

# Ballyclare Secondary School



6th Form Prospectus 2024-2026



# Welcome to our school



We are delighted that you are considering applying to join our family at Ballyclare Secondary School.

Sixth form at Ballyclare Secondary School provides an outstanding education for all, and has an excellent pastoral care system at the heart of all we do. We provide pupils with a broad range of qualifications and experiences helping pupils to progress to university, high quality apprenticeships and rewarding employment opportunities.

Ballyclare Secondary School is a wonderful non-selective controlled secondary school that has been providing high quality education for 60+ years. Our staff are dedicated, diligent and determined to put caring at the heart of everything we do. Pupils are challenged, encouraged and inspired to aim high, which is evident in the examination results achieved. Yet we care about much more than just exams. As a school we encourage the pursuit of personal excellence in a whole host of other areas including Sport, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, Drama, Art and Music. We believe in a well-rounded education and are focused on making a difference.

We welcome applications from our current year 12 pupils and warmly welcome pupils from other schools. Pupils who join our school in year 13 quickly integrate with those who have been with us to complete their GCSEs.

We know that when pupils feel safe and happy, they perform and achieve their best. Therefore, as soon as a pupil begins life at our school, staff work conscientiously to provide a high standard of pastoral care, using the strength of relationships that exist at all levels throughout the school.

With a focus on our 6th form curriculum offer, extra-curricular options and leadership opportunities, we hope this prospectus provides you with an insight into life in Sixth Form at Ballyclare Secondary School.

Thank you for your interest in our school.

Acting Principal

## Our Ethos

### School Aims

Our aim is personal excellence. This is something every young person can achieve. The belief in the equal worth of every young person is put into practice in our school with every pupil feeling valued as a unique individual.

#### We want every young person:

- to acquire knowledge, skills and practical abilities and the will to use them;
- to develop qualities of mind, body, spirit, feeling and imagination;
- to appreciate human achievement in art, music, science, technology and literature;
- to acquire understanding of the society in which they live and a reasoned set of attitudes, values and beliefs;
- to be prepared for their adult lives at home, at work, at leisure and at large as consumers and citizens;
- to develop, above all, a sense of self-respect, the capacity to live as independent, self-motivated adults and the ability to function as contributing and caring members of co-operative groups.

### School Ethos and Values

The community of Ballyclare Secondary School strive to provide an inclusive learning and teaching environment, in which all can reach their full potential. We aim to do this by fostering the core values of respect, kindness, compassion and joy.



# Senior Prefect Team

We are immensely proud of all our pupils and have a strong prefect system. Our Senior Prefect Team take on significant responsibilities including caring for younger pupils, acting as ambassadors, helping with duties, organising events and attending improvement meetings.

## Jonas Verner Head Boy

### What are your roles and responsibilities?

As Head Boy, I'm tasked with many roles within the School. I have to maintain a high standard in uniform, behaviour and many other aspects of school life. I'm also a role model for those in the younger years, to show what they can aspire to be.

It is vital that everyone feels safe and can have someone they can trust in, and the Head Boy/Girl need to be that person pupils and staff can rely on.

### What plans do you have for the incoming year?

This academic year, I plan to help build on those Success Stories that made the school what it is today. I want to make sure no one is left behind and everyone is included in as much as possible, not only in school but in the wider community.

**Deputy Head Girl:** Sarah Campbell

**Deputy Head Boy:** Adam Dalzell

**Senior Prefect Team:** Hannah Gillespie, Lauren Ferguson, Anna Laverty and Zara Mawhinney.

## Hannah Caldwell Head Girl

### What are your roles and responsibilities?

As Head Girl, I have various roles and responsibilities within school. My overall role is to represent the entire student body as Head Girl alongside the Head Boy and Senior Prefect Team, at various functions and events both inside and outside of school including Open Night and the Remembrance Sunday Service. My responsibilities include being a role model, setting uniform standards and being a supportive member of our school to all pupils to create a positive learning environment.

### What plans do you have for the incoming year?

My aim for the incoming year is to continue to make Ballyclare Secondary a welcoming and safe environment for all pupils to have a chance to flourish in their own success story. Alongside the Head Boy, I wish to build upon requests for changes from members in our school community about various issues or areas within school. This is to ensure everyone feels that they are valued, have a sense of belonging and that they have a voice in our BSS family. Finally, my end term goal is to leave school knowing I have made a difference for every pupil moving up behind me.

