the quality of life.

ATTENDANCE

Excellent standards of attendance and exceptional exam averages bear out the high correlation between attendance and achieving full academic and personal potential. In partnership with parents, the school encourages full attendance and punctuality.

PUPIL REPRESENTATION

- Pupils' representatives contribute to improvements in teaching and learning, pupil welfare, school meals, co-curricular experiences.
- Pupil Representatives are elected annually.
- Junior, Middle and Senior School Councils channel pupils' views to Heads of Year.
- Pupil opinions are also elicited through questionnaires.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Sixth Form Prefects ...

are elected by pupils and staff. Senior Prefects are appointed after interview. Prefects make significant and valuable contributions to school life-particularly on public occasions such as Open Morning and Open Nights, Prize Day, Parents Consultation Evening, annual Music Concert and School Play. Prefects receive training and are encouraged to be aware of their role as leaders and role-models.

Sixth Form Peer Mentors ...

receive specific training for their important support role with pupils in Junior and Middle School. They make a valuable and active contribution to our caring ethos.

Sixth Form Learning Mentors ...

help to support pupils in areas of their learning in which they need some guidance or may find a significant challenge.

The Sixth Form Committee ...

takes responsibility for the efficient running of the Sixth Form Centre. On a wider front, the contribution of Sixth Formers, as active citizens, to voluntary activities and fund raising is extensive – locally, nationally and internationally.

Co-Curricular Committees ...

offer a range of leadership opportunities to be involved in the planning, organisation and delivery of aspects of our co-curricular programme.



Security Policy : Summary

The security of all those who use the school premises and their property, along with that of the premises themselves, is prioritised by the Board of Governors. Stringent efforts are made to ensure that proper security measures are in place and observed while still recognising the need for appropriate access to all users, including visitors. As, and when required, additional measures are recommended to the Senior Leadership Team and thereafter to the Board of Governors.

A security policy has been established by the Board of Governors and copies are available to parents on request.

Remote control barriers are in place on main driveways. A close circuit television system is in operation. There is also camera surveillance of traffic entering the grounds. All visitors are directed to the main school entrance and reception area, where access is monitored and a record of visitors kept. Visitors' badges are issued at the office for visitors accessing any part of the buildings other than the main reception area, Careers Suite and the Principal's office.

An intruder alarm system has been installed in the most vulnerable areas of the school buildings.

In line with Department of Education requirements and in keeping with Child Protection Regulations all members of staff, governors and volunteers are subject to Access NI clearance.



Relationships and Sexuality Education

RSE focuses on the quality of relationships between family members, with an emphasis on stability, respect, caring and support in the home and thus in society. The RSE programme is provided in the broader context of health, personal, social and moral education and is delivered within such subjects as Learning for Life and Work (P.S.H.E.), Science, Religious Education, English, Home Economics and, where appropriate, through our Pastoral Care system.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Pupils', parents' and staff perceptions show that bullying is not a significant feature of Ballymena Academy. The Anti-Bullying Policy recognises that this school must be vigilant and accepts its responsibility to seek to prevent bullying, to support those who are bullied and to enable young people and parents to report bullying in the confidence that their concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.

Adopting a proactive approach to the issue, Anti-bullying information is regularly conveyed to pupils in a wide variety of ways throughout the year.

The school liaises closely with other schools, statutory agencies and organisations in the community to help in its work to eliminate bullying of all kinds, as part of its overall commitment to Child Protection and to providing a safe and secure learning environment.

School Development Plan

The School Development Plan was revised in line with the "Every School a Good School" policy and the regulations of the Department of Education. The School Development Plan brings together the school's priorities and the key outcomes and targets needed to achieve these. This provides clear guidance for the school and the emphasis is very much on safeguarding the young people, supporting their learning and attainment and making best use of available resources.

Drugs Education Policy : Summary

Ballymena Academy recognises that the care, welfare and protection of all pupils is of paramount importance.

A sustained Drugs Education Programme, delivered through focused Curricular and Cross-Curricular topics and themes, enables pupils to make informed judgements and choices.

Above all, Ballymena Academy seeks to create a supportive and caring school environment through which confident and fulfilled pupils are unlikely to be tempted into drug misuse in wider society.

