

# The OWL

Belfast Royal Academy  
Christmas 2024



## **THE OWL TEAM 2024**

Editor: Mrs S Graydon

Thanks to: Mrs Dillon, Mr McKenna, Mrs Gouk,  
Mrs Patterson, Mrs Atkins, Mrs O’Kane,  
Mrs Holland, Ms Graham, Mr Spence

Cover designed by Iona Navarro-McIntosh (MVI)



The Belfast Royal Academy was founded in 1785 and is the oldest school in the city. Originally situated near St Anne's Cathedral, in what is now Academy Street, it was transferred to the Cliftonville Road in 1880, when the present building was erected. For more than a century, the School was named Belfast Academy. In 1888, Queen Victoria granted permission for the School to style itself Belfast Royal Academy.

It is a voluntary grammar school and its management is vested in a Board of Governors on which parents and teachers are represented, along with Governors elected by members of the Academy and nominees of the Minister of Education.

Any past pupil who attended B.R.A. for at least three years and who is eighteen or over may, subject to the approval of the Board of Governors, become a member of the Academy upon the payment of a registration fee of £1. Applications should be made to the Head of Finance and Corporate Services at the School.

Past pupils are encouraged to join the Old Boys' and Old Girls' Associations. The cost of membership and contact details are as follows:

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| To join the Association, please email: | BRAoldgirls@outlook.com  |
| Registered Charity Number NIC104739    | Annual Membership: £5.00 |



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| Hon. Treasurer:                     | Nik Simon, c/o Belfast Royal Academy,<br>Cliftonville Road, Belfast, BT14 6JL                                     |
| Alumni and Membership enquires:     | alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net                                                                                    |
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| London & Edinburgh Dinner enquires: | doc_malone2004@yahoo.co.uk                                                                                        |
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| Estates Manager's Assistant      | Miss. G. Foy                                                          |
| Grounds Maintenance              | Mr. A. Gaw, B.Tech.                                                   |



|                                  |                                                            |
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| Estates Assistant Maintenance    | Mr. J. Craig                                               |
| Estates Assistant / Bus Driver   | Mr. I. Stinson                                             |
| Estates Assistant / Bus Driver   | Mrs. C. Easdon                                             |
| Estates Assistant / Janitor      | Mr. K. Hogg                                                |
| Estates Assistant / Janitor      | Mr. D. McKee                                               |
| Estates Assistant / Janitor      | Mr. J. Holland                                             |
| Swimming Pool Manager/Instructor | Ms. P. Gregge                                              |
| Modern Languages Assistants      | Ms. Y. Colin<br>Ms. H. Aguilar Martínez<br>Ms. S. Gushurst |

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| Mr. D. Calvert, B.A.                   | Miss. G. L. McNeill, B.A., M.Sc.                                  |
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| Ms. L. Kyle                            | Mr. G. Rice, Cert.Couns.                                          |



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Miss. L. Rooney, B.Sc.

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Mrs. E. Lyons

Miss. D. Speers

Mrs. L. Lyons, M.A.

Mrs. D. Townsend

Miss. K. Matthews, B.A.

Mrs. R. Tsang, B.A., Cert.Couns.

Ms. O. McCann

Mrs. N. Watson

Miss. O. McComb

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Mrs. J. Bill, M.A.

Mr. J. Creighton, B.Sc.

Mrs. P. Lennon, B.Ed.

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Daycare Manager

Miss. M. Boyd, B.A.

Pre-Preparatory Assistant

Miss. L. Mitchell

Pre-Preparatory & Afterschool Assistant

Miss. C. Owens

Building Supervisor

Mr. R. Crawford

Cook

Mrs. L. Johnston

Classroom Assistant

Miss. E. Richardson, B.A.



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# Valete

## ROSLYN O'DONNELL



Roslyn O'Donnell's journey in the world of art and education began at the University of Ulster, where she specialised in 3D design ceramics. Her passion for shaping not just clay, but young minds, led her to pursue a teaching diploma. From the moment she stepped into the classroom, it was evident that she was destined to leave a lasting impact.

Her teaching career took her halfway across the globe to Sydney, Australia, where she spent five fruitful years at two prestigious all-boys schools. However, the call of home and the desire to contribute to her community brought her back to Northern Ireland.

In Craigavon, Roslyn continued to nurture her artistic talents as an artist in residence, engaging with community groups and showcasing her work. It wasn't long before her teaching prowess was recognised, and in 1995, she secured a permanent post at the Belfast Model School for Girls. Three years later, we were fortunate enough to have her join our family at Belfast Royal Academy.

Over the past 26 years, Roslyn has been more than just a teacher. She has been a mentor, a confidante, and a friend to countless students. Her caring and approachable nature has made her a beloved figure in the halls of our school. Through her dedication, many of her students have excelled, with numerous art pieces selected for True Colours and achieving the highest marks within CCEA.

But Roslyn's influence extends far beyond the art room. She has immersed herself in school life, participating in everything from school plays to the life-changing trip to Malawi. She has shown us all that education is not confined to textbooks and exams, but is about nurturing the whole person and fostering a spirit of curiosity and compassion.

It's been said that "art teachers paint minds," and Roslyn has painted masterpieces. Her students will carry the lessons she imparted with them forever, not just in their portfolios, but in their hearts. Having taught them to see the world differently, to appreciate the beauty in the everyday, and to express themselves with confidence and originality.

Roslyn's retirement is well-deserved, but her absence will be deeply felt. Having faced the challenges and sacrifices of this profession with grace and resilience. She has been a beacon of creativity and passion. As she steps into this new chapter of her life, we hope that she will continue to inspire, create, and enjoy every moment to the fullest.



We thank Roslyn for her years of service and endless enthusiasm and wish her a retirement filled with new adventures, continued creativity, and, of course, lots of laughter.

**L.A.P**

## **FIONA GILMORE**



As we bid farewell to Mrs Fiona Gilmore, we celebrate her remarkable 21-year career at Belfast Royal Academy. Fiona's journey in education is a testament to her dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to her students and colleagues. Fiona is a former pupil of Wallace High School. After completing A-levels in Maths, Physics, and Biology, she went on to read Physics and Computer Science at Queen's University, Belfast. Following her honours degree, she completed a PGCE in Physics and Physical Education, also at Queen's. Fiona's first post was at her alma mater, Wallace High School, where she spent nine years teaching A-level Physics, Junior Science, and Games.

In 1995, Fiona welcomed her first child, Jeff, followed by Julia and Michael. After taking a career break to focus on her young family, she returned to teaching in 1999, with periods at Forthill Integrated and Victoria College. In September 2003, she joined the staff at Belfast Royal Academy, where she became an integral part of the Physics Department.

Fiona's impact on our school has been profound. She is an exceptional physicist who, alongside her close colleague Mrs. Terek, has guided some of our brightest students to remarkable achievements. Notable examples include Olivia Burke, who received the Sir Hans Sloane Award for the highest combined science marks at A-level in 2010; Ryan Ferguson, who finished second in Northern Ireland for combined science marks in 2023; and Oscar Hill, who was awarded a Top Gold in the British Physics Olympiad in 2024.

Fiona enriched the learning experiences of her students through engaging experiments, stimulating lessons, and memorable trips, such as the inspirational visit to CERN, which she organised and ran in collaboration with St. Malachy's College, Belfast. Her passion for hands-on learning has ignited a love for Physics in many young minds.

Fiona's contributions to the school have extended far beyond the Physics laboratory. She has also taught Games and PE, coached netball teams, and endured sleepless nights while supervising students during SU weekend events. An enthusiastic skier, Fiona has been a regular participant in the annual B.R.A. ski trips, even after a memorable off-piste detour resulted in a fractured pelvis. Her commitment to building strong relationships with students has always been evident, as she actively sought to connect with them outside the classroom.

As Fiona prepares for retirement, she leaves behind a legacy of excellence. Always an adventurous spirit, she is now set to embark on new journeys with her husband, Neil, in their recently purchased campervan.



Fiona, your smile, expertise, and kind nature will be deeply missed by the Physics Department and the entire school community. We wish you a long, happy, and healthy retirement filled with many joyful miles on the road.

**R.B**

## **GILLIAN MORRIS**



Gillian Morris attended Stranmillis College from 1999 - 2003, where she achieved her B'Ed Honours degree. She joined Belfast Royal Academy In 2004 And would continue to teach here for the next 20 years.

Gillian was a brilliant classroom teacher who got the best out of her pupils. From the very first day, she demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence. Her classes were never dull. The rapport she built with her students was key to the success she endured over her 20 years of service. The impact of Gillian extended far beyond the walls of the classroom. She was a mentor, a guide and a friend to countless students, helping them navigate the complexities of growing up and preparing them for the future. Many of her former students, now adults, can trace their accomplishments back to the lessons learned and the values instilled by her.

As a head of year, Gillian oversaw two and a half full cycles, dedicating herself to the girls before her. Her first form mistress post was in September 2006. It was very obvious and easy to see the care that Gillian had for her girls. She dedicated her time, her patience and gentleness, but also mixed these qualities with firmness and discipline to correct when needed. Such is the depth of her care for her current crop of girls, she wrote an individual card to each of them before leaving to take her new post. It is safe to say the girls have really missed her.

Outside the classroom, Gillian's contributions were just as noteworthy. Not only did she drive from and then back to Kilkeel every day, but she was. Dedicated Sunday School teacher from 2002 to 2010. She was also a member of Armah Old Boy's Silver Band from 1992 - 2010, of which she was a committee member for three years. Rumor has it she played the tuba! Furthermore, she received the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award at Saint James's Palace in 2002, and she holds a Star one and \*2 for a kayak canoe.

Gillian will be missed terribly. Her passion, her dedication, her unparalleled ability to find humor in the most stressful situations, and most of all, her unwavering commitment to her students have not gone unnoticed. On behalf of the Religious Education Department, her friends, and colleagues, I would like to wish her the absolute best in her new post at Down High School.

**P.M**

## **SARAH BELL**

Mrs Sarah Bell leaves Ben Madigan after just under 10 years of teaching across several year groups. She joined the school in August 2015 as a newly qualified teacher and quickly established herself as an excellent and dedicated professional. Hugely popular amongst both pupils and staff, Mrs Bell was always more than a teacher. Nothing was ever too much trouble for her – a trait that was respected by her colleagues, pupils, and parents. As a Prep 4 class teacher she consistently taught with great enthusiasm – her genuine care for the children's learning and welfare was clear to see.



She respected the great musical tradition in Ben Madigan by delivering many Carol Services, school plays, B.R.A. school concerts, and School Proms alongside the weekly hymn practices and Assemblies. Musically very talented with a beautiful singing voice, she was able to encourage many pupils to push themselves. Mrs Bell also undertook some of the ICT management responsibilities including updating the website and assisting colleagues with technical issues. She was always kind and built trusting and honest relationships with the children, staff, and parents. We wish her all the very best as she enjoys new challenges with the support of her husband, Andrew, and two children Tess and Jude.

F.G

### NICOLA FRIEL



Nicola joined the staff of Ben Madigan as Miss Henry in January 2020 and brought her expertise as a qualified Forest School teacher to enhance our pupils' experience in the extensive school grounds. During the years since, she has married Colin and had a baby daughter, Charlotte. A gentle and calm teacher, her classroom was a haven of fun and every child was encouraged to do their best. Her baking skills were always popular in the staffroom as she produced delicious cakes.

Nicola joins a local primary school closer to home to widen her professional experience. We wish her all the best with this exciting new chapter.

F.G

### REBEKAH DALLAS

Ben Madigan Principal, Mrs Rebekah Dallas leaves for a new position after just under 2 years in the post. She joined the staff in January 2023 moving from a preparatory school situated in the rugged moors of Yorkshire to a preparatory school nestled at the foot of Cave Hill. Mrs Dallas's energy enabled her to develop a good relationship with the pupils. Her love of all things sport was apparent in the playground. She was a great "multi-tasker", being called upon to teach on the one hand a Prep 4 class, then having to supervise a very busy dinner hall, and finally to give one of her comprehensive guided tours around the school to prospective parents.

She embraced the strong musical tradition in Ben Madigan accompanying singing and helping with the school play. She enthusiastically organised the residential visits to Ballyhaas in Co. Cork and the Share Centre in Enniskillen.

Outside school, Mrs Dallas was busy with her two young sons and her dog. We wish her and her family well as they begin a new chapter in Edinburgh.

F.G



## PHILIP INGRAM



Mr Ingram retires with our thanks for all that he has contributed over his 27 years of service. He joined Ben Madigan in January 1997 as a newly qualified teacher and will be hugely missed by pupils and colleagues alike. Throughout his tenure, he has consistently demonstrated his creativity and resourcefulness as a teacher. He always enjoyed a superb working relationship with his pupils, establishing and demanding high expectations yet simultaneously showing care and compassion for all. He was wonderful at preparing pupils for the next stage of their academic careers – “big school”. He was also hugely respected and trusted by parents and built strong bonds with them over the years. He contributed to the curricular and extracurricular life of the school as he was involved in all sports, particularly rugby, and running the popular ski trips to Austria. No one will forget his many inventive fancy-dress outfits for World Book Day and Halloween. He was our resident DJ – helping at all our discos – and our sound engineer for many school plays and nativity plays. He relished the challenge of cooking bacon for 100 people at our annual charity coffee brunch and flipping burgers at the Prep 7 leavers’ event. He was an excellent ambassador for the school and a real “team player”. He is a past pupil of Ben Madigan and Belfast Royal Academy and is always supportive of both, frequently seen wearing his Academy tie.

Ever young at heart, Mr. Ingram always led the way in the staffroom – whether it was fashion (some interesting suits), the latest trainers, nutrition, or social events. He had the most amazing range of aftershaves which he lent to anyone who asked. The men’s staff cloakroom was more a sophisticated locker room/Spa with Mr Ingram in charge. He was frequently found practicing the drums for his “dad” band or performing handstands in the Assembly Hall. He also ran the most helpful pharmacy from his desk drawer for the staff – all ailments from colds, flu, or headaches could be alleviated by his wide selection of medicines. On snowy days, staff simply parked on the Antrim Road until Mr Ingram arrived and carefully drove our cars to the required spot. An infectious sense of humour and ability to bring laughter and joy to any situation made him an esteemed colleague. He consistently made time for others and his presence had the remarkable ability to brighten anyone’s day. Ben Madigan will not be the same without him, but he will enjoy spending more time with his wife, Laura, and his two sons Lewis and Myles (never mind his beloved dog, Coco). He has however left many photographs of himself around the school should we dare forget him.

## LEARNING SUPPORT STAFF

### AMIE BRADLEY

After completing her Undergraduate degree at Liverpool John Moores University, Amie - a former pupil of the Academy - returned to B.R.A. to take up a post as General Assistant within the Learning Support Department. She also coached hockey after school and on Saturday mornings whilst continuing to play at Owls Ladies Hockey Club. Amie left her post to return to Liverpool to complete a PGCE in Physical Education. We wish her luck in her path to pursue a career in teaching.



## **ELLIE BURNS**

Former pupil Ellie Burns began the 2023/24 academic year working in the Learning Support Department. Her friendly nature and enthusiasm were evident to staff and pupils alike and she was a valuable member of the team. Ellie departed B.R.A. to pursue a career with Emirates Airlines. She is now based in UAE and we wish her every success for her world travels.

## **CAITLIN HOEY**

Caitlin, a past pupil of Belfast Royal Academy, came back to spend a short time in the Learning Support Department during the 2023/24 year. Not only did she enjoy being back at the Academy, but she valued this experience to inspire her in her future career. With a passion for languages, Caitlin is now completing a PGCE in French in the hope of pursuing a career in teaching. We wish her all the best with her studies.

## **FIONA HOLLEY**

Fiona Holley brought with her a wealth of experience from her time in Kenya as a PE teacher. She is a passionate runner in her spare time with several marathons under her belt. Her caring and calm nature made her a very valuable member of the team who was extremely supportive of both pupils and staff. Fiona moved to take up a post closer to her hometown and we wish her well in her new post.

## **REBECCA HUNTER**

Rebecca worked within the Learning Support Department while completing her studies at Queen's University Belfast in Social Work. During her time at B.R.A., she was also actively involved with coaching sport, mainly hockey and netball. She continues to play for Owls Ladies Hockey Club and coaches their mini-hockey section. Now graduated, she is pursuing a career as a social worker.

## **KATE JOHNSTON**

After a career as a social worker where her main post was supporting young people with drug and alcohol addiction, Kate took time out to enjoy raising her beautiful twin girls. We were fortunate to have her valuable experience in B.R.A. during 2023/24. Alongside her main role, she worked to provide wellbeing support for individual pupils. She has moved to take up a post closer to home in the Primary school sector. We wish her all the best in her new post.

## **ANNIE LONG**

We had the pleasure of working alongside Annie Long in the Learning Support Department during a short tenure from September – December 2023. After spending time working for Service Air, Annie decided travel was her passion. She joined her friend and colleague Ellie Burns in UAE where she trained and gained her wings as a hostess for Emirates Airlines. We wish Annie good luck and best wishes in her travels.

## **NEIL OG MARTIN**

A former pupil of the Academy, Neil Og came to join our Learning Support Department during the 2023/24 academic year. With a degree in History and a wealth of musical experience, his affable nature was a welcome addition to the team. Neil helped with the Junior Trad group during lunch times and supported several pupils to help them achieve their potential. We wish him well in his future endeavours.



## **AINE MCDERMOTT**

We welcomed Aine McDermott to the Learning Support team in January 2024 during the interim period between her studies and she quickly became a valuable member of our staff. She was organised, and patient and had a friendly manner with pupils. Aine is now completing her PGCE in English at Queen's University Belfast and has already completed a short placement at Ben Madigan Preparatory School. We wish her every success in her endeavours.

## **OLIVER SCOTT**

Former Head Boy, Oliver Scott gave us the benefit of his time here at School by taking up a post supporting pupils as part of the Learning Support team. A keen rugby player while at the Academy, he continues to enjoy this sport in his spare time. Whilst working at B.R.A. he coached rugby to junior pupils each week including Saturday mornings. Oliver has gone on to study Economics at Trinity College, Dublin and we wish him every success.

## **GEORGIA THOMPSON**

Georgia Thompson joined the team in 2020 after completing an Undergraduate degree in Early Childhood studies. She was an avid supporter of Scripture Union during her time at Belfast Royal Academy. She has moved on to study a PGCE at Queen's University Belfast with a view to a career in Health and Social Sciences. We congratulate her on her nuptials to William in April of 2023 and wish her the best of luck in her future.

## **KIRBY THOMPSON**

Before coming to Belfast Royal Academy, Kirby had graduated from Queen's University Belfast with first-class honours in English and Film. She then completed a Masters in English literary studies. Kirby worked with the Learning Support Department for two years before embarking on a PGCE in English to become a secondary teacher. She has great experience in drama and performance, helping with the after-school drama club. Outside of school, she was also passionate about drama, co-writing and directing her own very successful play 'Float' this past year which debuted at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival summer of 2024.

## **JILL LAMBERT**

Jill was appointed as Estates Manager in November 2017. Jill, a qualified architect, brought her vast experience to the role of Estates Manager, transforming the Estates department. She relocated the Estates office to under the Crombie Building this central location helped foster real team spirit amongst the Estates staff. Jill's approach to management and the restructuring of the team itself further contributed to make a strong, cohesive department.

Throughout her years in the School, as well as managing the maintenance and health and safety of the three sites, Jill managed various projects from start to finish. The Jackson concourse toilets, a new concept of school toilet design was her vision, right down to the very hardware used. She even had prototype cubicle doors made by the B.R.A. maintenance team, engaging with pupils throughout the process to get the design 'just right'. The Foundry pavilion was another of Jill's concept designs, a beautiful building geared for hosting and teaching at our Roughfort site. Jill's legacy is evident in how much she is missed in the estates department and B.R.A. as a whole.

Jill is now working for Sport NI and we wish her all the best in her new role.



# Obituaries

## JILLIAN ADAMS



Ms Adams as we know hailed from Armagh and was a former pupil of Markethill High school. As well as a diligent student she was a true 'Sporty type'. She won the Junior and Intermediate girls' athletics cups, was captain of the Hockey team, on the firsts netball team and 'Best overall Sportswoman' from Form I right through to Form V. If you knew of her ability to walk the mountains of Donegal in recent months, she had lost little of her fitness.

After secondary school, she attended Armagh College of F.E. and followed on to Stranmillis College where she excelled- with a 1st class honours Bachelor of Education from Queen's University, Belfast. She specialised in Business Studies and IT, achieved a grade A in her teaching practice, and won the prestigious 'Vere Foster Gold medal' for the Most meritorious secondary

student. She attained the top mark in her final exam in 1993. Her first teaching post was as a lecturer in Castlereagh College of Further Education from 1993-1996 before joining the Academy in September 1996 as a member of the growing Business Studies department.

She quickly displayed her ability as an absolute work-horse and was well organised, thoughtful and perceptive- always so well liked by her pupils. I know when pupils past and present think of Ms Adams it is with such fondness. She always made pupils feel valued and above all, believed in. Ms Adams taught Business Studies in Belfast Royal Academy for over 28 years. She was an expert and diligent subject specialist who had high expectations of her pupils and always encouraged them to achieve more. She held the role of Head of Careers since 2007 and she excelled in this crucial area of school life. She ensured that Academy pupils received the best possible careers guidance and she took this onerous responsibility extremely seriously by providing appropriate and relevant experiences of the workplace, utilising our extensive alumni network to provide careers talks on a variety of topics and preparing pupils for competitive courses through mock interview experiences. Her personal interest in supporting pupils who were applying for nursing and health related courses was reflected in the high success rate of applications to these professions.

Throughout her long career, Ms Adams held other roles of responsibility including Head of Year, Head of House and teacher in charge of the showjumping team. In an early CAREER appraisal, former Headmaster Mr. Young commented: 'She continually strives to encourage pupils to aim for excellence, in this, she is an excellent example herself, to all.'

Above all, she was a loyal and dearly beloved friend to so many members of the Academy community. Jillian was a stalwart of the many



social activities that took place amongst the staff and was always at the centre of fun and laughter in the staffroom. Her kindness, ability to not take herself too seriously and her loyalty ensured that she was a hugely popular colleague.

Ms Adams has dedicated her life to two things. Her work was obviously one, but most importantly she dedicated her life to her family. With a hugely supportive wider family, she and her husband Gethin built such a wonderful legacy, with their two sons Bryn and Davyd at the heart of it. Both of the boys are Academy alumni and I know she treasured the years her boys were here with her. They saw first-hand the esteem in which she was held in B.R.A.

Due to ill health Ms Adams sudden and shocking departure from school in October 2023 left a massive physical and emotional hole in many of our lives at the Academy. She is missed by her pupils and friends every single day. She retained a keen interest in all Academy-related business. She faced her medical prognosis with characteristic bravery and good humour and was always delighted to welcome colleagues who called at her house.

We extend our deepest condolences to her husband Gethin, children Bryn and Davyd, her parents and the wider family circle. Her legacy not only lives on with her boys but with her pupils both past and present.

Jillian Adams is undoubtedly one of the most dedicated members of staff to ever have walked the corridors of this school – a true advocate of Belfast Royal Academy. She was such an inspiration both in sickness and in health and she will be immeasurably missed. She touched the lives of so many pupils and colleagues and we are all the richer for having known her.

**L.N./H.W.**

## **KIM TEPE**



The School community was shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden death of our friend and colleague, Kim Tepe on 20th January 2024. Kim was a valuable member of the Learning Support Department and a friend to many colleagues. She was appointed 15 years ago as one of the first classroom assistants employed in the Academy and provided invaluable guidance and support to countless pupils on an individual basis throughout her time in the Learning Support Department. Her caring and compassionate nature and her commitment to helping pupils fulfil their potential leaves a lasting legacy.

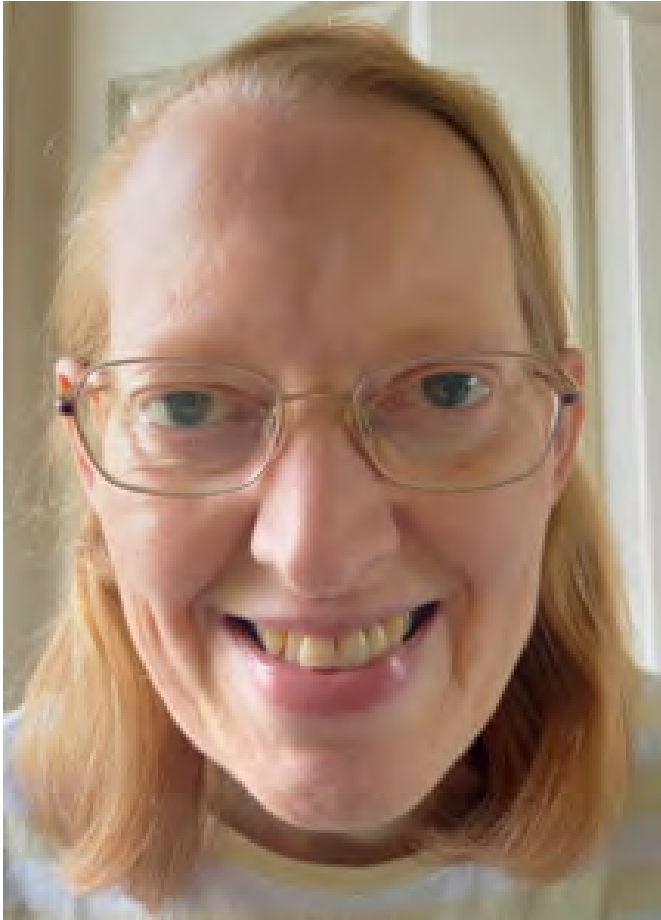
Kim had an infectious enthusiasm for life and her sense of fun and enjoyment of social activities made working alongside her as a colleague a real joy.

It is impossible to sum up Kim's contribution to the School. She continues to be missed and her family members and her partner Ray remain in our thoughts.

**W.G.**



## JUNE MEIGHAN



It was with much sadness that the School community heard of the passing of June Meighan on Tuesday 10th September 2024 after a period of recent illness.

June Meighan was appointed to the Learning Support Department in August 2022. She was genuinely interested in supporting young people as evidenced by her church commitments outside of school and the Learning Support Department very much benefitted from her quiet diligence and care for others.

As a former pupil of the School, June felt very much part of the BRA family especially as her daughter, Danielle, also a past Academy pupil, is another valued member of the Learning Support Team.

June will be much missed by her family, her friends and her colleagues, but most of all by her daughter Danielle to whom she was devoted.

W.G.





# *Distribution of Prizes*

The Annual Distribution of Prizes took place this year on Friday 18th October at The Spire's Centre. Prof. J. A. I. Montgomery, on behalf of Mr. D.E. Porter (Warden), delivered an engaging speech which focused on the hard work of both the pupils within the school and the staff.

The guest of honour Anne Madden encouraged prize-winners to aim high and to go out and make a difference in the world. Anne dedicated her speech to Mr. Connolly and to her peers who have passed. Anne urged pupils to not be pigeonholed into certain areas of learning, to have fun and to laugh at yourself, telling pupils they will value education more in their later years. Anne concluded by congratulating prize-winners for making their parents proud and for their hard work, along with their teacher's hard work.

The Senior Orchestra had feet tapping as they performed 'Dam Buster's March' by Eric. Coates (1886 - 1957). The Chamber Choir sang 'Irish Blessing' by Philip Stopford (b. 1977) with beautiful harmonies.

We are most grateful to Rev. Professor Patton Taylor for opening the prize-giving ceremony.

## **THE PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS**

Good afternoon, Reverend Taylor, ladies and gentlemen, pupils, colleagues, Governors and our guest speaker Anne Madden.

Anne left BRA in 1994 after a stellar career in the Academy winning multiple academic prizes for Latin, History and Politics year after year.

She was also a talented musician, singing alongside two of her sisters in the Senior Choir, and playing the flute in the wind band and Senior Orchestra. In her final year of school, she was awarded a place at Somerville College, Oxford to read Modern History focusing on slavery, emancipation and the American Civil War. For the past 10 years, Anne

has been the Policy and Communications manager with the walking and cycling charity Sustrans. We know that we have to do better both as a city and a school to improve our sustainability credentials and increase the number of people who walk or cycle to school so hope that Anne can provide some encouragement this afternoon. However, her even more impressive claim to fame than her undoubted academic and musical talents was the fact that Anne was one of four Madden sisters (Fiona, Jill and Claire) who were at the Academy at the same time and this photograph shows them on the Crombie steps.

It was, up to then, the only time in the modern history of the School that all the girls in one family were at the Academy at the same time and to our knowledge, this record still stands.

Anne's career journey - which you can read in more detail in the Prize Day booklet - across various professions and industries highlights the versatility of the skills she has developed as an historian. As we celebrate the achievements of our prize winners today, it is fitting that we hear from someone whose academic journey and career demonstrate the power of history – not just as a discipline but as a tool for shaping the future. Anne – thank you for taking the time out of your schedule to return to our prize distribution this afternoon.

We were pleased to welcome the USA Special Envoy, Mr Joe Kennedy to the Academy at the beginning of this month and during his visit he heard a potted history of the Academy. Next year, our school will celebrate its 240th anniversary and there will be time then to reflect on the Academy's rich history in more detail. However, with an historian as our guest speaker, I think it is appropriate to hear a little about our heritage this afternoon.



As we all know, our school was founded in 1785 by prominent Belfast professional and business leaders and was originally known as The Belfast Academy. The founders were Presbyterians of Scottish ancestry - enlightened liberals who strongly supported education as an essential tool for securing full religious and civil rights for all the citizens of Ireland. In 1791, some of them, inspired by the French Revolution and the writings of Tom Paine formed the United Irishmen, dedicated to the emancipation of Irish Catholics. The School's first Principal, the Rev Dr James Crombie also became involved with radical Presbyterians in Belfast. One of his sons, Joseph, joined the United Irishmen and, arrested after the 1798 Rebellion, was due to be hanged.

After many frantic appeals, Joseph was allowed to 'escape' on condition he leave the country immediately. He fled to the United States where he died in 1806. In the 19th century, the affairs of the Academy prospered under a number of distinguished Principals and the early influences of radical politics were replaced by a growing emphasis on scholarly achievement and advances in education. One principal, Dr Reuben Bryce, was an educational innovator and introduced new methods of teaching which were both popular and successful. His students included a Lord Chancellor of England (Lord Cairns) and an ambassador to the United States (Lord Bryce). He also led the way in facilitating education for girls, beginning with evening classes for 'young ladies' and his students achieved considerable success.

Fast forward to today and the Academy's 2024 pupil body reflects the diversity of Belfast in terms of religious denomination, ethnicity and race. As we will hear later in my report, the dedicated staff provide an outstanding education for our pupils and the emphasis on character and values is reflected by a rich extra-curricular programme including successful music, art, drama and sport.

When one contrasts life now in a busy school of over 1470 pupils and 200 staff with how much more simple life must have been for Academy pupils and staff in the late 18th century, it is not easy to draw parallels. Yes, pupils were able to bring both a dog and a gun into school in 1785 (with the Principal's permission of course) and we

know that the founders faced financial struggles and challenges in recruiting staff but I cannot imagine how the famous barring out incident would have been reported now on Belfast Live, Instagram and TikTok!

In terms of present day trials and tribulations, the Preparatory Department of the School has faced an extremely challenging year and members of the School community will be aware that Governors have taken the painful decision to begin a development proposal to consider the future of Ben Madigan. It is unfortunate that this attracted so much media attention which has made daily life for Ben Madigan pupils and staff difficult. During this process, the Governors and staff will do all that they can to continue to provide a high quality education for our pupils and ensure that their pastoral needs continue to be met.

The choice of school between the ages of 11 – 18 leaves an everlasting imprint on pupils' character. I am sure everyone in this audience recognises this in themselves – the influence of an inspirational teacher, the opportunities you were exposed to, the ethos of the school will all have infiltrated their way into your development and the formation of your character. Our new Form 1 pupils will be the class of 2031 and past experience teaches us that much of what they will go on to achieve in Northern Ireland and further afield will be shaped by their experience and interactions with staff within the walls and the sports grounds of BRA. Connections are everything in this school. Our pupils will make amazing memories in school and strengthen connections with each other through endeavours in the classroom, in the examination hall, on the sports pitch, on stage, in debating competitions, in mock magistrates' competitions, on the ski trip, in a house competition and so many more.

And these connections form a really tight web for all of this around this amazing school and will act as an anchor to this little corner of North Belfast when they leave us to go off and become leaders and thinkers all around the world.

We achieve what we do in educating, leading and inspiring our pupils as a team. That team encompasses support staff, teachers, parents and Governors.



We were deeply saddened when two members of the BRA family died this year – Mrs Kim Tepe and Mrs June Meighan. As members of the Learning Support team, they both played a significant role in supporting our pupils and had strong connections to the school as parents of former pupils and, in June's case, as a former pupil. On behalf of the entire school community we extend our deep condolences to the families of Kim and June. I would like to pay tribute to the Board of Governors, and in particular our Warden, Mr Eric Porter, who put in so many unheralded, unpaid and largely unrecognised hours on behalf of the pupils and has steadied the ship in what has been an extremely turbulent year.

I am hugely indebted to the Academy teaching staff who deliver outstanding teaching and pastoral support to our pupils but also support each other through illness, bereavement and challenging family situations.

While much of the focus in our school is on the important work that happens in the classroom, the success of our pupils and the smooth running of the school would not be possible without the dedication, commitment and hard work of those working behind the scenes. To all our learning support staff, administrative and finance staff, our IT manager, our technicians, our estates and cleaning staff – thank you. Your efforts are seen and appreciated as we know the impact you have on the lives of our pupils and the overall success of the school.

Our strength as a school in debating was recognised this year when the BRA team of Oliver Kulig (Form 5) and Emily Warnock (L6) were crowned the premier debating team out of over 80 teams from schools across Northern Ireland. The Competition was founded by Lord Lieutenant Fionnuala Jay-O'Boyle in 1993 to encourage mature debate and civic engagement amongst young people.

The BRA team were meticulously prepared and coached throughout the competition by Mrs Tate and Mr Patterson and the adjudicators were impressed by their teamwork, their research, the strength of their arguments, and their ability to respond cogently and authoritatively to points of information and questions from their opponents,

Foyle College. Our pupils' success was also recognised in another longstanding competition – the Hans Sloane Award which was first presented in 1960 and has been used to reward the highest performing pupils at A level in their combined scores in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Since its inception, BRA has been the most successful school with our pupils placed an amazing 21 times. In January of this year, we were delighted when two pupils – Riya Raghuram and Ryan Ferguson were placed 1st and 3rd respectively.

Our pupils enjoyed success in creative writing - Charlotte Marron Form 4, won the 13-16 age category in the BBC Two Minute Tales competition with her story Winter's Warmth and Clara Walsh, L6, was awarded first place for the Jigsaw Youth Writing Prize. Pupils contributed to the North Belfast Area Learning Community's poetry anthology entitled, Identity. and Lorcan McCusker's poem, Ulster Botanic and Ice Cream, featured in the Irish Times Young Writers' Annual Showcase anthology.

A significant number of Academy pupils once again took part in the UK Maths Trust's individual challenges and the number of certificates awarded and qualifiers for the elite further rounds continues to be impressive.

Similar success has been enjoyed by pupils in the British Science Association's Crest Awards in the Biology, Physics and Chemistry Olympiads and Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils were delighted to be placed third in the Chemistry Top of the Bench competition organised by Queen's University. We were extremely sorry to bid farewell to the Head of the Careers Department, Ms Jillian Adams during the course of the year. Together with other members of the department, her guidance and support has been instrumental in helping our pupils navigate the complex decisions around their future career paths. Ms Adams has been a significant part of the BRA community for many years, her two boys attended the school, and we extend our best wishes to her and her family.

Mr Murphy now leads the Careers Department offering invaluable advice, organising talks from alumni on a variety of disciplines, organising work placements and connecting pupils with opportunities that align with their ambitions and



skills. We are grateful to alumni, parents and local employers who volunteer their time and energy to assist our pupils to take the next steps in their journeys.

An emphasis on kindness has been a theme for many years in school and that is reflected in our pupils' fundraising efforts and also their willingness to give of their time through volunteering. From group fundraising via the English Department's Read-On week for NI Cancer Fund for Children, the Sixth Form led McMillan Cancer Coffee morning, the Christmas toy appeal and individual pupil driven challenges for Teenage Cancer Trust, the Kevin Bell repatriation fund our pupils have supported those who are most vulnerable and in need of help. Pupils and staff also contributed their time in numerous ways last year from assisting with Habitat for Humanity and the mental health group TAMHI, hosting an afternoon tea for senior citizens in our local community, providing homework club support for refugees based in Conway Education Centre and our Senior SU pupils visiting a children's centre in Poland to teach and distribute food parcels. History shows us that kindness is a vital component of strong communities and through their efforts, our pupils contribute to a legacy of kindness that is an important characteristic of our school.