# Prefect System



The role of Prefect is essential in Ballyclare Secondary School. Those taking on the leadership role of Prefect will be able to use the position to develop leadership skills. Such skills are essential for many aspects of life, not least when completing personal statements for UCAS forms, CVs and job applications.

We are incredibly proud of how our young people rise to the challenge of leadership in our school community, making a valuable and lasting contribution to us all. Our team of reliable and responsible young people show a commitment to work together as a Prefect team and alongside staff. They are a shining example to their peers when they get involved in school life. We trust them to complete their duties with care, fairness and integrity and are most grateful that they give of their own time and talents.

# Pastoral Care



**Mr A Nicholl - Vice Principal (Acting) Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care is at the heart of everything we do in Ballyclare Secondary School. We are totally committed to creating a caring and supportive school environment in which young people feel safe, secure and encouraged to build positive relationships with staff and fellow pupils.

Ballyclare Secondary School is an inclusive school in which all pupils are valued for their unique contributions, abilities, and achievements.

The overall work of Sixth Form is led by Miss Collins as Head of Sixth form, and Mrs Hill, Assistant Head of Sixth Form. It is our job to welcome pupils to the Sixth Form family and prepare them for what lies ahead in this two-year commitment.

In Sixth Form all pupils have a dedicated Form Teacher who is the first port of call for help and support.

Our Sixth Form pupils are assigned to class groups of around 20 pupils, allowing the form teacher to get to know the pupils, their interests and aspirations for the 2 years ahead and beyond.



The general focus of form time is getting ready for the day ahead. Pupils are supported and encouraged to plan effective use of their study periods. Where possible we try to group pupils studying similar pathways together for study periods, allowing them the opportunity to work together for peer support.

The pastoral programme follows a similar format to our other year groups, but we also look at issues specific to Sixth Form in terms of wellbeing and healthy study habits.

We encourage pupils to take pride in all that they do and to set high standards for themselves both inside and outside the classroom.

The achievements of pupils are celebrated through assemblies, addressing a variety of moral and social issues that are particularly relevant to young people.

The school has a Designated Safeguarding Teacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Teachers, who are known to the entire school community, and take responsibility for all safeguarding and child protection issues.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy acknowledges the duty of care of each member of staff towards each young person in school and our responsibility to promote and safeguard their welfare.

Our qualified nurse is available throughout the day and provides medical care for all pupils, including those with specified and particular needs. She maintains close contact with both staff and parents/carers. Prescribed medications are kept and administered by the school nurse and she also organises the school immunisation programme.

In addition, a counsellor, from an external agency, provides further support for pupils through sessions organised on a weekly basis.

Our Sixth Form Supervisor is another vital member of our team, supporting pupils by helping them to establish

effective independent learning habits. In addition, the Sixth Form Supervisor always seeks to create a quiet and effective working environment where good standards of discipline and behaviour are evident.

The Sixth Form Supervisor can at times mentor students who are identified as needing support in their AS or A2 work. They also play a key role in developing a positive holistic Sixth Form experience for all students.

Our tight knit Sixth Form team endeavours to help you achieve your aspirations by supporting you in helping you to feel a sense of purpose, belonging and achievement through respectful working.

We warmly welcome all who will join us in this shared vision.



**Ms L Collins - Head of 6<sup>th</sup> form**

# Curriculum Offer

## Courses of Study



The task any school faces is to build a curriculum sufficiently broad, flexible and stimulating to engage the diverse range of aptitudes young people bring with them to school.

It is our aim to assist pupils in acquiring knowledge and to nurture their individual aptitudes and abilities to develop as life-long learners.

Having reached the end of Key Stage 4 there are important choices to be made regarding the various routes available at Post 16.

Our 6th Form provides an exciting and broad range of courses which will prepare young people for further study or to take their place in the world of work.

Prior to admission to 6th form, we encourage prospective pupils to carefully consider their subject choices based on their strengths, passions and, very importantly, their future career plans. Careers advice is available when applications to join 6th form are made.

The curriculum offer for students commencing Key Stage 5 study in September 2024 is:

### A Level

- Art & Design
- Biology
- English Literature
- French
- Geography
- Government and Politics
- Health and Social Care (Single Award)
- Health and Social Care (Double Award)
- History
- Life and Health Science
- Media Studies
- Moving Image Arts
- Music
- Professional Business Services
- Psychology
- Religious Studies

### BTEC Extended Certificate

- Children's Play, Learning and Development
- Sport (Single Award)
- Travel and Tourism

### BTEC National Diploma

- Sport (Double Award)



# Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)



Our aim in Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is to prepare young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult and working life.

