



BLACON HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Head teacher's Report for Governors – March 2022

Blacon High School - More than a school

AIM - Prepare every young person for success and to develop the mind, body and character.

VISION - Inspire students to love and enjoy learning, achieved through a thinking curriculum.

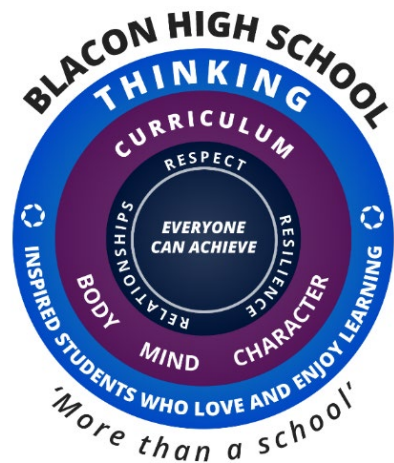
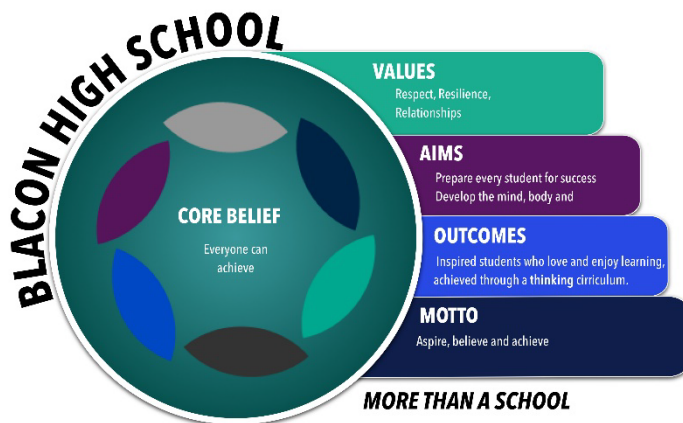
BELIEF – Everyone can achieve.

VALUES - Respect, Resilience, Relationships

MOTTO – Aspire, Believe and Achieve

It is through our curriculum that we will achieve our vision of inspiring students to love and enjoy learning for every student.

We believe that everyone can achieve, regardless of their background or starting point.



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Covid Update

Since our return in January, we have had a total of 160 cases of Covid within school, within this a total of 23 staff. (21 teachers and 2 support staff) The school community have responded so well to the challenges presented by Covid but it continues to have a significant impact on absence levels for staff, attendance for students and interruptions to learning. Whilst the guidance changed in February on a national level, staff and students are still expected to isolate for between 5 – 10 days, which has continued to impact staff absence across school.

Post Ofsted Work

Following the work with staff and the senior leadership team on redefining our vision of who we are, what we stand for and the values which matter most to us, which took place during the autumn term, we have now refined this further. We are currently rebranding and some of the initial designs are shown at the start. This work will be completed by the end of the summer term to allow time for this to be launched and displayed across school, ready for September 2022. The next stage of this, is to work with students on the vision, values, badge and motto.

During the week before February half term, we provided breakfast for every tutor group for three mornings. Each tutor led a discussion over breakfast linked to the behaviours which show our three core values of respect, resilience and relationships and how this translates into a corridor code of conduct.

The breakfasts were a wonderful opportunity for students and staff to come together to discuss the core values and to join together as community teams.

We have just shared with staff and students the summary of behaviours linked to the values and these will now be slimmed down and used to promote with students, in a similar, consistent format to the values and promise from leaders shown later on in the report. This has been presented using student language as a powerful tool for everyone to own this within the school community.

The Blacon Pledge - Student Charter on Behaviour at Blacon High School

‘If you have respect, this will improve your relationships, which will also help to build your resilience.’

Our School Values The 3 R's	What does behaviour look like when this value is shown?	What does behaviour look like when our core values are not shown?
	EXPECTED and ACCEPTED	UNACCEPTABLE
RELATIONSHIPS	<p>Being respectful to each other. Laughter and enjoyment, having fun, smiling at each other. Greeting people – ‘Hello, Good Morning, Do you need any help? How are you today?’ Acknowledging students and staff in the corridors. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Treat everyone equally. Teachers being fair. Be a good listener to students and staff. Arrive to lessons on time and actively listen to instructions. Good listening, a good energy, focus on work, helping others to learn. Volunteering and encouraging others to be involved. Communicate well, being calm and using appropriate language, including body language to show a positive attitude. Maturity, showing understanding, empathy, listening, respecting others’ opinions. To have someone to talk to, someone who is there for you.</p>	<p>Name calling, fat shaming, homophobic comments, winding others up, and using people. Dirty looks, staring, and no trust. Using bad language. Walking out of lessons and wasting time in corridors. Bad atmosphere. Being argumentative. Disengagement. Excluding or ignoring people Negative attitude and being violent to students and teachers resulting in exclusion, detentions and isolation. Speaking over students and staff, ignoring others and showing a lack of basic respect. Being a sheep and following the crowd even when you don’t really agree. Not expressing your opinion because you are afraid of what others think.</p>
RESPECT	<p>Treat each other with kindness, be nice. Think before you speak. Remembering good manners; saying hi, excuse me, please and thank you, opening the door, offering a helping hand. Waiting for your turn and sharing. Starting a conversation, smile, give compliments. Being polite to peers and staff, being sociable. Listening to what others have to say. Follow instructions when told the first time. Random acts of kindness. Follow core principles. Don’t discriminate against people and think before you speak. Don’t talk over others. Showing tolerance. Clean, calm environment for all.</p>	<p>Everyone talking over others, not listening to each other and their opinions. Swearing at teachers and other students. Not treating classrooms or school property with respect. (Damaging property or writing on walls/desks) Littering. Vandalism Disruptive behaviour. Aggressive body language. Arguing, talking back and shouting during a lesson or around school. Getting negative SSAs and not respecting the classroom. Being rude and using rude language. Bullying and not treating people equally because of who they are. (sexual orientation, race, income) Disruptive noises.</p>