Captains, our Heads of House have grown the number of competitions throughout last year with 42 house events which raised over £5000 for the charities nominated by each of the houses. For the first time in six years, Cairns House were victorious in securing the Evans Trophy with House Leaders Mr Rowntree and Mrs Patterson the most excited and enthusiastic winners! Our thanks to Mr Dorman and all the House Staff for keeping this crucial element of our theme of belonging to be as vibrant, enjoyable and wide-ranging as it is.

School trips continue to feature heavily in the calendar with pupils travelling to a wide variety of destinations including Paris, Berlin, Austria, Westminster, Poland and the next stage of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. Such trips are wonderfully enriching, and I am very grateful to my colleagues for giving up their time to run them. This is also true of the superb Duke of Edinburgh

Team led by our team of volunteers, who were out on numerous practice and qualifying expeditions over the past year with 143 pupils completing bronze, silver or gold awards.

Many groups support the School's successful operation including the Old Boys and Old Girls' Associations, the 1785 Foundation and the Friends of the Academy. Not only do they provide welcome funding for items of equipment and to support individual pupils but the many social activities within Northern Ireland and in London and Edinburgh, provides opportunities for former pupils, current parents and staff to come together in the name of the School to reminisce, to renew old acquaintances and to form new bonds. The Gala Ball which took place in April at Titanic Belfast was a glittering evening of celebration and fundraising for the Academy. Over 300 alumni, parents, staff and Governors came together for a fantastic evening of dining and dancing, with all proceeds going to the 1785 Foundation.

During the summer term, we also enjoyed hosting 4 groups of alumni to celebrate 20, 30, 40 and 50 years since they left school. The library was full of excited chatter and laughter as the groups rolled back the years to remember all of their shenanigans when they were at the Academy and reflect on what had changed and what had remained steadfastly the same. I used the photograph of the class of 1984 – which incidentally was the year that I left school – in a junior assembly in June to reinforce our theme of belonging with the pupils. A parent of one of our Form 1 pupils informed me that her daughter had confirmed that I had talked about the school community and the importance of connections but then my bubble was well and truly burst when she added that her daughter had said “Mrs Woods showed us a picture of a bunch of old people – what was that about?”

Team and individual sports are lynch pins of our school in terms of developing resilience, discipline and in creating long lasting memories. Our sporting programme began last August with pre-season training and continued right through the year every Saturday and mid-week in all types of weather. The facilities at Roughfort were enhanced with the opening of The Foundry, which is a superb facility for teaching, providing a venue for post-match analysis and for hosting visiting teams and spectators. In March, we were delighted



when the girls' 1st XI hockey team won the Schools' Shield Final against Royal School Dungannon. The 1st XV rugby team's journey in the Schools' Cup started extremely positively and after a heroic effort they narrowly lost to the Cup finalists Ballymena Academy. Whilst we were disappointed not to win any major trophies in rugby, it is extremely encouraging to note that so many teams reached the last 16 or 8 in their relevant competition.

A significant number of players were selected at Ulster level with Connor McVicker, Form 5 selected to play for Ireland Schools' U18 and was a part of the Ulster U18 Schools' interprovincial champions team.

If a measure of sporting success is the level of participation, then BRA must be one of the top performing schools with teams playing rugby from 1st – 4th XV, Medallion A and B teams and girls' hockey teams also covering 1st – 4th XI at senior level. One of our biggest challenges is finding other schools to play against with a similar number of teams.

Our swimmers, cricketers, athletes, cross country participants, sailors, showjumpers and gymnasts have all enjoyed considerable success too over the course of the year. The lessons learned in sport – about leadership, collaboration and mental toughness – will continue to shape our pupils' future both on and off the playing field. 2023/24 was a very busy year for the Music Department with the pupils performing at the Carol Service, Prize Day, Open Nights, School functions and the Spring Concert. The Senior Trad group took part in Belfast City Council's St Patrick's Day celebration in Royal Avenue and subsequently appeared on BBC Newsline.

Over 350 pupils participated in the annual Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall. To mark a social media feature highlighting BRA alumni who are now living and working all around the world, the Chamber Choir performed an exquisite version of the traditional Scottish song "The Parting Glass". The video was viewed over 25,000 times and judging by the comments it brought beauty and inspiration to many. The contribution that the performing arts makes to the life of our school is immeasurable and this is due in no small part to the dedication, passion and talent of our pupils and

also the staff in the Music and Drama departments. Whilst examination results are important, they are just one aspect of the well-rounded education that Academy pupils enjoy. There had been considerable coverage in the media about the resetting of academic standards after the pandemic and comparisons have been drawn with the Public Exam Results of 2019. It is therefore particularly pleasing that BRA's 2024 GCSE, AS and A level results outstrip our results back in 2019 by a significant margin in all key categories.

At A level, 86% of pupils attained 3 or more A levels at grades A\* - C with three pupils – Cormac Doherty, Joseph Golden and Oscar Hill – gaining an outstanding 5 A\* grades. 43% of grades attained were either an A\* or an A grade and all 4 of our Oxbridge candidates fulfilled the conditions of their offer.

At AS level, 74.4% of pupils attained at least 3 AS passes grades A – C with 10 pupils attaining 4 A grades whilst at GCSE, 93.7% of pupils achieved at least 7 GCSE passes grades A\* - C, including English and Mathematics.

Behind these statistics we also recognise that some of the greatest achievements in public examinations came in the form of grades that might not specifically feature in the headlines, but for which the pupils – and staff – had worked incredibly hard to overcome adversity in the form of illness, family trauma or bereavement. And whilst it is a pleasure to pass on the heartiest of congratulations to all of our prize winners this afternoon, I also want to say 'well done' to those Academy pupils who are not here this afternoon, but who nonetheless continued to make outstanding and fulfilling contributions to the life of the School last year in many different ways.

To our parents, we say thank you for entrusting your children to our care. It is a responsibility that we take very seriously and we hope that the values that are instilled by both home and school will provide guiding principles for our pupils throughout their time in school and beyond. This year marks the departure of four long serving members of teaching staff – Mrs Roslyn O'Donnell, teacher of Art & Design, Mr Philip Ingram, Prep 7 teacher in Ben Madigan Mrs Fiona Gilmore, teacher of Physics and Mrs Gillian Morris, teacher of Religious Studies. We wish our



former colleagues health and happiness in their future ventures.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership and dedication of our outgoing Head Boy, Oliver Pearce, Head Girl, Ellie Bell and Deputies Matthew McQuiston and Jeb-Jeb Samama, Cara McMahon and Debby Ogunleye. With grace, humility and a strong sense of responsibility, they led the pupil body by example, fostering a sense of unity and school spirit through their attendance at formal school events, organisation of duties and representing the school in music and sporting activities. We thank them for their service and wish them continued success in all their endeavours.

To our M6 Leavers who are taking up their places in universities all around the UK and Ireland, embarking on apprenticeships or gap years or employment – we hope that you will be ambitious for yourselves but also to make sure that you always look out for others around you, with an aim to combine the two where possible.

We know that there are 4 words that resonate with many of you now that you are BRA alumni – Academy Till I Die. But hopefully there are sets of 3 words that will keep you on a steady path in the years ahead:

Courage.Kindness.Friendship

Integrity.Gratitude.Resilience

You are about to enter the great arena of life after school. An arena that is not always fun, not always fair, you will be knocked down, you will feel discouraged but don't allow yourself to stay there. Get up, reassess, realign and reignite your fire to keep fighting.

The Irish born explorer, Ernest Shackleton said "Patience and perseverance are vital qualities in the ultimate successful accomplishment of any worthwhile endeavour."

We wish you success in your endeavours and look forward to hearing about your successes in the future when you return as 'old people' for your reunions.

Professor Montgomery – this concludes my report for the 2023 - 24 academic year.

## 2024 PRIZE LIST

### FORM I

Ahmed, Lamar B  
Alinonu, Ejike C  
Bell, Ava R  
Brown, Joshua A  
Calvert, Maeve C  
Carpenter, Ryan M  
Chen, Coco  
Chen, Peter  
Cox, Charlie F  
Fox, Zac D  
Golonka, Zofia A  
Hughes, Emily C  
Johnston, Katie L  
Ke, Enoch Y  
Lyons, Ella M  
McIlmurray, Eve  
McKeown, Eilidh J  
McKinty, Emilie S M  
McNevison, Erin A  
Nicholl, Maelin W  
Robinson, Matthew  
Seenan, Emily  
Strong, Molly  
Tohani, Saisha L  
Torrens, Lorelai E  
Turner, Grace J  
Watters, James F  
Weerawardhana, Mocsha A L V  
Welsh, Max A  
Xie, Vincy Y



## HONOURABLE MENTION

Adair, Ella K  
Armstrong, Isla A  
Beirne, Charlotte K  
Callaghan, Neamh F  
Crichton, Finn P  
Doherty, Rowan S

Gregg, Isla A  
Mathew, Aidan B  
McKee, Katie N  
Molyneaux, Luca Z  
Pollock, Scarlett I  
White, Grace

## FORM II

Connolly, Aaron  
Courtney, Joshua W  
Dalton, Benjamin A  
Davies, Callum N  
Dunlop, Chloe O  
Fularczyk, Nicola  
Gamble, Jessica E  
Gao, Joshua S Y  
Holmes, Mathilda A O  
Hurson, Cian E  
Jones, Leila  
Kelly, Grace A  
Lada, Oliver  
Lockhart, Maggie I E  
McCarey, Isabella G

McCormick, Lily C  
McDonald, Amie  
McKenna-Murray, Niamh L  
Moore, Finn J  
Morris, James K  
O’Kane, Rosie E  
Pandiaraj, Vismithaa Sai  
Press, Jonah R G  
Rogers, Hope C  
Rowan, Peter F  
Sanchez, Gabriel A  
Schilling, Christian G  
Sedgwick, William J  
Simms, Daniel J  
Vrabelova, Noelle J

## HONOURABLE MENTION

Baksh, Izabel-La A R  
Bell, Olivia M  
Geddis, Evan A  
Gillam, Isla M  
Green, William J A  
Hawkins, Matthew

Li, Boye  
Manson, Ella O  
Paul, Harry R S  
Teague, Ryan D  
Warnock, Rachel E I  
Wilson, Isla G



### FORM III

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Adair, James G        | Johnston, Holly J     |
| Adams, Molly J        | Kerr, Daniel J        |
| Allen, Marco G        | McCall, Olivia R      |
| Brogan, Shay V        | McCune, Isabelle K    |
| Campbell, Elsa J      | McCusker, Lorcan X    |
| Chojnacka, Zuzanna    | McFarlane, Amy E      |
| Crainey, Jake P       | McLean, Harry R C     |
| Crawford, Layla R     | Millin, Nathan C J    |
| Cunningham, Niamh     | Mulholland, Melissa R |
| Drake, Eva A          | Pogue, Ryan M         |
| Eneh, Lois C C        | Scott, H Moss C       |
| Forsythe-Horan, Ben T | Smyth, Jessica E      |
| Gordon, Emilia K      | Whiteside, Dylan G    |
| Graham, Kady J        | Whittley, Lucy        |
| Ingram, Charlotte R A | Wilson, Jenna M       |

### HONOURABLE MENTION

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Adams, Mylie         | Goodchild, Rhianna P |
| Bacalsco, Fritz M M  | Hudson, Maria P      |
| Bickerstaff, Scott R | Kelly, Mitchell N    |
| Clements, Gwen I     | McFerran, Steven J   |
| Clydesdale, Reece J  | McLaughlin, Ben R    |
| Curley, Jessica J    | Williamson, Harry L  |

### DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES

#### FORM IV

|                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adam, Ella J              | Drama                       |
| Aidaroos, Shimous         | Chemistry                   |
| Altayeb, Mohamed          | Digital Technology          |
| Armstrong, Mya            | Technology                  |
| Banasik, Luna             | Art and Design              |
| Bingham, Nelly C E        | Art and Design              |
| Bowler, Freya M           | English Language            |
| Boyd, Benjamin A          | Economics                   |
| Chesnel, Jérôme P G       | Home Economics              |
| Clarke, Rosa J            | Physical Education          |
| Clawson, Annie M          | Home Economics              |
| Convery, Charlie M        | Spanish                     |
| Crowe, Elizabeth G        | English Literature, Spanish |
| Dalzell-McGhee, Rebekah A | English Language            |



|                         |                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Derezinski, Antoni      | Economics                                                                                                 |
| Downey, Ella Sofia      | Physical Education                                                                                        |
| Foley, Ethan A          | History, Religious Studies                                                                                |
| Gordon, Jacob T         | Geography, Music                                                                                          |
| Gracey, Maya G          | Home Economics                                                                                            |
| Jackson, Finlay         | History, Physical Education                                                                               |
| Kirk, Phoebe K          | French                                                                                                    |
| Lockhart, Sam J R       | Business Studies                                                                                          |
| Maitland, Daniel J      | History                                                                                                   |
| Manlan, Robert G        | German                                                                                                    |
| Marron, Charlotte E     | Art and Design, Drama, English Language,<br>French, German                                                |
| McAteer, Jack S         | Science                                                                                                   |
| McCarthy, Roisin M      | Music                                                                                                     |
| McCullough, Vincent     | Business Studies, Computer Science, Geography,<br>German, Mathematics                                     |
| McKay, Daniel           | Geography                                                                                                 |
| McVeigh, Lucy E         | Latin                                                                                                     |
| McVeigh, Sophie R       | Latin                                                                                                     |
| McWhinney, Caleb J      | English Literature                                                                                        |
| Moore, Adam B           | Physics                                                                                                   |
| Morrison, Philomena H R | Business Studies                                                                                          |
| Murphy, Eleanor E       | Chemistry, English Language, English Literature,<br>Mathematics, Physics                                  |
| O’Kane, Owen P          | Technology                                                                                                |
| O’Reilly, Kacie E       | English Literature                                                                                        |
| Raghuram, Keshav        | Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, English Language,<br>Latin, Mathematics, Physics, Religious Studies |
| Ross, Holly             | Mathematics                                                                                               |
| Seath, Beatrice L       | Drama                                                                                                     |
| Spack, Cezar            | French                                                                                                    |
| Stevenson, Lucy G       | Music                                                                                                     |
| Suresh, Arjun           | Computer Science                                                                                          |
| Tate, Eimear I A        | Biology                                                                                                   |
| Toal, Elizabeth R       | Mathematics                                                                                               |
| Wilkinson, Oliver       | English Literature, Religious Studies                                                                     |
| Woloszyn, Michal L      | Spanish                                                                                                   |



## HONOURABLE MENTION FORM IV

|                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Adam, Ella J              | History                              |
| Bell, Daniel P            | Physical Education                   |
| Black, Jonah G            | Music                                |
| Carpenter, Adam D         | Business Studies                     |
| Carter, Leah G            | Physical Education                   |
| Chesnel, Jérôme P G       | Art and Design                       |
| Craig, Evan J             | Religious Studies                    |
| Crowe, Elizabeth G        | Biology, Latin                       |
| Curley, Bethany R         | History                              |
| Dalzell-McGhee, Rebekah A | French                               |
| Devlin, Ruairi            | Science                              |
| Downey, Ella Sofia        | Business Studies                     |
| Duffy, Zara A             | Biology, Spanish                     |
| Foley, Ethan A            | English Literature                   |
| Glover, Josie E           | Drama                                |
| Gordon, Jacob T           | Physics                              |
| Hughes, Anna E            | Business Studies                     |
| Kalakura, Krystian        | Digital Technology                   |
| Kirk, Phoebe K            | Drama, German                        |
| Kyle, Lucas M             | Drama                                |
| Lane, Timothy J A         | Geography                            |
| Lewis, Evie R             | Art and Design                       |
| Lockhart, Sam J R         | Chemistry, English Language, Physics |
| Magill, Matilda L         | Religious Studies, Science           |
| Maitland, Daniel J        | Business Studies                     |
| Marron, Charlotte E       | Biology, English Literature          |
| McAnoy, Callum J          | Economics                            |
| McClellan, William S P    | Science                              |
| McCullough, Vincent       | Physics                              |
| McKeown, Rebecca L        | Art and Design, Music                |
| Miskimmin-Young, Austen   | German                               |
| Moore, Adam B             | Mathematics                          |
| Morrison, Philomena H R   | Chemistry, English Language          |
| Murphy, Eleanor E         | Spanish                              |
| Nicholson, Aaron M        | Technology                           |
| O'Brien, Erin S           | English Language, Religious Studies  |
| O'Kane, Aoife T           | Mathematics                          |
| Pradeep, Rohit            | History                              |
| Raghuram, Keshav          | English Literature                   |
| Robinson, Nathanael N     | Economics                            |
| Rossal, Nadia E           | Latin                                |
| Scott, Alexander C        | Technology                           |



|                      |                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Steele, Oran A       | Biology                            |
| Stevenson, Lucy G    | German                             |
| Stewart, Matthew J R | Economics                          |
| Suresh, Arjun        | Chemistry                          |
| Taggart, Aaron G     | Computer Science                   |
| Tate, Eimear I A     | French                             |
| Toal, Elizabeth R    | Chemistry, Computer Science, Latin |
| Wilkinson, Oliver    | Spanish                            |
| Wilson, Sophie J     | Music                              |
| Woloszyn, Michal L   | Computer Science                   |
| Wright, Isaac O      | French                             |
| Wright, Tate J M     | Technology                         |

## DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES FORM V

|                        |                                                                                        |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Akmad, Aliyah N        | Art and Design, Biology, English<br>Language, Exceptional Performance                  |
| Cahill, Grace E        | Spanish                                                                                |
| Campbell, Maya M       | Chemistry, English Literature,<br>French, Physics, Spanish,<br>Exceptional Performance |
| Carter, Aaron J        | Business Studies                                                                       |
| Chen, Loannes Y H      | Mathematics                                                                            |
| Chen, Sean             | Biology, Further Mathematics,<br>German, Physics                                       |
| Clements, Ruby I       | Geography, Technology                                                                  |
| Colvin, Max J          | Geography                                                                              |
| Coulter, Jake C        | Computer Science                                                                       |
| Daniels, Hope C E      | Further Mathematics, Physical<br>Education, Religious Studies,<br>Spanish              |
| Donaldson, Rosa J      | English Literature, History                                                            |
| French, Alex A         | General Excellence                                                                     |
| Gibson, Joshua G S     | Technology                                                                             |
| Gilmore, Madison M     | Drama                                                                                  |
| Hamilton, Grace M      | Business Studies                                                                       |
| Haridy, Ahmed          | Spanish                                                                                |
| Hipolito, Samuel G     | Further Mathematics                                                                    |
| Irwin, Jayden D        | Physical Education                                                                     |
| Januszevska, Wiktorja  | English Language, English Literature                                                   |
| Johnston, Samuel       | Music, Religious Studies                                                               |
| Kirkpatrick, Rebecca C | Home Economics                                                                         |
| Kulig, Oliver          | English Language, English<br>Literature, French, Geography, Latin                      |
| Latham, Ruby A G       | Business Studies                                                                       |



|                            |                                                                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lavery, Abby J R           | German                                                            |
| Lin, Jacky                 | Mathematics                                                       |
| McCrea, Toby               | Economics                                                         |
| McCullough, Lauren S       | English Language, English Literature, History, Latin, Mathematics |
| McKee, Owen M              | Computer Science, Further Mathematics                             |
| McLaughlin, Jacob R        | Mathematics                                                       |
| McQueen, Alexandra N       | Art and Design, Music                                             |
| McVicker, Connor M         | Science                                                           |
| Moore, Evie                | Drama                                                             |
| Morris, Megan A            | Home Economics                                                    |
| Nethercott, Edward H       | Music                                                             |
| O'Carroll, Ella R          | Drama                                                             |
| O'Hanlon, Patrick J        | Economics                                                         |
| Patterson-Wilson, George W | Technology                                                        |
| Quinn, Erin L              | Biology, Business Studies, English Language, Religious Studies    |
| Rankin, Hannah J L         | Art and Design, History                                           |
| Saunders, Zachary          | Computer Science                                                  |
| Scott, Ines A J            | General Excellence                                                |
| Seymour, Mya J             | Home Economics                                                    |
| Shute, Imogen              | German                                                            |
| Smyth, Lucy K              | Biology, Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Physics                  |
| Staworzynski, Olivier P    | Chemistry                                                         |
| Teague, Sarah              | Physical Education                                                |
| Wallace, Malachy P         | French, Latin, Mathematics                                        |

## HONOURABLE MENTION FORM V

|                   |                                                         |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Akmad, Aliyah N   | Further Mathematics, Religious Studies, Spanish         |
| Baird, Finlay J   | Latin, General Excellence                               |
| Baird, Ryan L D   | Further Mathematics                                     |
| Blair, Adrianna   | Latin                                                   |
| Blayney, Lydia L  | General Excellence                                      |
| Campbell, Maya M  | Biology, Further Mathematics                            |
| Carter, Aaron J   | English Language                                        |
| Chen, Sean        | General Excellence                                      |
| Chowne, Sophia S  | Art and Design                                          |
| Clarkson, Leo J   | Music                                                   |
| Clements, Ruby I  | General Excellence                                      |
| Coulter, Jake C   | English Language, General Excellence                    |
| Craig, Chloe A    | English Literature                                      |
| Crawford, Ella    | Business Studies, General Excellence                    |
| Crossan, Eva R    | English Language, General Excellence                    |
| Daniels, Hope C E | General Excellence                                      |
| Donald, Ellie S   | Drama                                                   |
| Donaldson, Rosa J | Chemistry, Latin, Religious Studies, General Excellence |



|                            |                                                        |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Dowey, Jack A              | Science                                                |
| French, Alex A             | Computer Science, German, Technology                   |
| Gibson, Joshua G S         | Computer Science                                       |
| Gilmore, Madison M         | General Excellence                                     |
| Gourley, Ruben             | Science                                                |
| Gray, Erin S               | Physical Education, General Excellence                 |
| Hamilton, Grace M          | General Excellence                                     |
| Haridy, Ahmed              | General Excellence                                     |
| Hipolito, Samuel G         | General Excellence                                     |
| Ingram, Zoe H              | General Excellence                                     |
| Januszewska, Wiktoria      | French, Latin, Religious Studies, General Excellence   |
| Jones, Ema                 | General Excellence                                     |
| Kearney, Clodagh           | General Excellence                                     |
| Kirkpatrick, Rebecca C     | General Excellence                                     |
| Kulig, Oliver              | History, General Excellence                            |
| Latham, Ruby A G           | Home Economics                                         |
| Lavery, Abby J R           | Geography                                              |
| Macauley, Molly C          | Music                                                  |
| McCollam, Hugo C           | Chemistry, General Excellence                          |
| McCullough, Lauren S       | Biology, Physics                                       |
| McCurley, Toby J           | Mathematics                                            |
| McGrath, Ben               | French, General Excellence                             |
| McKee, Owen M              | Biology, Spanish, General Excellence                   |
| McKeown, Eve G H           | Technology, General Excellence                         |
| McLaughlin, Jacob R        | Art and Design, French, Physics, General Excellence    |
| McQueen, Alexandra N       | General Excellence                                     |
| Morrison, James R          | Biology, General Excellence                            |
| Murray, James T            | Chemistry                                              |
| Nellis, Fionn L            | Science                                                |
| Nethercott, Edward H       | Drama                                                  |
| O'Hanlon, Patrick J        | General Excellence                                     |
| O'Kane, Harry D            | Economics, Spanish, General Excellence                 |
| O'Kane, Jamie E            | German                                                 |
| Patterson-Wilson, George W | Chemistry, General Excellence                          |
| Payot, Gail L              | Business Studies, Music, General Excellence            |
| Platt-Bell, Scarlett L     | General Excellence                                     |
| Pollock, Jackson J         | General Excellence                                     |
| Pollock, Lucca R           | Economics                                              |
| Quinn, Erin L              | English Literature, General Excellence                 |
| Scott, Ines A J            | Art and Design, Drama, English Literature, Mathematics |
| Seymour, Mya J             | General Excellence                                     |
| Shute, Imogen              | General Excellence                                     |



|                         |                                         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Smith, Ruby C           | General Excellence                      |
| Smyth, Lucy K           | General Excellence                      |
| Snoddy, Alexandra V     | Physical Education                      |
| Spence, Adam S J        | History                                 |
| Staworzynski, Olivier P | General Excellence                      |
| Strong, Beth S          | General Excellence                      |
| Taylor, Finn L          | Physics, Technology, General Excellence |
| Teague, Sarah           | General Excellence                      |
| Torrens, Ethan E        | General Excellence                      |
| Tosh, Robbie S M        | Physical Education                      |
| Wallace, Malachy P      | Geography, General Excellence           |
| Ward, Daniel T R        | Mathematics                             |
| Watt, Lucy P            | History                                 |
| Yip, Rigby A            | German                                  |

## DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES FORM LVI

|                       |                                               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Anderson, Emily B     | Business Studies                              |
| Anderson, Rachael A   | German                                        |
| Bacon, D Jack         | Geography                                     |
| Barsalini, Oisin R    | Physics                                       |
| Baxter, Mark A        | Software Systems Development                  |
| Blaskett, Niall I     | Music                                         |
| Bosket, Anouk         | Sport                                         |
| Boyd, Jolie S         | General Excellence                            |
| Chesnel, Amandine A C | Geography, Government and Politics, History,  |
| Crooks, Rebecca       | Religious Studies                             |
| Dabrowski, Jakub J    | Software Systems Development                  |
| Dann, Niamh B         | Sport                                         |
| Davidson, Penny J     | English Language, Moving Image Arts           |
| Ferguson, Lucy A      | General Excellence                            |
| Finnegan, Eva E M     | Chemistry, Technology                         |
| Finnegan, Jane A      | Religious Studies                             |
| Flood, Megan H        | Economics, German, History, Moving Image Arts |
| Follis, Jacob G       | English Literature                            |
| Gallagher, Eamonn G   | Art and Design                                |
| Geddis, Katie C       | English Literature                            |
| Gibson, Mia G J       | Biology, Mathematics                          |
| Gilchrist, Ciara E    | Sociology                                     |
| Guy, Ben S            | Technology                                    |
| Hetherington, Leah    | Religious Studies                             |
| Hui, Moses            | Physics                                       |
| Jones, Sydney L E     | Digital Technology                            |
| Kane, Ellie           | Digital Technology                            |
| Kerr, Rosa E          | French                                        |
| Lane, Jessica S       | Chemistry                                     |
| McCarney, Katie E     | Biology                                       |
| McIvor, Aoife P       | Business Studies, Mathematics                 |
| McKenna, Tom A        | Economics, History                            |



|                          |                                          |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| McWilliams, Anna J       | Art and Design                           |
| Mitchell, Eva            | Sociology                                |
| Navarro-Mcintosh, Iona L | Art and Design                           |
| Nemeth, Benjamin         | General Excellence                       |
| O'Dowd, Anna J           | Biology, Chemistry, Spanish              |
| Orr, Mia N               | Psychology                               |
| Philip, Fiona            | Biology, Health and Social Care          |
| Piddington, Zoe          | English Language                         |
| Place, Zoe K             | Sport                                    |
| Riddell, Aoife M         | General Excellence                       |
| Rossal, Nathan C         | German, Mathematics, Physics, Technology |
| Schilling, Clara E       | General Excellence                       |
| Stewart, Beth A          | French                                   |
| Walsh, Clara E           | English Literature, Latin, Spanish       |
| Warnock, Emily S         | Geography                                |
| Watters, Maria R         | Music, Spanish                           |
| Webb, Jack W P           | Government and Politics                  |
| Whiteside, Matthew       | Business Studies                         |
| Willis, Teya S J         | English Language                         |
| Wilson, James T          | French                                   |

## HONOURABLE MENTION FORM LVI

|                       |                                                  |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Anderson, Emily B     | Geography                                        |
| Anderson, Maya        | Religious Studies                                |
| Anderson, Rachael A   | English Language, General Excellence             |
| Bacon, D Jack         | General Excellence                               |
| Barnes, Thomas D R    | English Language                                 |
| Barsalini, Oisin R    | General Excellence                               |
| Baxter, Mark A        | Physics, General Excellence                      |
| Blaskett, Niall I     | Mathematics, General Excellence                  |
| Bosket, Anouk         | General Excellence                               |
| Boyd, Jolie S         | English Literature, Psychology                   |
| Chambers, Lucy H      | Biology, General Excellence                      |
| Chesnel, Amandine A C | General Excellence                               |
| Crawford, Lucy A      | Religious Studies                                |
| Curran, Anna C        | Art and Design, German                           |
| Dabrowski, Jakub J    | Technology, General Excellence                   |
| Davidson, Penny J     | General Excellence                               |
| Deans, Sophia A       | English Literature                               |
| Duffy, Caolan G       | Chemistry, General Excellence                    |
| Ferguson, Lucy A      | Business Studies, Digital Technology             |
| Finnegan, Eva E M     | Physics, General Excellence                      |
| Finnegan, Jane A      | Music                                            |
| Flattery, Nathan J    | French                                           |
| Flood, Megan H        | General Excellence                               |
| Gastar, Kian F        | Software Systems Development, General Excellence |



|                       |                                                  |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Anderson, Emily B     | Geography                                        |
| Anderson, Maya        | Religious Studies                                |
| Anderson, Rachael A   | English Language, General Excellence             |
| Bacon, D Jack         | General Excellence                               |
| Barnes, Thomas D R    | English Language                                 |
| Barsalini, Oisin R    | General Excellence                               |
| Baxter, Mark A        | Physics, General Excellence                      |
| Blaskett, Niall I     | Mathematics, General Excellence                  |
| Bosket, Anouk         | General Excellence                               |
| Boyd, Jolie S         | English Literature, Psychology                   |
| Chambers, Lucy H      | Biology, General Excellence                      |
| Chesnel, Amandine A C | General Excellence                               |
| Crawford, Lucy A      | Religious Studies                                |
| Curran, Anna C        | Art and Design, German                           |
| Dabrowski, Jakub J    | Technology, General Excellence                   |
| Davidson, Penny J     | General Excellence                               |
| Deans, Sophia A       | English Literature                               |
| Duffy, Caolan G       | Chemistry, General Excellence                    |
| Ferguson, Lucy A      | Business Studies, Digital Technology             |
| Finnegan, Eva E M     | Physics, General Excellence                      |
| Finnegan, Jane A      | Music                                            |
| Flattery, Nathan J    | French                                           |
| Flood, Megan H        | General Excellence                               |
| Gastar, Kian F        | Software Systems Development, General Excellence |
| Gibson, Gabrielle     | General Excellence                               |
| Gibson, Mia G J       | General Excellence                               |
| Gillespie, Jasmine R  | English Literature, Spanish, General Excellence  |
| Graham, Melissa       | German, Religious Studies, General Excellence    |
| Gribbon, Rosa         | General Excellence                               |
| Guy, Ben S            | Software Systems Development, General Excellence |
| Hackett, Rachel C     | Spanish                                          |
| Hewitt, Adam D        | Business Studies, General Excellence             |
| Horkan, Katie E       | Music, General Excellence                        |
| Hui, Moses            | Chemistry, General Excellence                    |
| Hume, Charlotte M     | General Excellence                               |
| Jones, Sydney L E     | Business Studies                                 |
| Kane, Ellie           | General Excellence                               |
| Kerr, Ethan B         | Economics                                        |
| Kerr, Rosa E          | Psychology, General Excellence                   |



|                        |                                                      |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Kirk, Joshua E         | Sociology                                            |
| Lane, Jessica S        | Biology, Mathematics, General Excellence             |
| Mallon, Amber C        | Art and Design                                       |
| McCarney, Katie E      | Chemistry, Mathematics, General Excellence           |
| McIvor, Aoife P        | General Excellence                                   |
| McKenna, Lucy S        | English Language                                     |
| McKittrick, Max        | Sport                                                |
| McLean, Sarah J        | General Excellence                                   |
| McVicker, Luan         | General Excellence                                   |
| McWilliams, Anna J     | Geography                                            |
| Mitchell, Eva          | Digital Technology                                   |
| Moran, Lucy E          | Government and Politics, History, General Excellence |
| Murphy, Aidan S        | Sport                                                |
| Nemeth, Benjamin       | Chemistry, Physics, Technology                       |
| Nicholson, Ethan J     | Technology                                           |
| O'Brien, Adam T        | General Excellence                                   |
| O'Dowd, Anna J         | Mathematics, General Excellence                      |
| Orr, Mia N             | General Excellence                                   |
| Pandiaraj, Madhumitha  | General Excellence                                   |
| Pearson, Mya A         | Government and Politics                              |
| Philip, Fiona          | General Excellence                                   |
| Place, Zoe K           | General Excellence                                   |
| Quinn, Darragh F       | General Excellence                                   |
| Reid, Max              | Sport                                                |
| Riddell, Aoife M       | History, Moving Image Arts                           |
| Rodriguez, Arleen P    | Nutrition and Food Science                           |
| Rossal, Nathan C       | General Excellence                                   |
| Saji, Diana            | Health and Social Care                               |
| Saneesh Krishna, Aditi | French                                               |
| Schilling, Clara E     | Biology, Chemistry, French                           |
| Srikanth, Samvritha    | Art and Design, General Excellence                   |
| Toal, Annabelle C      | English Language, General Excellence                 |
| Walsh, Clara E         | General Excellence                                   |
| Warnock, Emily S       | History, General Excellence                          |
| Watters, Maria R       | General Excellence                                   |
| Welsh, Nathan J        | Geography, General Excellence                        |
| Whiteside, Matthew     | Economics, Spanish, General Excellence               |
| Willis, Teya S J       | Sociology                                            |
| Wilson, James T        | Biology, General Excellence                          |
| Yates, Charlie         | Moving Image Arts                                    |



## DEPARTMENTAL PRIZES FORM MVI

|                          |                                                                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adam, Beth M             | History                                                               |
| Beattie, Rachel G        | Technology                                                            |
| Bell, Ellie R            | Geography, Nutrition and Food Science                                 |
| Brogan, Sarah E          | Physics, Spanish                                                      |
| Campbell, Cara J         | French, Government and Politics, Sociology                            |
| Cole, Oran               | Business Studies                                                      |
| Connolly Mulcahy, Dara M | Economics                                                             |
| Dalzell, Tara A          | Drama and Theatre Studies                                             |
| Dillon-Wright, Haydn A   | Economics, Geography                                                  |
| Doherty, Cormac          | Biology, Chemistry, Further Mathematics,<br>Exceptional Performance   |
| Donaldson, Daisie B      | Biology                                                               |
| Donnan, Hollie A         | Sport                                                                 |
| Elliott, Mark D          | History, Religious Studies                                            |
| Eneh, Iruoma B           | Digital Technology                                                    |
| Gibson, Abbie            | Art and Design                                                        |
| Gillen, Grace M          | Art and Design, Geography                                             |
| Gilmore, Jay S           | Mathematics, Software Systems Development                             |
| Gilmour, Jack S          | Software Systems Development                                          |
| Golden, Joseph L         | Chemistry, Moving Image Arts, Physics,<br>Exceptional Performance     |
| Gueye-Dorval, Carla-Lina | English Literature, Spanish                                           |
| Hamilton, Molly K        | Business Studies                                                      |
| Harold, Joshua C         | Government and Politics                                               |
| Hill, Oscar T            | Mathematics, Software Systems Development,<br>Exceptional Performance |
| Kirk, Harrison S         | Biology, Music, Exceptional Performance                               |
| Lowry, S Ellen           | Life and Health Sciences                                              |
| McCarey, W D Alex        | Government and Politics                                               |
| McClinton, Aleah J       | Business Studies                                                      |
| McKay, Mia E             | Art and Design                                                        |
| McLaughlin, Matthew R E  | Chemistry, Economics, Further Mathematics,<br>Exceptional Performance |
| McQuiston, Matthew J     | Sport                                                                 |
| Millard, Riona J         | Technology                                                            |
| Mirfield, Jasmine K      | Drama and Theatre Studies                                             |
| Montgomery, Sasha        | English Literature, Sociology                                         |
| Mulholland, Alex L E     | Religious Studies                                                     |
| Nicholson, Harry         | English Literature, French, Exceptional<br>Performance                |
| O'Kane, Joe M            | General Excellence                                                    |



Ogilby, Grace  
Pearce, Oliver P D

Ramsey, Lois D  
Rankin, Matthew A  
Reilly-Stewart, Hugo J  
Sabri, Zaynab  
Scott, Aoife M G  
Sterritt, Brianna M  
Topping, Anna  
Woods, Harry R

French  
Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Mathematics,  
Physics, Exceptional Performance  
Sociology  
Music  
Music  
Spanish  
Sport  
History, Religious Studies  
Health and Social Care  
German