We aim to equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes which they require in order to manage their future career pathway and personal development.

At Ballyclare Secondary, we promote equality of opportunities with the needs of the learner at the centre of everything we do.

Key public agencies, employers, colleges and universities also have a specific and important role in assisting with the promotion of CEIAG in Ballyclare Secondary School.

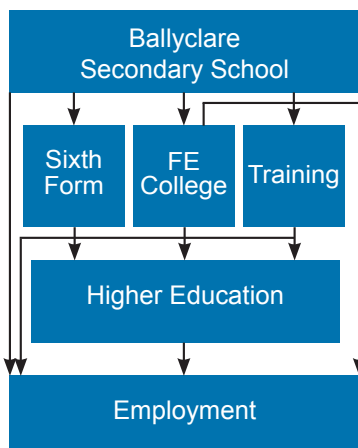
In sixth form, support and advice is available to all students to enable them to make informed decisions for the future. Students are assisted in the transition from Sixth Form to Higher Education, Training or Employment.

## Career Progression Routes

A range of resources are used to help students make decisions.

### These include:

- Interactive programmes
- Career matching
- Career websites
- Labour market information
- A dynamic Google Classroom that is regularly updated with key information
- CEIAG evenings
- Career Conventions
- STEM activities
- Study Skills
- Health and Safety Talks



The subjects listed on the previous page will be arranged into four option blocks from which students select three or four courses.

At Ballyclare Secondary, we can offer ready-made pathways linking through to a large number of further and higher education courses and career pathways.

Common pathways include:

- Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions
- Sport, Health and Fitness
- Travel, Tourism and Business
- Engineering, Technology and Design
- Creative Arts

# Sixth Form

## Enrichment Programme

At Ballyclare Secondary School we firmly believe that education should be challenging, enriching and fun. This is especially true in the Sixth Form where we believe learning should extend beyond the classroom. The opportunities available in the Sixth Form Enrichment Programme are designed to help pupils develop a wide range of skills to be able to enrich their own lives and the lives of others.

### Social Provision

Sixth Form students have use of the Sixth Form Centre at break and lunch. This facility has a newly renovated kitchen for student use.

The annual school formal is held in January or February. A student committee assist with the planning and preparation for this popular event.

### Leadership and Personal Development

Year 14 students can be selected to act as prefects carrying out duties during the school day and representing the school at school and community functions. Some prefects are also placed with Year 8 classes to help these new pupils in their transition from Primary to Secondary education.

### Study Buddy Programme

Year 13 and 14 students can volunteer to provide support in a particular subject area. This may be supporting pupils who are finding a topic difficult or who need help to focus on personal study and revision. Working alongside younger pupils and acting as academic role models gives Sixth Formers valuable experience, but also improves younger students' chances of success.

### Peer Mentoring

Mentors take part in a 3-session training programme designed to equip them in carrying out this important role. Mentors can provide tips, tools, and advice that can reduce stress and promote confidence in younger students.

### Enrichment Days

Sixth Form Enrichment days allow students the chance to pursue their own areas of interest. There are three enrichment days in Year 13 (Induction, Enrichment Opportunities 1 and Enrichment Opportunities 2) and three in Year 14 (Induction, Enrichment Opportunities 4 and Year 14 Leavers' Day).

Each of the above sessions which are relevant, inspirational and innovative are hosted by school community members, teaching staff and guest speakers. Students are encouraged to find their own balance between the things they need to learn and the things they want to learn by planning their own day of custom sessions to suit their needs and interests.

### Enrichment Curriculum

The aim of the enrichment curriculum is to allow students to develop skills in different areas and to provide a little down time amid the rigors of post-16 study. Areas covered are:

- Tool time
- Money Matters
- Digital Skills
- Fitness
- Survival Cookery

Pupils can also take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme and can complete the award through to Gold level.

### Extra Curricular Activities

Sixth Form students are encouraged to take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school. These include Drama, Sport, Music, Scripture Union, and ICT. Year 13 and 14 pupils often find that they can take an active role in the planning and running of these clubs and societies.

