

Ballakermeen High School



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Dear Parents and Carers

I write to you with kind wishes as we approach the summer holidays. This year has passed incredibly quickly, and I would like to thank the whole Ballakermeen community for making me so welcome in my first year as Headteacher of this ambitious school. Make no mistake, the message that I get from staff and students is that we want to be better, do better and achieve better.

Back in September we made an explicit statement about our desire to foster positive behaviour from all. We phrased this as a 'Reset on Respect' and we have seen so many wonderful examples of this reset demonstrated in everyday actions, conversations and contributions to our community. Nobody involved with Ballakermeen should think that this focus on core values was a soon to be forgotten approach. We are quite clear that fundamental to student success is a calm and safe learning environment; it is this that we are working hard to establish as a 'norm' here at Ballakermeen.

There has been so much going on and so many fabulous youngsters doing amazing things this year. Over the course of 2022/2023 480,417 e-Praise points have been awarded to students from all areas of the school. To put that into perspective, that is over 345 e-Praise points per student in years 7-11! These points reward consistent hard work and demonstration of our values of Kindness, Honesty and Respect plus our BHS Learner Attributes. We are all so proud of this consistent application and our reward assemblies have been a great tribute to every student who has been recognised during the year.

There have also been specific events and achievements that have been highlights. Our Prizegiving ceremony early in the year set the tone for celebration and this was continued through success in wellbeing, environmental and design competitions. We've had further success at inter-school public speaking, Charity Challenge, Junior Achievement and the Guild whilst taking pride in the successes of students out of school in the Island Games, on the Gaiety stage, playing hockey, swimming, cycling and many other sporting achievements. Each of our Houses have been busy working on behalf of their chosen charities and we have made an outstanding contribution to the Poppy Appeal. Our annual Carol Service was a beautiful occasion that set us all up for Christmas whilst the Spring Concert and Easter SPC show were brilliant performances. Students have benefitted from many educational trips and visits around the Island for various subjects along with two very successful ski trips and visits to a number of UK Universities.

This past week has been wonderful as we have celebrated the end of key periods of education with Year 13 on Saturday and Year 11 on Tuesday. These moments are special and the students pulled out all the stops and looked fabulous! They were a credit to their school and their families. Just exam results days to look forward to now!

If you have visited school recently you will have noticed our beautiful display of flowers brightening the entrances. I was delighted last week to catch up with Nehall Kilari in year 7 who has a passion for photography and was inspired to capture the "Ballakermeen Nature" as he put it. Look at these photos that he has taken. Aren't they just stunning?



As a new year 7 cohort start in September, we will be working hard with them and all our year groups to recognise the important part that they all play in setting and maintaining the best possible working environment at Ballakermeen. We will have a lot of fun along the way but the core purpose of education is to provide the best possible preparation, both in terms of qualifications and character, for a successful and happy future. At times the journey may be difficult, but it is at exactly those times when students should know that both school and families are there to support them. We cannot remove all the challenges that they may encounter but we can equip them with the knowledge and resilience to overcome whatever they face.

I would like to offer a couple of reminders as we look forward to next year. Our uniform expectations have not changed. We believe that uniform as an important part of the Ballakermeen identity. We expect that students wear uniform appropriately and with pride as the vast majority do so every day. Aspects to be aware of are that footwear should be plain black with no obvious logos. Skirts should be of an appropriate length, plain or pleated and not tight fitting as these are prone to rise up. To support the provision of correct uniform, we are thrilled that the BSHA and parent volunteers will run a 'Uniform Swap Shop' during the school holidays. All uniform is fully washed and available for you to come along and pick up, much of it is 'good as new'. Our BHS Facebook will be updated to show when the next event is taking place, but if your need is urgent please contact Mr Mitchell via bhsenquiries@sch.im.

Finally, as is often the way at the end of the school year, we must say goodbye to some of our staff who are moving on. Mr Melia-Jones, Mrs Whitehead, Miss Wang and Miss Cowley who have been brilliant colleagues and will be missed greatly. We thank them all for everything that they have done.

I wish you all a brilliant summer and I look forward to bigger and better things in September.

Take care of yourselves

Graeme Corrin

Headteacher

OUR VALUES:
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Kindness
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Honesty
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Respect
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