	<p>Having appropriate conversations. Remember your equipment and be ready to learn. Being in the right place at the right time. Good teacher/student relationships – no shouting. Respect needs to be earned by having good relationships – mutual respect. Trusting staff with important information or issues.</p>	<p>People not moving to the side in corridors, allowing others to pass.</p>
RESILIENCE	<p>Showing independence. Being willing to learn, trying hard. Being ready to learn, excited about learning and always trying your best. Owning up to mistakes and doing better next time. Trying something new. Don't give up – persevere, cope with difficulties. Can do atmosphere. Having a positive attitude and not stopping until you achieve your goal. Being determined to continue and succeed even if the task is hard. Changing mind set from 'I can't do that' to 'I can't do that yet.' Adapting to change. Giving something a try before giving up and saying it's too hard. Don't give up. High SSA's and students taking responsibility for their own learning, being focused and learning from their mistakes. Taking responsibility for learning. Being persistent, find another way to solve the problem.</p>	<p>Giving up and getting angry. Being angry, upset, frustrated and annoyed because something didn't go the way you expected. Sulking if you get something wrong and not wanting to join in and take part and making excuses. Putting head on desk and not engaging in the lesson and being lazy in lessons. Refusing to do work, showing a negative mind set. Not attending. Distracting others and walking out of the classroom. Not putting hand up to have a go. Not caring about new things or succeeding or achieving. Saying negative things like 'I give up.' Making a fuss when you can't do something. Giving up at the first hurdle. Feeling overwhelmed emotionally when you are struggling. Messing around in a lesson because it is too difficult.</p>

Corridor Behaviour around school

<p>DO</p> <p>Walk on the left at all times - Don't run. Move around school sensibly and quietly. Go straight to lessons. Arrive on time. Walk briskly to next lesson via the most direct route. Follow instructions first time. Be aware of younger students, allow them past first. Display good manners. Be friendly. Be kind and respectful. Leave lessons in correct uniform, without wearing coats. Put rubbish in the bin - Don't litter.</p>	<p>DON'T</p> <p>No pushing, shoving and barging into people when moving around school. No running in the corridors. No coats inside school. (Corridors, classrooms and diner) No phones in school. No Air Pods in. No wasting time in corridors between lessons. No students in corridors at break and lunch. No shouting or swearing in the corridors. No chewing. No walking around in large groups.</p>
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It is clear that this fundamental vision and aim must run through every aspect of our curriculum and we know there is more to do to ensure that all staff, students, parents and Governors are clear on this ambition, understand why we are teaching subjects in the way that we are and our ultimate aim of enabling students to be ready for their next steps in life beyond Blacon. This work has been led by Mr Scoltock with middle leaders who have developed curriculum statements outlining their subject visions, to enable a clear and consistent approach. Middle leaders have also reviewed the curriculum maps with an overview of the topics covered from Years 7 – 11 as we move to a 3 year Key Stage 3 for September 2022.

On the 4th January, our post Ofsted curriculum development work was launched with the aims, vision and values, with staff using the support of Mark Cotton, formerly Chief Officer of Teaching and Development at Holy Family Catholic Multi Academy Trust and now a freelance consultant. Further work continued with staff on the training day in February where staff had the opportunity to look at the sequencing of topics in subjects across the curriculum, making links between departments to support our ability to effectively make links across the curriculum and consider where key topics are best placed to be delivered.

Part 1 - Update on progress towards 2023 Strategic Plan

1. To raise levels of attainment, standards and progress to outstanding and to close gaps in performance between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students nationally.

Performance Indicators from Strategic Plan	Results 2019	CAGs 2020	CAGs 2021	Year 11 Targets	Year 11 data Dec 21	Year 11 data March 22
	69 students	88 students	113 students	118 students	118 students	
KPI – Progress 8 score 0.1	-0.67	-0.09	NA	NA	NA	-0.18*
KPI - English and Maths 9 - 4 - 60%	62%	69%	66%	81%	49%	48%
KPI - English and Maths 9 - 5 - 40%	23%	49%	43%	34%	25%	18%
KPI - English 9-4 - 70% and 9 -5 - 60%	72% / 48%	81% / 60%	80%/53%	90%/62%	90%/52%	89%/50%
KPI - Maths 9-4 - 70% and 9 -5 - 60%	67% / 28%	75% / 53%	71%/53%	81%/34%	51%/31%	50%/23%
KPI - Progress 8 for English	-0.73	-0.01	NA	NA	NA	0.03*
KPI - Progress 8 for Maths	-0.66	-0.23	NA	NA	NA	-0.57
KPI – Student Premium 0 Progress 8	-0.83	-0.18	NA	NA	NA	-0.30*
KPI Open Bucket Progress 8 score 0.2	-0.39	0.22	NA	NA	NA	0.25
High Ability Progress 8	-1.02 (26 students)	-0.16 (33 students)*	NA	NA	NA	-0.45* (28 stu)
Middle Ability Progress 8	-0.51 (38 students)	-0.11 (43 students)*	NA	NA	NA	-0.15* (78 stu)
Lower Ability Progress 8	0.06 (4 students)	0.29 (8 students)*	NA	NA	NA	0.30* (11 stu)