### Arts

- Film Club
- Drama Club
- School Production

### Music

- Music Theory Group
- Senior Choir
- Wind Group
- Brass Group
- Instrumental Group
- String Group
- Instrumental, Vocal, Guitar and Drum Lessons
- Bagpipe and Snare Drum Lessons

### Lunchtime Activities

- Scripture Union
- Football
- Choir

### Charity Work

- Think Pink
- Annual Multiple Sclerosis Sponsored Walk
- NI Hospice
- Tiny Life
- Hope 365
- Aware
- PIPS
- Bryson House
- Shoebox Appeal

### Sports

- Cricket
- Girls and Boys Football
- Hockey
- Rugby
- Netball
- Athletics
- Dance
- Basketball





# Special Educational Needs

Ballyclare Secondary School acknowledges that the need of all pupils who have Special Educational Needs or a disability either throughout or at any time during their school careers, working towards equality in schooling, must be addressed, and their rights to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum including maximum possible access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Our philosophy is based on the belief that all children should be given the opportunity to develop their potential and be contributing and caring members of society. In this way we prepare them for their adult lives at home, at work and at leisure.

Ballyclare Secondary School has adopted the procedures for the identification and management of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or barriers to learning as recommended by the Education Code of Practice.

Pupil Learning Plans (PLPs) are drawn up, monitored, and reviewed by the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) Miss Miniss, in consultation with parents, members of staff, and pupils. The Pupil Learning Plans support pupils with special educational needs. Learning support assistants work alongside subject teachers to provide individual support to a pupil with additional needs. All pupils have full access to the curriculum.



# Parent/person with Parental Responsibility

At Ballyclare Secondary School we acknowledge that successful partnerships between parents, pupils and school play a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation, openness and transparency and have a crucial impact on the effectiveness of special educational provision. Seeking the views of the child or young person also plays a

key role in helping us understand individual needs.

Teachers, pastoral staff, LSC, and other school staff all have a significant role in developing positive and constructive relationships with parents and pupils. We encourage this participation and value its contribution.



# Pupil Views

In school, as far as reasonably practicable, we seek and have regard to the child's/young person's views about their strengths, learning difficulties and education, considering their age and maturity. We seek and listen to their views about how they learn effectively and then focus on the strategies that work for them.

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- Contributing to their own assessment, provision, and progress
- Working towards achieving agreed targets
- Contributing to the review of PLPs, Annual Reviews, and the Transition Process
- Involving and supporting the pupils to participate in making decisions about matters affecting them

# Autism Impact Award

As Northern Ireland's largest autism charity, Autism NI has developed the Impact Awards to help organisations create a more 'autism friendly environment'. An autism friendly organisation strives to ensure every autistic individual feels welcome and

comfortable accessing the range of services and facilities offered. We are very pleased to have been the first ever school in Northern Ireland to be awarded the Autism Impact Award NI.



# School Uniform

All pupils are required to wear a uniform and we appreciate the support of parents in maintaining our high standard. Uniform helps with creating a positive school identity, reducing social barriers, creating self-esteem and self-respect. It helps pupils to feel a sense of belonging as well as identifying them as ambassadors for the school.

## Boys' Uniform



**Extreme hairstyles or extreme hair colouring will not be permitted. Hair must be natural in colour. Boys are expected to be clean shaven.**

**Shirt:** Plain white school shirt with unstyled collar.

**Tie:** Years 8-10 junior school tie  
Years 11-12 senior school tie  
Years 13-14 sixth form tie

**Blazer:** Royal blue blazer with school badge

**Pullover:** Long sleeved v neck sweater (optional).

**Jewellery:** Boys are allowed to wear one ring. All other jewellery; earrings and facial piercings including tongue bars are not permitted.

**Trousers:** Dark grey or black trousers.

**Socks:** Black or grey socks

**Shoes:** Black formal sensible leather shoes. Casual shoes of any kind are unacceptable. "Trainer" style shoes or boots are unacceptable whether in leather or canvas. Shoes with logos, symbols, flashes of colour or brand names are not acceptable.

## Please Note:

This is an overview only. The full uniform policy is available on the school website.

## Girls' Uniform



**Extreme hairstyles or extreme hair colouring will not be permitted. Hair must be natural in colour.**

**Makeup:** Excessive makeup is not to be worn in school

**Jewellery:** Girls are allowed to wear one ring and one stud in each earlobe. All other jewellery; earrings and facial piercings (including tongue bars) are not permitted.

