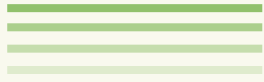




22 Dec



“ Dear Parent or Carer,

As we get to the end of term, I would like to wish you, your family and your loved ones a peaceful and happy Christmas and a joyous 2024. A reminder, school re-opens for all students on Monday 8th January!

The last day of term was a colourful affair with a variety of Christmas jumpers adorning our students and staff. Donations made in respect of this event have been collected for the Ballakermeen Association (BHA). This group of parents and carers make such a great contribution to the school by giving their own time to plan social events and fundraising. This effort directly funds resources and activities for our students that may not otherwise be possible from normal school budget. I thank them once again and urge any of you who wish to contribute to check out the BSHA page under the 'Parents' section of the website. One of the best and easiest ways to support is to join the 300 club. In doing so you will also have the possibility of a big cash prize!

I should finally like to recognise three colleagues who leave us at the end of the Autumn term. Mrs Stead is moving to become Head of Maths at Castle Rushen and our loss is Castle Rushen's gain. We all wish her the very best of luck in her new role. Mr Evans is retiring, and we thank him for his contribution in a number of roles and directly supporting individual students. Finally, Mrs Evans is also retiring after 27 years at Ballakermeen where her work has literally transformed the lives of many students. Mrs Evans will be very sadly missed but we all wish her the happiest of retirements.

Looking further ahead, I am pleased to confirm that Parental Academic Tutoring evenings will recommence in February, starting with years 9, 13 and 11. Further details will follow but we will all be pleased to have this opportunity to meet formally once again.

May I finally once again thank you for your support and wish you a happy and healthy Christmas break.

Graeme Corrin
Headteacher



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Ballakermeen
High School

2023

December Monthly News



Looking Ahead

TEAM BALLAKERMEEN

BUILDING A WARM, WELCOMING AND FRIENDLY CULTURE

It is said that manners cost nothing but are worth a lot. At Ballakermeen we really believe in the value of manners and politeness; respect is one of our core values after all!

We know that manners are very well taught at home but sometimes when youngsters arrive in school and meet up with their mates, they can slip up or forget at times. We are going to work on this by explicitly modelling politeness. From January we are going to show students what politeness looks and sounds like at Ballakermeen. We are going to be extra polite to students and expect them to be as polite to us as we are to them.

The politeness that we are talking about is nothing that won't be familiar. As adults in school, we will be routinely saying good morning or good afternoon to students and in return we will simply expect a "Good morning sir" or "Good afternoon miss". Although this may feel a little artificial to begin with, once we have practiced, it will become a positive habit which will then develop into natural positive interactions across the school helping to create a warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

We believe that politeness is important for life and that every interaction with an adult is a possibility for students to practice for job, college or university interviews so that students grow in confidence and have the skills to go anywhere and compete with anyone!

We will be using the acronym, STEPS. Your children may have spoken to you about this. STEPS is simply a memory tool to remind us of the simple actions that demonstrate politeness. The 'S' stands for smile and reminds us of the importance of tone or voice, facial expression, body language and choice of words. TEP stand for thankyou, excuse me and please which we know will have been taught at home, but we want to reinforce in school. The final 'S' stands for our BHS style which is formal for example sir or miss at the end of a sentence.

In short, we are going to focus on politeness and manners in the hundreds of interactions that take place between adults and students every day within Ballakermeen. We hope that you will see and hear about the impact of our positive habits from your children at home.

January marks the start of an exciting and positive journey where we work as a Ballakermeen team, adults and students, to live our values in all that we do. We will work together to create the warmest, most welcoming and friendly school that we can be!



E-PRAISE LEADERS SO FAR...

DEC LEADERS: MAUGHOLD (52,842)

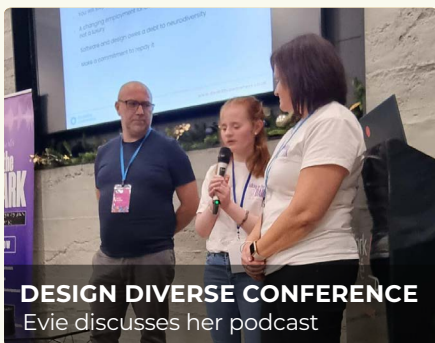
CONISTER TOP TUTOR GROUP	7CS4
LANGNESS TOP TUTOR GROUP	7LL2
HILLARY TOP TUTOR GROUP	7HS7
MAUGHOLD TOP TUTOR GROUP	7MS6
PATRICK TOP TUTOR GROUP	7PK6



WHAT'S ON JANUARY 2024

- MON 08** SCHOOL RE-OPENS
- 10 - 12** YEAR 13 MOCK EXAMS
- 16 - 22** YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMS
- THU 25** YEAR 6 OPEN EVENING
- WED 31** INTERMEDIATE MATHS CHALLENGE

December Roundup



DESIGN DIVERSE CONFERENCE

Evie discusses her podcast

Year 10 student Evie had the huge privilege of speaking at the Design Diverse conference organised by PDMS. During the talk Evie referenced various conversations she has had over recent months with guests on her Talking in the Dark podcast. It was a fantastic opportunity to talk about technology without sight and to listen to the other speakers talk about the wonderful work that they have been doing to highlight and adopt a more inclusive approach in the world of technology Well done Evie!