## HONOURABLE MENTION FORM MVI

Adam, Beth M

Agnew-Boyce, Kitty

Allen, Matthew J

Baine, Aodhan S

Bell, Ellie R

Boone, Charlotte L

Brobyn, Josh S

Brogan, Sarah E

Burns, Emma E

Burns, Sophie E

Cairns, Jack D R

Caldwell, Evie

Callaghan, Beth

Campbell, Cara J

Choi, Etta

Chow, Tiffany T

Cole, Oran

Crawford, Georgia M

Dalzell, Tara A

Dillon-Wright, Haydn A

Doherty, Cormac

Donaldson, Daisie B

Elliott, Mark D

Eneh, Iruoma B

Fyffe, Lana M

Gibson, Abbie

Gillen, Grace M

Gilmore, Jay S

Gilmour, Jack S

Business Studies, Religious Studies, General  
Excellence

Art and Design

General Excellence

General Excellence

General Excellence

Government and Politics

Moving Image Arts

General Excellence

Sociology

Health and Social Care, General Excellence

Drama and Theatre Studies

Business Studies

Biology, General Excellence

General Excellence

Sport

Health and Social Care

General Excellence

General Excellence

History

General Excellence

Mathematics, Physics

Chemistry, General Excellence

General Excellence

General Excellence

English Literature

English Literature, Software Systems Development,

General Excellence

General Excellence

Biology, General Excellence

General Excellence



|                       |                                                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Golden, Joseph L      | Further Mathematics, Mathematics                         |
| Haddock, Jackson      | Religious Studies, General Excellence                    |
| Hamilton, Molly K     | General Excellence                                       |
| Harold, Joshua C      | Business Studies, Economics, History, General Excellence |
| Harvey, Emma A        | General Excellence                                       |
| Henderson, Rex A      | Economics                                                |
| Hill, Oscar T         | Chemistry, Further Mathematics, Physics                  |
| Hunter, Layla G       | Nutrition and Food Science                               |
| Jackson, Matthew J M  | Technology                                               |
| Johns, Cara M         | Technology                                               |
| Kelly, Shannen L      | French, General Excellence                               |
| Kirk, Harrison S      | Chemistry, Mathematics                                   |
| Logan, Alice R        | Biology, General Excellence                              |
| McClinton, Aleah J    | Religious Studies                                        |
| McCord, Leah C        | Art and Design                                           |
| McGrath, Lois R       | English Language                                         |
| McMahon, Cara         | Spanish, General Excellence                              |
| Millard, Riona J      | General Excellence                                       |
| Mirfield, Jasmine K   | English Language                                         |
| Moffett, Nisha E      | Life and Health Sciences                                 |
| Montgomery, Sasha     | General Excellence                                       |
| Morwood, Felix        | General Excellence                                       |
| Muldoon, Megan G      | Digital Technology, Geography, General Excellence        |
| Mulholland, Alex L E  | General Excellence                                       |
| Murugaperumal, Gopi G | Biology, General Excellence                              |
| O'Hara, Alessandro R  | Technology                                               |
| O'Kane, Joe M         | Music, Physics                                           |
| Ogilby, Grace         | Further Mathematics, General Excellence                  |
| Oliver, Rebekah H A   | English Language                                         |
| Pollard, Rhys         | Government and Politics                                  |
| Ramsey, Lois D        | English Literature                                       |
| Rankin, Matthew A     | Software Systems Development, General Excellence         |
| Robinson, Ciara A     | General Excellence                                       |
| Sabri, Zaynab         | French                                                   |
| Scott, Aoife M G      | History, Moving Image Arts                               |
| Sheppard, Emma M      | Spanish                                                  |
| Smith, Casey J        | Sociology, Spanish, General Excellence                   |
| Sterritt, Brianna M   | Art and Design                                           |
| Stewart, Daniel J     | General Excellence                                       |



|                  |                                             |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Storey, Brooke A | French                                      |
| Taylor, Elyse R  | Geography, General Excellence               |
| Topping, Anna    | General Excellence                          |
| Walker, Aoife R  | Drama and Theatre Studies                   |
| Wright, Ezra M A | Government and Politics, General Excellence |

### **SPECIAL PRIZES**

|                                                                                                      |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ANNE BARRON PRIZE<br>(Ben Madigan)                                                                   | George T Cole            |
| McCORMICK PRIZE<br>(English)                                                                         | Jessica E Smyth          |
| HAROLD RAINEY MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(GCSE English)                                                       | Oliver Kulig             |
| R. S. J. H. MAGOWAN PRIZE<br>(GCSE Geography)                                                        | Ruby I Clements          |
| MARY A. HYNDMAN PRIZE<br>(GCSE Home Economics)                                                       | Rebecca C<br>Kirkpatrick |
| CLYDE PRIZE<br>(GCSE Religious Studies)                                                              | Hope C E Daniels         |
| TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN AWARD<br>Sponsored by LB Property Developments<br>(GCSE Technology and Design) | Joshua G S Gibson        |
| JACKSON PRIZE<br>(GCSE Science)                                                                      | Maya M Campbell          |
| S. S. N. PIERCE MEMORIAL TROPHY<br>(for outstanding endeavour at GCSE)                               | Eva R Crossan            |
| FREDERICK WHITE MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(For the top performance at GCSE)                                  | Sean Chen                |
| J. N. SHEARMAN MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(Classics)                                                          | Clara E Walsh            |
| THE MARK LONG POETRY PRIZE                                                                           | Clara E Walsh            |



|                                                      |                       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| R. J. BRYCE MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(Irish Studies)        | Cara McMahon          |
| J. C. PICKEN MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(Art and Design)      | Mia E McKay           |
| AMY DICKSON TROPHY and PRIZE<br>(Art and Design)     | Abbie Gibson          |
| ALLISON HERON PRIZE<br>(Biology)                     | Harrison S Kirk       |
| McCLAY PRIZE<br>(Business Studies)                   | Molly K Hamilton      |
| MERVYN SEMPLE PRIZE<br>(Chemistry)                   | Cormac Doherty        |
| SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON PRIZE<br>(English Literature)    | Sasha Montgomery      |
| THE J. W. and EVELYN DARBYSHIRE AWARD<br>(Geography) | Haydn A Dillon-Wright |
| ANTHONY TAYLOR MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(History)           | Beth M Adam           |
| T. R. COLLIER PRIZE<br>(Mathematics)                 | Grace Ogilby          |
| G. B. TAYLOR MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(Mathematics)         | Oliver P D Pearce     |
| THE W. L. CLEMENTS MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(Music)         | Matthew A Rankin      |
| R. M. FANNIN MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(Music)               | Joe M O’Kane          |
| MIDDLETON PRIZE<br>(Music)                           | Alexandra N McQueen   |
| LEO FORTE PRIZE<br>(Music)                           | Hugo J Reilly-Stewart |



EMMA ALLEN MEMORIAL PRIZE  
(Music)

Harrison S Kirk

THE ANNE CAMPBELL CUP  
(Nutrition and Food Science)

Ellie R Bell

KNOX PRIZE  
(Physical Education)

Hollie A Donnan

HAROLD HUTCHINSON PRIZE  
(Religious Studies)

Leah Hetherington

McCAUGHEY PRIZE  
(Science)

Cormac Doherty

N.E. MOORE PRIZE  
(Technology)

Riona J Millard

WALTER TATE PRIZES

Economics

Government and Politics

Physics

Chemistry

Religious Studies

Sociology

Dara M Connolly-Mulcahy

Joshua C Harold

Oliver P D Pearce

Matthew R E McLaughlin

Mark D Elliott

Lois D Ramsey

SIR DONALD CURRIE SCHOLARSHIPS  
(for the top overall performance in the Form)

Form I

Form II

Form III

Form IV

Form V

Emily Seenan

Maggie I E Lockhart

Molly J Adams

Keshav Raghuram

Maya M Campbell



## LEAVING SCHOLARSHIPS

|                                                     |                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| SIR PAUL GIRVAN                                     | Harry Nicholson         |
| J. M. CLEMENTS                                      | Joseph L Golden         |
| SIR FRANCIS EVANS                                   | Daniel J Stewart        |
| WHITEHEAD                                           | Sarah E Brogan          |
| MAURICE JACKSON                                     | Beth Callaghan          |
| HUGH GIRVAN                                         | Gopi G Murugaperumal    |
| WALTER TATE                                         | Daisie B Donaldson      |
| KNOX                                                | Molly K Hamilton        |
| ANTHONY TAYLOR                                      | Aoife M G Scott         |
| C. B. and A. M. MURRAY                              | Grace M Gillen          |
| McCLEERY                                            | Shannen L Kelly         |
| G. B. TAYLOR                                        | Oscar T Hill            |
| PICKEN                                              | Grace Ogilby            |
| ARCHIBALD                                           | Carla-Lina Gueye-Dorval |
| BRUCE and PIM PRIZE                                 | Jay S Gilmore           |
| THE BEGGS FAMILY PRIZE                              | Riona J Millard         |
| Dr L.H. CAMPBELL PRIZE (Chemistry                   | Georgia M Crawford      |
| CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BURSARY                        | Harrison S Kirk         |
| W. A. RAW BURSARY<br>(Modern Languages)             | Harry Nicholson         |
| MacDERMOTT TRAVELLING BURSARY<br>(Modern Languages) | Harry R Woods           |



|                                                                                                                                                               |                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| GLORIA SIDWELL (née KINKEAD)<br>MEMORIAL BURSARY<br>(Art and Design)                                                                                          | Grace M Gillen                  |
| J. S. LOUGHRIDGE BURSARY<br>(Geography)                                                                                                                       | Amandine A C Chesnel            |
| THE MONA McCONNELL CARES AWARD<br>(For work in the Community)                                                                                                 | Mia G J Gibson                  |
| J. J. KANE MEMORIAL PRIZE<br>(for contributions to 'The Owl')                                                                                                 | Charlie Yates                   |
| THE RUAIRI McALEESE MEMORIAL<br>DEBATING PRIZE                                                                                                                | Oliver Kulig<br>Emily S Warnock |
| THE ERIC STRAIN MEMORIAL CUP<br>(Duke of Edinburgh Gold Leader)                                                                                               | Finn L Taylor                   |
| TENNANT SALVER<br>(Chair of Sixth Form Centre Committee)                                                                                                      | Mia S Nixon                     |
| TROPHY FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE<br>PERFORMING ARTS<br>(Presented by the Old Girls' Association)                                                                  | Jack D R Cairns                 |
| J. C. PICKEN BAT<br>(for overall contribution to Cricket in School,<br>presented by the Old Boys' Association)                                                | Matthew D Williamson            |
| OWL TROPHY<br>(Presented by W. H. and J. Gray for<br>outstanding endeavour at Advanced Level)                                                                 | Diarmuid M Butler               |
| N. M. SAVAGE AWARD<br>(for the most impressive combination of<br>academic attainment,<br>prowess in organized games and sense of<br>corporate responsibility) | Matthew R E McLaughlin          |
| ULSTER UNIVERSITY ENDEAVOUR CUP<br>(for outstanding achievement throughout the<br>year)                                                                       | Ciara R Murray                  |
| WALTER TATE AWARD<br>(Head Girl)                                                                                                                              | Ellie R Bell                    |



MARTIN PRIZE  
(Deputy Head Girls)

Cara McMahon  
O W Debby Ogunleye

WHITEHEAD AWARD  
(Head Boy)

Oliver P D Pearce

ANNUAL PRIZE FOR BOYS  
(Deputy Head Boys)

Matthew J McQuiston  
M Jeb-Jeb Samama

THE EVANS TROPHY  
Cairns Captains:

Kristopher T Mills  
Emma G Campbell



# School Societies

## JUNIOR SU

Junior Scripture Union is held every Wednesday at lunchtime in the Sixth Form Study Centre and is open to everyone in forms I to III, whether they are a Christian or not. During this time, we play fun games and spread God's word by reading stories from the Bible and discussing important themes brought up throughout it. Members of the SU Committee organise these. Pupils in forms V to MVI can opt to join the committee alongside the exceptional help of Mr. Morrison and Mrs Graydon. This allows us to serve God and develop enduring relationships with the pupils attending, whilst forming and growing solid connections with God and discussing what Christian life looks like as a B.R.A pupil.



During the past year at Junior SU, we used the Scripture Union NI plan of "Identity" which allowed us to explore themes such as the way, the truth and the life, being the light of the world, and the resurrection and life of Jesus. Each committee member planned and delivered a talk, based on this theme, that was meaningful to them. They talked about how some Characteristics of God could be applied to our daily lives and how the younger pupils attending could use these in their individual situations and around school. This was a great way

to teach the junior members about who Jesus was and support them during their journey of faith, we were able to have conversations about how the pupils may struggle with behaving in accordance with the Bible and are unsure how to apply its teachings in specific circumstances.



As well as attending the weekly sessions, members of Junior SU were also invited to the 'Big SU Weekend' which was held in Castlewellan Castle. Over the weekend we had the chance to hear from guest speaker Phil, sing worship songs at the lake on the grounds of the castle, and ultimately have fun whilst cultivating our relationship with God, as well as giving others the chance to establish one with Him there. Throughout the rest of the year the committee planned events at Christmas and Easter to connect further with the Junior SU members while telling the story of Jesus, as well



as the annual SU barbeque. These additional events throughout the year ensured that committee members could form resilient ties with the pupils and be there to guide them in their faith and support them wherever possible.

Overall, the past year at Junior SU has been nothing short of spectacular. Every year we are amazed at how many young pupils attend every week to hear the word of God, and we are so grateful to be able to spend this time with Him and with the members. I pray that Junior SU continues to flourish and motivates many others to follow Jesus with passion and faith.

*Izzy Worthington (LVI)*

## SENIOR SU

Senior SU meets every Friday at lunchtime on the top floor of the sixth form centre. Through a wide range of activities including talks, games, interviews, and discussion we spent a lot of time this year getting to know more about God and each other. It's truly a unique society in school bringing together a whole range of year groups and personalities all with the common interest of learning more about God's word and putting our faith into action in everyday life at school.



The Senior committee worked diligently all year organising weekly meetings, writing talks, organising special events, and spending time praying over the SU and every pupil who came along. Supported as always by Mr. Morrison and Mrs Graydon we had an amazing year at Senior, and it was an absolute privilege to get to serve in this way.

Senior SU hasn't just been limited to Friday meetings this year but additionally was able to come along to Tuesday morning bible study in which we explored Paul's letters of Ephesians and Romans and spent time discussing what his wisdom means for us practically. This was an incredibly encouraging experience for everyone who came along, and it was a great way to start the school day.

We also had the pleasure this year of hosting a joint praise night with Belfast High School and Grosvenor Grammar School SU's held in Whiteabbey Presbyterian. This was a great evening spent worshipping God and getting to meet other Christians as well as hearing from a guest speaker.

Within school, we held both our Christmas and Easter end-of-term celebration events which were both very much enjoyed by everyone that came along. Thankfully there were no injuries during our traditional particularly competitive game of musical chairs! It was very special to catch up with the Junior SU at both events.





The Senior SU weekend took place in March, and we had an amazing time. We spent time thinking about the desires of our hearts and how God should be number one in our lives. Between listening to talks we spent lots of time worshipping God together, discussing some big biblical questions, and participating in activities from volleyball and late-night unihoc to a photo challenge and quiz. It was a great opportunity to grow in faith and to get to spend time with one another.

We wrapped up the busy year with the annual SU end-of-year BBQ that took place in June. Although it was extremely rainy, we were still able to enjoy our burgers in the Jackson Suite after hearing from Dr. Bell on the topic of how to read the bible, a lovely way to end a wonderful year of SU.

It's sad to have to say goodbye to our MVI committee members, Lois McGrath and Matthew Rankin, who have contributed so much to the SU over the years and will be very missed.

The committee is so thankful for such a great year at SU and for the support of all the teachers who have helped out.

*Lucy Chambers (LVI)*

## THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

The Library continued to be a welcoming, inviting space for timetabled library classes, class visits, intervention groups, book clubs, lunch clubs, and book fairs. Centrally located in our Crombie building, it continued to be easily accessed and utilised by both staff and pupils. The School Library aims to promote a lifelong love of reading for pleasure and education by providing a large selection of up-to-date fiction and non-fiction.

Our Librarian is supported by many pupil librarians who assist in the general upkeep of the library as well as checking out and returning books. The pupils learn valuable life skills such as working as part of a team and helping others. Form 1 and 2 classes continued to visit the library weekly as part of their studies in English. The 2023/24 academic year became our most successful in terms of Accelerated Reader.

We had more millionaire readers this academic year than in any previous year.

## NATIONAL POETRY DAY IS CELEBRATED AT THE SCHOOL LIBRARY.

The Library had been overflowing with joy in celebrating National Poetry Day 2023. The theme this year had been 'refuge' and we were very impressed by poems pupils penned on the theme. Well done to Jay Gilmore from MVI on becoming our senior school poetry competition winner and to Orianna Di Tano from Form I on becoming our junior winner. Both Jay and Orianna were awarded a £10 voucher to spend at our school book fair. Congratulations also go out to our three poetry competition runners-up: Eabha Moore (Form I) Paige Stewart (Form I) and Eva McCullough (Form II). All three were awarded a £5 voucher to spend at the book fair.

A staff quiz also took place as part of our celebrations. Well done to Ms Craig from our English department on becoming the winner of our 2023 staff competition to celebrate National Poetry Day.

Pupils also participated in a rhyming scavenger hunt as part of our National Poetry Day celebrations. The scavenger hunt involved finding a total of 46 clues and matching the rhyming pairs. A huge well done to Leila Jones (Form 1) on winning what had been quite a challenging scavenger hunt! A very well-deserved £10 book voucher went to Leila.

## WORLD BOOK DAY CELEBRATED AT THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

March 2024 was a very busy month in our School Library with a Book Fair, World Book Day, and tons of fun Easter competitions for both staff and pupils. We are indebted to No Alibis bookstore on Botanic Avenue for supplying World Book Day titles to our pupils.

The Library also celebrated the International Day of Mathematics on the 14th of March.



## THE LIBRARY CELEBRATED BOOK WEEK NI

The pupils had been very excited to be celebrating the eagerly awaited annual week-long celebration of books, reading, and libraries that had been Book Week NI. Our junior book club put in tons of hard work in preparation for this special week. Book recommendations from pupils were showcased throughout the school on our digital screens. Book club members have also helped put together celebratory library displays to mark Book Week. Pupils were very excited to take part in #OurBigRead and read 'The Man with the Yellow Face' by Anthony Horowitz for it. Here's some of what our book club members recommended for Book Week NI:

- Isla Kearney (Form I) recommended 'All the Places I've Cried in Public' by Holly Bourne
- Chase Irwin (Form I) recommended 'The Maze Runner' by James Dashner
- Evie Lagan (Form I) recommended 'The Book Thief' by Markus Zusak
- Sam Monroe (Form I) recommended 'Skulduggery Pleasant' by Derek Landy
- David Vicchi (Form I) recommended 'Oblivion' by Anthony Horowitz
- Vismithaa Pandiaraj (Form II) recommended 'The Explorer' by Katherine Rundell
- Holly Ireland (Form II) recommended 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen
- Anna McMenamy (Form II) recommended 'Mortal Engines' by Philip Reeve
- Leila Jones (Form II) recommended 'A Million to One' by Abida Jaigirdar
- Anna McLaughlin (Form II) recommended 'Five Survive' by Holly Jackson
- Aidan Kerr (Form II) recommended 'On the Edge of the Dark Sea of Darkness' by Andrew Peterson
- Aidan Gilmour (Form II) recommended 'Six of Crows' by Leigh Bardugo. Book Week NI ran from 16th - 22nd October 2023 throughout Northern Ireland.

## ANTI-BULLYING WEEK MARKED IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

We were delighted to have been recognised for our support for Anti-Bullying Week. The week, which ended on November 17th, was a nationally recognised event organised by the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Our School Library hosted a 'Design an Odd Sock' competition and asked pupils to draw what makes them unique on the sock. Many pupils across all year groups took part, which involved lots of fun with a serious message. The top ten entrants were each awarded with their very own odd sock filled with goodies. We even had the socks in school house colours!

Pupils also penned thank you notes to one another, and these were delivered during anti-bullying week.

### Scholastic Book Fairs

For an entire week in both October 2023 and February 2024, the school library had been abuzz. Pupils had been bowing their heads over book trolleys, excitedly discussing what they hoped to purchase at the Scholastic Book Fair.

The Book Fairs provided something critical and unique for pupils: The fair showed that books are not something to be dreaded, nor viewed as compulsory and difficult. Instead, books are desirable, talked about, and treasured.

The tell-tale signs of the upcoming book fair not only got pupils excited about books, but it also got them talking about books of their own accord, rather than being compelled to discuss assigned reading in the classroom.

The unique sounds, smells, and sights of the library book fair are hard to beat. Heavy metal cases that are like a band's equipment, except full of books, rolled into the school library to mark both our National Poetry Day celebrations and our World Book Day celebrations. £951.51 was raised and the School Library was awarded £330.20 worth of free books, as a result. We have been delighted with such a success and with our lovely new books.



## LIBRARY CLUB

At library club pupils trained to become pupil librarians. Organising pupils to help with the library not only ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the library but also helps develop a sense of responsibility, achievement, and self-esteem in pupils. Examples of some of the duties carried out by our pupil librarians include:

- Helping in the library during breaks and lunches
- Shelving fiction books in A-Z order
- Shelving non-fiction books by subject order
- Keeping a section of the stock tidy and in the correct order
- Helping with library displays
- Helping other pupils find what they are looking for
- Helping the librarian with the issuing and returning of materials

The pupil librarians give up their free time before school, during break, lunch, and after school to fulfill their assigned duties.

### Millionaire Readers

The 2023/24 academic year saw our highest amount of Millionaire Readers on record since starting Accelerated Reader in the 2011/12 academic year. Well done to the following pupils on becoming millionaire readers:

#### Position Pupil Words Read

- 1st Rowan, Peter 4,854,908
- 2nd Mihalache, Alex 4,350,685
- 3rd Vicchi, David 3,843,715
- 4th Okonkwo-Ezechia, Chukwuweta 3,735,282
- 5th Monroe, Sam 3,267,303
- 6th Schilling, Christian 3,235,874
- 7th Bonar, Isaac 3,115,697
- 8th Robinson, Matthew 2,813,436
- 9th McCormick, Lily 2,652,094
- 10th Slane, Lorcan 2,475,690
- 11th Lada, Oliver 2,392,536
- 12th Ireland, Holly 2,288,425
- 13th Moore, Eabha 2,215,504
- 14th Oluwaleye, Nicole 2,165,197
- 15th Okojie-Eromosele, Grace 2,010,000
- 16th Vrabelova, Noelle 1,984,681
- 17th Gault, Abby 1,973,165
- 18th Lagan, Evie 1,894,902

- 19th Paul, Harry 1,889,013
- 20th Calvert, Maeve 1,870,891
- 21st Pradeep, Rohan 1,838,895
- 22nd Mathew, Aidan 1,751,678
- 23rd Platzoeder, Ethan 1,720,343
- 24th Eremion, Raymond 1,699,255
- 25th Watters, James 1,664,791
- 26th Gilmour, Aidan 1,663,614
- 27th Xie, Vincy 1,557,413
- 28th Hegarty, Marcella 1,515,966
- 29th Adams, Alice 1,490,925
- 30th Quinn, Harry 1,488,361
- 31st Mukula, Theo 1,450,173
- 32nd Moore, Finn 1,420,696
- 33rd Alinonu, Ejike 1,411,227
- 34th Chen, Peter 1,351,511
- 35th McKinty, Emilie 1,336,322
- 36th Warnock, Rachel 1,321,879
- 37th O'Shaughnessy, James 1,307,690
- 38th Lorrimer, Jude 1,267,867
- 39th Adair, Tom 1,264,548
- 40th Connolly, Aaron 1,256,285
- 41st McAleer, Luke 1,251,067
- 42nd Rogers, Patrick 1,250,396
- 43rd Clarkson, Rosa 1,247,635
- 44th Weiniger, Joshua 1,202,599
- 45th George, Emmanuel 1,180,053
- 46th Clulow, Lucy 1,172,372
- 47th McClafferty, Eva 1,158,999
- 48th Hughes, Emily 1,158,999
- 49th Connolly, James 1,154,340
- 50th Spoerri, Joseph 1,119,688
- 51st McAvoy, Tom 1,090,964
- 52nd Dabrowski, Hubert 1,069,443
- 53rd Shaw, Rosie 1,067,040
- 54th Teague, Ryan 1,032,981
- 55th McCord, Mason 1,031,511
- 56th Drake, Evie 1,012,147
- 57th Wang, Jasmine 1,006,765
- 58th Rogers, Hope 1,004,989

## HOUSE POINTS AWARDED FOR READING SUCCESS

Reading at B.R.A. is heavily awarded. Pupils score 5 house points for every 100% scored in a reading quiz. Our millionaire readers also gain additional house points. We are delighted to announce the annual house points being awarded by our school library for reading performance:



Cairns - 2410 points  
Currie - 2445 points  
Pottinger- 3130 points  
Shaw- 2645 points

Well done to Pottinger on becoming the house of the best readers during the 2023/24 academic year!

*E. Doris*

## THE SCHOOL AND PUPIL COUNCIL

The School and Pupil Council met regularly throughout the year to discuss issues important to the pupil body and update the Senior Leadership Team on the thoughts of the pupil voice. Many important issues were discussed and debated including RSE and extra-curricular provision, lockers, catering, and uniform amongst many others. The Pupil Council held a non-uniform day during Wellbeing Week raising money for Guide Dogs NI, Dementia NI, and the Cancer Fund for Children.

### School Council

#### Form I

Grace Okojie-Eromosele  
Tom McAvoy

#### Form II

Vismethea Pandiaraj  
Theo Mukula

#### Form III

Devaughahn Comrie  
Maria Hudson

#### Form IV

Sophie Curran  
Kalvin Ogunleye

#### Form V

Ines Scott  
Leo Clarkson

#### LVI

Rambo Sharma  
Eva Finnegan

#### MVI

Ellie Bell- Head Girl  
Oliver Pearse- Head Boy  
Olivia Gallagher  
Jeb Jeb Samama

*C.M.C.*

## POLITICS SOCIETY

Politics Society was focused this year on junior pupils with Rishi Sunak's announcement of a July election while the examination years were on study leave. Around 15 Form I pupils attended a virtual event led by former journalist and 'Spin Doctor' turned podcaster Alastair Campbell. This was hosted by Waterstones to promote his children's and teens' books Why Politics Matters and Alastair Campbell Talks Politics. Even though it was a virtual event, it was pleasing to see the engagement of our Form I pupils on the issues discussed.



A group of around 8 pupils from Form I-IV worked together to organise a House Mock General Election. Pupils met over a series of break and lunch times to make decisions about how the election would be run in school. Those wishing to make election posters highlighting the parties' policies then were actively involved in running the election itself.



## 2024 Mock General Election Result

| British Parties          | % Vote       | NI Parties         | % Vote       |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Conservatives            | 7.4%         | Alliance           | 13.9%        |
| Green Party              | 25.9%        | DUP                | 25.1%        |
| Labour                   | 16.3%        | Green Party NI     | 16.2%        |
| Liberal Democrats        | 2.5%         | SDLP               | 4.1%         |
| Reform UK                | 41.5%        | Sinn Féin          | 22.3%        |
|                          |              | TUV                | 6.8%         |
|                          |              | UUP                | 5.3%         |
|                          | Spoiled 6.4% |                    | Spoiled 6.3% |
| <b>Reform UK elected</b> |              | <b>DUP elected</b> |              |

The results somewhat mirrored the real result in July, with a surge for Reform UK, although it did considerably better in our mock election than the five seats they picked up in the real election. The Green Party was second, again, this success was a foretaste of its increase from one seat to five seats in the real election. In the NI ballot, it was close between the DUP and Sinn Féin, with less than 3% between the parties.

## House Turnout Results



What became apparent through the house mock general election is how persuasive and attractive some parties can make themselves through their social media platforms to younger people, which serves to remind us of the responsibility in citizenship education, and politics more specifically.

*K.S.B.*

## SENIOR DEBATING SOCIETY

The 2023/24 season got off to a very good start with several lunchtime debates in school. Indeed, the society has enjoyed a resurgence of interest and attendance since the end of the pandemic, with many new and talented debaters beginning to emerge.

Around 30-40 senior pupils were in attendance for debates on some topical and controversial issues. These included “This House Believes That Relationship and Sex Education should be taught at Home,” which was strongly defeated. Another serious political debate was the motion “This House Believes that a Line should be Drawn under the Troubles.” Again, teams argued passionately on both sides and this motion was carried. A more light-hearted, yet determined debate, was held on the motion “This House Believes that everyone should be a Vegetarian.” This motion was also defeated.

The Debating Society was honoured and delighted to receive the gift of an annual debating cup and bursary in honour and memory of Ruari McAleese, a past pupil and former winner of the Northern Ireland Debating Competition. This annual award was funded by his B.R.A. peers, to represent his skill as a debater and his enjoyment of debating. We are incredibly grateful. The cup was presented to its first winner, Oliver Kulig, at prize day. In November, the Northern Ireland Schools Debating Competition was re-started after a hiatus of 5 years. In 2017 our school team had been defeated finalists in the competition and the following year, we reached the semi-final. Given the growing numbers in the Debating Society, we decided to field 2 teams for the 2023/24 season. The teams were composed of Emily Warnock and Oliver Kulig, and Clara Walsh and Luca Barsalini.

The first round of the competition was held at Hunter House College, where our teams were up against teams from Hunter House and Dominican College, Portstewart. The motion was an environmental one: “This House Believes that new Houses should not take place in the Green Belt.” Both B.R.A. teams were victorious and proceeded to Round 2 of the competition.



The next round was hosted by us and took place in our school library. We were up against teams from Enniskillen Royal Grammar School and St Louis' Grammar School, Kilkeel. The motion for this debate was "This House believes that the Dominant Ownership of Social Media by a handful of Oligarchs is a Danger which should be Curbed." This debate was an interesting and topical one to research, and very heated for both teams on the day. Once again both B.R.A. teams won the debate and went through to the quarter-finals of the competition.

The quarter-final motion was once again an environmental one: "This House Believes that the Attempt to achieve Net Zero is Fruitless and Carries Unacceptable Costs." Again, we acted as hosts for this debate, and teams from Bangor Grammar School and Campbell College put up extremely stiff competition. Unfortunately, Luca and Clara were defeated by the team from Campbell College, while Oliver and Emily beat the team from Bangor Grammar School. Oliver and Emily then proceeded to the semi-final round which was held at the council chamber of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council at Mossley Mill. They defeated the team from Campbell College after debating the motion "This House would legally require all schools in Northern Ireland to become Integrated."

Our surviving team had reached the final and had been ably supported through each stage of the competition by 12-15 pupils who had also taken part in each of the floor debates. The final was held in the auspicious setting of the Belfast City Hall. The judging panel was chaired by the founder of the competition, Lord Lieutenant, Fionnula Jay O'Boyle. Gavin Robinson acted as guest judge and delivered the adjudication. B.R.A. was against a team from Foyle College and had to propose the motion "This House Believes that National Defence in an increasingly Hostile World Requires Immediate and Massive Rearmament." The debate was of an exceptionally high calibre and extremely passionate. In the end, Oliver and Emily from B.R.A were victors and received the Northern Ireland Schools Debating Cup and prize money of £500.

**H.T/J.M.P**

## BOYS' CHOIR

While the Academy always strives to highlight the talent of its pupils through the wide gamut of societies and clubs available, ranging from academic challenges and sporting fixtures to musical concerts and beyond, none capture the true sense of camaraderie between members quite as well as Boys' Choir. Each Wednesday of the year, all are welcome to come along to J9 for rehearsals, whether your musical prowess has been honed through Chamber Choir or by singing in the shower. There is a true sense of community amongst the choir members, as each of us aims to make each performance the best it can be.

A staple event for Boys' Choir is the Christmas Assembly at the end of term in December, providing us with an opportunity to don a Santa hat and sing our hearts out with some festive tunes, which is a real treat. Few things signal the holiday season as much as our renditions of classics, such as Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, and as is tradition, Merry Christmas Everyone, to send the school off into the winter break. Our second major event of the year is the Spring Concert in the Ulster Hall, which is greatly anticipated as the highlight of the year. This year's performance truly allowed us to demonstrate our skills, as we performed A Welsh Medley, consisting of four great tunes, alongside a rousing rendition of Happy Together by The Turtles. The raucous applause from the audience confirmed that many parents enjoyed listening to our pieces just as much as we enjoyed singing them.

Managing the 54-strong crowd of boys and men who form the choir is no easy feat and there are various members of staff to thank. To begin, the quality of our collective vocals was greatly aided by Mr. Dorman and Mr. Harte, who lent their voices to the chorus. We were once again joined by Mr. McCabe, who provided cornet accompaniment to our Spring Concert pieces and lifted the music to a higher level, alongside Harrison Kirk on piano and Matthew Rankin on drums, two stalwarts of the Academy Music Department, whose playing made their final Spring Concert just that much more special. Finally, the Boys' Choir itself wouldn't exist without its heart and soul, Mrs McCombe, and her incredible abilities to plan our



pieces, play the piano, conduct and fine-tune our singing, and even deal with our early attempts at singing in Welsh.

This year we bade farewell to quite a few MVI pupils, all of whom will be dearly missed. Their collective solo at the beginning of Men of Harlech provided an apt goodbye. The torch is now passed down to those of us who remain in the choir to live up to their legacy – big shoes to fill indeed.

Boys' Choir is always a high point of my week, a chance to relax, chat with friends, and enjoy the feeling of community – all while creating some great music under Mrs McCombe's watchful eye. Each member of the choir extends a warm thank you to her for her incredible commitment and we hope to see the choir continue far into the future. There are very few places in school where you feel like you belong as much as in Boys' Choir. I would encourage all boys to come along and attend rehearsals – who knows, it could be your new favourite activity.

*Niall Blaskett (MVI)*

## SAVE THE CHILDREN

This year, the Save the Children committee was excited to get the whole school involved in all the fundraising efforts, organising several events to support the charity.

During the festive season at B.R.A., the Christmas jumper day for staff turned out to be a brilliant way to raise money. Teachers and support staff brought out their best Christmas jumpers, adding a bit of fun to the usual school routine.

The annual non-uniform day was also a huge success, giving everyone the chance to ditch the uniform for a day in exchange for a small donation. Next, was the Great B.R.A. Bake-Off House competition. Students from every year group put their baking skills to the test, creating an impressive variety of cakes, traybakes, and buns. After much debate, the judges finally selected the winners, who earned some crucial points for their Houses. The committee then sold the delicious baked goods at lunch, with all the proceeds going to Save the Children.

This year introduced 'Guess how many eggs are in the jar' for the first time. Committee members donated mini eggs, crème eggs, and chocolate eggs and pupils had to guess how many eggs were in the jar in exchange for a small donation to the Save The Children charity. The lucky winner managed to win the entire jar for themselves.

The year wrapped up on a high note with the BBQ at the annual Sponsored Walk. After the tough trek over Cavehill, everyone was more than happy to tuck into the burgers prepared by the committee and staff.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of the school community and the hard work of the staff, we managed to raise over £3600 for Save the Children. We'd like to give a huge thank you to Ms. McMillen, Mrs. McIntyre, and all the staff who supported us along the way. Their help made all our events possible, and it was an amazing experience being part of the committee, raising money for such an important cause.

*A.M.M.*

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CHANGEMAKERS PROGRAMME



Founded in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller, Habitat for Humanity was created as a global non-profit Christian organisation working in local communities around the world. The sole focus of Habitat is making housing affordable and turning a house into a home.



At the beginning of the year, a group of pupils joined together to form the Habitat for Humanity team in B.R.A. With little prior knowledge of the organisation, we were excited to be selected and to have the privilege of taking part in Habitat's "Change Maker Programme".



As a team, we had the opportunity to do some fundraising for Habitat for Humanity. Through opening a Valentine's Day tuck shop we sold packets of Love Heart sweets which were incredibly popular amongst the junior school. Collectively, we raised approximately £500 of which we are proud as Habitat for Humanity is an extremely worthwhile cause and all the money will go towards bettering the future.

Our thanks go to Mr Spence for accompanying us on our Habitat for Humanity journey this year.

*Grace McAllister (MVI)*

## YOUNG EINSTEIN CLUB

The Young Einstein Club had another enjoyable year in school. It continues to provide junior pupils with a relaxed environment where science is, above all, fun.

First, we participated in a workshop at BRA. This workshop educated us on the fundamentals of the charity's beliefs and everything it stood for; the belief that affordable housing is the foundation to creating strong and stable communities. The workshop was led by Peter Graham who provided us with insight regarding what a volunteer for Habitat does. Peter explained the issues regarding housing, globally and locally, even right on our doorstep. We saw how local communities were aided by the work of Habitat for Humanity.

Next, we had our day of volunteering at Lisburn Restore where we had the privilege of making acquaintances with Peter's colleagues and they demonstrated their roles in running the Restore. We learned about how Habitat upcycles used furniture and made it more attainable due to its new discounted price. Throughout the day we had the opportunity to learn and take part in various tasks such as setting up the Christmas display, building wooden planters, pricing miscellaneous items, and sorting through the 'bric a brac'. By witnessing the extent of the importance of each volunteer's role, we learned the importance of utilising all the help you're given, which Habitat had displayed in their work.



We enjoyed a "Wibbly Wobbly" investigation of the force of friction using chopsticks and jelly cubes; we struggled to believe our eyes as Secret Messages were revealed and Optical Illusions explored, and we put our engineering skills to the test investigating which raft design could support the greatest load without sinking.



There was great excitement at our annual House Tower Building Competition where Pottinger claimed 1st place and Cairns secured both 2nd and 3rd place.