* no official DfE definition of Higher Ability, Middle Ability, Lower Ability for scaled scores
2020 & 2021 - converted to KS2 Fine levels

KPI - PP Progress 8 matching non disadvantaged nationally for English	-0.90	-0.06	NA	NA	NA	-0.02*
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English Student Premium						
KPI - PP Progress 8 matching non disadvantaged nationally for Maths Maths Student Premium	-0.79	-0.43	NA	NA	NA	-0.62

Profile of Year 11 for Current Cohort compared to last year

	Year 11 2021		Current Year 11 2021/22	
	No. of students	% of students	No. of students	% of students
Total	113		118	
Males	68	60%	64	54%
Females	45	40%	54	46%
Student Premium	56	50%	63	53%
English as an Additional Language	6	5%	1	1%
SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	26	23%	20	17%
Number of In Year Transfers to Year 11	17	15%	22	19%
Number affected by safeguarding currently	10	9%	10	9%
High Ability **	27	24%	7	6%
Middle Ability **	71	63%	69	58%
Lower Ability **	8	7%	41	35%
No prior data	7	6%	1	1%

* Number of In Year Transfers to Year 11* that arrived after normal year 7 admission in September 2015.

**no official DfE definition of High Ability, Middle Ability, Low Ability for scaled scores 2020 & 2021 - converted to Key Stage 2 Fine levels

** New DfE KS2 Scaled Scores definition published Nov 2021

The profile of Year 11 is important to understand the context. There is a higher proportion of student premium students this year, a rise from 50% to 53%, an increase in transfers into the year group from 15% to 19% and significantly, a change in the ability profile of the year with a lower proportion of high ability students (decrease of 27% to 7%) and much larger of lower ability. (Increase from 7% to 35%)

All of the latest research is showing that the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged has widened further post Covid and these students comprise over half of our cohort. Covid has impacted significantly on their learning, not just during the two lockdowns but also due to a high number of days lost due to students being sent home to isolate. Whilst some have embraced home learning, we know that many still face barriers to learning independently at home, even with the

technology to support remote learning, however, we remain committed to working to achieve the very best for our students.

Contextual Data –whole school

	2019/20		December 2020		March 2021		June 2021		December 2021		March 2022	
	No. of students	% of students	No. of students	% of students	No. of students	% of students	No. of students	% of students	No. of students	% of students	No. of students	% of students
Total no. of students	618		672		669		664		683		682	
FSM	258	42%	279	42%	286	43%	287	43%	308	45%	307	45%
Student Premium	321	52%	354	53%	360	54%	358	54%	375	55%	373	55%

Covid-19 has had an impact on the number of students' eligible free school meals and a rise in student premium students. The table shows the figures for the last two academic years, compared to the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms in 2020/21.

Student Premium = (Ever 6 FSM, LAC, Post LAC* and Service Children)

*Children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order.

For FSM, we are in the highest quintile (top 20%) of all schools for those on FSM and Ever 6 (students who have been eligible for FSM over the past 6 years). The 2021 IDSR references Blacon at 49% compared to the national average of 27% so we are now more than double the national average.

Update on Exams for 2022

The government have announced that GCSE exams in 2022 are likely to go ahead next summer with adjustments made to individual subjects to counter the impact of the pandemic.

- In English Literature and History there will be a “choice of topics beyond a common core on which students would answer questions in the exams.”
- In Geography, there will be a “choice of content beyond a common core on which students would answer questions in the exams”.
- In all other subjects, students will be given advance information of some of the topics that will come up on the summer exams.
- In Maths, Physics and Combined Science students will be allowed a formulae sheet in the exam.
- In Art students will be assessed entirely on your coursework, not by an exam.
- When grading exams in 2022, Ofqual will aim for a grading standard that reflects a midway point between 2021 and 2019.

SEND Overview

We currently have 185 students with SEND which is 27% of the school population, almost double the national average at 15.9%. As a school, we are in the highest quintile (top 20%) of all schools for the number of SEND students. IDSR 2021 reports 20.6% of students with SEND support compared to the national average of 11.5% and for students with an EHCP, Blacon is at 3.3% compared to the national average of 2%. We also have the highest number of students with an EHCP and with top up funding across all of the schools in Cheshire West and Chester. Overview of SEND numbers and applications for funding as follows;

Year Group	<i>Social & Emotional</i>	<i>Cognition & learning</i>	<i>Physical &/or sensory</i>	SLCN	Top Up Funding	EHCP	Funding application submitted
Year 7	21	18	4	6	5	8	1 has just been finalised
Year 8	15	19	3	6	5	7	1 has just been finalised 1 EHCP being written
Year 9	16	15	1	4	4	10	2 awaiting Final EHCP panel outcome
Year 10	15	13	2	7	2	4	SEN team missed 1 so

							their funding is continuing
Year 11	7	12	0	1	1	3	2 TU applications being written
Totals	74	77	10	24	17	32	

We continue to promote SEND across the school and a weekly briefing dedicated to SEND is being held each Wednesday morning, to provide a regular flow of information to staff, to support this key group in school.

Literacy

National Tutoring Programme (NTP)

Following a successful outcome from using Action Tutoring during the Spring and Summer Terms in 2021 with Years 10 and 11, we decided to move forwards with them for both this year for students in Year 11 and Year 7.

Action Tutoring is a charity that supports disadvantaged young people to achieve academically, with a view to enabling them to progress in education, employment or training. They do this by partnering high-quality volunteer tutors with students to increase their subject knowledge, confidence and study skills. This company was founded in 2011 and has grown considerably since.