**Shirt:** Plain white school blouse.

**Tie:** Years 8-10 junior school tie  
Years 11-12 senior school tie  
Years 13-14 sixth form tie

**Blazer:** Royal blue blazer with school badge

**Pullover:** Long sleeved v neck sweater (optional).

Only clear nail varnish is permitted, no other colour. All nail varnish may be requested to be removed where safety hygiene is an issue in specific subjects.

**Skirt:** Year 8, 9 and 10 royal blue, knee length, 4 gore skirt.

Year 11, 12, 13 and 14 royal blue, knee length, straight skirt with kick pleats

**Socks/Tights:** Grey knee length socks. Plain gunmetal grey tights.

**Shoes:** Black formal sensible leather shoes. Casual shoes of any kind are unacceptable. "Trainer" style shoes or boots are unacceptable whether in leather or canvas. Shoes with logos, symbols, flashes of colour or brand names are not acceptable.

# Sixth Form Facilities

Our dedicated Sixth Form centre provides a space for Year 13 and 14 pupils to study and socialise. The general study area provides a quiet and focused environment for independent learning whilst the small computer room facilitates completion of coursework and research tasks.

Our sixth form study supervisor provides support and guidance as required.

The kitchen area of the Sixth Form centre has recently been refurbished to a very high standard and is fully equipped for the preparation of break and lunchtime snacks.

Also within the Sixth Form centre is our well-being space; a tranquil area where pupils are able to decompress from the stresses of Key Stage 5 study.



## General school facilities

Many departments have their own computer suites which are fully equipped with up-to-date technology, including Apple Macs for film making in Media Studies. In addition, Sixth Form students are able to borrow a Surface SE device.



This is particularly beneficial for portfolio-based subjects such as BTEC Sport, Travel and Tourism and Children's Play, Learning and Development. Study periods are often facilitated within departments where students can easily access support from their teachers.

The well-resourced school library provides an additional workspace for independent study.

All learning areas are fully equipped with high standard laboratory, workshop and practice space in relevant subjects.

Our Enrichment Curriculum makes use of the facilities in many departments including the fully equipped fitness suite, the Home Economics kitchens and the Technology and Design workshops.

# House System

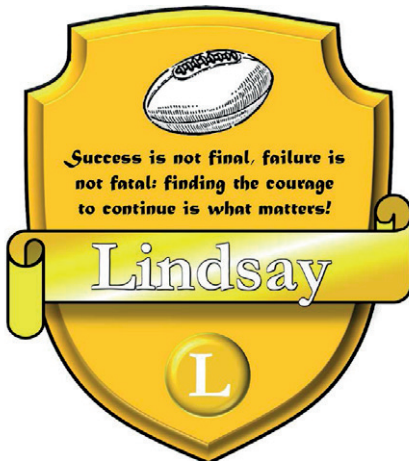
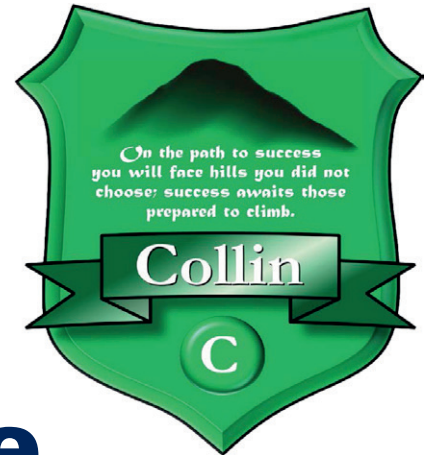
The House system is an area of school life that continues to develop within Ballyclare Secondary School. Whilst there is a healthy, competitive element in belonging to a House, perhaps most importantly, it creates another element of our Ballyclare Secondary School identity, another strand of your school family.

The four Houses of our schools are: McConnell, Ollar, Collin and Lindsay. You will be assigned to a house when you begin your journey at our school. Our House Captains are Miss Dunwoody (McConnell), Miss Dunlop (Ollar), Mrs Weir (Collin) and Miss Smyth (Lindsay) however each member of staff belongs to a House too. We also have pupil House Captains who lead and encourage everyone in their House.

House activities are designed for you to meet new people and make new friends across all year groups, gain points for your house and most importantly, have fun! Activities include a House Quiz, Sports Day, creative design competitions and much more.

There are also House points available for the best attendance within each House, awarded every month and displayed on our leader board in the assembly hall. Attendance is very important within our school, therefore everyone has an important role to play in contributing to their House.