We would like to thank our faithful junior pupils who approached each experiment with limitless enthusiasm. A special mention must also go to our outgoing LVI committee for all their help throughout the year. Their commitment, enthusiasm, and willingness to get involved enriched the club in so many ways.

*J.P.C. / J.M.A*

## THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

The past school year has been a very successful period for our DofE Award, despite the ongoing challenges of running and taking part in the Award. However, our dedicated team of supervisors facilitated all aspects of the Expedition sections for Bronze, Silver, and Gold, and our DofE participants rose to the challenge, progressing their sections and many achieving their respective Awards.



Registration numbers remained high with 288 pupils signing up or continuing to work on Awards, a slight decrease from the previous year.



We achieved a full year of expeditions including Bronze, Silver, and Gold across a variety of locations within Northern Ireland. Last year, the DofE Team decided to relocate the Bronze Expeditions, in which, the Practice/Training Day was conducted in Castlewellan Forest Park and the Qualifying Expedition was conducted along the



Hollywood Coastal Path with overnight camping at the Scout Centre, Crawfordsburn Country Park. This was a new and exciting development for our Bronze Expedition Section and was thoroughly enjoyed by participants and staff alike.

With regard to our staffing, we would like to extend a massive thank you to the small number of volunteers who continue to dedicate their time to enhancing the experiences of our participants. Without our volunteers, this Award would not be possible. Last year, our team assisted a huge 149 participants to successfully complete their relevant expeditions.



Our participants continue to work towards the additional sections of the Award, including the Volunteering, Skill, and Physical sections, to achieve their DofE Award. We are amazed at the broad spectrum of activities that our participants engage with.

Volunteering for community activities has included checking up on neighbours, gardening, and tutoring children, as well as getting involved in litter picking in local neighbourhoods and sports leadership. The Tent Team has also restarted with pupils meeting after school on a Friday to check, repair, and pack the tents ready for expeditions - a tremendous help when so many expeditions were taking place in such a short period.



Potentially the most completed section continues to be Physical - with many of our participants tracking their daily walks or runs, whilst hockey, rugby, netball, swimming, and cricket continue to be popular activities with hiking, dance, fencing, and squash making the list too.

Our kayaking course ran again this year with Brain McLaughlin and Robert Armstrong providing a fantastic opportunity for 22 Bronze participants. This highly popular course trains participants in the safe handling of a kayak canoe and paddling skills, all in the safety of the school swimming pool.



As for Skills, there has been a range of activities taking place - learning a language, cooking, crochet, playing a musical instrument, singing, vegetable growing, sailing navigation theory, photography, money management, drama, and drawing all included in this year's Awards list.





In the last school year, we have had 40 Bronze Awards, 16 Silver Awards, and 8 Gold Awards completed, which is a fantastic achievement. The total number of awards gained from 1984 to date is now: 1,581 Bronze; 773 Silver; 494 Gold. As previously mentioned, we are indebted to the many people who were willing to give up their free time to make possible the huge undertaking of the Expedition section. We sincerely thank the following volunteer supervisors who generously gave their time and assistance whenever possible this school year:

Matthew Blair  
Holly Grant  
Dennis McArthur  
Maurice Miller  
Gary Nelson  
Catherine Reed  
Martin Scott  
Shelley Wilson



We would also like to extend a huge thank you to our support staff who assisted in the running of Bronze Expeditions. Their continued dedication in assisting the DofE Team, voluntarily, to run the Bronze Award, our largest participant group, is a great help! Therefore, thank you to the following people:

Emma McAllister  
Abby Reid  
Guy Reed  
Nicola Scott

Very special thanks must also go to the following people: Maurice Miller, Holly Grant, Shelley Wilson, Matthew Blair, and Catherine Reed for

their outstanding contribution in overseeing all aspects of the Expedition section; Shelley Wilson and Matthew Blair for Award administration; Shelley Wilson for over-seeing Tent Team on Friday afternoons, and; Holly Grant for assessing numerous Bronze, Silver and Gold Expeditions.



Although the Volunteering, Physical, Skill, and Residential Sections are primarily coordinated and supported by the DofE staff, we still have school staff members who run various activities enabling the participants to complete their sections. We would like to thank the staff of the P.E. and Music Departments for all their much-appreciated help throughout the past year. Many thanks are due to the numerous members of staff who gave up their time to act as Skills section assessors.



Thanks must go to Maurice Miller for his help in looking after our finances.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the school office staff who have been fantastic, as always, helping us collect forms, etc, and distributing important information.

We would also like to thank the Expedition Assessors who have worked with us this year



on our many weekends, ensuring the participants all have as good an experience as possible while meeting the conditions of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. These Assessors volunteer their time and enjoy meeting and motivating the young people undertaking the expedition challenges - so it is hugely gratifying when they give positive reports of their interactions.



## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Farewell to Mr. Brian McLaughlin**

Brian has been an instrumental member of our DofE Team, for approximately 30 years, by providing participants with an option of attending kayaking classes to attain their physical section of their Bronze Award.

Brian's dedication and enthusiasm for kayaking has enabled opportunities to be provided for our young people but has also ignited a passion for water sports amongst a variety of pupils past and present. His knowledge, expertise, and skills will be a loss for the DofE Award at B.R.A.!

We would just like to say a massive thank you to Brian, and we sincerely hope you enjoy your well-deserved retirement!

### **Congratulations to the new Mr and Mrs Reed**

We would like to extend a huge congratulations to Catherine, our expedition Supervisor, and her husband, Guy on their marriage! Catherine and Guy were married during the summer and we would like to take the time to wish you a happy, healthy, and prosperous life together!

### **Congratulations to Martin and Nicola Scott**

We would also like to extend a massive congratulations to Martin, Expedition Supervisor, and Nicola Scott, on the birth of their son, Cohen. We cannot wait to recruit another supervisor into the team!

### **Thank You to Mr Maurice Miller**

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Maurice Miller, our Expedition Section "Leader". Maurice commenced his DofE career in B.R.A. on the 10th September 1994 and has dedicated 30 years of voluntary service to the Award since. Maurice's knowledge, skills, and expertise of the hills, conducting expeditions, and teaching during the expedition training classes are invaluable. We, as a team appreciate all he does. Thank you, Maurice, and here's to the next 30 years.

In conclusion, 2023-24 was a jam-packed year that demonstrated our supervisors' dedication and our participants' resilience, determination, initiative, drive, and commitment to progress through their Awards.

We are incredibly proud of those who are pursuing their Awards and remind them to keep in touch. Finally, pride of place and congratulations must go to the following pupils and past pupils who gained awards during the past year:

### **BRONZE AWARD**

Thomas Barnes (LVI)  
Daniel Bell (IV)  
Benjamin Boyd (IV)  
Harry Burns (IV)  
Rosa Clarke (IV)  
Evan Craig (IV)  
Toby Cummings (V)  
Sophie Curran (IV)  
Ruairi Day (IV)  
Nicholas Dillon-Wright (V)  
Joseph Donnelly (IV)  
Ella Sofia Downey (IV)  
Krish Gupta (IV)  
Farida Haridy (III)  
Zoe Ingram (V)  
Callum Johnston (IV)



Aaron Knott (IV)  
Ciaran Lavery (IV)  
Sam Lockhart (IV)  
Molly Macauley (V)  
Daniel Maitland (IV)  
Eve Manson (IV)  
Callum McAnoy (IV)  
Logan McCall (III)  
Vincent McCullough (IV)  
Lorcan McCusker (IV)  
Harrison McMahon (IV)  
Leah McNevison (IV)  
Luan McVicker (LVI)  
Aleesha Moriarty (V)  
Eleanor Murphy (IV)  
Erin O'Brien (IV)  
Aoife O'Kane (IV)  
Daniel Ogilby (IV)  
Milo Platt-Bell (IV)  
Hannah Press (IV)  
Kyle Rooney (LVI)  
Adrian Rychlik (IV)  
Emily Warnock (LVI)  
Isaac Wright (IV)

### SILVER AWARD

Finlay Baird (V)  
ZiXuan(Sean) Chen (V)  
Megan Flood (LVI)  
Madison Gilmore (V)  
Erin Gray (V)  
Charlotte Hume (LVI)  
Wiktorija Januszewska (V)  
Ema Jones (V)  
Jenna McCall (LVI)  
Ieuan McClean (MVI)  
Daniel Parkhill (MVI)  
Daisy Purvis (MVI)  
Clara Schilling (LVI)  
Olivier Staworzynski (V)  
Finn Taylor (V)  
Emily Warnock (LVI)

### GOLD AWARD

Alana Joseph (MVI)  
Alby Joseph (-)  
Jamie O'Brien (-)  
Daisy Purvis (M6)  
Kurtis Scott (-)  
Rob Sturgess (-)  
Kate Sturgess (-)

Hannah Thompson (-)  
Christina Warnock (-)

*Maurice, Shelley, Holly,  
Matthew & Catherine*



# Literary Contributions

## LONELY

I fear being judged,  
By those around me  
Who are more liked by others.

I hide myself away,  
Not wanting to be involved,  
Or even spoken to.

I want to be myself,  
But my body just won't let  
My soul be set free,  
It claws and yearns to be free,  
I keep it in, like an animal in a cage.

I'm afraid to talk,  
When questions are asked,  
It feels like my voice was stolen,  
Without a flinch.

I want to be me!  
I want to be free!  
But I fear popularity  
Beats personality  
In this sad reality.

I'm not like the rest of them.  
Not at all.  
But maybe, just maybe,  
There is someone who feels  
Just like me.

*Paige Stewart (I)*



*Aliyah Akmad (V)*

## IDENTITY

I look in the mirror,  
And what do I see?  
Somebody strange staring back at me.  
Their skin so smooth,

Their features so neat.  
Their nose not crooked,  
Their waist so petite.  
This person's not me.  
They look so different.  
It has taken me too long to see  
I've changed myself so much.  
I'm barely recognisable anymore.  
I wipe off my make up,  
And sit on my floor.  
Why did I change?  
Who was it for?  
It wasn't for me,  
I feel worse than before.  
I open my phone  
and suddenly realise  
I did this because I felt bad.  
They're so beautiful,



Their hair,  
And their size.  
I cut a fringe  
I will forever hate.  
I got trapped in a net of social media,  
These pictures the bait,  
The changes I made  
To look just like them.

*Eva McCullough, Form 2*



And, just like that – a journey of being lost  
begins to find resolution

The clouds begin to part  
A rainbow embrace  
paints the troubled air  
A kaleidoscope of vibrant colours  
illuminates my path

As I emerge from the shadows  
I have found my strength  
No longer imprisoned in black and white  
A glimmer of light guides me home

As I navigate the currents  
I do not fear the storms that lie ahead  
Because after the rain comes a rainbow  
After the storm comes calm  
After an end comes a new beginning

I am home  
Where I can be me  
Not the lost me, just ME.

*Abby Gault (II)*

*Leah McCord (MVI)*

## HOME

A dark cloud stalks me  
My loneliness a prison  
It eats away at my sanity  
My loneliness speaks in silence

I am a boat lost at sea  
Alone in the darkness  
The ocean, an unseen vastness  
The waves – me

Just like a storm,  
my loneliness arrives uninvited  
In a world with no colour  
There's nothing left inside of me  
I am drowning,  
but the world moves on without me  
I am a lonely soul seeking my home

Amid darkness, a glimmer of hope  
The storm, which has battered me, subsides  
The dark clouds disperse



*Amy Simpson (LVI)*



## A BOOK WITH NO COVER

Am I tall or am I short?  
Am I pretty or am I not?  
What I look like isn't what I am.  
I am funny.  
I am kind.  
But you couldn't care.

If they say you can't judge a book by its cover,  
why is it there?  
If they aren't meant to judge it  
why do they care what I look like?  
Why don't they care if I'm funny or kind?  
Because in their mind what they see  
when they look at me is just a shell,  
just an exterior with nothing inside, hollow.

Does that mean I'm expected to care?  
To care if my hair is pretty enough.  
To care if my makeup looks nice.  
Why should I care about what you see  
if you won't even bother to get to know me?

Do you know that I love to sing?  
Do you know that I love to read?  
Do you know that I love the sea?  
Because that's the real me  
and that's my true identity.

*Maria Hudson (III)*



*Klaudia Maciejowska (MVI)*

## ULSTER, BOTANIC AND ICE CREAM

Walking through the Garden, excited but calm,  
The sun rains down its rays, forcing me to put  
on a balm.  
The building rises up before me, modern and new,  
I still enjoyed going there, though everything  
I knew.

The entrance is bland, no friend for a  
cordial greeting,  
But my family and I shall soon go on a greeting.  
Walking into the main hall, my sister running,  
My heart is like electricity, it's humming.

We walk up the ramp, the lizard awaiting.  
My mum speaks of my posture, my back begins  
straightening.

We look up at the beast, our eyes in awe.  
Outside a crow begins to caw.

Walking through the place filled with joy,  
We see the creepy mummy, who is definitely not a  
boy.

We see old, so very old, deer, we have loved;  
We have loved them through their tasty flesh,  
which we have killed.

Seeing the aquatic wonders, forgetting how false  
they are.

A couple of drunks walk by, just out from the bar.  
The rocks are always boring, they just seem so  
afar,  
Heading towards the exit, the door ajar.

Dad suggests we take a walk; the idea is met with  
applause.

Round the gardens we go; my sister constantly  
demanding a pause.

Approaching the house as warm as the rainforest,  
the flowers blooming outside.

Walking as long as we want, our time we bide.

I suggest ice cream; we go to my favourite place.  
Nugelato; the name seemingly means grace.  
Sitting down, ice cream in hand,  
Our relationship is tight in love, a secure bond.

*Lorcan McCusker (III)*

Featured in the Irish Times Young Writers'  
Annual Showcase anthology



*Iona Navarro-McIntosh (LVI)*

## WINTER'S WARMTH

A bitter chill freezes the air, she flutters her wings to a rhythm known only to her. A wisp of breath escapes her sharp beak, like smoke from a chimney.

She lands gracefully on the frost. Her sharp eyes dart from stone to leaf, from fallen foliage to vixen's deep den.

She is searching, hunting for the unsuspecting beetle bold enough to venture to the surface.

Tap, tap, tap.

She mimics the pattering of rainfall, hammering the earth with her beak. Her head cocks toward the ground, listening for faint murmurs of movement.

There it is.

With a sharp jerk of the head, she captures the unfortunate creature. Perhaps if you looked closely, you would see a small glimmer of pride in those beady eyes.

She takes flight with a flap of feathers, waltzing on the wind like a lone dancer clothed in a gown of umber and ruby, making her way back to her humble home.

A nest in the highest branches, far from the dangers of the world below.

A castle in the clouds to guarantee her family's safety.

The ground below appears as blotches of paint on an unfinished canvas when she reaches her thatched home of twigs and branches.

Five needy beaks open upon her arrival, cawing and squeaking in their instinctive dependence.

They fuss and flap for their mother's attention, which is promptly given. Their cries are calmed as the warmth of her body settles in their home.

To the bystander, a robin's nest is no more than an inky blur in the branches. But this wintertide, look up, and perhaps you would see a family of creatures who care for each other, who huddle close when that bitter chill starts creeping in.

An unassuming family, high in those branches, but a family nonetheless.

*Charlotte Marron (IV)*

Winner of the BBC Two-Minute Tails Competition



*Evie Moore (V)*



## A TEENAGE REVELATION

Hair trimmings,  
 In the bathroom sink,  
 I am born anew.  
 Up till 3 on a Tuesday,  
 Standing in front of the mirror,  
 Staring at the beautiful, beautiful mess  
 That is myself.  
 Oversized sweater,  
 From that one charity shop.  
 I am born anew.  
 Up till 4 on a Sunday  
 Watching the streetlights turn off.  
 The traffic lights flashing red, amber, green,  
 Like the transition of  
 Self-hate, self-love and  
 Pure unadulterated adoration.  
 Long hairy legs,  
 Running through fields in the summer.  
 I am born anew.  
 Up till 5 on a Monday  
 Surrounded by 70s New Wave,  
 Dancing over piles of laundry spread over the floor,  
 Joyously alive.  
 Sign in hand,  
 Shouting so they will listen to me speak,  
 I am born anew.  
 Up till 6 on a Wednesday  
 Listening to my CDs, one  
 By one by one,  
 Music filling my soul and crawling under my skin.  
 Heavy boots,  
 Jumping to a violent thud of bass  
 In a stranger's basement.  
 I am born anew.  
 Up till 7 on a Saturday  
 Drunk on my beauty.  
 Drunk on your beauty.  
 Such a beautiful, beautiful mess.

*Charlei Hill (V)*



*Felicity Selfridge (V)*

## ELEVENTH NIGHT

Smoke. Ash. Ashtray.  
 The shape of a woman  
 wrapped in red.  
 Trapped in  
 a sun without a face.  
 Go and be away now.  
 As if the light knows who stands beneath it.  
 It's been a long day.  
 Click. Clink. Pour.  
 A river running clear.  
 It's late.  
 Yes.  
 Say nothing more.  
 There's nothing more to say that wants to be said.  
 I got you this.  
 A bundle of red-wrapped  
 chocolate, overpriced.  
 Paid with little silver coins.  
 Thank you.



Bang. Bang. Bang.  
Fireworks.  
Does it still burn?  
Yes.  
Okay.  
Okay.  
Bring the dogs in.  
Bring the dogs in.  
All want and soft beneath the teeth.  
Jesus. Go to brush them off  
with a snap, a startle.  
An easy warning.  
Take them upstairs but they don't go.  
Stupid.  
They don't know any better.

Go on up.  
Don't look back now.  
Water builds on the sill,  
fortified by the building storm.  
Rest there: cold, calm, silent.  
Beyond the pane the world is afire,  
weather-beat flags and leaning pyres

*Abbie Gibson (LVI)*



*Katie Geddis (LVI)*

## MY NAME

In the tapestry of life, a thread so very fine,  
It tells a tale that defines my name.  
A name, a word, a whisper in time,  
It carries the weight of a personal claim.

In writing and speech, it takes its form,  
A label, a symbol, a grand design.  
But deeper within, where the soul is warm,  
My name, and identity, closely entwined.

In languages I have spoken and lands I have  
roamed,  
My name finds a place, a place to call home.  
An identity formed from the now and the then,  
My name will guide me until the very end.

In the mirror's reflection, a world untamed,  
Lies the mystery, magic, and truth of my name.  
So, in the end, as my story's told,  
I embrace my name, as it's worth its weight in  
gold.

In the symphony of life, a note in the score,  
My name is the melody, in my life forevermore.

*Adam T O'Brien (LVI)*



*Ruby Clements (V)*

## CONCRETE

I saw a fox on the road.  
 It was still  
 and I fill  
 with shivering pity.  
 Where will it go?  
 Its path is broken.  
 It is rusty, and will grow more;  
 the earth can't reach it.  
 Tarmac is in the way.  
 This is inorganic.  
 Is its soul still on the white paint?  
 My eyes well like a small pond,  
 they overflow.  
 I take no action,  
 this emotion is meaningless.  
 I drive on and think,  
 I might turn up the heat.

*Lois Ramsey (MVI)*



*Samvritha Sirkanth (LVI)*



*Anna McWilliams (LVI)*

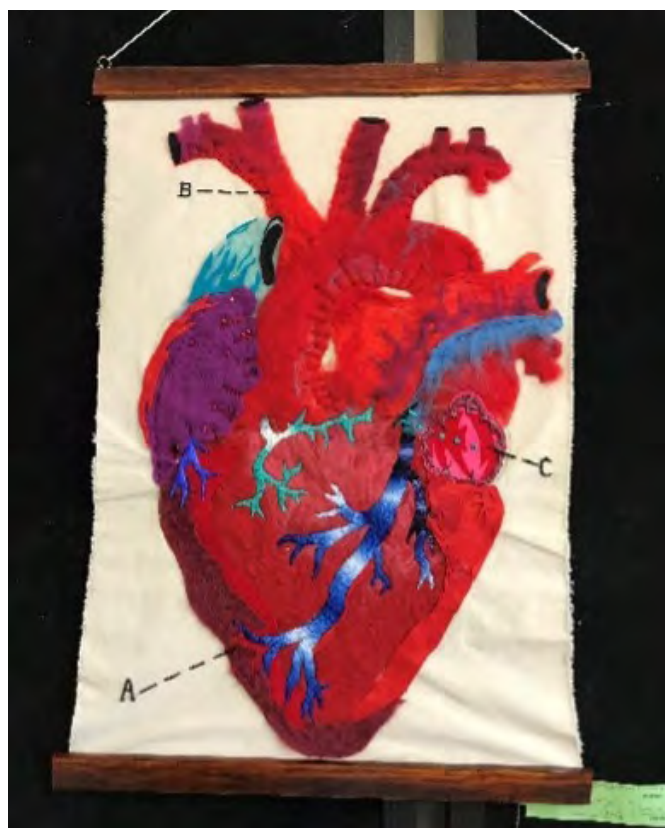
# Art in School



Our senior pupils were given the opportunity to attend the Royal Ulster Academy of Arts Annual Exhibition in the Ulster Museum. These trips helped enhance their course as they viewed a range of work at the exhibition and were given a detailed tour by Maggie Bowen. Mrs O'Donnell and Laura Atkins had work selected to be shown in the exhibition.



Congratulations to our Art and Design pupils Holly Hooks and Anna McWilliams whose artwork was selected for the CCEA True Colours Virtual Exhibition. The exhibition showcased the top candidates from Northern Ireland.



*Anna McWilliams*



*Holly Hooks*

This year we have had a University of Ulster Fine Art student Kathleen Malone complete her 100-hour project within the department. During this time, she taught the pupils in Lower and Middle Sixth the skill of oil painting. She also gave a talk on portfolio development for those intending to apply to Art University courses.



Caitlin Arthurs, a past pupil of the Class of 2019, visited the Academy to speak to pupils about Marketing and Graphic Design. Caitlin has been in the Marketing industry since she left B.R.A. and is graduating from Queen's University this year with a Business and IT degree. Caitlin offered advice, awareness, and guidance to current pupils about the Marketing and Graphic Design career paths. The pupils enjoyed hearing about Caitlin's career and the type of work she is involved in.



Past pupil, Kerry Waugh who is a Graphic Designer completed a short work experience with us in the Art and Design Department before making an application to the P.G.C.E course where she was successful in gaining a place. During her time in the department, she shadowed the teachers and gave several talks to pupils on graphic design and branding.

Pupils are encouraged to be involved in the art world through competitions and projects outside of the normal school curriculum. Jai Beattie F5 won 1st place in the Newington Credit Union's Chapter 3 Art Competition.

The North Belfast Area Learning Community Schools' Art Exhibition took place in October hosted by Ulster University.



Ten of our own outstanding Art and Design pupils with their family and friends were invited to celebrate their Art successes over the last year.



It was a wonderful evening they were able to view their creative work alongside that of several other North Belfast schools in the Belfast School of Art.



The Art Department ran a ceramics Christmas snowman workshop in November for Friends of the Academy to help raise much needed funds.

The Creative Art Society continued this year with past pupil Kim Mawhinney as the patron and our President Grace Rogan and Vice President Lucy Lyons. The Old Girls Association kindly gifted us

three sewing machines for the Art Department that were very much needed due to our current machines requiring replacement.



The Annual Art and Design Exhibition in the Art and Design Department took place this year in June. Work was on display from the GCSE and A-Level groups as well as the Junior classes and extracurricular Art Clubs in our dedicated exhibition space and Art classrooms. We had the Staff Preview Art and Design Exhibition event where school staff viewed the artwork and made donations to Save the Children Fund.



Mrs Patterson and Laura Atkins our technician hosted P6 children from a local primary school for an art session on pareidolia.



We have had several staffing changes this year. Mrs. O'Donnell retired from the Art and Design Department after 26 years at the Academy. Mrs. McDevitt joined our department on a full-time basis to teach Art and Moving Image Arts.

The Owl Cover for 2022-23 was designed by Charlie Yates LVI.

*L.A.P*

## MOVING IMAGE ARTS

The Moving Image Arts pupils attended the MIA showcase in Cineworld in November.



They had the opportunity to view films from the top young filmmakers in Northern Ireland along with meeting some of the film's actors and directors in person.

*L.A.P*

## ART AND DESIGN CLUBS



The Art and Design Department continues with its many highly successful Art Clubs. Afterschool Fantasy Club, Drawing Challenge Club, Comic Creators Club, and Game Makers Club, all run by Art Technician Laura Atkins. Senior Afterschool Art Club is run by Art and Design teacher Mrs Hare.

## FANTASY ART CLUB



After-school Fantasy Art Club members met each Monday afternoon to go on a fantasy adventure to another world. They learned to draw themselves as fantastical characters and creatures, and designed weapons, armour, and magical pets.





Pupils created fantasy tea-stained maps with ink dip pens, filled adventurer journals with ideas and stories about this make-believe world, and designed 3D maps and props. They eventually collaborated to help the queen of Selene protect the kingdom from the big bad monster.

## DRAWING CHALLENGE CLUB



Drawing Challenge Club took place each Monday lunchtime and pupils were given a prompt to draw something, then display their drawings at the front of the class and talk about their work. Pupils voted for their favourites, the best artwork, or the most creative, and small prizes were given to the winners.

## COMIC CREATORS CLUB



Comic Creators Club met every Thursday at lunchtime (Sept-Dec) to discover how to create comic characters, write plots, design comic book covers, plan a comic story, and enjoyed lots of fun challenges such as making mini-comics, story blocks, and Frankenstein comic games.

## GAME MAKERS CLUB

Game Makers Club met every Thursday at lunchtime (Jan-June) and pupils designed, created, and got to test their own board games and card games. They learned about what makes a good game, the difference between random dice roll and decision base play, how to balance and create fairness in their games, and how to keep creating better iterations of their games to make them work for real play.



## INKTOBER



All pupils were invited to take part in the Inktober Challenge for an eighth year running. Junior pupils joined together in the Art and Design Department every break-time. Senior pupils met once a week for the entire month of October to draw from the official Inktober prompts list, encourage one another, and experiment with various ink media from markers to traditional ink dip pens. Drawings were displayed daily in the Art and Design Department and Inktober badges were awarded to all those who took part with a special 31 badge for being able to complete a drawing for all 31 days, 100 badges were awarded in the end.

*L.A.*



# Music in School

I always find it difficult to begin an article about the Music Department and our shenanigans throughout the previous school year. This is mainly because we move from one performance to another so quickly, that we sometimes forget to reflect on the event that has just passed. When I speak of the 'Music Department', I refer to all the pupils, teaching staff and peripatetic tutors, who all work together to make performing every month, an enjoyable experience. Every year I witness B.R.A.'s young people take control of events on stage, 'lit up' inside by their own musical creativity, and an enthusiasm equal to the passion of energies released on stage. I firmly believe in pushing young people to take control of the event themselves; over the years this has really started to pay dividends.

Rehearsals commenced in September for all the groups. Prize Day is always the first event to aim for and the Orchestra and Chamber Choir performed with confidence and flair. The pieces chosen were Pomp and Circumstance by Elgar and Ms McMullan's favourite Hallowe'en-themed choir piece, Daemon Irrepat Calledius. It certainly woke the audience up before the guest speaker took to the stage! Meanwhile, as rehearsals and performances for Prize Day were taking place, the hotly anticipated Battle of the Bands took to the stage.....



Let's rewind a few months and put this epic battle into perspective. At the start of September, I put out a simple announcement requesting any bands who wished to take part in a contest after Half-term to speak to me. I was expecting a couple of bedraggled-looking pupils, clutching a broken guitar to enquire. Instead, 10 bands filled in the application form, participated in the audition/rehearsal process and enthusiastically put themselves on stage in front of 400 pupils.



An epic contest ensued between Radiation, Subject to Change, Secret Base, Dead Nethercott, 2 ½ Indians, Absent Minds, Social Situation and IV. The final was a hotly disputed contest, but 'Dead Nethercott' edged slightly in front of '2 ½ Indians' with their tight ensemble playing and screaming from Matthew on drums.



Almost immediately it was November, and the old Green Carol books were dusted off, sellotaped back together and the chosen carols photocopied. I always enjoy the B.R.A. Carol Service and it never really feels like Christmas until the night of the service in Belfast Cathedral. It is also a little nerve-wracking as all the music needs to be learnt by the end of November due to the school examination week. The day after examination week is always spent relearning any parts, frantically locating the music, and sorting out arrangements to get 250 pupils bused down to the Cathedral and back to school. This year the pupils sang fantastically well, and they are learning how to fill the vast space of the Cathedral. Special mention must go to Jack Cairns and his rendition of O Holy Night. He made it sound effortless and I think everyone simply relaxed and listened to him – the sign of a true musician.

Open Nights arrived as usual on the first week back in January and I must thank each one of the pupils who stood in a packed Assembly Hall, frozen in the Crombie Foyer and playing the same playlist over and over again to prospective pupils. I am not sure that the complimentary packet of crisps and juice made up for this in any way, but you certainly impressed many P6/7 pupils.



Over 300 performers took to the stage of the Ulster Hall for Belfast Royal Academy's Spring Concert on Wednesday 13th March. It was a wonderful success, full of variety and musical talent and a range of accomplished performances from many groups.



The Senior Orchestra's spritely rendition of Raider's March gave a rousing start to the proceedings leading into Ben Madigan's lively performance of songs from Matilda and Annie.



Throughout the first half of the concert, the audience was treated to a feast of music from the junior pupils in Form 1 to the more seasoned performers in Chamber Choir. Every group performed beyond the standard that we had expected, and it was lovely to see the camaraderie and good humour on display between pupils.





The second half of the programme opened with the winners from the Battle of the Bands followed by the talented pupils from Senior Strings.



They performed their items from Bartok and Holst with such awareness of tuning and tempo that they produced a sound of more seasoned performers than some of them are. The musical transitions between all the groups were seamlessly and effortlessly made by the vast numbers of performers on stage (only 2 pupils did not manage to make it to the stage on time), and the packed hall enjoyed every piece of music being sung or played to them.



The Junior Choir managed to sing in 3 parts and the Senior Traditional group played a rousing set led by Jane Finnegan.



Boys' Choir (or army) sang their little hearts out on stage and made Mrs McCombe proud!



Hugo Reilly-Stewart performed Vaughan Williams The Lark Ascending for the M6 solo and his performance was of such a high standard that he received a standing ovation. It was a totally exquisite and beautifully phrased performance and I think everyone in the hall that night witnessed a special moment.



The final piece was Chilcott's A Little Jazz Mass, which the Senior Choir enjoyed; it is a mark of the talent amongst the musicians in B.R.A. that I was able to get pupils to accompany the Choir instead of having to hire professionals!



Thank you so much to the wonderful Joe O'Kane who accompanied every single choir rehearsal throughout the year and performed with such aplomb on the evening with fellow M6 musician, Matthew Rankin. A fine conclusion to a highly enjoyable evening.



After Easter, we started tidying up coursework, getting GCSE, AS and A2 performances sorted and recording coursework. The Chamber Choir recorded Desmond Earley's arrangement of The Parting Glass for a school video and suddenly everyone was away sitting examinations. I kept the spirit of Battle of the Bands alive with the Junior Battle of the Bands. Fake Plastic Trees, Core, Amethysts, Minus Half an Indian and BrainRot performed in a packed Assembly Hall. It was a very enjoyable lunchtime indeed.

I must take time out of my musings to thank the M6 boys, Hugo, Harrison, Matthew and Joe for basically running the Department for me. Harrison could tackle any piano piece required for any occasion and frequently found himself in front of a piano playing for the various groups that needed accompaniment. Matthew and Joe set up anything to do with a plug, and Battle of the Bands would not have gone quite as well without their technical know-how.



Hugo diligently looked after the String Quartet, Senior Strings and Orchestra, ensuring that rehearsals were set up, music photocopied, and bowings all written in parts. I know all four of them particularly enjoyed their time in the percussion section of Wind Band, along with Jack Cairns, who managed to knock the bass drum over during the Spring Concert, mid-performance – a true talent indeed.

Finally, news of some successes in the wider choral and instrumental scene. Pupils from Belfast Royal Academy participated in a range of music residencies over the summer months. Jamie Wilson was accepted into St John's College Cambridge for a choral masterclass at the start of July where he took part in rehearsals and an evensong. Hugo Reilly-Stewart, Jamie Wilson, Harrison Kirk, Matthew Rankin, Maria Watters and Alexandra McQueen performed with the Ulster Youth Orchestra and Katie Horkan, Rachael Anderson, Niall Blaskett, Aidan Murphy, Harrison Kirk, Thomas Gillam, Alex Simon and Beth Stewart sang with the NYCNI Senior Choir. Here's to another year of music-making!

*M.M.M*





# **BELFAST ROYAL ACADEMY**



## **ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE**

### **BELFAST CATHEDRAL**

**WEDNESDAY, 20TH DECEMBER 2023**

**AT**

**7.00 P.M.**





**HYMN: ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY  
(V.1 HOPE ROGERS; V.V. 2, 3 CHOIR ONLY)**

4.

For He is our childhood's pattern,  
Day by day like us He grew,  
He was little, weak and helpless,  
Tears and smiles like us He knew;  
And He feeleth for our sadness,  
And He shareth in our gladness.

5.

And our eyes at last shall see Him  
Through His own redeeming love,  
For that child so dear and gentle  
Is our Lord in heaven above;  
And He leads His children on  
To the place where He is gone.

6.

Not in that poor lowly stable,  
With the oxen standing by  
We shall see Him; but in Heaven,  
Set at God's right hand on high;  
Where like stars His children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.

**CONGREGATION PLEASE REMAIN  
STANDING**

**Bidding - Lord's prayer**

Carol: Away in a Manger H.F. Selwood Lindsay

1st LESSON: Genesis III - A Ben Madigan pupil  
Amber McIlwaine-Biggins

Carol: What Sweeter Music  
J. Rutter

**We are very grateful to Belfast Cathedral for  
the use of the Church. Thanks are also due to  
The Very Reverend Stephen Forde, Dean of  
Belfast for officiating at the service, Stephen  
Hamill for playing the organ and Joe O'Kane  
(M6) for accompanying on the piano.**

**-5-  
BLESSING**

**HYMN: HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING**

1.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled:  
Joyful all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies,  
With th' angelic host proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Hark! The herald angels sing.  
Glory to the newborn King.

2.

Christ by highest heav'n adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold him come -  
Offspring of a virgin's womb:  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see,  
Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with man to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

3.

Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
Risen with healing in his wings;  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.



**2ND LESSON: GENESIS XXII - A JUNIOR  
BOY JOSHUA BROWN**

CAROL: Calypso Carol M. Perry arr. A. Pote

3rd LESSON: Isaiah IX - A Junior Girl  
Isla Kearney

CAROL: In the Bleak Mid-Winter  
H. Darke  
(soloists: Jasmine Mirfield & Niall Blaskett)

4th LESSON: Isaiah XI - A Middle School Girl  
Leah McNevison

CAROL: Stille Nacht F. Gruber arr D. Willcocks

**CONGREGATIONAL HYMN: O LITTLE  
TOWN OF BETHLEHEM**

1.

O little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see thee lie  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting light:  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.

2.

For Christ is born of Mary:  
And gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God  
the King,  
And peace to men on earth

3.

How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessing of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming;  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still  
The dear Christ enters in.

4.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel.



5th LESSON: St. Luke 1 – The Head Girl  
Ellie Bell

CAROL: Tomorrow shall be my dancing day  
J. Gardner

6th LESSON: St. Luke II - The Head Boy  
Oliver Pearce

CAROL: O Holy Night (soloist: Jack Cairns)  
A. Adam

7th LESSON: St Luke II - A Member of Staff  
Miss E. Wallace

CAROL: Candelight Carol J. Rutter

8th LESSON: St. Matthew II - The Principal  
Mrs H. Woods

CAROL: The Three King - P. Cornelius arr I  
Atkins (soloist: Jamie Wilson).

**CONGREGATION PLEASE STAND**

9th LESSON: St. John 1 - The Warden Professor I.  
Montgomery

**CONGREGATION PLEASE SIT**

CAROL: Mary, did you know?  
M. Lowry & B. Greene

**HYMN: O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL**

1.

O come all ye faithful,  
Joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold Him  
Born the King of Angels:

**O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord!**

2.

God of God,  
Light of Light,  
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God,  
Begotten not created:

3.