Year 11 have had the following students (names removed) on the first 15-week programme and the impact has been as follows:

English Language Prediction/Mock GCSE grade issued (1-9)	Target	Maths Prediction/Mock final GCSE grade issued (1-9)	Target
4	0		
4	0		
4	-2	Attended 2 sessions	
5	-1		
5	1+		
4	-1		
4	0		
4	0		
4	0		
4	-1		
		4	-1
		4	0
		3	-2
		5	-1
		2	0
		3	-2
		3	-1
		2	-2
		4	0
		4	0

Overview		
	Met Target	Above Target
English	TBC	TBC
Maths	TBC	TBC

Where students are not on target, attendance to sessions has been poor or they have just been added to the programme due to their mock exams not being where they needed to be. There are still several weeks left for these students to move towards their target grade.

So far, we have been allocated the following amount of funding:
September 2020 – March 2021: **£53,679**

Following some interruptions to the programmes due to staffing shortages linked to covid, we will look to investigate other organisations that are being recommended in our area. However, Action Tutoring have offered to a discount for the interruptions and also, a more convenient time slot for our Year 11 students, so that attendance can be as high as possible (during school hours).

Following the positive impact from the previous academic year and the excellent relationship that the tutors have formed with our Year 7 students, we are likely to continue with them and evaluate the impact following GCSE exams and end of year assessments monitoring reading ages.

Reading Ages

Following a successful start to our Guided Reading, please see feedback from staff and students, following the first term of this whole school strategy:

Guided Reading – Overview

Year 7		
Coraline – novella by Neil Gaiman (2002)		
Key themes/messages/Cultural Capital for students – home, appreciating what you have and courage; stereotypes and dealing with anxieties		
Group	Tutor	Progress/Feedback
7Charcoal	GAM/STA	<i>Great engagement, great discussion – will be finished by Christmas – issue with confidence reading aloud</i>
7Grey	MCZ	<i>Should be done by Christmas and really enjoying it and looking forward to the film of the book EOT</i>
7Navy	ILK	<i>Like it but only halfway through.</i>
7Purple	DIA	
7Royal	JOK	<i>About a quarter of Coraline left to complete; text has been successful, students have been engaged and have been excellent at reading out. They are very slow at reading so slow progress.</i>
7Turquoise	RIA	<i>We are only about a third of the way through so we still have plenty of time left. Awkward about reading initially so it was a bit slow to start off with. But since we have come back after half term they have started enjoying it more and more people are eagerly volunteering. They are also enjoying the storyline which is fab.</i>
7Sanctuary	FIJ	<i>¾ way through text; group also being supported with 1:1 reading intervention; not enjoying the text as much as Oliver Twist</i>

Year 8		
Goldfish Boy – novella by Lisa Thompson (2017)		
Key themes/messages/Cultural Capital for students – well-being, anxieties, particularly OCD-related anxieties		
Group	Tutor	Progress/Feedback
8Charcoal	ANF	<i>Really enjoying it but a little chatty, so only halfway through it</i>
8Grey	GRM/THC	<i>Halfway through, so predicting that will be finished by March – it's been OK but students found it a bit boring</i>
8Navy	HAD/MCE	<i>Up to P168 and are enjoying it – won't be finished by Christmas</i>
8Purple	GHA	<i>Might need a few weeks after Christmas but will then be finished – has been enjoyable</i>
8Royal	SAJ	<i>Will be finished by Christmas – really enjoyed it</i>
8Turquoise	EVP	<i>Will not be finished for a while as many LA students – really enjoyable though and engaged with text</i>

Year 9		
Refugee Boy – novel by Benjamin Zephaniah (2001)		
Key themes/messages/Cultural Capital for students – community culture-wealth and migrant students negotiating life in UK		
Group	Tutor	Progress/Feedback
9Charcoal	OWE/THC	<i>Absolutely loving the book – not close to finishing it yet</i>
9Grey	ALH/LLH	<i>Behaviour has impacted on pace but improving and only on Chapter 5 – will take time due to attitude towards reading</i>
9Navy	ROK/STA	<i>Nowhere near finished – only on P57</i>

9Purple	HAS	<i>Will be finished by Christmas</i>
9Royal	PRR/THC	<i>On page 100 which is about 1/3 of the way in. Should be finished the book by Easter. The text has been successful - the students are enjoying it.</i>
9Orion	STL	<i>Started off well but reduced timetables and other requirements have impacted on the continuation of guided reading but will be starting it back up in some form, after Christmas</i>

Year 10		
In the Sea There Are Crocodiles – novel by Fabio Geda (2010)		
Key themes/messages/Cultural Capital for students – Afghanistan culture, childhood innocence, freedom, friendship		
Group	Tutor	Progress/Feedback
10Grey	WIR	<i>Not great engagement – battle in the morning so can take a while to get going</i>
10Purple	MCS	<i>Just over halfway and finding the story to follow, however watched Newsround to support and great discussions from this have taken place</i>
10Royal	GIL/COJ	<i>Should take them until the end of Spring Term to finish - TBC</i>

Year 11		
Noughts and Crosses – novel by Malorie Blackman (2001)		
Key themes/messages/Cultural Capital for students – racism, sexual relationships		
Group	Tutor	Progress/Feedback
11Grey	PEJ/COR	<i>Only up to P80 but students are enjoying the text</i>
11Purple	DEA	<i>Might take us until the end of the school year as a very long novel – some students think it is brilliant but most are finding it challenging to read</i>
11Royal	SUT/SLJ	<i>Nowhere near finished; difficult to keep the students engaged with it and they seem to have lost interest with a lot of them coming to form late. Reluctant readers - only the same two students are willing to read. Attempted silent reading on their own which is working better then recapping chapters all together but know this isn't what it is meant for so do keep attempting to get more reading aloud but it does come with difficulty.</i>
11Turquoise	PRF	<i>Will not be finished by Christmas and will not need a new book until Spring 2</i>

Following the completion of the book, Karen Appleby collated several resources to support the wider curriculum aspect of each text to consolidate students' understanding and knowledge gained of the text.