Aspects of Drugs Education Programme

Curricular materials delivered through Science, Home Economics, Physical Education, Religious Education and English Programmes of Study emphasise how the medicinal application of drugs can enhance the quality of life.

In marked contrast, it is stressed that the abuse of drugs can severely impair health and, indeed, endanger life. Legal implications are also considered.

Pupils' social skills are enhanced so that they may counter and resist those attempting to embroil them in drug-related activities.



Moreover, the school's Drugs Education Co-ordinator ensures that the teaching staff are fully conversant with initiatives and materials emanating from the Police Service, voluntary and statutory agencies.

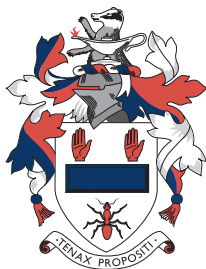
Drugs Education Policy Document

The Drugs Education Co-ordinator will be pleased to explain to parents full details of the school's policies on the management of prescribed medicines in school; procedures related to the safe management of solvents in schools; procedures and personnel pertinent to an emergency drugs-related situation; procedures and sanctions specific to suspected illicit substance misuse; obligations and procedures concerning possession or dealing of drugs on school premises.

These procedures are included in the overall Drugs Education Policy Document which is available to parents on request.

Inculcating Positive Attitudes and Behaviour

Those parents who wish to consult the main Drugs Education Policy Document will be reassured that Ballymena Academy seeks to inculcate attitudes and reinforce behaviours which will deter drug experimentation and abuse.



A detailed **Prospectus** is available, as are copies of the school regulations and policy documents relating to many aspects of school organisation. These include the School Curriculum, Child Protection, Anti-bullying and S.E.N. and may be obtained from the school office free of charge. A copy of the school regulations and Code of Conduct is made available to each pupil and his/her parents on enrolment.

Admissions Criteria for Year 8 Pupils – School Year 2021/22

To Parents/Guardians naming Ballymena Academy as a preference on their child's Online Transfer Application. Please ensure that you provide the following information on or with the application:

Entrance Assessment Registration

Ballymena Academy will use proof of registration for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment (CEA) provided by the Association for Quality Education Limited (AQE) as specified by the school. Parents should record their child's candidate number for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment on the online application and upload a copy of the AQE Examination Card or the AQE Registration Letter with the online application.

Special Provision

Parents/Guardians wishing to claim Special Provision must complete Form SP20 available from Ballymena Academy. The completed Form SP20, together with appropriate documentary evidence corroborating the claim for Special Provision, must be uploaded with the online application no later than 16th March 2021. Special Provision will not be considered in advance of the deadline for submission of online applications.

Capital Fee

There is a capital fee of £140 per annum (set by the Department of Education), which is payable by all Parents/Guardians of pupils enrolled in the school.

Parents/Guardians are also asked to make a voluntary contribution to the Education Enrichment Fund. This voluntary contribution helps to support the educational and co-curricular provision within the school. The suggested contribution for 2020/2021 was £120.00.

A detailed prospectus and information on school policies and organisation may be obtained from the school, free of charge. Detailed information is also available on the school website.

Respective function of the Board of Governors and Principal in relation to Admissions to the school

The Board of Governors is the relevant admissions authority for Ballymena Academy. The Board of Governors draws up and approves the Admissions Criteria and delegates to an Admissions Panel - nominated and approved by the Board of Governors, to include the Principal - the responsibility for considering all applications for admission to Year 8.

Any reference to the term 'the Board of Governors' within these Admissions Criteria includes the Admissions Panel, nominated and approved by the Board of Governors, for the purposes of applying the Admissions Criteria set out in this document.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR ENTRY INTO YEAR 8

In producing these criteria, the Board of Governors of Ballymena Academy has had regard to relevant material on the Transfer Procedure, issued at various times by the Department of Education. These materials have been given active and receptive consideration; the decisions taken reflect the Board of Governors' focus on communicating clearly, complying with legal guidance and providing an efficient and effective service for children and parents.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only take into account information which is detailed on, or uploaded with, the online application. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the online application or uploaded with it.