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

Some of our students in Pathways and LSS worked hard making a whopping 60 Christmas hampers for residents of Springfield Grange Nursing Home. Each hamper includes a variety of chocolate, handmade crafts, bath bombs and more, plus a hand written card from the students. Many thanks to businesses who donated to the project!



Pupils Jamie and Lily-May even visited Manx Radio to talk about the project. Listen: [here](#).



XMAS AROUND THE WORLD

The library created a display highlighting a huge range of Christmas traditions from all over the world, holding a competition for students to win epraise points and a small prize if they can answer all the questions on a quiz sheet. The photo shows some of our year 8 and 10 students having a go at the quiz over lunchtime.



3FM CAROL CUP

School choirs enter competition

Two talented groups of students entered 3FM's 2023 Carol Cup with Zedra Isle of Man. Our Year 7 Choir performed a beautiful rendition of 'When Christmas Comes to Town', and students from the Special Provisions Centre performed original song 'Granny's Christmas Dinner', written by talented SPC staff Simon Fletcher and Ellie Quayle.

CHRISTMAS READING CHALLENGE



Our librarian Ros wrapped up select library books in Christmas paper for students to choose from and take home to open on Christmas day. Students can then read, review, and return the book after Christmas for a prize and epraise points. The idea of this challenge is that students will have a book to read that they might never have chosen for themselves, so perhaps opening a door to new genres and authors. And it's always fun to have an extra present to open on Christmas day!

JD VOUCHER WINNERS

Congratulations to Dan and Joseph on completing all of their skills grids at the recent DESC Employment and Skills event. They are the lucky winners of the draw for a £50 JD Voucher each, courtesy of Paragon Recruitment. Thank you to Mia from Paragon for coming in to school to present the vouchers.



KINDNESS | HONESTY | RESPECT

December Roundup



CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

On Wednesday 20th December, we held our annual Christmas Carol Service at St George's Church. It really did begin to feel a lot like Christmas from that point!

There were some wonderful musical performances interspersed with fabulous readings, which made for a lovely evening.

Many thanks to Mrs Crossley for her planning and organisation and also Mr Karran, Mr Craige, and Miss Carter, plus returning friends of the school Dannii Bridson and Ian Quayle.



CHRISTMAS FAIR

Some of our Year 8 - 11 Bridge students ran their own Christmas Fair, including a number of different stalls, with some amazing cake contributions from both staff and LSS students, and a lucky dip. However the biggest hit was the Teddy Tombola, with lots of teddies finding lovely new homes to go to. It was fantastic to see so many students enjoying some festive fun in a really heart-warming way!

YEAR 7 HANDBALL

Our Year 7 Handball teams competed in the Interschool's Handball tournament at Bermahague. They have all been training very hard on Wednesdays after-school, and should be extremely proud of their efforts, as we are!



CROSS-COUNTRY

Douglas Rugby Club was the venue for the Inter-School cross country competition yesterday, which saw students from all years competing on a very muddy and slippery course. All students represented the school with pride and were a credit to Ballakermeen. Notable performances were: Tara 2nd and Darcey K 10th in the Year 7 Girls race. Faith 3rd in the Junior Girls race. Lucy 6th and Elena 7th in the Intermediate Girls race. Mikey 10th in the Year 7 Boys race. Alec 3rd in the Intermediate Boys race. Congratulations to all competitors - with over 40 runners in each race, conditions were not easy. We are extremely proud of you all!





Last week of term Festive Fun!



FRENCH CHRISTMAS LETTERS

Year 8 students wrote about what they would like for Christmas in French, and then created decorative baubles using their letters!



GINGERBREAD

In French lessons, Year 7 have been working on describing themselves and members of the family over the last half-term. They then created their own gingerbread men, with a written description of them in French!

A VERY FESTIVE DRAMA

Year 8 and 9 Drama worked on scripts taken from holiday classics: *The Grinch* and *the Christmas Chronicles*!



YEAR 8 SCIENCE

Year 8 Science made some colourful Christmas chromatography snow flakes using felt tips and water!



FRENCH & GERMAN XMAS CARD COMPETITION

The entries into the annual MFL Christmas card competition were of a particularly high standard this year and it took us some time to choose our favourites. In the end we couldn't pick just one winner and so there were two prizes for French and two prizes for German. Congratulations to Isaac (not pictured), Ruby, Isabella and Holly who each won a £5 gift voucher.