Some classes are taking their time and using these resources as part of the guided reading strategy and as a result, will use most of the year to complete. Following the publication of our Ofsted report, I was contacted by the Head at Hartford High School who was interested in our reading strategy and also suggested exchanging texts to help save on costs of a second text for each year group. Karen Appleby will contact to discuss the best way to coordinate this ahead of the Summer Term.

Karen met with Highfield Primary School to share ideas re: reading approaches and a summer project is planned to support transition.

Reading age data catch two will be completed during the end of the Spring Term for parents' reports. Once this data is collected and organised, Karen Appleby will share with SLT and Governors ahead of the next meeting to evidence progress and next steps. Karen attended a course last month: Close the Reading Gap, led by Alex Quigley, a key and 'critical friend' to the Blackpool Literacy Project. His strategies and methods to support reading are proven to be positively impactful, particularly for students from a disadvantaged background. These details will be shared with staff to promote the teaching of reading skills across all subject areas.

Karen Appleby, Vicki Davies-Rose (SENDCo) and Karen Brookes (Teaching Assistant) have been meeting and discussing the various reading strategies in place across school. Vicki and Karen are mostly supporting students in The Sanctuary and are running a successful targeted intervention group with our team of Teaching Assistants. Reading age data has been shared with the team so they can identify those who are in the lowest 20% of each year group and we are aiming to close this gap by the end of the year.

In addition to this, Julie Williams, the Teaching Assistant in the English Department, is running a guided reading group and is in communication with The Sanctuary, so as many as students as possible are receiving these key interventions.

Progress so far: students are becoming more confident in reading aloud. As difficult as this is to measure, the impact in lessons is measurable by how they are accessing new material and class teachers have reported this with some of these students. Reading age data will hopefully support the impact of increased confidence and more time reading outside of the classroom.

Please see below the key information re: Reading across the Curriculum that was shared recently with our Local Authority School Improvement Partner, Fiona Burke-Jackson:

Reading Interventions

1.	Guided Reading in Tutor Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three times per week • Each year group has a different text that covers a range of Cultural Capital • Following the reading of the book, there is a bank of resources for each text to explore text further and to enhance Cultural Capital through non-fiction texts and various activities
2.	Guided Reading in Small Groups – Julie Williams in English
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group for Autumn/Spring – Yr7 (Closing the reading and vocabulary gap) • Those identified have RAs below 8 years old (bottom 20%) • Intervention include guided reading approach to complement tutor GR • ‘Two Weeks with the Queen’ initially but this has evolved into plays now (range of literature) • Impact – mostly confidence in reading is evident (Kyle Burgess and Adam Toff) • Students are reading out loud to develop fluency • Plays from ELS – they really enjoy and makes them focus as having to look for their part • Not only does it feel like there is an improvement in performance in reading but also that there is a genuine enjoyment of reading: developing RA and reading for pleasure (Aims) • Julie delivers this intervention 4 sessions a week • The first group has five students and will stay as an intervention group until Easter – NGRT to do to confirm progress and change group •
3.	IDL (Indirect Dyslexia Learning) Programme and NGRT (New Group Reading Test) to assess Reading Ages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDL is a programme run in The Sanctuary – IDL is an award-winning programme and is endorsed by the British Dyslexia Association • IDL is delivered each morning before lessons and after school • IDL does report a reading age but it is not in line with the NGRT due to the differences in what is being assessed (IDL focuses on spelling and NGRT focuses on higher-level vocabulary and comprehension) • Yr7 and Yr8 are on IDL and can find it tedious but evidence is clear of progress and forms good habits across literacy levels • TAs in Sanctuary are liaising with Julie Williams to ensure a range of students are receiving interventions • The Sanctuary is using the NGRT RA data to identify those in the bottom 20% of school re: RAs • Aim is to become a ‘Dyslexic-Friendly School’ • Vicki has carefully selected engaging dyslexic-friendly books that are suitable for all levels and ages – she will build on this library • Request for SEND readers to be identified clearly in classes to check individual needs re: reading (CAA is aware and ideas will be generated to share with All Staff)

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sanctuary is leading bespoke reading intervention with TA's concentrating on comprehension, reading strategies and self-esteem. They do 10 mins of IDL and 10mins of reading intervention |
|--|---|

Karen Appleby made contact with **Blacon Library** last term who are supporting the mission to enrol each Blacon High Student as a member of the library within the next six months. Karen's aim is by Christmas, library visits and wider reading/reading for pleasure will be embedded in the curriculum. This will hopefully encourage parents to become more engaged with the importance of reading and the impact it can have on well-being and success in high school and beyond.

Finally, to tie in with the curriculum groups, Karen will share key information on the following evidence-based research to support the delivery of reading across whole school:

1. Read All About It: Why reading is key to GCSE success – GL Assessment
2. Closing the Reading Gap – Alex Quigley
3. Closing the Vocabulary Gap – Alex Quigley
4. Reading Reconsidered – *rigorous literacy teaching & guided reading as strategies* – Doug Lemov
5. An EEF guidance report from 2018: Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning
6. Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools EEF Guidance Report 2018
7. Disciplinary Literacy Strategies – ESSA Academy

***'We read to know we are not alone.'* C. S. Lewis**

Staffing

A new Family Support Worker, Charlotte Johnson has started this term along with a new Teaching Assistant, Sara Sidwell. Both members of staff have been great additions to the Inclusion and Safeguarding Team and bring a wealth of experience and passion for making a difference to the young people in Blacon. Shelley Mackintosh, one of our Family Support workers, has completed her Level 3 Safeguarding certificate.

