



Ballyclare Secondary School

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Principal: Mrs K O Bell BA Adv Cert Ed PQH

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Dear Parent/Carer

Congratulations on securing a place for your child at Ballyclare Secondary School. It is an important milestone for any family when a child transfers from Primary to Secondary Education and we very much look forward to working with you and your child in the years ahead. We hope that they will enjoy learning and feel encouraged to do their best in all that they undertake. The school is now full to capacity which says so much about its popularity and levels of success.

One of the great strengths of Ballyclare Secondary School is the excellent working relationship which exists between teachers and the young people entrusted to our care. This is clearly evident in the classroom but also in the varied extra-curricular programme details of which are enclosed with this letter. On our website from July you will find our Calendar of Events which includes details of important Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings.

Staff and pupils are key components in the success of any school, but we also greatly value the contribution made by parents and I thank you for your support.

It is a great privilege to be Principal of Ballyclare Secondary School, particularly at a time when there is much development of our school buildings and estate and further improvements to the curricular and extra-curricular activities that we provide for our pupils. Pupils enrolled in this school will continue to be educated to the high standards associated with Ballyclare Secondary School.

As ever, there are a few specific matters to bring to your attention:

- Attendance and Holidays during Term-Time

School attendance is compulsory until age 16. In Ballyclare Secondary School we encourage good attendance and it is understood that persistent absences are unacceptable and term time holidays should be avoided, if possible. The link between attendance and achievement is well known, but it is particularly significant at GCSE, AS and A level where the school year is made much shorter by the demands of the examination system. 'Controlled Assessment' regulations mean that a pupil's absence from class could lower the GCSE grade awarded for a subject. This does not mean that you force your child to attend school in the case of genuine illness. As parents you are best positioned to make the judgement about your children and it is not sensible for them to be in school if they are unwell.

- School Records

It occasionally happens that when we have to contact a pupil's parents, perhaps because a child is unwell, we find that our records are out-of-date. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of any change in circumstances e.g. address, telephone numbers, family circumstances and emergency contacts.

- Health and Safety

In the interests of the safety of all our pupils, parents are requested not to use the driveways into school when dropping children off or picking them up by car at the beginning or end of the school day.

- School Uniform

We are grateful to parents and pupils for the high level of uniform compliance. Details do matter and the 'open collar – shirt out' style is unacceptable. Those pupils, who do not respond to encouragement and are persistently in breach of uniform regulations, can expect to find themselves issued with warnings and detentions, in keeping with our high expectations and procedures.

- Homework Club

This is open every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday in the school library. Pupils can use the library resources to do homework or research in a quiet atmosphere. Please encourage your child to make use of this facility.

At the end of August Mr Houston will be leaving us to take up the position of Principal of Ulidia Integrated College.

We acknowledge the contribution he has made to the pastoral work of this school, to the English and Media departments and to the education of the young people entrusted to his care. We extend our very best wishes to him as he takes on this new role.

I hope that you find the enclosed information useful and you can keep up to date with all that is happening at Ballyclare Secondary School by visiting our website at www.ballyclaresecondary.co.uk

Yours faithfully

K O Bell (Mrs)
Principal

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