Sing, choirs of angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing all ye citizens of heav'n above.  
Glory to God,  
In the highest:

4.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,  
Born for our salvation,  
Jesus, to Thee, be glory giv'n.  
Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing:



# **BELFAST ROYAL ACADEMY**



**SPRING CONCERT**

**ULSTER HALL**

**WEDNESDAY, 13TH MARCH 2024**

**AT**

**7.00 P.M.**



# PROGRAMME

**Orchestra**

**Raider's March**

**J. Williams**

**When I Grow Up**

**T. Minchin**

**Ben Madigan**

**It's a Hard Knock Life**

**C. Strouse & M. Charmin**

**A Thousand Years**

**CD. Hodges & C. Perri**

**Junior Strings**

**Something Just Like This**

**C. Martin & The  
Chainsmokers**

**Chamber Choir**

**O Love**

**E. Hagenberg**

**Junior Trad**

**The Boys of Bluehill; The  
Home Ruler; The Liltin Ban-  
shee & The Spotted Dog  
English Folk Song Suite  
March: Seventeen Come Sun-  
day  
Glenn Millar in Concert**

**Ralph Vaughan Williams**

**Wind Band**

**Arr. P. Murtha**

**Junior Choir**

**Soloists: Maria Hudson,  
Vismitha Pandiaray & Joshua  
Courtney**

**Medley from Les Miserables  
Soloists:**

**Schoenberg arr. E.  
Lowejski**

**Senior Traditional Group**

**Morrison's Jig; Tripping up  
the Stairs; Harp & Shamrock;  
The Golden Stud & Cooley's  
Reel.**

**And So It Goes**

**B. Joel arr. B. Chilcott**

**Chamber Choir**

**The Battle of Jericho**

**Arr. M. Hogan**

**Orchestra**

**The Phantom of the Opera**

**A. Lloyd-Webber arr. C.  
Custer**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Ms M. McMullan: Senior Choir, Senior Strings, Big Band, Junior Strings  
& Chamber Choir**

**Mr C Davison: Senior Orchestra, Junior Choir & Wind Band Mrs V**

**McCombe: Boys' Choir**

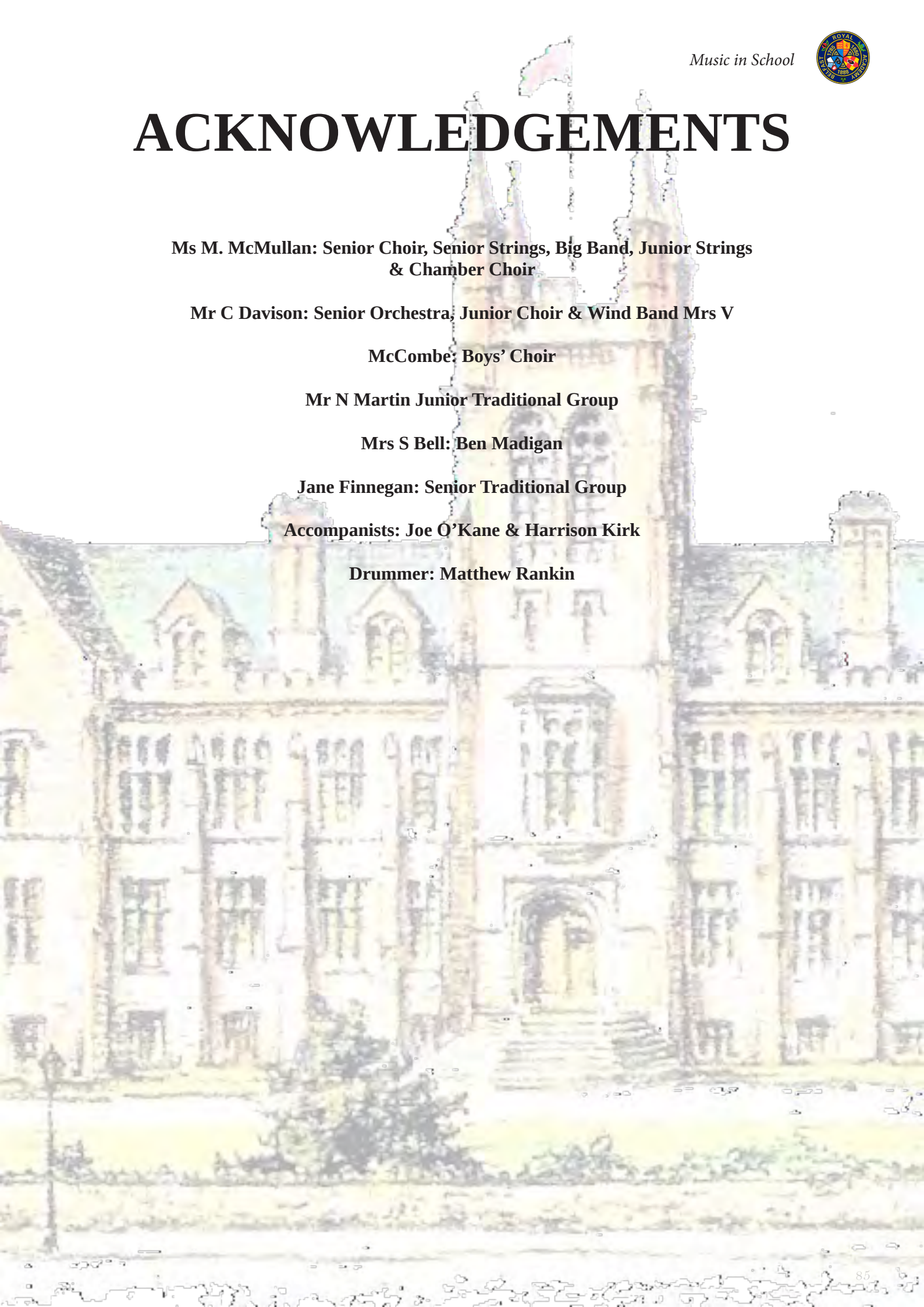
**Mr N Martin Junior Traditional Group**

**Mrs S Bell: Ben Madigan**

**Jane Finnegan: Senior Traditional Group**

**Accompanists: Joe O'Kane & Harrison Kirk**

**Drummer: Matthew Rankin**





# SENIOR CHOIR

## SOPRANO

Ella Adam  
Adrienne Balili  
Freya Bowler  
Lucy Chambers  
Stephanie Chow  
Amandine Chesnel  
Rosa Clarke  
Aaliyah Clark  
Annie Clawson  
Katie Crooks  
Elizabeth Crowe  
Sophie Curran  
Rebekah Dalzell  
Lucy Donald  
Ella-Sofia Downey  
Zara Duffy  
Rachel Easdon  
Eva Finnegan  
Megan Flood  
Madison Gilmore  
Maya Gracey  
Leah Hetherington  
Faith Hillis  
Cora Johnston  
Ema Jones  
Clodagh Kearney  
Rosa Kerr  
Phoebe Kirk  
Alice Logan  
Molly Macauley  
Matilda Magill  
Charlotte Marron  
Lola Mateer  
Roisin McCarthy  
Jessie McCauley  
Grace McDowell  
Rebecca McKeown  
Eve McKeown  
Abigail McKinty  
Leah McNevison  
Alex McQueen  
Sophie McVeigh  
Lucy McVeigh  
Anna McWilliams

Jasmine Mirfield  
Aleesha Moriarty  
Sophia Morwood  
Eleanor Murphy  
Erin O'Brien  
Miah O'Reilly  
Fiona Philip  
Hannah Press  
Sofia Rea-Lavery  
Seraphina Rooney  
Clara Schilling  
Beatrice Seath  
Lucy Stevenson  
Elizabeth Toal  
Annabelle Toal  
Ria Tohani  
Maria Watters  
Trina Whittington  
Sophie Wilson  
Rosie Woods

## ALTO

Rachael Anderson  
Ellie Bell  
Tanisha Biswas  
Sophie Burns  
Beth Callaghan  
Cara Campbell  
Sophia Chowne  
Chloe Craig  
Rebecca Crooks  
Eva Crossan  
Anna Curran  
Rosa Donaldson  
Jane Finnegan  
Katie Horkan  
Wiktoria Januszezwska  
Shannen Kelly  
Rebecca Kirkpatrick  
Jessica Lane  
Amber Mallon  
Jane Martin  
Clodagh McAuley  
Katie McCarney  
Lauren McCullough

Lois McGrath  
Sarah McLean  
Riona Millard  
Ciara Murray  
Ella O'Carroll  
Grace Ogilby  
Madhumitha  
Pandiaraj  
Gail Payot  
Zoe Piddington  
Scarlett Platt-Bell  
Hannah Rankin  
Aoife Riddell  
Grace Robinson  
Emily Saunders  
Aoife Scott  
Ines Scott  
Alex Simon  
Samvithra Srikanth  
Beth Stewart  
Emily Warnock  
Diana Zhou

## TENOR

Niall Blaskett  
Cormac Doherty  
Michael Eyjolfsson  
Jacob Gordon  
Samuel Johnston  
Harrison Kirk  
Lucas Kyle  
Timothy Lane  
Ciaran Laverty  
Daniel Maitland  
Robert Manlan  
Finn McAlorum  
Callum McAnoy  
Felix Morwood  
Owen O'Kane  
Kelvin Ogunleye  
Keshav Raghuram  
Matthew Rankin  
Kyle Rooney  
Toby Sayers  
Arjun Suresh

## BASS

Jonah Black  
Jack Cairns  
Loannes Chen  
Andrew Cleland  
Jakub Dabrauski  
Kian Gastar  
Thomas Gillam  
Jack Gilmore  
Liam Gonsalves  
Hugo McCollam  
Nathaniel McCracken  
Vincent McCullough  
Aidan Murphy  
Ed Nethercott  
Ethan Nicholson  
Adam O'Brien  
Jamie O'Kane  
Joe O'Kane  
Darragh Quinn  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Zachary Saunders  
Olivier Staworzynski  
Jamie Wilson  
Michal Wolozyn



# 15 MINUTE INTERVAL

Two & a Half Indians  
(Keshav, Arjun, Timothy,  
Michal & Jacob)

Battle of the Bands

Bad to the Bone

Dead Nethercott (Matthew, Joe  
& Roisin)

Aneurysm

Senior Strings  
Soloist: Hugo Reilly-  
Stewart

Rumanian Folk Dances: I—  
Jocul Cu Bata; II—Braul; VI  
& VII—Maruntel

B. Bartok

St Paul's Suite 1st movement

G. Holst

Big Band

Now's the Time

Parker arr. M. Taylor

The Chicken

A.J. Ellis arr K. Berg

A Welsh Medley

arr. V. McCombe

Boys' Choir

Happy Together

G. Bonner & A. Gordon

M6 Solo

Hugo Reilly-Stewart

R Vaughan-Williams

The Lark Ascending

Senior Choir

A Little Jazz Mass

B. Chilcott

Jazz Trio—Matthew Rankin,  
Joe' O'Kane and Oliver  
Staworzynski

1. Kyrie
2. Gloria
3. Sanctus
4. Benedictus
5. Agnus Dei

Finale

Rock Band—Matthew Rankin,  
Joe' O'Kane, Harrison Kirk  
and Gail Payot

Bohemian Rhapsody

F. Mercury arr. M. Brymer



# BOYS' CHOIR

James Adair  
Riaz Ahmed-Fennell  
Ventura Bamisile  
Jonah Black  
Niall Blaskett  
Josh Brobyn  
Jack Cairns  
Loannes Chen  
Leo Clarkson  
Aaron Davidson  
Mark Elliott  
Joseph Golden  
Liam Gonsalves  
Jacob Gordon  
Jackson Haddock  
Oliver Kulig  
Lucas Kyle  
Samuel Johnston  
Timothy Lane

Reuben Leavey  
Jacky Lin  
Sam Lockhart  
Matthew Mallon  
Robert Manlan  
Finn McAlorum  
Callum McAnoy  
Lewis McAuley  
Alex McCarey  
Cormac McCollam  
Hugo McCollam  
Nathaniel McCracken  
Vincent McCullough  
Harry McIntyre  
Jack Mercer  
Tom Moore  
Ed Nethercott  
Kelvin Ogunleye

Jack O'Kane  
Jamie O'Kane  
Joe O'Kane  
Owen O'Kane  
Oliver Pearce  
Keshav Raghuram  
Matthew Rankin  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Zachary Saunders  
Toby Sayers  
Alexander Scott  
Olivier Staworzynski  
Jacob Stewart  
Arjun Suresh  
Robert Todd  
Michael Woloszyn  
Dani Wright  
Mr P Dorman  
Mr M Harte  
Mr J McCabe—Cornet

# BIG BAND

## SAXOPHONE

Cormac Doherty  
Ciara Murray  
Bryn Mawhinney  
Keshav Raghuram  
Samvithra Srikanth

## TRUMPET

Harrison Kirk  
Ed Nethercott  
Emily Warnock  
Roisin McCarthy  
Adam O'Brien  
Kyle Rooney

## TROMBONE

Riona Millard  
Andrew Cleland  
Jonah Black  
Finlay Baird

## GUITAR

Gail Payot  
Owen O'Kane

## BASS GUITAR

Joe O'Kane

## PERCUSSION

Matthew Rankin  
Jake Coulter

## PIANO

Niall Blaskett



# JUNIOR CHOIR

Olivia Hunter  
Amelia Johnston  
Katie Johnston  
Ellie Kitson  
Jude Lorrimer  
Evie Mackinson  
Eve McIlmurray  
Emilie McKinty  
Erin McNevison  
Mae Nicholl  
Saisha Tohani  
Eliza-Jane Tomlinson  
Lorelai Torrens  
Cantong Yang

Melissa Cathcart  
Rosa Clarkson  
Joshua Courtney  
Hubert Dabroski  
Rose Davey  
Isla Gillam  
Mathilda Holmes  
Leila Jones  
Oliver Lada  
Lily Macauley  
Lucy McBride  
Theo Mukula  
Alana O'Flaherty  
Niamh O'Rourke  
Vismitha Pandiaraj  
Sophia Redpath  
Hope Rogers  
Christian Schilling  
Christian Schilling  
Phoebe Scott  
Daniel Simms  
Isla Wilson

Mylie Adams  
Eva Bettany  
Yan Chen  
Zuzanna Chojnacka  
Niamh Cunningham  
Eva Drake  
Rosemary Enriquez  
Sophie Harris  
Maria Hudson  
Maja Jones  
Amelia Manley  
Isabelle McCune  
Inis McVicker  
Nathan Millin  
Aadya Mohan  
Darcey Moriarty  
Jayden Njadina  
Ella O'Kane  
Zoe O'Kane  
Pujitha Srikanth

# BEN MADIGAN

Eryn Johnston-Crowe  
Evie Gass  
Conor Groombridge  
Portia Lippert  
Mia Mullan  
Oscar O'Boyle  
Charlotte Patterson  
Orla Corbett  
Soham Dhingra  
Oriana Maynes  
Donal McGlew  
Shubarna Thapa

Siena Fitzpatrick  
Lily Mitchell  
Aalok Thapa  
Abigail Thompson  
George Cole  
Sofia Fitzpatrick  
Ciara Groombridge  
Amber McIlwaine-Biggins  
Thomas McRitchie  
Darcy Patterson  
Joshua Strain



# WIND BAND

## FLUTE

Alice Logan  
Grace Ogilby  
Jessie McCauley  
Leah Hetherington  
Samuel Johnston  
Zara Duffy  
Eve McKeown  
Samuel Lockhart  
Erin O'Brien  
Lucy McVeigh  
Sophie McVeigh  
Vismithaa Pandiaraj  
Jenna Wilson  
Isla Gillam  
Emily Hughes  
Harry Paul

## SAXOPHONE

Bryn Mawhinney  
Cormac Doherty  
Ciara Murray  
Keshav Raghuram  
Samvritha Srikanth  
Ciaran Laverty  
Reuben Leavey  
Niamh O'Rourke

## CLARINET

Beth Stewart  
Abigail McKinty  
Sophia Chowne  
Cate O'Dowd  
Rebecca Kirkpatrick  
Rebecca Crooks  
Melissa Cathcart  
Hope Rogers  
Emilie McKinty  
Lorcan Slane

## TENOR HORN

Seraphina Rooney

## BARITONE

Jacky Lin

## TRUMPET

Harrison Kirk  
Ed Nethercott  
Kyle Rooney  
Emily Warnock  
Adam O'Brien  
Roisin McCarthy  
Harry McIntyre  
Milo Platt Bell  
Jamie O'Kane

## TROMBONE

Riona Millard  
Andrew Cleland  
Jonah Black  
Finlay Baird

## BASS

Joe O'Kane  
Jacob Gordon

## EUPHONIUM

Scarlett Platt-Bell

## PERCUSSION

Matthew Rankin  
William Sedgwick  
Matthew Mallon  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Jack Cairns



# SENIOR ORCHESTRA

## 1ST VIOLIN

Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Maria Watters  
Cara Campbell  
Thomas Gillam  
Jane Finnegan  
Jessica Lane  
Cara McMahon  
Rachael Anderson  
Katie Horkan

## 2ND VIOLIN

Jamie Wilson  
Rebecca McKeown  
Lucy Stevenson  
Eva Crossan  
Zachary Saunders  
Toby Sayers  
Finn McAlorum  
Alessandro O'Hara  
Katie McCarney  
Sarah Brogan  
Chloe Craig  
Madhumitha Pandiaraj  
Lucy Chambers  
Sophie Curran  
Eleanor Murphy  
Michael Eyjolfsson  
Odhran McAteer  
James Adair  
Inis McVicker  
Zoe O'Kane

## VIOLA

Alex Simon  
Lucy Donald  
Lorcan McCusker  
Gemma Duffy

## CELLO

Alex McQueen  
Clodagh Kearney  
Rosa Kerr  
Timothy Lane  
Caoimhe Casey

## DOUBLE BASS

Olivier Staworzynski  
Joe O'Kane

## CLARINET

Beth Stewart  
Abigail McKinty  
Rebecca Kirkpatrick  
Sophia Chowne

## FLUTE

Alice Logan  
Grace Ogilby  
Jessie McCauley  
Leah Hetherington  
Samuel Johnston

## HORN/SAXOPHONE

Seraphina Rooney  
Keshav Raghuram  
Ciara Murray  
Cormac Doherty  
Samvritha Srikanth

## TRUMPET

Harrison Kirk  
Ed Nethercott  
Emily Warnock  
Roisin McCarthy  
Adam O'Brien

## TROMBONE

Riona Millard  
Andrew Cleland  
Jonah Black  
Finlay Baird

## PERCUSSION

Matthew Rankin  
Ben Boyd



# JUNIOR TRADITIONAL GROUP

## FIDDLE

Maggie Lockhart  
Eábha Moore  
Paige Stewart  
Ella Adair

## CONCERTINA

Shane Óg McNeill

## MANDOLIN

Callum McAnoy

## TIN WHISTLE/FLUTE

Charlotte Marron  
Erin O'Brien  
Aaron McCullough  
Niamh Cunningham  
Isla Gillam  
Jenna Wilson  
Lorcan Slane  
Daniel Simms  
Harry Paul

## GUITAR

Jacob Gordon  
Owen O'Kane  
Jack O'Kane  
Kelvin Ogunleye  
Sophie Wilson  
Isla Kearney  
Caleb Stevenson

## HARP

Carmen Loughlin

## BODHRÁN

Lucas Kyle

# JUNIOR STRINGS

## 1ST VIOLIN

James Adair  
Maggie Lockhart  
Odhran McAteer  
Fiadh McKenna  
Blathnaid Callaghan  
Evie Drake  
Willow Stewart  
Maebh McAteer  
Inis McVicker  
Zoe O'Kane

## 2ND VIOLIN

Eve McIlmurray  
Katie Johnston  
Annie Smith  
Paige Stewart  
Eliza-Jane Tomlinson  
Charlotte Berne  
Maeve Calvert  
Ella Adair  
Kassi O'Hare  
Dawid Zbanski  
Eva Burnside

## VIOLA

Gemma Duffy  
Lorcan McCusker  
Eábha Moore

## CELLO

Leila Jones  
Mae Nicholl  
Rory Lemon  
Matthew Robinson



# SENIOR STRINGS

## 1ST VIOLIN

Leader: Hugo Reilly  
Stewart  
Maria Watters  
Jamie Wilson  
Cara Campbell  
Cara McMahon  
Jane Finnegan  
Katie Horkan  
Jessica Lane  
Rachael Anderson

## 2ND VIOLIN

Thomas Gillam  
Rebecca McKeown  
Sophie Curran  
Michael Eyjolfsson  
Lucy Stevenson  
Eva Crossan  
Zachary Saunders  
Finn McAlorum  
Toby Sayers  
Lucy Chambers  
Alessandro O'Hara  
Eleanor Murphy  
Chloe Craig

## VIOLA

Alex Simon  
Lorcan McCusker  
Lucy Donald

## CELLO

Alex McQueen  
Clodagh Kearney  
Timothy Lane

## DOUBLE BASS

Olivier Staworzynski

# CHAMBER CHOIR

## SOPRANO

Ella Adam  
Faith Hillis  
Clodagh Kearney  
Jessie McCauley  
Rebecca McKeown  
Jasmine Mirfield  
Annabelle Toal  
Sophie Wilson

## ALTO

Rachael Anderson  
Katie Horkan  
Jane Martin  
Ella O'Carroll  
Alex Simon  
Beth Stewart

## TENOR

Niall Blaskett  
Thomas Gillam  
Harrison Kirk  
Matthew Rankin

## BASS

Jack Cairns  
Aidan Murphy  
Ed Nethercott  
Joe O'Kane  
Hugo Reilly-Stewart  
Jamie Wilson



The Owl 2024

# SENIOR TRADITIONAL GROUP

## FIDDLE

**Leader: Jane Finnegan**  
**Thomas Gillam**  
**Maria Watters**  
**Zachary Saunders**  
**Katie Horkan**  
**Jessica Lane**

## MANDOLIN

**Callum McAnoy**





# School Games

## RUGBY

### 1ST XV



Senior rugby began mid in mid-July. This summer period has become an integral part of the preparation for senior rugby. This involved training in the gym and the sports hall to maximise player strength and conditioning for September.

There were some fantastic performances in the early season with some exciting rugby on display. Much of the early season was geared towards the Schools Cup group campaign. Early victories versus Ballyclare High School and Royal School Armagh gave a great start to the year. The next block of games was difficult against Methodist College Belfast (21 - 13), Sullivan Upper School (19 - 12) and Wallace High School (36 - 3). Although losing all three games it was evident the team was not far away from competing against such opposition. It stood the team in good stead heading into the Schools Cup Group Stages.

The first cup game was against Rainey Endowed School. In a very close encounter, B.R.A. won the game 28-20, with Josh Manson scoring a fantastic individual try.

Half term allowed the team to get some well-deserved rest. It had been a tough start to the season.

After the break, it was straight back to business with a tough fixture against Campbell College at Roughfort. B.R.A. started the game superbly with Ryan Calwell scoring a fantastic try straight off the scrum from his wing. This was followed shortly with another try giving B.R.A. a 14-0 lead at half-time. The team managed the rest of the game well with some precise kicking from Connor McVicker and Frank Davis. The game ended 14-0, a brilliant win which brought so much confidence to the group. This gave perfect preparation for the next group stage cup game. A long journey to Foyle College was up next. Although slow to start the team came away 32 - 7 winners. We had not been at our best but had done enough to take a bonus point win. There were two further matches due before the last group-stage game. Regent House proved to be a tough match. Trailing 24 - 0 at half-time there was a little soul searching. However, the second half was a very different story. James Murray had a stand-out performance showing some individual brilliance. We managed to turn the score around and win 34 - 24. Unfortunately, our fixture against Coleraine Grammar was cancelled due to frozen pitches. That left one Schools Cup game versus Grosvenor Grammar.

A comfortable 40 - 0 win at Roughfort meant we progressed to the Last 16 of the Danske Bank Schools Cup. The Christmas break gave a good opportunity for some rest again. It had been another very busy term. A fixture was arranged however versus RBAI over the holiday period. On a beautiful morning at Osborne, a large crowd drew to watch what turned out to be a fantastic game. The game itself ebbed and flowed. B.R.A. scored some brilliant tries, Alex French scoring the stand-out try. Adam Hewitt had a brilliant game in the centre causing RBAI several problems defensively.



We narrowly lost the game in the end (28 - 22) but showed great determination in a performance everyone was very proud of. As the spring term began the draw for the last 16 was released. Up next would be Ballymena Academy at Roughfort. A huge game and opportunity against the top-seeded team in the competition.

In preparation for our last 16 games, the team had a very successful trip to Edinburgh for a training camp. This was an excellent opportunity to refine many aspects of our game. The highlight of the trip was the opportunity to train at the indoor rugby pitch at the Scottish Institute of Sport (Oriam). This was a memorable experience training where the Scotland National team do much of their training. The team trained and bonded superbly well and were well prepared for their last 16 versus top seed Ballymena Academy.

The morning of the Ballymena game came around very quickly. There had been so much preparation put into this game. It was very clear the team was ready. Roughfort was really busy and there was a fantastic atmosphere. As the game kicked off it was evident Ballymena were a hugely physical side. They took an early 12 - 0 lead in the game. After this, the game settled considerably and we managed to take a great score through Adam Hewitt to make it 12 - 5 at halftime. Turning around at halftime with the wind we knew there was a real chance. Playing some fantastic rugby the team managed to take a 15 - 12 lead with approximately 15 minutes to play. Ballymena however managed to regather the subsequent restart and go on to score another try taking a 17 - 15 lead. With much effort, we fell short at the final whistle. This was a performance I was immensely proud of. The team could not have given more.

The exit from the Schools Cup was difficult to process. Players were understandably very disappointed. So much work and effort had gone into this and we had a chance. There was so much however for players to learn from this experience. It was time to put energy into the Subsidiary shield competition. The team was drawn away to Portadown College they did not perform to their true ability losing the game and exiting the competition. As a coaching staff, it was a pleasure to work with this group.

They were led superbly well by Captain Matthew McQuiston. As a leader and captain, he is certainly one of the best I have ever seen. His ability to always bring the group with him, whilst maintaining high standards and group cohesion is a true skill. It was a pleasure to work alongside him, he played a major part in the success of this team throughout the year.

There were some very notable individual successes during the season. Connor McVicker played for Ireland U18 Schools versus Wales U18 Schools.



He was then also selected to participate in an Ireland U18s Camp during August. He also was part of the very successful Ulster U18 Schools' team during the summer months going on to win the Interprovincial Title. A fantastic achievement. Jayden Irwin and Adam Hewitt had a very successful summer also with Ulster U18 Clubs, whilst Aaron Caldwell and Ethan Pavlovic had a great summer campaign with Ulster U19s. It was fantastic to see so many players involved in the summer programme with Ulster Rugby, with 6 more players training with the Ulster U16 and U17 groups



I would like to thank Chris McCarey for his continued expertise and support, Mike Bentley for his work conditioning players, Luke Bonnar for his support in video analysis and Daryl Service as team Physio. Without these members of staff Senior players wouldn't get the fantastic experience they do.

**D.J.C.**

## 2ND XV



The 2XV entered the 2023/24 season as a young, ambitious squad with a strong desire for a successful campaign. With such a young squad we needed to find a leadership group who could pilot the team with calmness, reliability, and steadiness. We found these qualities in Captain, Nathan Rossol and Vice-Captain, Ryan Cowden.

We began the season with a visit from local rivals Ballyclare High School and started in style with a comprehensive 26-5 win. Player of the Match vs Ballyclare: Aaron Brolly. Game two gave us the chance to play our first away game of the season against a very impressive Armagh side. The team found themselves 19-0 down at halftime but a fantastic second-half comeback saw B.R.A. take a 21-19 win. Player of the Match vs Armagh: Nathan Rossol.

Another tough away game against Methody was up next and a poor start left B.R.A. trailing 31-7 at the half. Another rousing comeback in the second half almost saw an incredible shock result but B.R.A. just ran out of time and the game ended with a 38-31 defeat. Player of the Match vs Methody: Elias

Agbonkpolor. The difficult games kept coming with a visit from Wallace and although the result went against us with a 29-21 loss, we continued to show positive signs of growth as a team. Player of the Match vs Wallace: Matthew Williamson. The team bounced back with an impressive 52-0 win over Bangor with some incredible team tries scored. Player of the Match vs Bangor: Oran Cole.

The squad was stretched thin with injuries and the next matches against Campbell and Regent were difficult ones. Two battling performances were not enough to get the wins, but we learnt a lot about ourselves in the defeats. Player of the Match vs Campbell: Alex French. Player of the Match vs Regent: Sam Saunders.

The arrival of the 2XV Cup was greeted with excitement and we started our campaign with a trip to Banbridge in the Round of 16. B.R.A. started brilliantly and didn't let up throughout, a fantastic team performance resulted in a 47-15 win. Player of the Match vs Banbridge: Zack Archer.

In the Quarter Final B.R.A. got a home draw against Sullivan and were keen to build on their last performance. Another dominant performance saw B.R.A. take a 29-15 win and a place in the semi-finals. Player of the Match: Josh Gibson.

The semi-final draw was made and it was an extremely difficult one, an away tie against overall favourites RBAI. Our team fought with everything they had but were outplayed on the day and eventual champions, RBAI took a deserved 38-14 win. Player of the Match vs RBAI: Matthew Allen.

Although there is a tinge of disappointment for what could have been, the season was a huge success. Every player who wore a 2XV shirt during the season showed the commitment, positivity and work ethic that makes a team special. We, as their coaches, are incredibly proud of the playing group and thank each one of them for a brilliant season.

Top Try Scorer - Zack Archer (5)

Most Improved - Josh Gibson

Player of the Year - Hadwyn Hughes

**Johnny Patterson**

## MEDALLION A



The Medallion squad of 2023-2024 had a very successful campaign, both the A and B team competed with the other top sides of Form IV rugby, progressing weekly as a group from September to March.

The A squad had a positive season winning the majority of their games before losing in the quarter-final of the Medallion Shield against a talented Coleraine side.

The squad had good wins against Armagh, Sullivan, Wallace and Ballymena, coming up short in some close games against Campbell, Methody and RBAI.

Throughout the season the squad grew and developed their style of play and the tight 5 of Oscar, Ciaran, Elijah, Adam and Zach were always working hard providing the groundwork for many attacking moves. Adam and Elijah were essential, not only in the lineout but also in the loose, developing their excellent handling skills. The front row gave excellent go-forward ball, Oscar and Zach always looking to spearhead any move.

The back row was a pest in attack and defence, Daniel, Antoni and Alex always gave their best in every game. Daniel and Alex played like traditional flankers, tackling everything that came their way and trying to steal the ball at every breakdown. Antoni brought to the pitch what Muhammad Ali brought to boxing, every game he demonstrated devastating power with delicate footwork.



The halfbacks of Max and Blake were always on the lookout to attack. Blake with his trademark show and go and Max driving the forwards around the park. Both improved massively as the year went on and we hope they continue to do so in senior rugby.

At centre Harrison and Caleb provided a steady base in the midfield. Both players have true talent going forward and in defence. Throughout the season they provided game-winning tries and tackles alongside a desire to win which spurred on their teammates.

The back three provided pace power and defensive solidarity throughout the season. Joe, Ryan and Daniel all provided an electric lift to the team with ball in hand and developed a reputation as one of the most feared counterattack sides in medallion rugby.

This is a talented and special group of players and hopefully, they will continue to mature and progress through senior rugby at all levels.

**C.G.N/P.R.R**



## MEDALLION B



The year started slowly for this squad of players who showed a lot of potential but initially struggled to get results on the pitch. The squad developed their game, particularly their defence, getting better every week. It was a pleasure to see so many of them improve and hone their skills, becoming a talented side by the end of the year.

Leadership skills were evident throughout the squad with many players demonstrating their ability such as Adam, Ben, Matthew, Harry and Keon. The team continued to develop their skills, particularly in the lineout with Adam, Zach, Matthew and Tim working hard on the calls and moves.

The strength of Carey, Ben, Finn, and Jack became more effective as they used their agility in combination with their power to create devastating attacks and solid defence.

In the backs Matthew, Toby and Finn controlled the games beautifully, kicking into space and letting strong runners like Luca and Jay play off them. The standard achieved by this squad must not be undervalued, we have high hopes that many of these players will be involved in 1st XV, 2nd XV or 3rd XV success over the coming years.

There are too many people to thank for a season as successful as this however our sponsors who provided kits for the boys require our gratitude as do the parents who support every week and transport the players to the games, without you the games wouldn't run. Lastly, we would like to

thank Mr Shields, Mr McAuley and Mr Creighton who gave up their time and efforts to work with the boys across the season.

*P.R.R/C.G.N*

## BOYS' HOCKEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Taylor Cup – Captain Max Colvin

The Taylor Cup side was only afforded one group game due to the withdrawal of Portadown College. As such the group decider saw us travel to face Newry High School. The side consisting of 5 1st XI regulars from Form V and a talented core of Form IV boys travelled with high expectations. Ben Montgomery who played sweeper for the 1st XI for most of the season filled the role of goalkeeper. Max Colvin at centre back led the side well, while Michael Eyljofsson did an excellent job defensively trying to nullify Newry's best player in centre midfield. In the first half we dominated possession, but our ball pace was not fast enough to move the Newry defence around and create space. As such it was a half of very few chances. In the second half our general play was a lot better. Jacob Clements and Jude Craig were combining together well, and the team seemed to be gelling better. Aaron Knott was effective in a more advanced role and suddenly we were opening up the defence and creating more chances.

However, our profligacy in front of goal ensured that we were unable to break the deadlock and the game ended in a 0-0 draw. After a few phone calls and a quick consultation of the internet before we stepped back on the bus, we realised penalty run ins, a skill we had never really practiced, would be required to decide the group winner. Ben Montgomery did well to save 2 of the Newry efforts and Max Colvin and Aaron Knott both converted their attempts adeptly, but unfortunately, we failed in our other 3 attempts losing 3-2 to finish second in the group.

This meant we had to travel to Markethill High School – a school with an excellent pedigree in this competition for the semi-final. We were without Sam Lockhart who was recovering from a viral infection, but Ethan Thompson of Form III had emerged as a brave goalkeeping option,



which permitted Ben Montgomery to slot into midfield and Daniel Kerr and Callum Weir of Form III strengthened our options in defence and midfield respectively. In contrast to the Newry game when an opportunity presented itself mid-way through the first half Cormac McCollam took it with aplomb to put us in the lead. Unfortunately, Markethill equalised on the stroke of half time. In the second half the physicality of the Markethill side and their greater experience started to pay off. They scored to go 2-1 up and try as we might we could not find the equaliser, instead with a few minutes to go they got a 3rd to seal the victory.

The boys effort could not be questioned and some of our hockey was excellent. In truth we should have been contesting the final as our general play in the Newry match was much better than the hosts. Thankfully many of the side will have the opportunity to correct this next year.

In addition to those mentioned in the article the squad for the semi-final included James Quigley, Harry McIntyre, Heaven Raju, Ewan Bickerstaff and Sam Hipolito. Additionally, Lewis Gray and Daniel Kirk played in the Newry game.

## UNDER 15XI



### CAPTAIN: AARON KNOTT

The Under 15 side played 6 games over the course of the season, losing 5 and winning one of their matches. In truth the playing record does not reflect the quality of some of the hockey we played, but we struggled to score goals – only managing to find the back of the net on 4 occasions during those 6 games. We started with a 5-0 defeat to a very capable Sullivan side at the Valley. We

struggle to deal with the visitors' ball pace out of the gates and found ourselves a couple of goals down early. By the second half our own ball pace had improved and defensively we were a lot more assured, but the damage had been done.

Our second fixture saw us welcome Kilkeel High School to the Valley. This was a much closer contest than the Sullivan game and some of our hockey was excellent. We took the lead with a well taken goal by Cormac McCollam before Kilkeel restored parity with a short corner strike. The second half saw us continue to play well and force most of the play, creating a number of good chances. However, as in the first half the set pieces were the difference. Kilkeel converted a further two goals from short corners, while we failed to register a goal from ours, condemning us to a second defeat by a scoreline of 3-1.

Another defeat at the hands of Grosvenor meant that we travelled to face a formidable Bangor Grammar side away in the Richardson Cup first round without a huge amount of confidence. We conceded a very early goal but stuck at our task well, with Sam Lockhart managing a second half goal as we slumped to a 6-1 defeat.

This gave us a Richardson plate match, which was something of a derby against Ballyclare High School, in which we produced our best all round performance of the season. Harry McIntyre and Aaron Knott were composed and combative at the back. Daniel Kerr and Lewis Gray were very solid as full backs. Heaven Raju, Callum Weir, Michael Eyjlfsson and Sam Lockhart were dynamic in midfield with Cormac McCollam and Finlay Jackson providing a cutting edge up front. Michal Wolozyn, Olivier Orlowski, Arjun Suresh, Austen Miskimmin-Young, Bryce Morrow and Finn Gregg gave good options rotating on from the bench. Behind them Ethan Thompson was an assured figure between the posts. Goals from Callum and Aaron were enough to give us a 2-1 victory and a trip to Regent in the second round of the plate.

This was a journey we made with great confidence, especially as the Under 14s had played much of the same Regent side in the Ferris Plate the previous week. A disciplined first half performance saw us trailing 1-0 at the break and we were right in the contest. Unfortunately, the second half was the nadir of our season as we conceded 3 goals



in quick succession in the first 5 minutes after the break. As we pushed forward to try and get the goal that would get us back in the game we left ourselves further exposed ending up on the wrong side of a 6-0 scoreline, which was not a fair reflection of the abilities of the two sides.

In spite of the inauspicious end to the season there was a good sense of progress over the year. I hope many of the boys push towards playing on the 1st XI next year and that they get involved in clubs, which will help them to make further progress. Special mention goes to Aaron Knott and Michael Eyjlfsson who were the player of the year and most improved player respectively.