Young People's Service

In KS4 we have welcomed our new Young People's Service officer, Lindsey Charnock. Lindsey has already continued 1:1 interviews with Year 11 students who have additional needs or who may be at risk of NEET in the future. Lindsey has started working with students to create their own CVs, think about appropriate career options according to the students' interests, and discuss relevant pathways to achieving their goals, such as college, apprenticeship, or other routes such as the NHS employment programmes. This is to support these students with the transition to their next phase of education.

Young Leaders course at Storyhouse

Three vulnerable students from The Sanctuary have continued on the Young Leaders course at Storyhouse in Chester, attending once a week every Wednesday from 1-4pm. The nine-month programme is a chance for young people to discover their passion and explore the workings of the different departments at Storyhouse including marketing, producing events, customer service, backstage, fundraising and running activities. Young Leaders will receive mentoring, training and be given practical opportunities to help them develop, create and grow both professionally and personally. The programme is designed for young people who would benefit from a longer-term intervention. It is a small team of young people who will work on numerous projects in Storyhouse alongside many different departments. They have learnt about creative careers and job roles, whilst discovering their passions and sharing their skills. Storyhouse aims to build confidence, raise aspirations, increase teamwork skills and develop transferable job skills. During the course of the programme young people will also work towards gaining a Trinity College London Arts Award qualification.

Alternative pathways

We continue to explore alternative education providers who we could potentially work with, in order to support some of our students with the most complex needs. We are visiting a variety of providers who offer diverse learning experiences, such as construction trade skills, and bicycle repairs and maintenance. It is hoped that we can enhance the learning experiences, attendance and levels of engagement of individual students who may be at risk of exclusion in the future, by providing part time offsite vocational training on a bespoke basis. This is an area of school where further funding will be required to meet the needs of our students.

ELSA training

Two of our support staff, Kyle Hill-Chambers and Jenny Beyer have been completing the ELSA training course provided by CWAC. It is a preventative intervention which aims to build the capacity of schools to support students' emotional/social needs from within their own resources. ELSAs are Teaching Assistants or Learning Mentors working within schools who attend five days of specific training from Educational Psychologists (EPs). The five days of training cover topics including raising emotional awareness, Self-esteem, Active Listening and Communication skills, Anger Management, Working with Puppets, Social Skills, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Social Stories, Friendship Skills and Writing Therapeutic Stories. Following initial training, ELSAs are responsible for planning and delivering interventions within their school, which may involve individual or small group intervention. ELSA training is based on psychological principles, meaning that it is relevant to students from Reception-Year 13, within both mainstream and specialist provisions. Following initial training, ELSAs are offered half-termly group Supervision with CEPs. Supervision aims to offer ELSAs casework support, discussion of areas not covered in the five days of initial training, information about useful resources, access to peer support and opportunities for shared problem solving.

Sanctuary/Orion

Sanctuary

Sanctuary has seen 1 student fully transition out to mainstream lessons and 3 are going to more lessons than last term. Plans are being put in place to start transitioning 3 others back into mainstream. 1 student who has been long term in the sanctuary for mobility and medical issues is now accessing the Sanctuary teaching.

There have been 2 EHCP's finalised just before Christmas and 2 students have just had EHCP assessments carried out and we are awaiting the outcome of panel. We are prioritising Orion 8 students.

Orion

Orion 7, 8 and 9 are now running for students who are vulnerable and are struggling with their behaviour in mainstream. This is a fluid class and 2 additional students have joined these groups, one from Year 7 and one from Year 9 have successfully transitioned into Orion. Another student in Year 9 has entered the Y9 Orion but this is currently still work in progress.

Mental Health - Platform 4 Life

We have now had referrals accepted and actioned as part of the new Education Mental Health Practitioner team intervention by Cheshire and Wirral NHS partnership. It was hoped that this would help to tackle the rising demand we have in school for mental health support, and to take some of the students who require more early intervention support away from the waiting list for Platform for Life or CAMHS. Following this intervention, it was then hoped that if they still required further support, the next step would be to offer counselling.

Unfortunately, this has not proved to be what we hoped would be some tangible early intervention support for a proportion of our students. It seems that the support being offered by the NHS is not currently meeting the needs for the majority of identified students, and they are again on the waiting list for counselling from Platform for Life. This is meaning that the demand for Platform for Life is still considerable, and continues to be the main resource we have in addressing mental health difficulties amongst students.

This term, we have been offered some additional funding through Platform for Life to support some group therapy work for 5 weeks around emotional support and wellbeing. We have identified and allocated a group of 8 students to each group- one key stage 3, and one key stage 4 for this early intervention support. This has been running for two weeks, and the feedback seems positive at this early stage, and has allowed us to target support to a wide range of students at one time. This can then open up the possibility of students feeling ready to access the 1:1 counselling service if they still feel that this is required.

Platform for life currently run 15 sessions per week in school, 6 of which are funded by school, and 9 of which are funded by external funding. The demand for Platform for Life counselling sessions continues to grow, and students are finding this a very useful source of support. The flexibility of the service is also needed as they will work with families, will work outside of school times, and will see clients in a variety of locations to support individual needs. This has proved particularly needed for students who are struggling to access school due to mental health difficulties, as they can be spoken to over the phone, or can go to an independent location. Chris Matheson MP visited Blacon High School in February to understand more about the work being supported on mental health.