Parents of all children transferring from Primary to Post-Primary school are eligible to apply for a place in Ballymena Academy.

If there are more applications than places available, registration for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment will be used as part of the admission procedure. Precedence will be given to those applications which include evidence of registration for the Common Entrance Assessment provided by AQE or for whom a valid claim for Special Provision has been made.

1. ELIGIBILITY, PRIORITY, CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS AND VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY:

- 1.1 For a child to be considered eligible for admission to Year 8 in Ballymena Academy ("the School") in September 2021, an application in his/her name on a completed Online Transfer Application, must be submitted according to the requirements of the Transfer Procedure conducted through the Education Authority.

PRIORITY to be given to applications:

- 1.2 In determining those children to be admitted, the Board of Governors will consider children who are resident in Northern Ireland at the time of their proposed admission to the School before those children who are not so resident.
- 1.3 Priority shall be given, on equal terms, to two categories of application:
- Applications for children who have registered for the Common Entrance Assessment (provided by AQE, as specified by the School) in an approved Assessment Centre.
 - Applications for children for whom a valid claim for Special Provision has been made (Special Provision: see Sections 4 and 5 below).

Then, if places remain after all applications in these categories have been accepted, all remaining applications will be considered.

CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS

- 1.4 If, after consideration of 1.3, there are still places available, all remaining applications shall be considered as follows.
- If the number of applications remaining does not exceed the number of places available, all shall be accepted.
 - If the number of such applications exceeds the number of places available, the procedure identified in section 2 shall be applied until all places are allocated.

VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

- 1.5 Duty to Verify: Parents should be aware that the Board of Governors of the School reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify the information on, or uploaded with, any online application. The obligation rests with parents to provide this evidence for verification purposes on request.
- 1.6 The provision of false or incorrect information, or the failure to provide information within the deadlines set by the School, can result in the withdrawal of a place or the inability to offer a place.

2. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO YEAR 8 IN SEPTEMBER 2021

Applications for children who have registered to sit the AQE Common Entrance Assessment specified by the School

(or for whom a valid Special Provision claim has been made)

Where the number of applications for children who have registered to sit the Common Entrance Assessment specified by the School, along with those for whom a valid claim for Special Provision has been made, exceeds the School's Admissions Number, the Admissions Panel will apply the following criteria, in order, to admit children up to the School's Admissions Number. Parents/Guardians must provide appropriate documentary evidence that the child was registered for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment or a valid claim for Special Provision.

Precedence shall be given, in the following order to an application for a child:

- 2.1 who has sibling(s)* currently enrolled in the School, or has sibling(s) already approved for acceptance by the School in the current admissions process.
(N.B. Preference shall be given on the basis of the greatest or greater number of siblings).
- 2.2 who is the eldest** or only child of the family to be eligible to apply for admission to the school (details to be supplied on the online application).
- 2.3 (a) who at the time of application is registered either as a pupil who is educated at home or as a pupil at a Primary School from which pupils have been admitted to Ballymena Academy within the past five years (a list is available from the School Office or on the school website).
- (b) In the event that there remain more applications than there are places available, preference will be given to those children who at the time of application are registered either as a pupil who is educated at home or as a pupil at a Primary School from which 3 or more pupils have been admitted to Ballymena Academy over the past five years. A list of these Primary Schools is provided in the following table.

Antrim P.S.
Ballykeel P.S.
Ballymena P.S.
Braidside I.P.S.
Broughshane P.S.
Buick Memorial P.S.
Camphill P.S.
Carnaghts P.S.
Carnalbanagh P.S.
Carniny P.S.
Carnlough I.P.S.
Clough P.S.
Cloughmills P.S.
Creavery P.S.
Duneane P.S.
Fourtowns P.S.
Gracehill P.S.
Groggan P.S.
Hazelbank P.S.
Kells & Connor P.S.
Kilrea P.S.
Kirkinriola P.S.
Longstone P.S.
Maine I.P.S.
Moorfields P.S.
Portglenone P.S.
Randalstown Central P.S.
Rasharkin P.S.
St. Colmcille's P.S.
St. Mary's P.S. (Portglenone)
St. Paul's P.S. (Ahoghill)
Templepatrick P.S.
The Diamond P.S.