### UNDER 14 XI



#### CAPTAIN: CALLUM WEIR

| Played | Won | Lost |
|--------|-----|------|
| 9      | 4   | 5    |

The Under 14s were by many measures the most successful boys' hockey team in the school. Built around a solid spine and with a good competitive instinct.

The season started with the visit of Ballycastle High School to the Valley where a 2-0 victory was secured through goals from Callum Weir and a debut goal from Ryan Pogue. This was followed by another victory against Ballyclare High School. In a fairly even contest, but one in which we made the best of our opportunities. An excellent team goal finished by Dexter Thompson and a hat-trick from Callum Weir were more than enough to secure us a victory by a margin of 4-2.

Grosvenor were up next and this amounted to

something of a wake up call, as we suffered a 3-0 and somewhat chastening defeat. Another tough contest saw us fall to a further defeat at home to a strong Regent House side. We caused them some problems defensively, but our own defence was all too porous in the face of some excellent Regent attacking play. By contrast this match was followed by a trip to the Boys' Model where we ran out 6-1 victors with goals from Dexter Thompson, Callum Weir and Leo Philip.

This set us up for the first round tie in the Ferris Cup against Raphoe on a crisp cold January afternoon. In a very tight contest on an slippery pitch, which became increasingly hazardous as the game went on. The game ebbed and flowed and much of our play was very good. However, Raphoe got the decisive goal and held on to end our Ferris Cup run just as quickly as it had started.

Sullivan Upper provided the next opposition and we made a very bright start to the game, going into a 1-0 lead. However, a very strong Sullivan side came back to win by a margin of 3-1 in the end. This was good preparation for a trip to Londonderry Park to play Regent in the Ferris Plate. A very exciting, end to end game saw Regent pull into a 2-0 lead, before a fine Callum Weir goal pegged us back to 2-1. Regent again scored to go 3-1 up before Weir added a second to make it 3-2. Regent had time to score another before half time, heading into the interval 4-2 up. At the start of the second half we had a gilt edge chance to get the deficit back to a single goal, but we failed to convert it and with that any hope of victory disappeared as Regent scored a further goal to end our Plate run by a margin of 6-2.

Our final game of the season saw us travel to a Campbell College development side who we comfortably defeated by a scoreline of 4-1. Callum Weir continuing his fine goal scoring form with another hat-trick while Daniel Kerr got the other goal to conclude a successful season.

Within the team, Ethan Thompson emerged as a very good keeper, not only for the Under 14 side, but playing for the Under 15s and the Taylor Cup side. He is fearless and has good reflexes and could develop into a very good goalkeeper. In defence Daniel Kerr anchored the team. His basic skills are very solid – he just needs to be a bit more confident



and positive in his own abilities. Sidhak Singh has solid skills and is a good striker of the ball. Ryan Pogue was our most improved player. He reads the game well and generally makes good decisions on the pitch. Adam Cleland often operated at right back. He could impose himself more on matches as his basic skills are good and improving. Oliver McBurney is a good athlete who was a great competitor and didn't shy away from the challenge – similar qualities that Josh Fletcher displayed when he crossed over from rugby and played in a number of matches.

In midfield Leo Philip's skills were a bit raw, but what he lacked in finesse he more than made up for in desire and competitive spirit. Always up for the challenge of marking and standing up to the opposition's best player. Callum Weir was the driving force behind the team. Daniel Kerr's technique is perhaps a bit more polished, but Callum never knew when he was beaten and scored the majority of the team's goals. Dexter Thompson and Kayden Graham were regulars up front. Kayden ran endlessly and took up some excellent positions. He was very effective on the right-hand side. Dexter has a slightly laid back appearance. He is a bit more upright than the textbook might suggest, but his decision making tended to be good and he posed a genuine goal threat down the left hand side. Evan Richards, Jacob Lunn and Kielan Briggs all made valuable contributions when called upon. In some cases their abilities and value to the team was greater than they felt it was.

I would like to thank Mr Watt for his efforts in coaching the boys on Thursday afternoons. Their greatest quality as a team was that they never gave up and continued to battle to the final whistle. Thanks as well go to Mr McCleary for all his efforts in organising the fixtures and the end of season awards night in the Jackson Suite. I hope all the boys continue to persevere and develop their hockey playing abilities.

**M.G.H.**

## GIRLS' HOCKEY

The Girls' Hockey Club welcomed back the expertise of elite coach Stephen Watt for a sixth season. Stephen's focus again would be with the 1stXI and 2ndXI squads, although he would also have an important input working with the junior teams throughout the week.

For the 2023/24 season we fielded 4 Senior and 4 Junior teams every week for our Saturday morning fixtures, some weeks we also played a 5th team if the opposing school were able to provide one, such were the high numbers attending our Senior club. In addition to our 8 regular teams, the Form 1 club practised every Saturday.

2 8-a-side Form 1 teams played friendly fixtures against Sullivan Upper, Methodist College, Antrim Grammar and Belfast High.

They then progressed on to friendly 11-a-side fixtures as part of their development. They also competed in 3 different tournaments.

As always, the club boasted girls who gained representative honours; Leah Callaghan, Leah Carter, Rosa Clarke, and Beth Strong represented Ulster U16.





Leah Callaghan represented Ireland U16.



*N.S.N*

### 1ST XI 2023/24



| Played | Won | Drew | Lost |
|--------|-----|------|------|
| 22     | 14  | 2    | 6    |

**CAPTAIN: SOPHIE BURNS**  
**VICE-CAPTAINS: DAISIE DONALDSON & RACHEL BEATTIE**

Top Goal Scorer: Anouk Bosket

Squad: Ella Kilpatrick, Rachel Beattie, Anouk Bosket, Sophie Burns, Beth Callaghan, Leah Callaghan, Rosa Clarke, Daisie Donaldson, Erin Gray, Faith Hillis, Grace McDowell, Lois McGrath, Zoe Place, Beth Strong, Alex Snoddy, Leah Carter, Beth Adam and Emily Anderson.

### 1ST XI CAPTAIN'S REPORT

The 1st XI had a very successful season this year, the team worked very hard throughout preseason preparing us well for the Super League. We won our Super League group, winning three matches against Victoria College, Limavady Grammar and Methodist College Belfast, drawing against Ballyclare High. This then allowed us to qualify for the quarter-final of the Super League in which we unfortunately lost 2-1 to a future Schools' Cup finalist, with Zoë Place scoring. We then proceeded into Schools Cup Round of 16 where we lost the match due to difficulties with run ins. We thankfully performed better and gained some confidence when we won the quarter-final of the Senior Shield against Strathearn School. We won 1-0 with Leah Callaghan scoring to lead us to victory. This was a big achievement and improvement as it was Strathearn School we lost to the season before in School's Cup semi-final. We produced another win in the semi-final of the shield with a final score of 3-2 against Sullivan Upper, with a goal from Grace McDowell and 2 from Leah Callaghan.

Then the big day came, the final of the Senior Shield against Royal School Dungannon (RSD), filled with nerves and excitement we played our hearts out. The first half ended 0-0 showing how tight the match was, then in the third quarter I scored a goal which relieved some of the pressure. The match remained 1-0 until the last two



minutes when RSD's captain was able to make an impressive breakthrough and score, taking the end result to 1-1. This then led us to run ins, this was nerve wracking for us due to the result of run ins from Schools' Cup, but we fought very hard with Faith Hillis, Anouk Bosket, Lois McGrath and I scoring with the hard efforts from keeper Ella Kilpatrick we won the Senior Shield with an end score of 5-3.



This was the best end to a great season with our continuous hard work paying off.



As an end of season hurrah, we went on tour to Holland where we continued to play hockey against a very high standard which helped us develop our skills further.



As well as playing hockey we had a great time watching the EHL where we were blown away by the standard giving us motivation for the future of our hockey. Overall, it was a very fun way to end the season after a great year of B.R.A. hockey.





I am incredibly proud of everyone for their continuous efforts as we raised the standards of B.R.A. hockey, we won 14 matches, drew 2 and only lost 6, which is an impressive statistic. Lastly, I would like to give a huge thank you to coaches Stephen Watt, Miss Brady, Megan Warke and Mrs Nicholl who supported us throughout the whole year with their commitment to us, our hopes and dreams for the season played a big part in how successful we were.

*Sophie Burns*

## 2ND XI



| Played | Won | Drew | Lost |
|--------|-----|------|------|
| 19     | 15  | 1    | 3    |

**CAPTAIN: BETH ADAM**  
**VICE-CAPTAINS: EVIE CALDWELL**

Top Goal Scorer: Evie Caldwell

Squad: Leah Carter, Sophie Hollywood, Beth Adam, Grace McAllister, Grace McDowell, Hope Daniels, Sophia Morwood, Anna O'Dowd, Faith Hillis, Evie Caldwell, Maya Campbell, Rosa Clarke, Daisy Johnston, Emily Anderson, Hannah Cole, Eve Manson and Ella Kilpatrick

## 2ND XI CAPTAIN'S REPORT

2023/24 was a very exciting and successful season for the 2ndXI. Having made it to the semi-final of the cup in the previous season, we hoped to build on this success and use it as motivation for the upcoming season. We were spurred on by the fact several of us had 2ndXI experience and it was also great to welcome in some super young talent to the team.

To start the season, we had a match against Wallace High. As many of us had never played together we didn't know what to expect but coming away with a 1-0 win gave us much encouragement for the matches that followed. The season continued with more success as we won lots of friendlies including a notable 6-0 against Victoria College. Our cup run started at the end of October with an away game to Carrick Grammar. The girls did so well to achieve an 8-0 win. To get such a strong result in a cup match was so pleasing and a great return for the hard work being put in by everyone.

Our next cup match was away to Ballymena Academy at the end of November. Having been unbeaten up to this point we were determined to come away with another win. With a goal from Vice-captain, Evie Caldwell, who was playing her first match back after injury, just before half time, we were able to settle into the match. Another goal from Daisy Johnston meant that we secured the win 2-0 and progressed to the quarter-finals. We knew that an away match against Banbridge was going to be tight and having had our only two losses of the season just before Christmas meant that the nerves were high for this January match. Having lots of the 1st XI players travel down to watch us along with parents and Mrs Woods, was really encouraging. We started strong with an early goal from Daisy Johnston in the first quarter.

However, Banbridge came back fighting, with a goal to equalise, it was 1-1 at half time. With some amazing saves from our goalkeeper Leah Carter and a fourth quarter goal from Faith Hillis, we won 2-1 and made it to the semi-final.



Making it so far into the cup competition, and to the stage we were put out last season, was nerve wracking but also exciting. We drew Armagh which we knew was never going to be an easy match and with a last-minute change of venue to Roughfort due to the weather, we were desperate to win. The nerves got the better of us in the first half of this match as Armagh scored in both the first and the second quarter which meant we went into halftime 2-0 down. At this point it would have been easy to accept defeat, but our team was so determined, and we decided in our half time team talk that we did not want to get put out this way. The turn around of this match in the third quarter was amazing and our supporters also really helped spur us on. With a penalty corner goal from Emily Anderson and a further goal from Faith Hillis in the third quarter, we had fought to equalise the match and it ended 2-2. This meant it came down to the dreaded penalty runs where we had been put out last season. Unfortunately, the girls tried their best, but we were beaten 4-2 and put out of the cup in the semi-final once again.

Although it was an upsetting end to our season, I am so proud of this team in reaching the semi-final of the cup two years running. Evie and I will be supporting the rest of the girls next season as they work to progress even further. I want to say thank you to the girls for making 2ndXI hockey in B.R.A. something so special to be a part of and I will really miss not playing on this team every Saturday morning. I also want to thank our coaches as we would not have been able to do so well without them. Thank you to Stephen Watt who has put so much work into developing our hockey. Thank you also to Miss Brady for her encouragement, dedication to our hockey and putting so much effort into organising a brilliant end of the season tour to Holland for us.

**Beth Adam**

This was a very enjoyable and successful season for a talented group of players. Both the 1stXI and 2ndXI squads have worked very hard during training and matches to improve their hockey skills and fitness throughout the season. Their commitment to hockey was exceptional.

I was proud to see the 1stXI squad win the Ulster Schools' Shield Competition against Royal School Dungannon and also reach the quarter-finals of the Super League Competition, losing 2-1 to a strong team from Portadown College. The 2ndXI also had an excellent season with only three losses throughout the year, reaching the semi-final of their Cup Competition. The squad lost narrowly to Royal School Armagh despite their determined efforts.

The season finished with a tour to Utrecht, Holland where the group played competitive matches against Kampong and Stichtsche Hockey Club. They also enjoyed a training session with Irish International, David Harte. A cycling tour to see the sites of Amsterdam, some shopping in Utrecht and a visit to the Wagener stadium to watch the European Hockey League were some of the highlights.





Being able to see teams from around Europe compete at the highest standard was an incredible experience. We were very grateful to receive generous sponsorship from Philip Burns at Monkstown Dental and Thompson Aero Seating to supply all players with a Kukri playing shirt, hockey socks and contribute to the costs to attend the EHL. We thank our sponsors and our supporters who contributed to our fundraising activities.

I would like to thank the girls for their dedication and hard work not only this year but throughout their time at B.R.A. I wish those players in MVI good luck and best wishes for the future. Additionally, I would like to thank Stephen Watt, Megan Warke and Dylan Ramsey for all of their coaching and umpiring throughout the year.

***K.E.B.***

### 3RD XI



| Played | Won | Drew | Lost |
|--------|-----|------|------|
| 16     | 13  | 0    | 3    |

**37 goals scored in 16 matches**

**CAPTAIN: ELYSE TAYLOR**

**VICE-CAPTAIN: MADDIE BEGGS**

**3RD XI PLAYER OF THE  
YEAR – EMA JONES**

**3RD XI TOP GOAL SCORER – CHLOE  
CRAIG & EMMA CAMPBELL**

3rdXI Squad: Elyse Taylor, Harriet Brobyn, Maddie Beggs, Julia Robinson, Ema Jones, Hannah Cole, Emma Campbell, Jenna McCall, Ella Sofia Downey, Chloe Craig, Leah McNevison, Hannah Press, Caitlin Shaw, Anna Morrow and Emma Harvey – injury.

This season I had the pleasure of having another fantastic side and we enjoyed a successful season. We made it to the semi-finals of the Gibson Cup. The 2023/24 season began with training matches at the start of September to try and establish our new squads for the season ahead. Our first Saturday was against Wallace High School which secured our first win of the season with Grace McAllister scoring our only goal. We had some notable wins at the start of the season against Hunterhouse (Won 8-0), Methodist College Belfast (W 2-1), Victoria College (W 0-4) and Limavady Grammar (W 5-0). An abundance of players always arrived at training and matches with enthusiasm and a will-to-win attitude.

With so many keen players turning out to training I had a very tough job of deciding this year's 3rdXI. Senior hockey numbers remained high this season, we could field 3s, 4s, and 5s most Saturdays. However, not all opposing schools could always provide us with a 5thXI fixture.

This year's success was down to a group of girls from Form IV – MVI who bonded as a team very quickly. Thanks to Elyse and Maddie the girls often had team nights or met for brunch when they didn't have a Saturday fixture. Our strength was working together as a team, the girls showed excellent communication skills working together and in turn our passing ability was our strength.

Every season the girls compete in the Gibson Cup which begins in October. Here are this season's Gibson Cup results. We were very unlucky to just miss out on penalty runs against Royal School Armagh. Armagh went on to win the Gibson Cup Final.



## GIBSON CUP RESULTS – SEMI-FINALISTS FIXTURE RESULT

3rd round Vs Ballymena Won 2-0

Quarter-Final Vs Rainey Endowed Won 2-1

Semi-Final Vs Armagh 0-0 Lost on sudden death



This is a promising squad of players, and they have the potential to be very successful in the future. They were a pleasure to coach, and I look forward to working with some of these girls again next season. The season finished with a Senior Hockey Awards night at Greenisland Golf Club with many of our senior players turning out. It was a lovely way to round off the season.

A special mention must go to Emma Harvey MVI who although couldn't play this season due to injury she very much remained part of the 3s squad. Emma regularly helped at Wednesday training and often supported the girls on Saturday mornings. Thank you, Emma.

A very special thanks must go to Elyse Taylor and Maddie Beggs who were an excellent Captain and Vice-Captain, motivating and encouraging our team. We will greatly miss Elyse and Emma next season. I hope that Elyse and Emma will continue to enjoy hockey at University or Club level. Thank you also to our past Captain Kate Sturgess for helping with coaching on Wednesdays and to Samantha McGrath for umpiring on Saturdays. Your support is always appreciated.

**J.R.S.**

## 3RD XI CAPTAIN'S REPORT

This season I had the pleasure of being the 3rd XI captain, we had an extremely successful, and enjoyable season. As a team, we worked very well together all year and clicked quickly, which was brilliant as our team had drastically changed since last season.

The pressure was on to improve from last season's cup finish, but we didn't let it get to us. We were more than prepared to tackle the year thanks to several team-building days, brunches, and a lot of effort from Mrs Shaw our coach.



The season was rather bittersweet, especially with the cup, we made it to the semi-finals and narrowly missed out on a place in the finals due to penalty runs. We played against Royal School Armagh and it was a brilliant high-intensity game of hockey. Everyone worked so hard the whole match up until the end whistle but unfortunately, we couldn't score as their keeper was strong. We had many close opportunities through penalty corners as well as players on the post but we just couldn't get the ball into the net ending with a score of 0-0. We pushed through the nerves post-match for our penalty runs with me up first making a save. A huge well done to Maddie, Harriet, Leah, Emma, and Ema for being so brave and stepping up to take our run-ins. Emma and Ema successfully scored their runs with great goals as well as two being conceded resulting in a tie. This consequently led to sudden death where we held our front for two more rounds but despite our best efforts, we were unable to achieve victory.



I truly believe the match could've gone either way that day, both teams were very strong and Armagh got it by the skin of their teeth - it was one of the most even games I have ever seen. Throughout the season, we were very consistent in playing a total of 16 matches: Winning 13 and losing 3. We conceded only 9 goals and scored a total of 37 which draws attention to our drive and determination. One of the season's main highlights has been our passing, resulting in goals during most matches, for example, a 6-0 win against Sullivan Upper as well as a 5-0 win against Limavady Grammar. Both matches contained a team effort of moving as a unit and supporting each other on the pitch. Our ball possession has been exceptional throughout the year, as well as our hunger and persistence for the ball. Our midfielders have always ensured defence is supported well when times get tough, and defence has worked strongly by changing the play on the pitch to allow the forwards to get possession of the ball.

Likewise, the forwards worked excellently to achieve our goals via strong passing, calling for the ball and making space when we needed to expand the pitch. It was the dedication and commitment of all the players showing up to training and matches every week, come rain or shine, that allowed us to have such a successful season. I felt confident in this squad from the beginning, and they never disappointed. Everyone put their heart and soul into every match and training session, day in and day out, I couldn't have asked for a better team. I have genuinely loved being captain this season and love every member like family, I am so incredibly proud of each one of them and I certainly will miss them next season.

Thank you all for making this season great and I have every confidence in you next year. Our team and I are extremely grateful for all the support, encouragement, and work Mrs Shaw has put in throughout the season as well as a huge thank you to Samantha McGrath for showing up weekly and umpiring for us, we appreciate you both – we couldn't have done it without you.

*Elyse Taylor*

## 4TH XI



**CAPTAIN: ELLIE DONALD**  
**VICE-CAPTAIN: ELLIE GALLAGHER**

4th XI Player of the Year – Holly Ross  
4th XI Top Goal Scorer – Cate O'Dowd  
4th XI Squad: Ria Tohani, Rachel Easdon, Phoebe Bradley, Mollie Bacon, Kara McCoubrey, Ellie Gallagher, Evie Lewis, Ellie Donald, Holly Ross, Cate O'Dowd, Rebecca Pettigrew, Annabelle Junk, Ruby Latham, Lucy Ferguson, Rosa Donaldson, Kayla Adair and Cora Johnston.

The season began with training matches at the start of September to try and establish our new squads for the season ahead. Attendance at training was excellent and a great deal of work was devoted to improving both skills and fitness.

In our first Saturday fixture against Wallace, although we played well, we narrowly lost this game 2-1, in the last few minutes of the game. As the season progressed, results varied. We had notable wins against Hunterhouse (Won 0-5), Limavady Grammar (W 0-5), and Regent House (W 6-0).

The 4thXI again had a successful Cup run with this group of girls reaching the semi-finals. We were unlucky to lose to a very strong senior squad from Royal School Armagh. The team dedicated a lot of time and effort to prepare for this match. I look forward to building upon this with the 4thXI next season.



## 4TH XI CUP – SEMI-FINALISTS FIXTURE RESULT

1st Round Vs Down High (Away) Won 0-5  
Quarter-Final Vs Strathearn (Away) Won 0-2  
Semi-Final Vs Armagh (Away) Lost 2-0



We finished our season with an awards dinner at Greenisland Golf Club with all our Senior players. It was lovely to see so many teams together celebrating this season's successes. Thank you to both our Captain Ellie Donald and Vice-Captain Ellie Gallagher for leading the team this season. A very special mention to our Captain Ellie who always led by example, even when injured. Especially motivating and leading her team throughout the Cup run.

*J.R.S.*

## 4TH XI CAPTAINS REPORT

This season proved to be an enjoyable, and enthusiastic experience for the team, with encouraging results throughout. In preparation for our cup matches, everyone dedicated their time, our skill level increased, and our commitment didn't go unnoticed. The pressure was on to defend our previous cup win from the season. We were prepared for what was to come, thanks to the help of Mrs Shaw, and the bond that our team had formed. We played Down High School in the first round of the cup, winning by an incredible 5-0, progressing us to the quarter-final, in which we were set to play Strathearn School. Unfortunately, due to illness, I could not attend, but

the team fought hard and played to their strengths, coming away with a 2-0 win, I couldn't have been prouder.

Weeks later, we found out we were going to play Royal School Armagh in the semi-finals. I knew it would be a tough match, as I was part of the 2022/2023 team who narrowly beat R.S.A. in the cup final, on penalty runs. To prepare for this match, we had a team night to reflect on how well we had done all season, and how if we put our minds to it, we could beat R.S.A.

Unfortunately, we were unable to defend our title. Due to multiple injuries throughout the game, we were not at full strength and lost 2-0. Despite the result and the many tears that were shed, the team did themselves, and Mrs Shaw proud. These things happen, and we must move on to become stronger and more resilient, to come back and win next year. Mrs Shaw's dedication, leadership, and care for our team did not go unnoticed, we greatly appreciate her.

A thank you to Samantha McGrath who umpired our matches every week and always encouraged us. I wish next season's 4thXI the very best of luck, and hopefully, we can bring the 4thXI cup back to B.R.A.

*Ellie Donald*



## U14A XI



**CAPTAIN – KERI GRAY**

**VICE-CAPTAIN – HOLLY JOHNSTON**

Player of Year – Maja Jones and Keri Gray

Top goal scorer – Lucy McBride

Most improved – Lucy Whittlely and Martha Donaldson.

U14A squad – Macy Beggs, Erin Colvin, Martha Donaldson, Emilia Gordon, Keri Gray, Hollie Hipkins, Charlotte Ingram, Holly Johnston, Leila Jones, Maja Jones, Molly Long, Lucy McBride, Kristen Savage, Jessica Smyth and Lucy Whittlely.

This season had its ups and downs but overall, it was an amazing year. This season was also a very important one for us, we had the Super League and the Junior Cup. We had 3 wins and a draw in the group stage - winning against Ballyclare High (3-0), Victoria College (2-1), Limavady Grammar (4-1) and drawing against Methody (0-0). This made us winners of the group. In the next round, we played Royal School Armagh but sadly lost 3-0 which put us out of the Super League, but we didn't stop there, we still had the Junior Cup.



We played Methody in the first round and won 1-0 then we played Victoria in the second round but lost on sudden death penalty runs. That result put us into the Junior Plate. We faced Glenlola Collegiate in the first round and won 3-2, next was Larne Grammar which resulted in a 3-0 win. In the quarter final we won 4-0 against Grosvenor Grammar which took us to the semi-final against Rainey Endowed which ended in a 1-0 loss. I am so proud of everyone in this team as they went out this season and gave it their all which got us to a semi-final. Everyone on this team has improved so much with their skills since the start of the year, and not only that, but they also take the skills they learn in training and show them off on the pitch every match. I am so sad that the team is splitting up, but I wish all players the very best as we progress to senior hockey next year, I hope that they all excel through their hockey no matter what team they are in. In the end, we couldn't have done it without our amazing coach Miss Robinson and the help of Stephen Watt because a team doesn't become who they are without their coaches, training, and teamwork.

*Keri Gray*





## U14B XI



**CAPTAIN – ISABELLA SIMPSON**  
**VICE-CAPTAIN – AMELIE**  
**MCKEOWN**

Player of Year – Olivia McCall and  
 Amelie McKeown

Top goal scorer – Macy Beggs

Most improved – Amy Bell and Eva McKinney

U14B squad – Molly Adams, Macy Beggs, Amy Bell, Charis Bell, Jasmine Burgess, Layla Crawford, Niamh Cunningham, Katie-Nicole Kane, Petra Keeling, Lauren Knocker, Esther Lawrence, Amelia Manley, Olivia McCall, Amelie McKeown, Eva McKinney, Phoebe Onang, Bella Redfern-McBride, Isabella Simpson, Rebecca Stevenson, Bo Stewart and Autumn Stirling.

The U14B team had a very fun and successful season. Our first win was against Ballyclare High School where we won 2-0. It was really good to start the hockey season off with a win, especially against a local team. We also won against Limavady Grammar at home. My personal favourite win was against Larne Grammar School at Roughfort as our team played so well together and it was so nice for all of us to see how far we had come since the start of the season. Our most recent win was against Sullivan Upper, winning 1-0. This win was particularly good as we had previously lost to them so to see that we came back stronger was a big confidence boost for the team.



Overall, the hockey season for the U14B's was very successful and we all grew closer together on and off the pitch. A highlight for the team would be the bus rides as we all got to talk and enjoy time together as a team. I believe that we have come a long way since the start of the hockey season, seeing all of our individual strengths working together to form a strong team. We are all very excited to move into senior hockey although I will miss the team very much. I would like to thank Miss Robinson for coaching us this year, I would also like to thank Miss Kirkpatrick as she has helped our team so much and has looked after us all year and always encouraged us.

*Isabella Simpson*

The U14 hockey season began with a period of August pre-season training. For the first time ever, a Junior Super League competition was announced, and the girls playing for the U14As started their campaign on the second Saturday in September. A successful run of results (3 wins and 1 draw) progressed the girls out of the group stage and into the knockout stages of the competition, where they lost to Royal School Armagh in a game that displayed a very high standard of junior hockey. The U14Bs played the same schools throughout the Super League competition and enjoyed a mixed set of results, which was a testament to the hard work they put in throughout the summer. Upon completion of the Super League, the U14As entered the Junior Cup. The team secured a win against Methody, followed by a loss on penalty runs against Victoria College, placing the girls into



the Junior Plate. The girls had a very successful Junior Plate run, progressing through to the semi-final stage, where they just missed out on a place in the final, narrowly losing to Rainey Endowed. Throughout the latter stages of the season, the U14Bs continued to enjoy a mixed set of results, with a notable win away to Sullivan Upper.

Every U14A and U14B fixture throughout the season was tightly contested, which is a credit to the hard work that the girls put into their training all year. Fitness, match awareness and skill development were all training priorities this season and, because of the commitment the U14 teams showed improvement in these areas, they will be in a strong position next season as they progress into the senior hockey programme. Thank you very much to Stephen Watt for his large contribution made to the U14 hockey squad this season. A massive thank you also to Miss Kirkpatrick who led the U14B and umpired for both teams every weekend.

*E.P.R.*

## U13A SQUAD



| Played | Won | Drew | Lost |
|--------|-----|------|------|
| 13     | 6   | 3    | 4    |

Niamh O'Rourke, Eva Lavery, Vismithaa Pandiaraj, Bella McCarey, Kristen Savage, Sophia Simon, Lucy McBride, Leila Jones, Maisie Jones, Olivia McAllister, Matilda McAllister, Ella Manson, Sophia Hipkins, Grace Kelly, Daisie Lewis and Niamh McKenna-Murray.

## CAPTAIN'S REPORT

I enjoyed being captain of the U13As and losing only 4 matches made it feel like a really good season for us. We had a very talented squad of players who always tried their best. In fact, myself and 2 others played up on the U14A team every week before we played for the U13s. Some of our most memorable wins were beating Methodist College Belfast 1-0 in September and then again 2-1 later in the season.



We improved as the season went on and are looking forward to our season as U14s when we would start playing in competitive fixtures.

*Lucy McBride*

## U13B





| Played | Won | Drew | Lost |
|--------|-----|------|------|
| 12     | 5   | 3    | 4    |

Eva Lavery, Alice Adams, Sophia Simon, Lily McCrory, Lucy Read, Niamh McKenna-Murray, Daisie Lewis, Maggie Lockhart, Emily Anderson, Rosie O'Kane, Leila Scullion, Kasi O'Hare, Chloe Dunlop, Rose Kerr, Brogan Blaney and Marcella Hegarty.

## CAPTAIN'S REPORT

The U13Bs have been outstanding this year. Our best win was beating Limavady Grammar 4-0. We have developed as a team so much from the beginning of the season. Everyone put in so much effort and it's been visible in every match we have played. I know that we will continue to grow and enhance our skills and team building in the future. I'm incredibly proud of our team and I am honoured to have captained the team for this season.

*Lily McCrory*

## NETBALL

B.R.A. netball had a successful season overall. Ten teams played competitive matches in the Northern Ireland League Competitions, the format this year included blitz days at the initial stages followed by knockout rounds. The Senior squad reached the semi-final of their league and Cup competition, losing both times narrowly to St Dominic's. The Senior B reached the final of their league competition finishing second place to Friends School Lisburn. The Intermediate A team also reached their league final placing as runners up. The Intermediate B team were successful in their league final against Shimna Integrated College. It was fantastic to see continued progress and success within the netball club. The numbers of players participating continues to rise. There are a number of teachers volunteering to coach and support the development of the club. I would like to thank all of the players and coaches for their hard work this season.

Congratulations to the pupils competing at representative level.

## REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS

U15 Regional Development Squad – Keri Gray, Gwen Clements

U17 Northern Ireland Squad- Erin Gray, Emilia Gordon



*K.E.B.*

## FORM I NETBALL



Form I netball was well attended, the players were enthusiastic and worked hard to improve their skills and fitness. The girls enjoyed some friendly matches at the Northern Ireland blitz competitions and House Competitions throughout the year. The level of participation was excellent, and we will continue to build upon the skills and promise shown next season. My netball experience at B.R.A has been amazing. I have been able to continue playing a sport that I truly enjoy in school and have



made lots of friends along the way. It is great to see so many people at training. I always look forward to our training sessions and am particularly looking forward to competing next season.

*Grace White*

Our cup competition sadly ended at round two against St Ronan's but we were happy with how we progressed as a squad throughout the season. Thank you to Mrs Patterson for all her dedication to taking our training, I look forward to next season.

*Lilyanna Devine*

## MINOR NETBALL



### CAPTAIN: LILYANNA DEVINE

Minor A Squad: Nicole Oluwaleye, Vismithaa Sai Pandiaraj, Kristen Savage, Maggie Lockhart, Nicola Fularczyk, Sophie Maguire, Isabella McCarey, Leilia Jones, Eva McCullough, Lilyanna Devine, Oliwia Fularczyk.

### CAPTAIN: OLIWIA FULARCZYK

Minor B Squad: Lily Macauley, Eva McCullough, Sophia Redpath, Olivia Fularczyk, Lilyanna Devine, Lexi Harker Quinn, Nicole Oluwaleye, Blanaid Callaghan, Amelia Gogacz, Rachel Warnock, Olivia McAllister and Hope Rodgers.

We started our season with an enjoyable blitz competition, finishing third overall against strong competition from Belfast High School, Ballymena Academy, and Dominican College. We then faced Wallace in the next stages and were unfortunate to come runners-up.





The Minor B squad played Ulidia, Carrick Academy, and Blessed Trinity in their first league blitz. We finished second overall with only one loss against Ulidia (8-7). We then went on to play Priory Integrated College losing narrowly 7-5. We worked hard at training each week to develop our skills and fitness. Well done to all players for their efforts throughout the season.

## JUNIOR NETBALL



### CAPTAIN: EMILIA GORDON

Junior A Squad: Darcey Moriarty, Niamh Cunningham, Amy McFarlane, Keri Gray, Jessica Smyth, Gwen Clements, Emilia Gordon, Holly Johnston, Ruby Johnston and Maja Jones.

This year the Junior A team had some very challenging matches against teams such as St Dominic's (21-20) in the Cup competition. We also faced tough opposition in our blitz competition against Banbridge Academy and Friends School Lisburn tested us as a team and as individuals.



However, we worked hard during our training and won against Glenlola Collegiate to progress to the quarter-finals of the Shield Competition. We played Aquinas but sadly came runners up. Overall, we had a good season, and I couldn't have asked for a better group of girls and can't wait to play with them next season in the intermediate league and cup.

*Emilia Gordon*



### CAPTAIN: OLIVIA MCCALL



Junior B Squad: Eva McKinney, Eva Bettany, Jenna Wilson, Deena Hariri, Zoe Falls, Olivia McCall, Maja Jones, Charlotte Barber, Niamh Cunningham, Ruby Johnston, Farida Haridy, Farrah Laughlin, Olivia Mitchell and Martha Donaldson.

The Junior B netball team has had a great season, coming 4th in our first blitz day, winning our league quarter-final against FiveMile Town (11-6) as well as our semi-final against Lagan College (22-2). In the final against St Marks, it was a nail-biting 9-9 at the end of full-time. Unfortunately, we lost narrowly in extra time (12-11).

A massive thank you to Miss Brady for organising and coaching us throughout the year and to Layla Hunter and Ciara Murray for helping each week. The whole team worked very hard in both training and all matches. We are looking forward to the next season.

*Olivia McCall*

## INTERMEDIATE NETBALL



### CAPTAIN: ERIN GRAY

Intermediate 'A' Squad: Wiktoria Januszevska, Ema Jones, Lucy Smyth, Maria Mallon, Beth Strong, Erin Gray, Emilia Gordon, Hope Daniels, Megan Morris, Harriet Brobyn. This season has been one to remember. The first run out for the team was at the blitz day in Antrim, this decided what division of the league we went into. It was the first time this team had played together however it

wasn't long before we realised the full potential to push competitively this season after winning 3 out of 3 matches convincingly placing us in division 1. Through teamwork and commitment, the squad progressed further into the competition winning the quarter and semi-final placing us in the Division 1 league final. The work was far from finished as we faced our toughest opponents yet, St Dominic's. Unfortunately, the match didn't go our way and they took the win 43-28. Everyone gave all of their efforts and had a positive attitude during the match and although we were disappointed, we knew we had to focus our energy on the Cup. We picked ourselves back up and breezed through the rounds of the cup. In the quarter-final against Wallace High School, we came from behind to win 33-31 showing the bond and determination this team had to succeed. Our mindsets were focused going into the semi-final as we knew we had a chance to take home the cup as St Dominic's went out in the first round, so it was all to play for. In a very tightly contested match, Our Lady and Saint Patrick's took the win at the last minute ending our season.





It has been an honour captaining and seeing this amazing team develop throughout the year I couldn't ask for a better group of girls; they genuinely made my netball experience this year better than I could have imagined. I want to say a big thank you from the team and me to Miss Brady who coached us and was there for us every match experiencing the highs and lows we had together throughout the season. Also, for dedicating her time to make our school netball this year possible, we couldn't have done it without you.

*Erin Gray*



### **CAPTAIN: BEATRICE SEATH**

Intermediate 'B' Squad: Rebekah McKeown, Sophie Curran, Kacie O'Reilly, Sophia Morwood, Erin O'Brien, Beatrice Seath, Zara Duffy, Miah O'Reilly, Sophie McVeigh, Lucy McVeigh, Grace McDowell and Eleanor Murphy. The Inter-B netball team had a great season this year. We won every match and made it to the final of our league competition, it was a tight game against Shimna Integrated College, but due to our determination and teamwork on the court we won with a score of 26-18, I couldn't be prouder of my teammates and the hard work at training each week, it really paid off.

*Beatrice Seath*

## **SENIOR NETBALL**



### **CAPTAINS: LAYLA HUNTER & CIARA MURRAY**

The Senior A season officially began in November with a successful blitz day. We played several schools from around Belfast, including Belfast High School, Dominican College Fortwilliam, and Aquinas Grammar. We placed second, being closely beaten on point difference by Belfast High School. Our constant hard work as a team every week at training helped us to then secure a win (22-17) against St.Paul's High School in the first round of the cup.

Feeling confident after having a very successful start to the season, we then faced St.Dominic's Grammar in the second round of the cup. After a very exciting match, going point for point the entire way through and drawing in full time, we narrowly lost 48-46 after ten minutes of extra time, ending our chances in the cup. We then moved our focus onto the league, continuing to train hard both on and off the court. This paid off and we came away with a win against Glenlola Collegiate (26-14).