Safeguarding Updates

TAFs - Team around the Family						
Year Group	Dec 2020	March 2021	June 2021	Oct/ 2021	Nov 2021	March 2022
Year 7	2	2	3	1	1	5
Year 8	7	3	5	2	1	4
Year 9	7	4	3	7	7	9
Year 10	3	6	4	3	2	3
Year 11	5	0	1	4	3	3
Total	24	15	16	17	14	23

CIN Child In Need						
Year Group	Dec 2020	March 2021	June 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	March 2022
Year 7	3	4	3	1	1	2
Year 8	3	6	4	3	4	1
Year 9	2	3	2	5	3	2
Year 10	1	1	0	2	2	2
Year 11	1	2	3	1	4	2
Total	10	16	12	12	14	9

CP – Child Protection						
Year Group	Dec 2020	March 2021	June 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	March 2022
Year 7	1	1	2	1	1	5
Year 8	2	2	2	2	1	1
Year 9	0	0	0	2	2	3
Year 10	0	1	2	0	0	1
Year 11	3	2	2	2	2	5
Total	6	6	8	7	6	15

CIC/LAC Children in Care / Looked after Children						
Year Group	Dec 2020	March 2021	June 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	March 2022
Year 7	2	2	3	5	6	5
Year 8	4	5	5	3	4	4
Year 9	5	5	5	5	5	5
Year 10	1	1	1	5	5	5
Year 11	1	3	3	1	1	1
Total	13	16	17	19	21	20

10% of the school population are linked to safeguarding, which shows a rise just since October but is still consistent with the school's general pattern of need. These are students who have experienced significant trauma and for whom the challenge to thrive at school is more difficult.

There has also been a sharp increase in TAFs and our new Family Support worker will support the team during the maternity leave of one of our Family Support Workers but it is our intention for this to become a permanent post needed to support the significant growth in demand for this key team in school.

Cheshire Young Carers continue to use our bistro as a Hub to work with local Young Carers. They have invited students as they already have links with families and the sessions take place every fortnight. Cheshire Young carers will lead assemblies to further raise the profile of them and to identify new Young Carers.

The safeguarding parent newsletter continues to be shared with parents to support parental engagement and collaborative working to keep students safe.

Progress Evenings

As a result of COVID restrictions progress evenings continued to be carried out remotely this year, using a School cloud system to interact with parents, carers and students via a video call. The system was efficient allowing parents to book online and carry out appointments by simply signing in to the site on a phone, tablet or PC. Feedback on the system from both staff and parents has been very positive with good engagement figures across most year groups, although the attendance figures have dropped this academic year, and so this will be reviewed again for next year.

Progress meetings 2020-21

Year group	Yr7x	Yr7yz	Yr7	Yr8x	Yr8yz	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11
Date	12/05/21	13/05/21	All	27/04/21	28/04/21	All	23/03/21	03/03/21	11/02/21
Cohort	74	76	147	77	70	147	139	120	104
No. parents making appointments	61	54	115	57	40	97	93	80	55
No. parents asking for alternative feedback	5	2	7	7	11	18	26	16	7

% engagement with progress evening	89%	77%	78%	83%	73%	66%	86%	80%	60%
No. appointments made	581	456	1037	459	317	776	582	380	332
No. of appointments completed	525	346	871	424	243	667	492	345	319
No. of appointments missed	56	110	166	35	74	109	90	35	13
No. families linked to missed appointments	10	16	26	6	9	15	11	7	5
% appointments completed	90%	76%	84%	92%	77%	86%	85%	91%	93%

Progress meetings 2021-22

Year group	Yr7x	Yr7y	Yr7	Yr8x	Yr8yz	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11
Date	09/02/22	10/02/22	All					10/03/22	03/02/22
Cohort	82	59	141					129	120
No. parents making appointments	34	23	57					67	71
No. parents asking for alternative feedback	2	2	4					12	4
% engagement with progress evening	44%	42%	43%					61%	59%
No. appointments made	288	225	513					394	494
No. of appointments completed	234	168	402					333	401
No. of appointments missed	54	57	111					61	93
No. families linked to missed appointments	5	5	10					10	9
% appointments completed	81%	75%	78%					85%	81%

2. To develop an inclusive, broad and balanced curriculum that will underpin progress and ensure all students achieve their maximum potential.

KPI Performance Indicator from Strategic Plan	Current Performance up to December 2021
KPI Open Bucket Progress 8 score 0.2	Not available
KPI Attendance up to national average - 95%	88.5% overall 83.4% Student Premium
KPI 80% sport participation, 100% Learning outside the classroom	(Impacted by Covid Lockdown)

Attendance

Year Group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 12.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	147	89.0	89.9
Year 8	149	81.3	88.4
Year 9	139	86.2	84.9
Year 10	130	84.1	85.8
Year 11	118	81.8	84.2
Total	683	84.6	86.7

Girls

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 12.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	76	87.9	89.5
Year 8	59	81.7	88.4
Year 9	69	87.9	84.3
Year 10	48	85.7	87.2
Year 11	54	84.2	83.6
Total	306	85.2	86.7

Boys

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 12.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	72	89.8	90.3
Year 8	90	80.9	88.3
Year 9	74	85.1	85.5
Year 10	83	82.7	84.9
Year 11	64	80.1	84.6
Total	383	84.0	86.8