- 2.4 In order of preference with first preference applications being selected before second preference applications and so on.

* Where applicable "sibling" is defined as another child of the family (Article 2(2) of the Domestic Proceedings (NI) Order 1980) to include, for example, half-brothers and sisters, together with children who are adopted or fostered.

** Twins and other multiples who are eldest in the family are treated as joint eldest children.

- 2.5 If, after the implementation of each of 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 there remain more applications than there are places available, then the following random selection process as determined by the Board of Governors and overseen by the Admissions Panel shall be applied to determine the remaining applications to be accepted:
- each application to be considered at this stage is allocated a random number electronically generated within 'Microsoft Excel';
 - the applications are then ranked in order of the random number, with higher numbers having precedence.

**Applications for children who have not registered for the
Entrance Assessment specified by the School**

(and for whom a valid Special Provision claim has not been made)

- 2.6 Should any place(s) remain after all applications which include evidence of registration for the AQE Common Entrance Assessment or are made on the basis of a valid claim for Special Provision have been accepted, then other applications shall be considered for the remaining place(s).
- 2.7 If the number of such applications does not exceed the number of places available, all the applications shall be accepted up to the School's Admissions Number.
- 2.8 Where the number of such applications exceeds the number of places available, sub-criteria 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 shall be applied in the stated order until all places have been allocated up to the School's Admissions Number.

3. Admissions following conclusion of Transfer Procedure

- 3.1 Should a vacancy arise after the Transfer Procedure concludes, between 19th June, 2021 and 31st July, 2021, further admission to Year 8 shall be considered if fewer pupils are enrolled in Year 8 than the Admissions Number allows. At that point all applications (including those received after the final date for changes of preference) will be considered, and the published admissions criteria applied (see 2.1 – 2.8 above).

Parents/Guardians who wish to have their child considered for admission in the event of a place becoming available after 1st August, 2021 should write to the Principal stating this. An acknowledgement will be issued. If any place(s) subsequently become available and there are more applicants than places available, then a decision will be made upon application of the Admissions Procedure set out at Section 2 to those children seeking admission at the time the place(s) become available.

- 3.2 If the School's Admissions Number has been reached, an application for a child moving into the area can be considered, subject to the Department of Education granting a temporary extension to the Admissions Number.

4. Special Provision: Context & Summary

- 4.1 'Special Provision' refers to applications which claim that children did not register to sit the AQE Common Entrance Assessment on the basis that:
- (a) they are transferring from Primary Schools outside Northern Ireland; or
 - (b) they have received more than half of their Primary School education outside Northern Ireland.

5. Special Provision

- 5.1 Applications for Special Provision must be uploaded with the online application and be made in line with the detailed procedures set out below. This includes the appropriate Form SP20, a copy of which should be uploaded with the online application and requires parents to submit appropriate, independent, documentary evidence in support of the claim.

- 5.2 Special Provision claims may be considered for children who have not registered to sit the AQE Common Entrance Assessment:
- (a) who are transferring from Primary Schools outside Northern Ireland; or
 - (b) who have received more than half of their primary education outside Northern Ireland.
- 5.3 It is the parents' sole responsibility to ensure that information is provided for the School to be able to determine if the child is eligible for Special Provision.

Year 8 Applications and Admissions

Year	Admissions No.	Total Applications All Preferences	Total Admissions
2018/19	176	241	176
2019/20	176	207	176
2020/21	176	178	175

This table does not include children who were admitted to the school with a statement of special educational needs.

N.B. The Department of Education has determined that the Transfer Criteria will not provide parents with detailed information on the pattern of applications and admissions to this school. Additional information may be obtained on request from the school or on the school website.







BALLYMENA ACADEMY

89 Galgorm Road
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E-mail: info@balacademy.ballymena.ni.sch.uk

Voluntary Grammar School
Boys and Girls
Admissions No. 176
Enrolment No. 1200
Age Range: 11 - 18 years

Principal: Mr. S.W. Black, M.Sc., PGCE, PQH (NI)

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Dr. D. Johnston, O.B.E., M.B., M. .Sc., M.Med.Sc., F.R.C.G.P