With our confidence high after the convincing win against Glenlola, Miss Brady then broke the news to us that our next match in the league would be against St.Dominic's. Knowing it was going to be another very closely contested match, we tried to stay positive and focus on playing our own game. Exactly like last time, it was an intense match the entire way through, going point for point, our play as a team was working well, putting up a strong defense against St.Dominic's. With only a point in it this time St.Dominic's once again got the win, ending our chances at the league just as they did in the cup. This was sadly the end of the season for the Senior A's, although not as successful as we expected and most definitely not how we wanted it to end, I believe we speak for all of the team when we say it was still a great season, enjoying not only every time we stepped onto the court but also every training session, every bus journey and changing room team talk. Our biggest thanks go to Miss Brady for her constant dedication to netball, working to organise everything, and also being at every training session and match that she possibly could, we are so grateful for everything she does for B.R.A. Netball. We also want to thank

June McKeown who stepped in this year as Miss Brady's number two when it came to netball, June was always there to offer her coaching wisdom and enthusiasm whenever we needed it. Our final thanks go to Miss C Robinson, who was there every Thursday afternoon, always with positivity and enthusiasm, willing to put up with us, and always there offering to help. Overall it has been an amazing season, with a great group of girls and coaches we couldn't have asked for any more support and dedication to not only our team but B.R.A. netball as a whole, thank you to everyone who made our final season so fun and memorable.

*Layla Hunter & Ciara Murray*



### **CAPTAIN: EMMA CAMPBELL**

Senior 'B' Squad: Rachel Hackett, Rosa Gribbon, Beatrice Seath, Hope Daniels, Emma Campbell, Harriet Brobyn, Megan Morris, Aditi Saneesh Krishna, Ava Logan, Lucy Moran, Kacie O'Reilly and Beth Strong.

It was great to see so many senior players involved in netball this year. We started the season well by finishing second in our blitz competition, after close matches with Ulidia and Carrick Academy. We faced a well-drilled Wallace section in the next stages and played Friends School Lisburn in the final of our league. The team gave a determined effort but finished second, losing narrowly in the final quarter. A big thank you to all of the coaches and players for their hard work this season.

*Emma Campbell*



## FOOTBALL CLUB

The 2023/24 football season saw the Academy compete in the Grammar School League, Belfast Cup, and Northern Ireland Cup. Despite a challenging campaign, the team demonstrated resilience and flashes of potential throughout the year.

The league competition, which ran from October to April, involved fixtures against six grammar schools. Our season began with a 1-0 loss to Regent House, the eventual league winners, with the winning goal coming in the final minute of a closely contested match. Unfortunately, the team struggled to find its rhythm, suffering subsequent defeats to RBAI, Belfast High School, Campbell College, and Grosvenor Grammar School. These results placed us at the bottom of the league standings. In the Northern Ireland Cup, we faced St. Joseph's, Derry in the first round. As last year's U16 champions, St. Joseph's proved to be difficult opposition, and we were outclassed, resulting in a heavy defeat.

The team's best performances came in the Belfast Cup. In the group stage, we were drawn against Campbell College and Bangor Grammar. Against Campbell, the teams were evenly matched throughout, but we narrowly lost 2-1. Our encounter with Bangor Grammar was another close contest. After leading 1-0 at halftime thanks to a dominant display, Bangor fought back to score twice in quick succession. However, a last-minute equaliser salvaged a point. Throughout the season, several players stood out for their performances, including Myles Mateer, Odhran Moane, Nathan Flattery, Aodhan Baine, and George Trimble.

Despite having a talented group of players, poor commitment often made team selection challenging. However, the experience gained by the younger members of the squad will be invaluable moving forward. With promising Form V students set to join the team, we are optimistic that the group will be more competitive in the upcoming season.

**R.B.**

## 1ST XI CRICKET

| Played | Won | Lost | No Result |
|--------|-----|------|-----------|
| 7      | 2   | 4    | 1         |

### CAPTAIN: MD WILLIAMSON

With the loss of no fewer than 6 of the previous year's 1st XI, with most having finished school and Connor McVicker unavailable due to his rugby commitments this season was going to be a difficult one. There were fewer boys in Form VI playing than at any time I can remember, while several Form V had limited availability due to their GCSE studies. This is reflected in the playing record. Although had some players been better with their availability and some tight finishes gone our way both our playing record and our progress in the Schools' Cup could have been much more impressive.

The season started with a trip to Ballyclare on a cold Saturday in late April. A combination of a long outfield and a lifeless artificial pitch made scoring difficult. Batting first we could only manage 84 in our 20 overs, with Jerin Shibu's busy 14 our only meaningful contribution behind the 38 extras our gracious hosts provided. However, some poor running by Ballyclare High School – who produced no fewer than 4 run outs and some good bowling (the best of which was Harper McCloskey's 2-10) smattered between the 45 extras we returned to Ballyclare ensured a very exciting finish. Needing 3 to win off the last over bowled by Bradley Coburn, N Lyons missed the first 2 balls and McCourt tried to scramble a run on the 3rd, only to be run out by Jaskaran Singh. Matthews played and missed the next ball, then a single was completed off the 5th ball of the over. With Lyons back on strike and 1 required for a tie and 2 to win, this time good contact was made and Ballyclare completed the 2 runs required to condemn us to a 1 wicket defeat.

Our next outing was a trip to Ballymena Academy in the 1st round of the Schools' Cup. Winning the toss we inserted Ballymena and had them in trouble from the start. Alex Armstrong (5-1-2-4) and Rory Gordon (5-1-1-9) were miserly. Blake McCloskey continued where he left off against Ballyclare and James Murray picked up 4 wickets in a devastating

spell. They were ably supported by some very good fielding – Keshav Ragharum taking one particularly memorable catch. McCoriston's score of 19 was the only meaningful resistance as we restricted them to 63 all out. In response, despite an early wobble as Bradley Coburn was bowled and Jerin Shibu's over-enthusiasm to get his partner running is reduced to 9 for 2. However, Alex Armstrong (16 not out) and Matthew Williamson (24 not out) put on an unbeaten 55 partnership to see us home by 8 wickets.



So it was back to Rashy Road to face Ballyclare in round 2 of the Cup next time out. Some confusion around availability and a communication breakdown saw Hanbal Syed and Connor McVicker drop out of the side with Ciara Murray and Matthew Anderson drafted in at the 11th hour, both had prior commitments that meant they had to leave the field while we were bowling, which did not help our cause. This made the toss an important one, which we lost before being asked to bat first. Keshav was unlucky to be out first ball to the excellent Finn Lutton. The slow pace of the mat meant he was through his shot too early and caught at extra cover. Alex Armstrong (36) and Matthew Williamson (13) were again our two greatest contributors as 88 all out. Even on the slow outfield, it felt at least 20 or 30 runs too few.

However, when Alex Armstrong bowled Jacob Scarlett's second ball and James Murray picked up the wickets of Smyth and Donnelly in his first over the score was 22-3 and we were very much in the game. Finn Lutton was batting very well, but wickets kept falling at the other end and with Ballyclare 62-7 we had a real chance for victory. However, Wilson came in at number 9 and,

although he only scored 2 runs of 28 balls he was rock solid in defense we bowled enough bad balls to Finn Lutton (45 not out) and with only 9 in the field at one stage there were enough gaps for him to guide Ballyclare home by 3 wickets.

That we got so close to a team who would go on to contest the final, despite the problems we faced in getting a team out, was an indication that with greater application the season could have ended quite differently. After a washout in the fixture away to RBAI, we were due to play in the 'block' against Friends School Lisburn. However, with Friends unable to field a side a fixture was arranged against Grosvenor Grammar School as we made it to the 'Castle' for the first time in the season. The frailties in our batting were exposed once again as, to continue the theme, Armstrong (20) was the only significant contribution with Harper McCloskey (13) and Hanbal Syed (11) the other two to make it into double figures in the face of accurate Grosvenor bowling. Our total of 69 all-out was never going to be enough and despite Ciara Murray picking up wickets with consecutive balls, Grosvenor sailed, otherwise untroubled, to an 8-wicket victory.

Wallace High School was the next guests at The Castle Grounds. Some loose bowling, combined with some fine batting by Max Spence (50 retired) and one or two very inept attempts at catching allowed the hosts to amass a total of 144 in their 20 overs. Finn McAllorum picked up his first wickets for the 1st XI with 2-30. Despite our best batting display of the season so far with Jerin Shibu (35) top-scoring and Bradley Coburn (20) supporting him well again, we were always a little behind the run rate, falling to a 19-run defeat.

That was followed by our best all-round performance away to Methodist College at Pirrie Park. On a blustery morning, Alex Armstrong (4-2-1-4) bowled his 4 overs straight through on a pitch that was providing both turn and bounce. Several other bowlers picked up wickets, with Harper McCloskey's 3-4 the pick of the bunch as Methody were restricted to 99-9, a total that always felt well below par. Our reply with Alex Armstrong (53 retired) continuing at the top of the order with Keshav Ragharum (39 not out) restored to the other opening birth. They defended good balls well, punished the loose balls, and ran well between the wickets to post an unbeaten stand of 81 and ensure



we reached the target with ease for the loss of only one wicket.

Without quite a few of our regular starters, we took on the Old Boys' in the traditional end-of-season match. A combination of holidays and exams meant we started with a bowling attack of Fintan McCarthy of Form II and Callum Weir of Form III. Both bowled with a good bit of skill and aggression, in a style some of their older teammates could learn from. Fintan in particular, impressed picking up the wickets of Matthew Palmer and Chris Magee. As ever the skills of the Old Boys' batsmen, many of whom are plying their trade either in the Premier League or the upper echelons of Senior 1, was at times too much for the 1st XI bowling attack. Ross Bryans top scored with 54, with Harry Warke 33 and Matthew Palmer 25. However, the 1st XI stuck to their task well and there was no contest for the Champagne moment of the day as Jerin Shibu took an exceptional catch to remove Ryan Jameson off the bowling of Finn McAllorum. After the Old Boys' innings, the rain settled in and the match was abandoned with no result possible.

I would like to thank all the players for their efforts throughout the season. Congratulations to Alex Armstrong who was selected to go on the Ulster Schools' Tour and played regularly for the NCU U17s. His all-round cricket game has improved immeasurably over the past 12-18 months and we look forward to seeing his progression further next season. Particularly thanks to those for who it was their last year. Matthew Williamson skippered the side well and showed what he was capable of with the bat on several occasions. Rory Gordon, with his height, had a real advantage as a seam bowler. I would have liked to see him take off the hand brake and put his back into it a bit more, as with a bit of extra pace his height would have been an even greater asset. Ciara Murray made many contributions and always gave 100%. While Kain McGrory was always available particularly when others let us down at short notice. In different ways, all will be missed next season. With so many of the team from Form V and younger hopefully the experiences gained this year will improve us as a side moving forward.

With many moving into VI Form and with a smaller volume of examinations next summer, hopefully, more will be able to commit more fully to the season.

**M.G.H.**

## **U15XI**

As we wrap up another exciting cricket season, it's time to reflect on the U15 XI performance, which has been marked by grit, growth, and some unforgettable moments on the field. The players have shown tremendous dedication and spirit, making this a year to remember.

### **Impressive Victory Against Foyle College**

One of the standout achievements this season was our win against Foyle College. From the very first ball, the team played with intent and focus. Our batting lineup put up a solid total, with Keshav, Isaac, and Blake stepping up at the right moments to anchor the innings. The bowlers followed up with a brilliant display of accuracy and pace, dismantling the opposition's batting order and securing a well-earned victory. The entire team contributed to the win, whether with the bat, ball, or in the field.

### **A Valiant Effort Against Methodist College Belfast**

Another highlight of the season was our hard-fought match against Methodist College Belfast. Facing a strong opponent, the team showed tremendous resilience and fought hard throughout the contest. The bowlers gave it their all, especially Alexander Scott putting pressure on the opposition's batsmen with tight lines and key breakthroughs. Although we fell short in the end, the boys displayed great character and teamwork, making it a match to be proud of.

### **Season Overview**

Overall, this season has been one of growth and promise. The team has shown significant progress, from exciting wins to valuable lessons learned in tough games. Our batsmen have developed



consistency and maturity, while the bowlers have been relentless in applying pressure on opposing teams. Throughout the season, the fielding has been sharp, with many key moments in the field turning games in our favour.

The leadership within the squad has been outstanding, and the camaraderie between the players has been a key factor in our performances. Each player has made important contributions, and the spirit within the team has been exceptional.

Looking forward, the team can be proud of their achievements this season and take confidence into next year, knowing that they have the potential to achieve even greater success.

Congratulations to everyone for their hard work and commitment, and we eagerly anticipate what the next season will bring.

**P.R.R**

## FORM 1 CRICKET

The Form 1 cricket team performed well, considering many boys were new to cricket. The boys were excellent defeating Ballymena Academy in the first round of the Centenary Cup. The team was very well led by Luc Hood and the whole squad contributed well throughout the season. There were very competitive games throughout particularly against Ballyclare High School. I would strongly recommend all boys join a local cricket club and gain some very valuable experience for next season.

**I.M.G.**



## BOYS' ATHLETICS



### District Championships

#### Mini Boys

Zac Fox (3rd in long jump)

#### Minor Boys

Minor relay = 1st

#### Junior Boys

Jack McNab (1st in 100m and 1st in 200m)

Evan Tosh (1st in 1500m)

Adam Young (1st in high jump)

Josh Fletcher (2nd in high jump)

Junior relay = 3rd

#### Inter Boys

Chris O'Hara (2nd in 200m and 3rd in long jump)

Robbie Tosh (1st in 1500m SC and 3rd in 800m)

Finn McAlorum (3rd in 100mH)

Yasha Peters (2nd in shot)

Zach Archer (2nd in discus)

Oscar Coiley (2nd in hammer)

Inter relay = 3rd

#### Senior Boys

Hugo Reilly Stewart (2nd in 1500m)

Oscar Purvis (3rd in 1500m)



## Ulster Athletics Championships

### Mini Boys

Zac Fox 4th Long Jump

### Minor Boys

8th 4 x100 relay

### Junior Boys

Jac McNabb 3rd 100 & 200m

Evan Tosh 3rd 1500m

Josh Fletcher 7th High Jump

### Inter Boys

Robbie Tosh 3rd 1500m SC and 12th 1500m

Yasha Peters 4th Shot

Chris O'Hara 5th Long Jump

4 x100m relay 6th

Zac Archer 12th Discus

Congratulations to Robbie Tosh, who was selected to represent Ulster in the Tailtean Irish Schools Interprovincial.



**C.M.C.**



## BOYS' CROSS-COUNTRY

The district cross-country championships took place in January at Ormeau Park. There were several very good performances under some challenging conditions. There were many qualifiers for the Ulster championship. Jamie Henderson was 13th for the mini boys, and Fintan McCarthy was also 13th for the minor boys. Jack McNab ran an excellent race finishing second and the school completed a fantastic double with Evan Tosh finishing first. The senior boys were also very successful with Hugo Reilly Stewart finishing 3rd, Oscar Purvis finishing 5th, and Isaac Deane- Guilfoyle 8th.

The Ulster championships took place at Mallusk in February with some creditable results in a very strong field. All the boys competed well. Evan Tosh won the Junior Boys race by some distance and Jack McNab finished 21st out of 127 competitors. Hugo Reilly Stewart finished 5th and Oscar Purvis 11th out of 81 competitors. Hugo also finished in the top half of the field in the Irish championships and Evan Tosh had a superb run to finish second. Congratulations to all involved.

*I.M.G.*



## GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

The girls' Cross Country team competed well in the 2024 District Championships held at Ormeau Park. A team was entered into 3 Junior age group levels;

### Form 1 (Minis)

Chidinma Anyakudo, Lily Gilmour, Olivia Hunter, Olivia Knocker, Aeabh More, Farragh O'Hagan, Halle Sinnerton.

### Form 2 (Minors)

Lily-Anna Devine, Leila Jones, Lucy McBride, Niamh McKenna-Murray, Vismitha Pandiaraj, Lucy Read.

### Form 3 (Juniors)

Abi Crawford, Jessica Curly, Keri Gray, Holly Johnston, Esther Lawrence, Amelie McKeown. However only 2 individual girls qualified for the Ulster finals which requires a top 15 finish;

## ULSTER FINAL QUALIFIERS;

Leila Jones, MINORS  
Jessica Curly, JUNIORS

Only Leila Jones earned a high enough placing to qualify for the Irish Championships finishing a superb 5th after an incredible gutsy display.

Following this performance, Leila was selected to run at the London Mini Marathon along with Evan Tosh, who won the Ulster Cross Country Championships in the boys at Junior level. An incredible experience and opportunity for both Leila and Evan.

*N.S.N.*



# Trips and Events

## SPANISH EXCHANGE TRIP TO ASTURIAS

The Spanish Exchange is one of the most educational and beneficial trips in school. It teaches the pupils more about the language, the history, and the culture of Spain and it gives pupils a real opportunity to immerse themselves in the language and make life-long friends. The students travel to a lovely little region in the north of Spain called Asturias and live with their exchange partner and their families for five days. This gives students the chance to practice their Spanish in a safe home environment and allows them to build relationships with the family that they are staying with. During the school day, pupils go on educational trips and discover school life, and after school, the pupils go out with their exchange partners and discover what it's like to be a teenager in Spain or Northern Ireland.

*K.L.W.*

One of the best school trips I've been on was the Spanish Exchange. It was massively beneficial for my Spanish speaking skills, and I know that I'll treasure the memories and friends made in both Belfast and Asturias for a long time. The Exchange put me outside my comfort zone, challenging me to live in a new culture and community and to experience a new way of life – all in another language. Seeing the sights of Northern Spain, like Covadonga and the old Asturian mines, was fascinating, and we also had the chance to try some regional dishes like cachopo and fabada asturiana. Throughout the experience, I gained the confidence to speak to lots of new people, I learned to persevere even through difficulties, and I (accidentally) convinced a room full of Spanish teens to call me La Reina de la Pola too. I can't wait to go back to Asturias to see my exchange

partner and her family, including her grandma who has demanded I come back to try more of her cooking.



*Clara Walsh MVI*



The Spanish Exchange, although nerve-racking at first, was an amazing and memorable experience for all of us. It encouraged us to step outside of our comfort zones, make new friends, and enjoy a new culture. The first week of the exchange began in



Belfast as we welcomed our Spanish partners with open arms, showing them around the city centre, bringing them to our favourite restaurants, and introducing them to our families, friends, and homes.

Suddenly, two weeks later, we jetted off to Asturias for the second leg. After a long day of traveling, we spent the evening settling into our new homes for the week and prepared for the next few days where we explored Oviedo, Covadonga, and of course La Pola. The Exchange allowed me to actively practice my Spanish speaking skills, and enjoy a real Spanish environment and culture, and has provided me with friends for life as well as an experience I will never forget.

*Rachel Hackett, Middle Sixth*

## SKI TRIP EHRWALD, AUSTRIA



The ski trip to Erhwald, Austria certainly was a great way to spend the New Year for the 50 Form 5 pupils who took part. We left Belfast City Airport, late morning on the 30th of December, and after an unexpected detour to Dublin, we finally arrived in Austria at 2 am the next day.



No matter our ability, the different ski groups, beginner, intermediate, or advanced skiers, meant that everyone could develop their skills on the slopes day by day, at a pace that was comfortable for them. With the help of our excellent instructors and our fair share of falls along the way, everyone had made big improvements and gained a lot of confidence on the slopes by the end of the trip. It was an amazing experience.



Skiing was not the only fun part of the trip. We thoroughly enjoyed après-ski, night walks up the mountain, and, a fireworks display on New Year's Eve. There were also many laughs during karaoke in the hotel. As for Mr. Murphy, his highlight of the trip was getting cups of tea brought to him every morning at breakfast by some pupils.



This was an unforgettable experience for all, and we hope to be back soon, (no pressure Mr. Murphy).

*Hope Daniels*

## POLITICS TRIPS

In January 2024, thirty-four L6 and M6 Politics pupils embarked on the biannual trip to Westminster and the Supreme Court – the first since January 2020. It is brilliant that so many pupils were able to go on the trip.



On the first day, we visited the Imperial War Museum and had time for some shopping in Westfield Stratford. We met up with former B.R.A. Politics pupil, Niamh Carroll (class of 2016) who is now working as a journalist in London, and took in the sights from the top of the Walkie-Talkie building.



On the second day, we visited Westminster for a tour and workshop on debating laws and visited the London School of Economics to hear from Dr. Andrew Scott about studying at LSE. After which we visited the Supreme Court for a tour, and met up with another former B.R.A. Politics pupil, Faye Kidd (class of 2014), who was very gracious with her time in speaking to pupils about university and her work at the BBC.



Such a trip is only possible because of staff agreeing to come on such a busy two days and make what is always a memorable experience for pupils. It was fantastic to have two former members of staff, Ms McCay on her first Westminster trip and Dr. Campbell on his fourth, along with Dr. Springer on his third trip and Miss Molly McAuley, the Politics QUB PGCE student (November 2023-February 2024) to accompany the pupils.



In March 2024, with the return of the Assembly and Executive, L6 pupils were able to visit an operating Stormont – the first visit since 2016 because of the various suspensions and a global pandemic preventing visits. This demonstrates how the challenges in teaching and studying Politics A Level are unlike any other subject as one event (even a minor one) can have far-reaching consequences in the political world. To have pupils visit an operational Stormont, sit in the chamber during an adjournment in proceedings (rather than a suspension), and observe scrutiny of the Executive through the Committee for the Executive Office is so much better. This allows for connections to be made between the theory of the classroom with the practice in reality. During the visit, pupils met and questioned Nuala McAllister (Alliance) and Phillip Brett (DUP), both north Belfast MLAs with a great interest in B.R.A.



**K.S.B.**

On our first full day, we visited 2 primary schools where we took an assembly. This involved worship, a member of the team sharing a small sermon or a memory verse, a quiz, and just a whole lot of fun.

## SU POLAND TEAM



Poland 2024 Mission Trip was the best experience of my life, which includes not only the 5 days spent in Poland, but the many months beforehand that were spent planning and fundraising. As a team, we raised over £8000 which was used to help run the camp in Poland and to provide food parcels for people in need.



Later in the day, we were allowed to speak at a single mother's conference for Ukrainian refugees and to deliver food parcels all around Warsaw.



Every evening we came together as a team for a bible study and prayer time, it was so encouraging to see God answering our prayers and as a team, we felt God's presence throughout the trip.



It was a fantastic experience seeing God work in the lives of young people and I can't wait to go again next year.

## PARIS TRIP



During the trip, we worked in conjunction with the Joy Foundation in Poland and held a residential weekend for over 100 Polish and Ukrainian children. My favourite moment of the trip was seeing 26 kids give their lives to Christ, it was such a special moment to witness.



The Form 2 Paris trip was filled with many interesting and exciting experiences. We visited many famous landmarks of Paris including the Sacré-Coeur de Montmartre, le Louvre, Jardin des Tuileries, the Arc de Triomphe, the Eiffel Tower, and the Montparnasse Tower. The Eiffel Tower was amazing to see in real life, but all the sites were spectacular. We were also very fortunate to experience a River Seine cruise.

As well as seeing the sites, we were given some free time with our friends where we could visit



many shops and take in the streets of Paris. We had fun practicing our French speaking skills by buying ourselves lunch in the market. My highlight of the trip was the twelve hours we spent in Disneyland Paris. This is somewhere I had always wanted to go to and it lived up to expectations.



To summarise, the Form 2 Paris trip was filled with a lot of fun and laughter and both the teachers and pupils had an amazing time.

*Rosie O’Kane II*

## PARIS TRIP



When I found out I was going on the Paris trip last June, I didn’t know what to expect. But I certainly didn’t expect to have so much fun and to learn so much about French culture. Every day was a great new experience and I, along with my friends, had so much fun and learned so much. My highlight was using all the vocabulary I had learned in French class during the year to order my lunch at a French food market. I would go there again and would recommend it to anyone in Form II next year. 10/10.

*Benjamin Dalton Form 2*



## SORRENTO 2024

The Sorrento Trip is an opportunity for Classics and Geography pupils to see what they have learned in the classroom. During this worthwhile trip, pupils have the opportunity to see the ancient world of Pompeii, climb the volcano Mount Vesuvius, and discover the Grotta Azzurra in Capri.



Our final destination on the boat trip was visiting the Blue Grotto. This was an incredible experience seeing the glowing water with Italian sailors singing. When we finally arrived back on the island, we took a taxi to go to the chair lift. The chair lift was a 10-minute ride up to the highest point of the island. The views were incredible and it was undoubtedly one of my favourite experiences of the trip. When we finally got back to the square we had some lunch to end our time in Capri before taking the boat back to Sorrento port.

***Olivia McCall III***

One of my favourite parts of Naples was visiting the island of Capri. We arrived at the port in Sorrento waiting to get our boat to the island. Once we were on the boat we enjoyed the scenic journey while travelling along the coast. When we arrived we had a little bit of time to explore the square. Some of my friends and I went for a walk to see the sights and found a nice slushy shop and enjoyed the cold sweet treat. When meeting back up, we took our second boat ride of the day, this trip took us around the island and we were told about the unique geographical features of the island.

My favourite part of Naples was when we visited Pompeii. I loved seeing the ruins of the city, and all the artifacts preserved in the ash from thousands of years ago. We even got to see the iconic house of Caecilius. I think this was Miss William's favourite part, she got excited. Our tour guide talked to us about how things would have happened back then. This gave me a great understanding of how different their life was from ours. It is amazing how we were seeing things right in front of us that we had only learned about and seen in textbooks. Before going into the ancient ruins of Pompeii, we walked along the market, looking at authentic Italian souvenirs, and got lunch in the town.

I enjoyed all of the Italy trip, but this day stood out to me, as I love learning about their diverse culture and language from all those years ago.

***Jenna Wilson III***



I don't think I have a favourite part; it was all the little things that made it great. The excitement started right from the airport, although it was three in the morning, no one seemed that tired. Seeing all the sights was extremely fun, but some of the best memories were made simply by having dinner at the hotel, playing cards in the airport, and having free time in the cities. I remember standing in the street in modern Pompeii, eating pizza in a circle with all my friends, it didn't seem real. All the food was great, I think I had ice cream every day. One day on a train back to our hotel in Sorrento a trumpet player came in and played right beside us on the train. Even sitting on the bus we saw amazing views of the sea, we were all trying to work out what side of the bus to sit on so we could take pictures. It was the trip of a lifetime; I'll never forget it and I'd recommend it to anyone

***Niamh O'Rourke III***



My favourite part of the Naples trip was Sorrento town. The weather was amazing and sunny as we walked up to the ice cream shop. The shop was huge, and it had too many flavours of ice cream to count. The owner met us at the front, and they were so friendly. We all had to wear hair nets before we went round the back to the place where the ice cream was made. The owner picked two people to help her show everyone how the ice cream was made. Another student and I were chosen to make the ice cream. I started by grating the zest of the lemon to prepare to add to the mix, the other student cut and juiced the lemon. The owner then added it to a mix and then put it into the machine which mixed and froze the mixture. It was the best ice cream I've ever tasted in my life. Everyone got an ice cream each and we also made chocolate ice cream which everyone also got. After we made the ice cream we went up to the shop and everyone got to choose two flavours to have on a cone that was our third ice cream of the day, and it tasted amazing.

We also visited Sorrento in the evening about three times and the atmosphere was amazing. My friends and I bought gifts for our family, and we went back to the ice cream shop where we made our ice cream and all bought more ice cream. I also bought delicious tiramisu. The owner also gave me a free topping because she remembered me. Overall, it

was such a good experience and I enjoyed every second of it.

*Elsa Campbell III*

## CAMINO

This year's leg of the Camino consisted of 190 km between Burgos and León, due to its growing popularity, the trip was offered to only Lower Sixth pupils who fully embraced the spirit of the Camino.

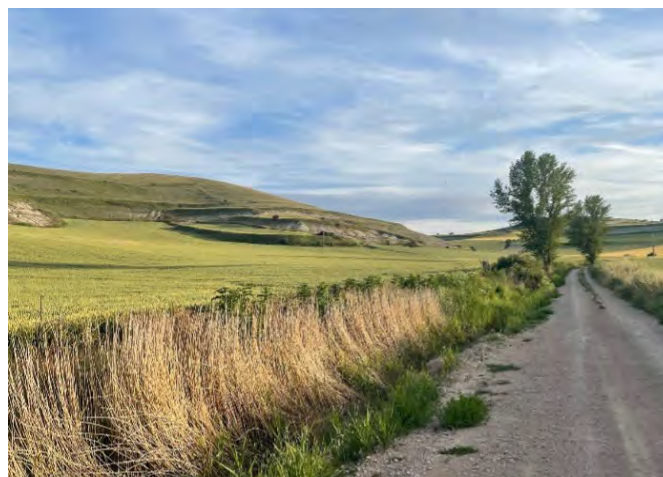


As mentioned below, pupils reflected on the positive impact the Camino had on their resilience and mindsets and every year this is the case. However, one particular value that I felt was the most memorable from this trip was the huge amount of kindness received from strangers. Aesop wrote 'No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.' As a group, we were overwhelmed by the random acts of kindness from hospitaleros and peregrinos alike. Pilgrims, I hope you carry the resilience, determination, and sense of community you discovered on the Camino into every challenge and opportunity you face in life.

*K.L.W*

The Camino was an extraordinary experience for everyone involved. We first arrived at Santander airport, where a gust of heat greeted us, amplifying the excitement that had been building for months.

Most days on the Camino involved walking 20 kilometres or more, with the longest day reaching up to 30 kilometres. The stunning scenery we encountered, even in the most unexpected parts of Spain, was truly breathtaking.



With a great group of friends and teachers, the experience was even more enjoyable. The Camino caters to all interests and personalities, making it a perfect adventure for anyone. I wholeheartedly recommend this trip to everyone, as it truly is a life-changing experience.

*Finn Connolly LVI*

I think that the Camino de Santiago is the best school trip that B.R.A. has to offer. Despite it being incredibly difficult at times it was really fun and exciting. It taught me to be resilient and helped me to overcome challenges, at the end of each day I felt like I had accomplished something. It gave me a greater perspective on life, and I learned to appreciate the small luxuries that you don't usually pay much attention to, like having a shower or using a hairdryer. One of the best things about the trip was getting to see and stay in places that you wouldn't normally visit whilst on holiday, like when we stayed in a convent with Spanish nuns. It was a memorable trip and I know I'll look back on it & laugh at some of the things that happened even whenever I leave school. I would highly recommend it to anyone, even if you don't like walking that much, I promise you it will be one of the most fun & challenging experiences you will ever have.



### *Jasmine Gillespie LVI*



Recalling just one highlight from the Camino de Santiago is nearly impossible. The trip was incredible and truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience that everyone should have. Our entire group enjoyed it thoroughly, even on the 28 km walking days. The sights we saw, like the cathedrals in León and Burgos, the ancient Roman roads we traversed, the delicious food we savoured, and the amazing people we met along the way, made this journey unforgettable.

My favourite moments on the Camino de Santiago were the days spent in the city of León. It was thrilling for everyone to explore a new city and unwind after a week of walking.

*Kris Mills LVI*

### **THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY TOP OF THE BENCH COMPETITION**



On the 14th of March, a team of two Form III pupils, one Form IV pupil, and one Form V pupil competed in the Top of the Bench Northern Ireland Local Section Heat at the David Keir Building, Stranmillis Road, Belfast. The team consisted of Jake Crainey, Jenna Wilson, Elizabeth Toal, and Maya Campbell, and were up against nine other schools from across the province.



The competition aims to raise awareness and enthusiasm in Chemistry and to make them aware of what Chemistry is like at university. The competition consisted of four sections. The first section involved some simple experiments in the teaching laboratory, based on Energy Changes. The second section was a test paper exercise covering the pupil's knowledge of key fundamentals of KS3 and KS4 topics. The third section was a poster presentation which the pupils had prepared before the competition. The fourth section was a short quiz of three rounds on general Chemistry questions.

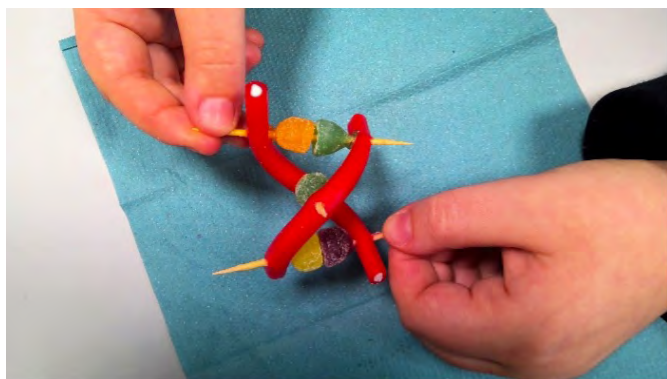
After over two hours of competition, the BRA team finished third and I congratulate them on their performance. Hopefully, the experience gained was invaluable to the members of the team and they were a credit to the school.

*B.M.M.*

## THE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

In September, our LVI cohort undertook an exciting field trip to Tollymore Forest in County Down, Newcastle. The students acquired skills in conducting sampling in different forest environments. We were pleasantly surprised by the beautiful sunshine, and we extend our gratitude to Field Studies Ireland for their organisation of this successful day.

From January to August, three groups of lower 6th students participated in a Biology Challenge organised by the Biology department at Cambridge University. The questions posed varied widely, ranging from inquiries such as “Why do animals not have wheels?” to “Which species in your local area exhibits the most remarkable Biology?”. Each group was allotted one month to present their material. Competing against 500 other groups, our three groups achieved placements of 14th, 17th, and 18th on the final national leaderboard. This is a significant achievement for these students, who successfully balanced this challenge alongside their preparation for their AS-level examinations.



In May, we welcomed over 60 Primary School pupils into the Biology department for The Big Day of Science 2024. The pupils were able to learn about the structure of a plant cell, they prepared a microscope slide and got to view it under the microscope whilst learning how to make some biological drawings of their work. The pupils had a great time in Biology and we hope to welcome them back in the future, as Form 1 pupils.

## POLITICS IN ACTION

Now in its fifth year (even with the pandemic), Politics In Action continues to provide great opportunities for pupils to engage with politicians and to think more deeply about how politics affects them and society as a whole. B.R.A.'s seven places were both Politics and non-Politics pupils and they worked alongside pupils from St. Malachy's College and Dominican College. As ever, our group was ably led and facilitated by Dr. David McCann of Ulster University, and Slugger O'Toole a BBC NI election pundit. The discussions and debate focused on Westminster's role in N.I, which would be in focus with the General election due to be held by January 2025.



Pupils were able to visit Stormont (before the return of the Assembly) in October 2023. They heard from outgoing Speaker, Alex Maskey (Sinn Féin) and question Phillip Brett MLA (DUP) and Kelly Armstrong MLA (Alliance).



**D.B.C**



In the after-school sessions, they also got to put questions to Claire Hanna MP (SDLP), Doug Beattie MLA (UUP), and journalist Sam McBride (northern editor for the Belfast Telegraph).



Their manifesto covered the Legacy Act, infrastructure funding, and universal basic income and was presented to Mike Nesbitt MLA (UUP), Sian Mulholland MLA (Alliance), and Alison Morris (crime and security correspondent for the Belfast Telegraph) who all commented on the mature approach taken and sound ideas proposed by the group.

**K.S.B.**

## **FOTA SECRETARY'S REPORT 2023/2024**

The 2023/2024 year was a continued success for FOTA with events and fundraising held throughout the year. We hope to be able to help build relationships with parents and provide support where needed. As members of FOTA, we enjoy getting to know other parents through the events put on during the year and I would encourage anyone interested in joining to contact us via the school office.

Once again, thank you to all members for your continued commitment and dedication to FOTA over this year.

Our first meeting of the year was held in September, with subsequent meetings held in the Heritage Room in the Crombie building each

month. In this meeting, we welcomed Miss Eilidh Wallace to the committee as our new staff member following the departure of Miss Williams. We also welcomed Aisling Quinn, Patricia McKeown, and Carol Jordan as new committee members. We look forward to getting to know them all as we work together over the coming year.

Our AGM was held on 10th October 2023, with the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports for the year being presented.

Officers for the coming year were elected, with the following being confirmed in the post:

Chair: Kim Burns

Vice-chair: Deborah McAuley

Treasurer: Niamh Knox

Secretary: Alison Monroe

## **Events**

This year we continued with our now traditional annual events. Due to the Gala Ball, we decided not to run a major event during the year as we did not want to detract from the occasion the Ball promised to be.

## **Uniform Sales**

Our first uniform sale of the academic year was held in November. While smaller than the summer event, it was still well attended raising nearly £1,000.

The main sale was then held in June, raising a further £2,800. This timing enables parents of new Form 1 pupils to attend and purchase uniform items before their children start school. Attendance at this event was exceptional.

It's important to note that pupils are also able to purchase uniform items from FOTA throughout the year. They do not have to wait for one of the dedicated sales events. If a pupil is in need of an item of uniform, they or their parents should contact the school office which will contact FOTA.

Parents continue to express their gratitude to the school and FOTA for running these events. With continuing pressure on household budgets, the price of school uniforms is coming under



increasing scrutiny. Preloved uniform sales have been running at B.R.A. for over 40 years and this is a service we are proud to provide to our parents.