The question now is; which House are you going to be a member of?



## Pupil Voice

Ballyclare Secondary School is committed to keeping pupils at the centre of our decision making. We are totally committed to creating a caring and supportive school environment, where the voice of pupils is listened to and taken account of in every area of school life.

Student Forum is the collective voice of the student body. It comprises of a group of 14 pupils, two from each year group, who meet regularly to discuss topics brought to them by pupils and staff.

In addition to the regular meeting of the Student Forum, the prefects meet on a weekly basis with the Head of 6th Form and the Acting Principal. Through these regular meetings, prefects are given the opportunity to develop their leadership, organisational and communication skills.

The school council allows pupils to:

- Express their views
- Express the views of other pupils in the school community
- Put forward ideas for potential changes in the school.



# Join The Family

## School Events

There are many events that run throughout the academic year that contribute to creating an enjoyable experience for everyone in Ballyclare Secondary School. A few key events in the year include:

### New Driver Workshop for Year 13 pupils

Early each September we partner with New Driver NI to deliver important messages to our Year 13 who are starting on the journey to being young drivers. This organisation is sponsored by CRASH and JMK Solicitors and visit schools to deliver accurate, reliable information about this important step.

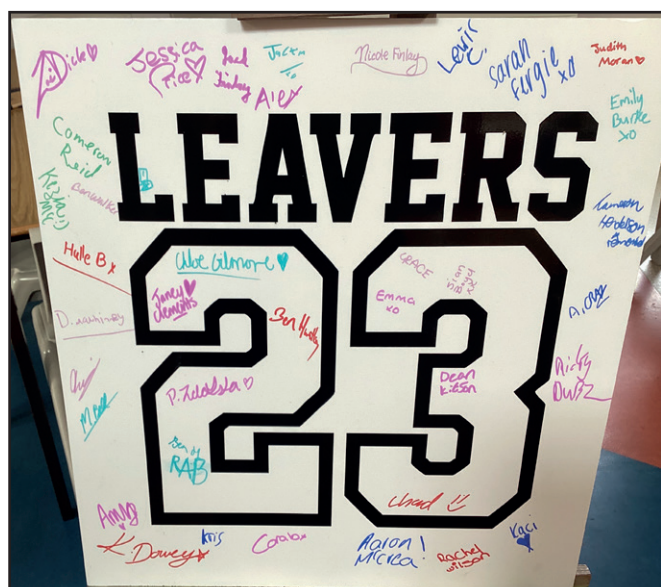
The first 6-12 months of driving is the riskiest time of your life. Almost 1 in 5 of all new drivers crashes within the first 6 months of driving. We want to give our pupils food for thought before getting behind the wheel.

*"It educated me on how to drive safer, save money and follow road safety guidelines."*

**Pupil Feedback Ballyclare Secondary School, Ballyclare**

### Sixth Form Formal

Every year we have our sixth form formal at Galgorm Resort and Spa. It is always a fabulous evening of great food, games, awards and of course dancing. We always hold our formal in January/February; providing a chance to get dressed up and let our hair down before the final push towards AS and A2 exams. There is always a brilliant atmosphere of friendship and fun as we celebrate the time we have spent together in Ballyclare Secondary School. Our senior prefect team take the lead in helping to organise the event but there are plenty of opportunities for others to get involved.



### Surviving Exam Season Workshops

Dr Flint, Head of Teaching and Learning, and Miss Collins, Head of Sixth Form, work together to take a workshop on key aspects of preparing for your exams: the latest thinking on recall, revision and exam technique coupled with well researched steps to taking care of your body and mind.

### Year 14 Leavers' Event

The last day of official lessons at school stirs up different feelings for everyone. What is common to all is that this is definitely an occasion that needs to be marked. Just before our Year 14 pupils go off on study leave we all gather to reflect on their time at Ballyclare Secondary, to celebrate success and have some fun. The afternoon starts with lunch together, followed by games and then a chance to gather over tea and buns to take stock of time in Sixth Form and wish each other well for the coming exams and whatever the future holds.

### Senior Prefects attend Leadership Seminar and lunch at Slemish College

Each Year the Senior Prefects are invited to attend a leadership seminar at Slemish College in Ballymena. This event is organised by the pupil leaders at Slemish. They welcome their peers and there are activities and guest speakers to encourage the young people to reflect on their leadership roles, network with their peers and share ideas.







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