Many thanks to everyone who assisted with the logistics of running these sales. We would also like to thank those parents who donated items of preloved uniform to us. Without these donations, the sales simply could not happen.

### **Form 1 Parents' Breakfast**

A breakfast for the parents of new Form 1 pupils for the 2023/24 academic year took place in August 2023. This year we provided a buffet-style continental breakfast for the parents of our new pupils. This event was well received by parents, who appreciated the thought and effort to make them welcome as part of the Academy family. Again, many thanks to all who assisted with these events.

### **Staff Appreciation**

Following the FI Parents' Breakfast, we were able to run a similar staff appreciation event. This was a small token to demonstrate our appreciation for everything all staff do to ensure the safe, secure, and smooth running of the school. At Christmas, chocolates were given to staff to further demonstrate our thanks.

### **Quiz**

The famous (or infamous?) B.R.A. quiz was held at the end of September with a fantastic turnout. With Dr Springer again acting as quiz master, attendees were treated to a wide variety of differing question rounds including yet another show-stopping music round.

FOTA continues to be in Dr Springer's debt for the time and effort he put in to ensure everyone had such an enjoyable and fun evening.

### **Christmas Craft Evening**

December saw a highly enjoyable Christmas ceramics workshop take place. Due to the unprecedented demand for tickets, the evening was held in the Jackson Suite. Everyone successfully made and decorated a Christmas Snowman. There

was great anticipation for the unveiling of the final fired results and thankfully everyone survived the kiln. Our thanks go again to Mrs Patterson and Mrs Hare for facilitating this.

### **Open Nights**

The school Open Nights were held over 2 nights in January. Once again, there was a large turnout of prospective pupils with their parents. FOTA provided refreshments for these evenings and ran a Photo Booth, with The Sorting Hat proving a particular hit. Parents are arriving earlier than ever for these evenings and our ability to provide refreshments to them was greatly appreciated.

### **Welcome Event**

FOTA attended the Form 1 Welcome Event in June where information on FOTA was shared with the parents of new pupils, and they were provided with the opportunity to purchase items of pre-loved uniform.

### **Donations**

**Merit & Reward Scheme**

FOTA once again donated £1,000 to the Merit & Reward scheme. We are glad to be able to support such a positive reward-based activity within the school.

### **Pink Paper Bag Project**

Several girls across the school have signed up to be part of a project supplying girls with reusable period pants as part of the Period Dignity project. FOTA provided £702 to fund the purchase of these, with further support provided from Belfast City Council for which we are very grateful.

### **Ben Madigan Library**

Reading is such an important part of a young person's growth and development. FOTA was delighted to be able to provide £200 towards the purchase of new books for the library at Ben Madigan.



### **School Donation**

A donation of £1,822 was made to the school's hardship fund. This fund is available to be used at the Principal's discretion to support pupils where necessary.

*A.M*



# *Ben Madigan Preparatory School*

## **BEN MADIGAN PREP 5 & 6 RESIDENTIAL TRIP, LISNASKEA SHARE CENTRE**



Prep 5&6 set off on their much-anticipated residential trip on Wednesday 29th May. Accompanied by Mr. Creighton, Miss Harris, and Mr. McCleery, the bus journey to Enniskillen was full of laughter, songs, and excitement! Upon arrival, the children were eager to meet their instructor for the week and find out their rooming arrangements. Much to their dismay, the trip began with a 'crash course' on how to properly make their bed to a satisfactory standard - a valuable life skill! Their first day included many exciting activities including rock climbing, abseiling, and a trip to the inflatable waterpark.

The waterpark proved to be a favourite amongst pupils and teachers. A hot shower and a warm dinner were certainly required after a busy day. Our second day was mostly spent on canoes in the middle of Lough Erne. The group embarked on an adventure to an isolated island where they enjoyed a cup of warm juice and biscuits.



Strong winds and rain made the return journey back to shore a gruelling thought however cheerful sing-alongs kept spirits high. That evening, the children enjoyed a delicious dinner and developed another life skill of tidying up and cleaning the dishes. An early night was needed by all after another very busy day of canoeing, treasure hunts, team games, and of course football. Our final day started with an early breakfast, before returning to our dorms stripping our beds, and getting ready for departure later in the day.



Our last activity was laser tag; an extremely exciting activity that the children thoroughly enjoyed. Set amongst a forest, the children (and staff) battled it out in teams to be the champions. Battle tactics, schemes, and plans were discussed, and the teams went head-to-head in combat. A teachers versus pupils match proved to be very competitive. With the teachers being heavily outnumbered the odds did not stack much in their favour, however, their age and experience proved too much for the children to handle! All in all, it was a hugely successful and enjoyable residential trip. The children were a credit to our school and demonstrated maturity beyond their years. A trip that will be etched in the memory of the children for many years to come.

*J.C.R*

## END-OF-TERM TRIP TO PORTTRUSH



Nothing heralds the end of the summer term better than Ben Madigan's "Big Day Out". This year Preps 4, 5, 6 & 7 pupils and teachers boarded a Translink train at Mossely Station bound for Portrush. Many were on a train for the first time, so the excitement was palpable. With a change of station at Coleraine and some delays, we eventually arrived in Portrush, in the rain! Our first destination was Curry's (formerly Barry's).



With groups formed with staff, and ride tokens distributed, we enjoyed a morning of Dodgems, whirling Teacups, the Carousel, the Waltzer, and the Scrambler, never mind the Ghost Train. A fantastic time was had by all, and fun memories were made as the children embraced challenges and then went back for more!





With multi-coloured rock and other treats purchased, we ate our lunch and headed to the beach. With the rain never far away, we paddled in the sea, played games, and headed back for the return journey.



Prep 7 enjoyed a fantastic few days at Ballyhass Outdoor Adventure Centre in Mallow, Cork. An early start saw them departing Belfast for Cork via Dublin on the train – an adventure in itself!



With exhausted children, we boarded the train back to Mossley and were entertained by other passengers on their way to a Shania Twain concert in Belfast! What an adventure!

### **BALLYHASS, PREP 7 RESIDENTIAL TRIP**

*F.G*



The group hit the ground running with a full day of activities before retiring to their camping pods for a well-deserved rest. Prep 7 enjoyed a vast range of outdoor pursuits throughout the 2-night trip: abseiling, kayaking, high ropes, archery, inflatables, and more. For some, this was their first overnight experience away from home, which they took in their stride. Even train delays and a missed connection from Dublin to Belfast couldn't dampen the group's spirits! A huge thank you to the team at Ballyhass for taking such good care of the Prep 7 children – and their teachers!

*J.B*

## **FUN-FILLED CHARITY FUNDRAISING DAYS AT BEN MADIGAN PREP.**



## **WORLD BOOK DAY**



## **CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY FOR SAVE THE CHILDREN**





## CHILDREN IN NEED



## ODD SOCKS DAY

### BEN MADIGAN PREP'S SPORTING LEGACY: A YEAR OF GROWTH AND TRIUMPH

Sports have continued to play a pivotal role in the life of Ben Madigan Prep School, fostering teamwork, resilience, and passion among our students. The 2023–2024 academic year was no different, as our sports program saw both thrilling victories and moments of growth. As we look ahead, we hope to build on these successes and continue developing a strong foundation of sports at the school.

The rugby season kicked off with a bang as we hosted a Blitz on January 17th, 2024, where six primary schools participated. Our team put on a competitive performance, winning three matches, drawing one, and narrowly losing two. Nathanael Tikare and George Cole were the standouts of the season, consistently demonstrating excellent ball-carrying and rucking skills. One of the season's defining moments came against Campbell College Prep, where Tom Bannon's critical offload to

Nathanael led to the try of the season.

Our hockey team also had a busy season, hosting a blitz on January 24th with five schools competing. Despite facing strong competition, our team secured two wins, two draws, and one loss. Darcy Paterson and Ciara Groombridge delivered standout performances during the event, with Ciara making crucial saves and Darcy shining in offense, driving the team forward.

Football saw our team participate in a competitive Blitz at Downey House Prep, with Campbell College Prep also entering teams. Despite narrowly losing both fixtures, the determination and growth of our footballers were evident. In friendlies against Whiteabbey Primary and Inch Marlo Prep, our team showed resilience but was narrowly beaten both times.

Our netball team, however, found success with victories in both fixtures against Wallace Prep and Downey House Prep, highlighting their growing strength.



Cross-country brought a momentous win for our boys' team, who triumphed in the relay event at Victoria Park on October 10th, 2023, hosted by Belfast City Council. This victory was one of the proudest moments of the year, showcasing the endurance and determination of our young athletes.

Swimming continues to be a hallmark of Ben Madigan's sporting legacy, with our annual gala expanding to include more schools than ever before. Carrickfergus Model, Victoria Prep, Victoria Primary, and Downey House all competed



this year. Ben Madigan performed exceptionally well, securing the top spot in the boys' section, and narrowly missing the top in the girls' section. Special recognition goes to Grayson Coulter, who took home three gold medals for his individual efforts.

Our Sports Day was a monumental success this year, introducing a new house system format where pupils earned points for their house by placing in races. This system added excitement and engagement, with Willow House proudly claiming the inaugural Ben Madigan House Sports Day Cup.



As we look toward the future, we are eager to build on this year's achievements and further expand our sports offerings. With plans for more competitions and the potential introduction of new sports, Ben Madigan remains committed to fostering healthy competition and camaraderie among schools in the region.



On a personal note, as I reflect on my time as P.E. Coordinator, it has been a joy to witness the growth of sports at Ben Madigan, from the challenges of COVID to the thriving program we have today. The passion and energy of our students have made every moment worthwhile, and it has been an honour to be part of this journey. In conclusion, sports at Ben Madigan Prep are not just about the scores but about the character, resilience, and teamwork they foster in our students. We are proud of how far we've come and excited for the sporting seasons to come.

**K.McC.**



# Alumni News

## ALUMNI REUNIONS - 50, 40, 30 AND 20-YEAR ANNIVERSARY LUNCHESES

In 2024, we were delighted to host a series of four Alumni Anniversary Reunions for the Classes of 1974, 1984, 1994 and 2004. It was wonderful to welcome so many former pupils back to the Academy to join us for a celebratory lunch marking the milestone anniversaries of the 50, 40, 30 and 20-year groups. It was a joy to see former classmates being reunited back at B.R.A., reconnecting with each other and with former teachers. I would like to thank former Principals, Mr Young and Mr Dickson, whose presence at the events meant a lot to our guests; Mr Reilly, whose vast collection of Duke of Edinburgh Award photo albums sparked many memories and conversations; Dr Campbell who acted as a very knowledgeable and entertaining tour guide each week and Mr Philip McKenna from the Old Boys' Association for coming along to photograph each group.



We were delighted that so many people made the effort to join us at these Reunion events, many of whom had not been back to the Cliftonville Road since leaving school. We are grateful to everyone who attended, but particularly those who travelled long distances

to attend – we had guests arriving from across Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia!



Following on from the success of these lunches, we plan to host similar events marking milestone anniversaries in 2025, as well as a special reunion event to coincide with the 240th anniversary of the School – dates will be confirmed in due course.



**BRA Class of 2004 - 20 Year Reunion**  
Lunch in the BRA Library - 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## ALUMNI VISITS

We are always delighted to welcome former pupils back to the school for a visit, many of whom are accompanied by family members who are keen to see for themselves the place they have heard so many stories about. One such visit was undertaken by Class of 1958 alumnus, Brian Apfel, and his wife Judith, who arranged a tour whilst on holiday in Belfast. Brian is a retired solicitor now living in Blackpool.



We were also delighted to welcome two former pupils and #RoleModel alumni back into school when they attended their respective Class of reunions in June. Yolanda Cooper attended as part of the Class of 2004 reunion, whilst Anne Madden came along with the Class of 1994 cohort.





We are grateful for the special connection these former pupils still have with the school and were delighted to snap them all alongside their #RoleModel posters.

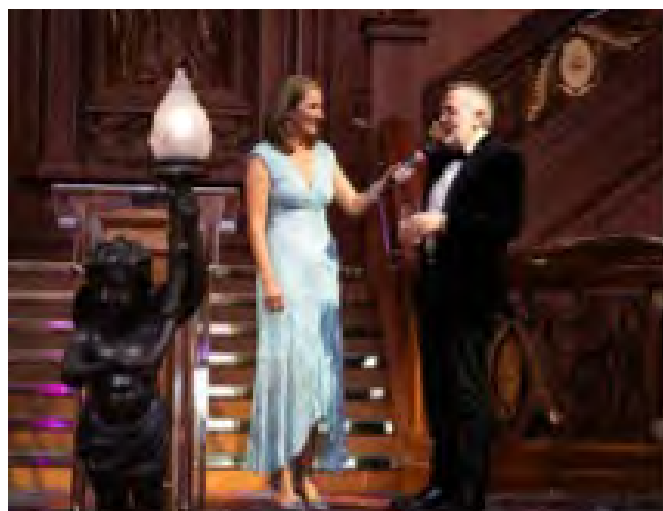
## GALA FUNDRAISING BALL

On 27th April 2024, a Gala Ball took place in the beautiful surroundings of Titanic Belfast. The Ball was the first event to be organised jointly by the School along with representatives from the Old Boys' Association, the Old Girls' Association, FoTA (Friends of the Academy) and the 1785 Foundation.

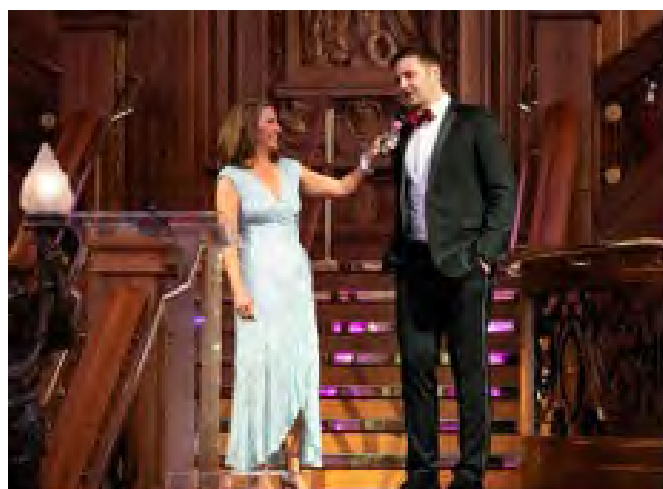


More than 300 guests attended the event hosted with consummate professionalism by Claire McCollum. Formal proceedings in the Grand Ballroom began with a fabulous video produced by Aisling Gallagher and her colleague, Emma McAllister – a former B.R.A. pupil – from Hop Skip Studios. Guests enjoyed a fabulous four-course meal interspersed with a series of short interviews with former pupils who had gone on to accomplish great things in their respective careers since leaving school. This included journalist Faye Kidd, Professor Paul Seawright and Ulster Rugby's Iain Henderson. We are grateful to them for speaking so warmly about what B.R.A. continues to mean to them, and photographer Tara Torrens

for capturing the evening so beautifully. Guests danced into the wee small hours to music provided by The Jukebox Jurors followed by DJ Andy Webber.



The Ball was held to raise funds for the 1785 Foundation – more than £20,000 was raised through ticket sales and a fantastic raffle, with tickets gifted by MAD Print. We are grateful to the many businesses and individuals who kindly donated fabulous prizes including Galgorm, Leonardo Hotels, AC Marriott, Killyhevlin Hotel, Gordon's Chemist, artist Denise McAuley, Dominic Walsh, Michael Black, Ceroc Ignite and Titanic Belfast. The incredible grand prize was a Tag Heuer watch, generously donated by Lunn's Jewellers. We hope all our lucky winners enjoy their prizes!





Thank you to everyone who attended the Ball, and to all members of the Gala Ball organising committee who worked so hard over many months to make this special event possible.



## GLOBAL ALUMNI INITIATIVE

This year, we launched the Global Alumni Initiative which celebrated the theme of 'Belonging' to Belfast Royal Academy. We asked former pupils who now live outside Northern Ireland to take part and send a photograph of themselves along with biographical information. The photographs were added to a video of our Chamber Choir singing 'The Parting Glass', a traditional Scottish song often sung at the end of a gathering of friends. As the video was launched at the end of the last school year, it was the perfect culmination to our Middle Sixth Leavers' time at the Academy.



As well as showcasing the talent of some of those involved in the School's incredible Music Department, the video - which can be found on the School website - celebrates the special connection many of our former pupils still have with the school. We hope, too, that the achievements and global presence of our alumni help inspire our current pupils and allow them to see that they can succeed on a global platform from their time at Belfast Royal Academy.

## DONATION OF MIDDLETON PAINTINGS



On 10th November 2023, a new memorial was unveiled to remember the 32 Academy pupils who died in World War II. After the war, the School was unable to get anyone to tender for a memorial at an acceptable cost during a period of post-war austerity. A memorial was then designed by Mr Leslie Baxter, an Art teacher who later became Head of that department.

The new plaque was unveiled by Mr Philip McKenna on behalf of the Old Boys' Association, who generously commissioned and funded the memorial. It was designed by former Head Girl and Oxford University graduate, Joanna McClurg, and created by sculptor Darren Sutton. We were pleased to have in attendance Form 1 pupil Richie Craig, and his father and former pupil, Jonathan, who is the great-nephew of Trevor Boyd, named on the memorial.

## UNVEILING OF WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL



Former pupil, Dr Michael Goldberger, also paid a visit to the school in June 2024 whilst on holiday in Northern Ireland. Dr Goldberger left school in 1966 and emigrated to Vancouver, Canada, where he still lives. With a passion for Irish art, Dr Goldberger kindly donated two charming charcoal drawings, "Old Park" and "Magnesium Lamps" by Colin Middleton, to be added to the Middleton Gallery – a valuable addition to the School's collection. We are very grateful to Dr Goldberger for his generous donation.



## ALUMNI NEWS



Congratulations to former pupil, Jenny Ireland (née Flynn), who is now a successful Young Adult author and this year had her second novel, "The Boy Next Door" published by Penguin. Her first book, "The First Move", was published in 2023. Jenny is a graduate of Law and French and was a



former paralegal before making the career change to become a published writer.



Congratulations too, to former pupil Professor Geoff Beattie, whose books on boxing were optioned by Hollywood Studios, AGC, four years ago. This year, shooting has finally begun, with Pierce Brosnan playing the lead role and Sylvester Stallone as the Executive Producer. In Professor Beattie’s own words, “It will be very odd, and very pleasing, to see some of my words written into the dialogue of the film. I’m also very excited that the contract specifies that I’ll receive an all-expenses paid trip to the U.S. celebrity premiere”.

## THE 1785 FOUNDATION

Named after the year the Academy was founded, the 1785 Foundation continues to grow and is the ideal opportunity for Alumni to reconnect with the Academy and share some of the pride and ambition that we have for our pupils. B.R.A. was founded to provide an exceptional education for young people from all walks of life, and the 1785 Foundation is one way through which the school demonstrates a strong social purpose and an ethos of caring for pupils from diverse backgrounds. The Foundation was formed to ensure that all pupils at the school have a rich schooling experience and can enjoy full engagement in art, music, sport and extra-curricular activities, regardless of financial background or family circumstances. Members of the 1785 Foundation are passionate about furthering both the School’s vision that all our pupils are given every opportunity and the support they need to fulfil their potential in school and life, and its mission, that we believe education has the power to transform lives. They achieve this by committing themselves to donate small, regular amounts of money, with

four different categories of membership available: bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

| PLAN     | CONTRIBUTION      | ANNUAL TOTAL CONTRIBUTION | DONATION OVER 5-YEAR PERIOD INCLUDING GIFT AID |
|----------|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| BRONZE   | £1.78 MONTHLY     | £21.42                    | £133.50                                        |
| SILVER   | £1.78 WEEKLY      | £92.56                    | 587.50                                         |
| GOLD     | 17.86 MONTHLY     | £214.20                   | 1338.75                                        |
| PLATINUM | £178.50 QUARTERLY | £714                      | £4462.50                                       |

This enables the flexible use of funds to be directed to wherever the need is greatest, helping Belfast Royal Academy as we work to build a school that is ever more influential, inspiring and accessible for all. We are most grateful to Foundation members for their ongoing support to enable us to do this. Over the past year, donations have been used to:

- Provide fruit and cereal bars for pupils who arrive at school hungry, ensuring they can access a healthy snack and avoid the detrimental impact that hunger can have on their learning experience and outcomes.
- Provide funding towards the cost of sports kits, trips and instrument tuition, enabling children from disadvantaged backgrounds to access the full range of extra-curricular activities available.
- Fund counselling and support services, thus tackling mental health and well-being issues which have a profound effect on education

With the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, this vital support for pupils is more important than ever. Every small, regular donation to the Foundation makes a difference to a pupil’s time at the Academy, so to our members, thank you for your ongoing support for Belfast Royal Academy.



For further information on the 1785 Foundation and details of how to join, please visit the 'Support Us' section of our website [belfastroyalacademy.com](http://belfastroyalacademy.com) or email the Development Office at [development@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:development@belfastroyalacademy.net).

**C.O'K.**

## B.R.A. OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

The B.R.A. OBA Annual General Meeting was held on 30th April 2024. The Senior Vice-President, Mr Iain Knox was elected President. He thanked his predecessor, Mr Philip McKenna for his efforts during 2023-24 which included unveiling the School's new WWII memorial, hosting successful OBA dinners and representing the OBA at our invitational dinners. Mr Paul Scoffield was elected Senior Vice-President and Mr Nik Simon was elected Junior Vice-President. The President also thanked Nik Simon (Hon. Treasurer) and James Cole (Hon. Secretary) for all their work during the previous year.



## THE B.R.A. OBA ANNUAL DINNER

The B.R.A. OBA Annual Dinner, held at The Belfast Hilton Hotel, is our major annual function. The dinner was held on the 25th November 2023 and is scheduled this year for Saturday 30th November 2024 at The Belfast Hilton Hotel. These are hosted by the current B.R.A. OBA President. If you have not previously attended and would like to be kept informed, please email the Alumni Office at [alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net).



B.R.A. OBA Annual Dinner - The Belfast Hilton - Saturday 25-Nov-2023  
Conor Spence (Speaker) Dr Tony Macaulay (Speaker) Mrs Hilary Woods BRA Principal Philip McKenna President BRA OBA

## THE B.R.A. OBA ANNUAL DINNER



Belfast Royal Academy FP London Dinner @ the R.A.F. Club (8-Mar-2024)  
Louis Campbell (Organiser/Past President) Conor Davis (Speaker) Philip McKenna (President BRA OBA) Hilary Woods (BRA Principal) David Haslett (Organiser/Past President)

The B.R.A. Former Pupils' London Dinner was held at the R.A.F. Club on Friday 8th March 2024. It was very pleasing to see this dinner is almost back to pre-COVID levels. Thanks for another successful event are due to David Haslett and Dr. Louis Campbell for their organisation skills. The guest speaker was Conor Davis of CitiBank who gave a lively presentation on his memories of life as a B.R.A. pupil. (please see the speech attached). The 2025 London Dinner is scheduled for Friday 7th March 2025.



## THE B.R.A. FORMER PUPILS' EDINBURGH DINNER

The B.R.A. Former Pupils Edinburgh Dinner was held in the New Club on 12th April 2024. While this was again a lively and enjoyable evening, in a very pleasant location – the future of this dinner will require more involvement from younger generations.

The attached photo represents table 1: (l to r) Philip McKenna (B.R.A. OBA President), Commander Peter Noblett (Royal Navy) (Speaker), The Principal, Mrs Hilary Woods, David Haslett (Organiser), Ken Houston, Colin Tennant. The 2025 FP Edinburgh Dinner is planned for April 2025, date is TBA.



## MONTHLY LUNCHEON CLUB



The monthly lunches attract between 30 and 50 members – mostly retired members of the Association. The attached photo is from a lunch at the Royal Belfast Golf Club. Robin Reid initiated and coordinated these lunches for many years, with the help of a local host in each location. The Old Boys' Association is grateful to Robb Fletcher for stepping in to run this programme for the last few years. If you would like to be copied on these announcements, please email Robb at: [Robb.Fletcher.braob.luncheon@gmail.com](mailto:Robb.Fletcher.braob.luncheon@gmail.com)

## GOLF

The Association plans to hold two golf outings each year. The first outing was held on 13th June 2024, at the Malone Golf Club. Stewart Beattie won the Picken Cup – presented by this year's captain, Chris Magee.





The second outing was Captain's Day, held at the Royal Belfast Golf Club on Friday 27th September 2024. Stuart McCombe was this year's winner of the Ferguson Cup for the best-combined score over the two 2024 outings, presented by Andrew Magee.



Any former pupil interested in playing in these competitions should contact Ken Knox at [ken@cd-group.com](mailto:ken@cd-group.com). The dates for 2025 are Thursday 12th June at Malone GC and Friday 12th September at Royal Belfast GC.

### **TOM MCKIBBIN MAKES GOOD PROGRESS AS A PROFESSIONAL GOLFER**



Former Ben Madigan and B.R.A. pupil, Tom McKibbin won his first professional trophy last year at the Porsche European Open in Germany. That was Tom's first win as a professional on the DP World Tour. Tom has followed that up this year with playing in his first two Majors and making the cut in both events. As we go to press, the Belfast Telegraph stated on 23rd September: "Tom McKibbin claimed his eighth top 10 result in an excellent season, closing with a six under 66 to finish tied for 10th on 13 under par (at the BMW PGA Championship) and remains in the hunt for one of 10 PGA Tour cards."

### **CRICKET**



The annual cricket match between an Old Boys' XI and the B.R.A. 1st XI was played on 21st June 2024. The match was limited to 25 overs to try and get a result. The match was played with a white ball, and the players played in their colours. The Old Boys batted first and scored 189 for 3. (R Bryans 54, H Warke 33, M Palmer 25, F. McCarthy 2-42). Unfortunately, the rain then arrived and after a colourful combined photo was taken of the two teams, the proceedings were abandoned. The photo of the Castle Grounds is a reminder that it is such a beautiful location for sporting events.



## RUGBY NEWS

Our two current rugby internationals

### IAIN HENDERSON



### TOM STEWART



Iain and Tom both enjoyed another impressive season – without maybe reaching the same level of excitement and awards as 2023 and the Rugby World Cup run. Iain continues as the captain of Ulster Rugby.

## FOOTBALL



Congratulations to Callum Marshall on his move to League One club Huddersfield in August 2024, (on loan from his Premier club, West Ham United F.C.). Callum scored and had an assist in his first match for Huddersfield in the EFL Cup against Morcombe. Callum now has 6 Senior Caps for Northern Ireland.

## B.R.A. OBA NEWS

### KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS: PROFESSOR IAN WHITE AWARDED CBE



Professor Ian White, College Fellow and former Master of Jesus College (2011-2019) was awarded a CBE in recognition of his services to Higher Education and Engineering. Professor White is Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Bath, where he has overseen a period of success across research and education. With the University significantly increasing its research income and being awarded triple Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework 2023, as well as rising in many university rankings both in the UK and worldwide.

Responding to the announcement, Professor White said: "I feel deeply fortunate to be recognised in this way and it means so much. As Vice-Chancellor, one is a member of a wider University community, and this honour, for me, recognises the achievement of the very special community at the University of Bath and its delivery of our mission along with those who importantly partner with us locally and further afield.

"This award also reflects the exceptional work of colleagues, students, and partners throughout my time at the Universities of Cambridge and Bristol as well as Bath, and of my many colleagues across Engineering. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to them."

### OBA DONATIONS TO B.R.A. NEW WW II MEMORIAL



Each year, the Principal, and the President, on behalf of the B.R.A. OBA Old Boys' Association, try and identify where the OBA could make a financial contribution to the School. Mrs Woods suggested that the Old Boys fund the construction, shipment and installation of the new WWII Memorial. This represented the OBA funding for the last three years. The School had engaged Joanna McClurg (an Old Girl) to design the Memorial. The new Memorial was unveiled on 10th November 2023 by Philip McKenna (OBA President) just before the annual memorial service. It is situated in the lobby beside the WWI memorial.

In September 2023 the OBA started funding 'House Ties' for Form 1 boys – as the Old Girls are funding ties for Form 1 girls.

### B.R.A. SCHOOL PLAQUE DELIVERED TO THE SOMME MUSEUM

When Dr Ray McClelland visited the Ulster Somme Memorial at Thiepval in France during his holidays, he noticed there was no B.R.A. School plaque among the other schools represented. Ray brought a B.R.A. School plaque to the next Old Boys' Committee meeting and requested it be sent



to France via the Somme Museum near Bangor. The plaque is now on its way to France.



### B.R.A. OBA WEBSITE:

The B.R.A. OBA website is at: [www.braoba.com](http://www.braoba.com) and provides news and archive documents. Our thanks to Peter Barr for all his updates over the last few years.

### FUTURE DATES:

London FP Dinner: Friday 7th March, 2025.  
Edinburgh FP Dinner TBA April, 2025.  
Golf: Picken Cup Thursday 12th June, 2025 at Malone Golf Club.  
Golf: Captain's day: Friday 12th September, 2025 at Royal Belfast Golf Club.  
Annual Dinner 29th November, 2025 at the Belfast Hilton Hotel.

### CONTACTING THE B.R.A. OBA

The Membership fee is currently suspended. New members are always welcome! Please notify the Alumni Office at [alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net) to register with the Association, or notification of changes to email address, or contact details. Notification of reunions is very welcome. Please inform the Alumni Office at [alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net](mailto:alumni@belfastroyalacademy.net) of any items of news for inclusion in The Owl and the Old Boys' Association website. Any notification of births/ marriages/ deaths or career developments etc will be very welcome and of considerable interest to other Old Boys.

Michael McDowell promotes the Association on Social Media through the Old Boys' Twitter account @TheBRAoldboys.

Thank you.  
Philip McKenna,  
B.R.A. OBA Hon. Secretary 2024-2025  
[philmac49@gmail.com](mailto:philmac49@gmail.com)

Welcome to Belfast Royal Academy Old Boys' Association.



#### ABOUT US

Founded in 1931, the Association currently enjoys a membership of over 1000. To join for free, see the 'Become A Member' section under the Contact Us menu of this site.

#### EVENTS AND NEWS

Find out more about monthly luncheons, business breakfasts, annual Belfast, London and Edinburgh dinners, golf competitions, the annual cricket match and other events. For Old Boys' News please see News in the Events and News Section.

Visit the calendar page here.

#### JOIN US

Join Belfast Royal Academy Old Boys' Association and find old school friends. Follow us on Twitter.

#### MORE ABOUT US



#### WHAT'S COMING UP



#### JOIN US HERE



#### SPORT

The Old Boys' Association supports a wide range of sports including rugby, cricket and golf. There are clubs and societies to join and we provide news and information about our international Old Boys.

#### NEWSLETTER

Here you can review past and current editions of the newsletter including biographies of and messages from our Presidents.

#### ALUMNI

Notable alumni past and present.

#### MORE ABOUT SPORT

#### NEWSLETTER

#### ALUMNI

## WELCOME TO THE 2023/24 UPDATE FROM THE OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION.

Belfast Royal Academy Old Girls' Association is a community of female pupils who previously attended the school, along with current and past female staff. Our Membership is worldwide, including many local ladies still living in Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK and Ireland.

We are delighted to welcome our new Members and we would like to extend an invitation to all past female pupils, as we continue to grow our Membership and community. Maintaining a link with Belfast Royal Academy is very special and we know that our members have many cherished memories of their time at school.



Our aim is to support pupils of Belfast Royal Academy with all aspects of school life. We provide opportunities for our members to network, socialise and help raise funds for the school.

## CONNECTING WITH PUPILS

On 18th December we held our annual Christmas Coffee Morning. This was an opportunity to meet informally with the MVI girls, and learn about their plans for university, gap years, and employment. There was of course lots of chat about the upcoming formal and festive plans over the Christmas break.



Just before the pupils left for study leave, we met again on 1 May 2024. During this meeting, we explained the Old Girls' Association's role in helping to support the School financially, through various fundraising events. We also encouraged the girls to keep in touch and that if they need any help or assistance with career advice or general support on leaving school, we can offer that support as required.

It was a pleasure to chat with the Head Girl, Ellie Belle, and her Deputies Cara McMahon and Debby Ogunleye, along with their peers and we very much look forward to meeting them at future events. We would like to wish all MVI leavers all the best for the future and hope that the BRA bond remains strong.



## FUNDRAISING

We held our annual Christmas Wreaths sale in December. This was a great success. There was a lot of festive spirit in the playground on the collection morning. A huge thank you to all who ordered and supported this event to raise funds for the school.





May saw the return of the annual hanging basket and planter sale, which continues to be a great fundraiser. The hanging baskets and planters were once again provided by Dundonald Nurseries.



Our thanks go again to all those who placed orders and helped to raise funds for the pupils of B.R.A. The quality of baskets and planters was very high, with many still in bloom as this article is written.



## EASYFUNDRAISING

Don't forget we are registered with Easyfundraising! This is an easy way to help us raise funds at no additional cost to you. The Association earns commissions from online purchases made by our members on a huge variety of shopping sites, including: Amazon, Currys, ASOS, Marks & Spencers amongst hundreds of others. So when you are next shopping online simply follow these simple steps:

- Step 1 - click [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/braoldgirlsassoc/?q=bra&cat=cause-autosuggest](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/braoldgirlsassoc/?q=bra&cat=cause-autosuggest)
- Step 2 - shop as normal.
- Step 3 - A donation will be made automatically to The Old Girls' Association based on a percentage of what you spend online, at no extra cost to you!

With funds raised from various sources, we were able to provide funding for 3 new sewing machines for the Art Department. The sewing machines were greatly appreciated by the department and have been put to good use for those pupils who work with textiles. When presenting these to Mrs Patterson, Head of the Art Department, I was very impressed with the quality of work produced by the pupils.

Funding was also provided to the Crochet Club to help them purchase resources.

September 2023 also saw the start of a new initiative with the Old Boys's Association for new Form 1 pupils. All Form 1 pupils will now receive their school tie on a complimentary basis, which both associations will jointly fund. We felt this would be a great way of welcoming pupils to the BRA family and also create a sense of belonging to the Academy.



## EVENTS

### GALA BALL

During this academic year, we put all of our time and resources into supporting and helping to organise the Gala Ball that was held on the 27th of April in Titanic Belfast. Therefore, we did not hold our Annual Afternoon Tea or quiz.



The Gala Ball was an amazing event, and we would like to pay tribute to Claire McCollum for doing such an incredible job hosting the evening. We were delighted that so many Old Girls were in attendance.



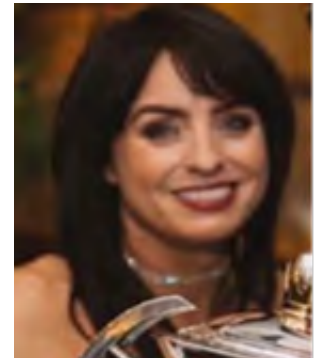
## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM was held again via Zoom on 11 October 2023. The agenda covered fundraising, membership updates, accounts, and planned events for the forthcoming year.

The committee remains as follows:



Caroline Dillon  
Chairperson



Nikki Johns  
Chairperson



Johanna Richardson  
Hon. Treasurer



Claire McGovern  
Hon. Secretary



## STAY CONNECTED

We love hearing from our members, please get in touch if you have some news to share.

If you would like to register as a Member of the Old Girls' Association and would like to offer your support please go to our new automated registration form at [Old Girls'... | Belfast Royal Academy](#). Our annual membership is an optional £5. Members who are previous life members can also subscribe to the annual fee if they wish. All fees contribute to the financial contributions that we pass on to the School.

Get in touch:

email – [braoldgirls@outlook.com](mailto:braoldgirls@outlook.com)

twitter – [@braoldgirls](https://twitter.com/braoldgirls)

Facebook – [Old Girls' Association-Belfast Royal Academy](#)



# *Births, Deaths and Marriages*

## **BIRTHS**

Chambers: 5th June 2024, to Andrew and Robyn, baby girl Georgie Eva Jamie.

Doris: 24th July 2024, to Eamann and Eileen, baby boy Nicholas Gerald.

Johnston: 30th May 2024, to Peter & Rebecca (nee McKinstry) a girl, Phoebe Elaine.

Kitchen: 26th March 2024, to Steven and Lois, baby boy Jaxon Robin Michael.

McKibbin: 16th August 2024, to Sean and Jenna, baby girl Mara Caroline.

Spence: 28th February 2024, to Katie (nee McAvoy) and Conor, a son, Isaac Mack, a brother to Clara Jayne.

## **MARRIAGES**

Irwin: 27th July 2024, Neil Irwin and Tracy (nee Connolly)

## **DEATHS**

Calvert: Dennis (at 99 years of age)

Neill: Henry Trevor (in Adelaide)

[illegible]



## Academy

'Middlemarch' caught the  
breeze blossom in its pages.  
Leave, carry both home.

Jackson promise of  
winter blossom, hope grows, vast,  
quickly, eternal.

In spring, snowflakes melt  
only to drift back again,  
old sculptures made new.

Right now there is wild  
flower blossoming somewhere  
unseen, wonderful...