Student premium students by year group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 12.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	92 (80)	82.7	88.5
Year 8	78 (93)	76.5	83.1
Year 9	84 (70)	81.8	81.2
Year 10	66 (67)	78.8	83.8
Year 11	63 (56)	75.0	79.0
Total PP	383 (366)	79.1	83.4
Total Non PP	310 (313)	91.4	90.8

Persistent absence – 01.09.20 – 12.03.21

	% of students	No. of students	No. of PP students	% of pp students	No. of students SEN	% of SEN students	No. of CLA students	% of CLA students	No. of students in cohort
Year 7	30.46	46	38	82.61	21	45.65	3	6.52	151
Year 8	43.14	66	52	78.79	27	40.91	4	6.06	153
Year 9	33.10	47	32	68.09	19	40.43	3	6.38	142
Year 10	40.00	48	37	77.08	10	20.83	1	2.08	120
Year 11	40.71	46	29	63.04	14	30.43	2	4.35	113
Total	37.26	253	188	74.31	91	35.97	13	5.14	679

Persistent absence – 01.09.21 – 11.03.22

	% of students	No. of students	No. of PP students	% of pp students	No. of students SEN	% of SEN students	No. of CLA students	% of CLA students	No. of students in cohort
Year 7	32.67	49	38	77.55	23	46.94	0	0.00	150
Year 8	35.57	53	40	75.47	18	33.96	1	1.89	149
Year 9	44.14	64	48	75.00	24	37.50	2	3.13	145
Year 10	45.8	60	36	60.00	21	35.00	1	1.67	131
Year 11	49.15	58	42	72.41	12	20.69	0	0.00	118
Total	40.98	284	204	71.83	98	34.51	4	1.41	693

SEN students by year group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 12.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	40 (36)	89.7	89.3
Year 8	36 (33)	76.3	85.2
Year 9	28 (35)	82.7	75.9
Year 10	33 (16)	77.4	76.7
Year 11	17 (20)	82.1	72.7
Total	154 (141)	81.7	81.3

EHCP students by year group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 12.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	8 (5)	49.4	82.6
Year 8	7 (5)	46.2	68.8
Year 9	10 (4)	65.7	66.9
Year 10	4 (3)	77.8	72.7
Year 11	3 (6)	72.3	97.0
Total	32 (23)	61.7	74.9

CLA students by year group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 11.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	4 (3)	52.3	96.3
Year 8	4 (4)	68.7	88.3
Year 9	4 (5)	76.3	91.6
Year 10	5 (1)	94.4	91.4
Year 11	1 (3)	75.3	95.5
Total	18 (16)	68.6	93.2

FSM students by year group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 11.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	75 (59)	79.8	87.8
Year 8	63 (78)	76.1	81.4
Year 9	76 (55)	80.4	80.2
Year 10	56 (48)	75.8	82.5
Year 11	50 (50)	73.4	76.2
Total FSM	320 (290)	77.1	82.0
Total for Non FSM	375 (389)	90.4	90.7

EAL students by year group

	Numbers on roll	01.09.20 – 11.03.21	01.09.21 – 11.03.22
Year 7	7 (15)	97.2	91.4
Year 8	13 (10)	89.9	94.6
Year 9	10 (10)	91.1	95.9
Year 10	9 (2)	93.8	88.2
Year 11	1 (6)	96.2	95.6
Total	40 (43)	93.5	92.9

Students coded I & M (illness and medical appointments)

	01.09.20 – 12.03.21		01.09.21 – 11.03.22	
	Number of students	Number of session	Number of students	Number of session
Year 7	89	621	136	2166
Year 8	108	1234	134	2207
Year 9	94	831	133	2353
Year 10	86	646	121	2556
Year 11	73	886	111	1948
Total	450	4218	635	11230

There has been an increase in absences related to illness and medical appointments over the last two years. The main reason for this is due to the caution being taken regarding the spread of illnesses across school. We have been advised that with any illnesses, we needed to wait until a student's temperature had been in the normal range for 48 hours. We are also cautious about having general colds spreading around school and the impact this would have on students needing to be tested and isolating for their results so students are advised to remain at home until they are symptom free. In terms of colds and mild illnesses, this is not our usual stance, we usually advise that a general cold or mild illness does not warrant any time of school. We have also seen an increase in the number of students getting general colds and illnesses since the national removal of masks in schools and the wider opening of society. Despite these extra precautions, our attendance figures are higher when compared to last year. This could simply be because we have had more schools days this year (no closures / students being sent home to isolate). Having more school days available, means that each day has a lower weighing on the overall attendance figures, so each absent has a lesser impact on the school's overall attendance.

Students coded X (isolating due to covid symptoms)

	01.09.20 – 11.03.21		01.09.21 – 11.03.22	
	Number of students	Number of session	Number of students	Number of session
Year 7	150	11703	146	1779
Year 8	151	9716	148	1908
Year 9	139	10455	141	1777
Year 10	12	9420	50	387
Year 11	112	8290	58	423
Total	672	49584	543	6274

Due to changes in guidance there has been a significant difference in the number of students having to isolate. If we were to assume that the X codes this year were presents and they didn't have to isolate, our cumulative attendance would be 87.3%. This means that X codes are currently affecting our attendance by -0.2%. However, this time last year, isolation and school closure was impacting the overall attendance by 5.1%. This means that this year we are able to more accurately measure the impact of attendance interventions and this will become more accurate as rules relax further.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

	01.09.20 – 11.03.21		01.09.21 – 11.03.22	
	Number of sessions	Percentage	Number of sessions	Percentage
Authorised absence	12955	13.1	13453	9.2
Unauthorised absence	2273	2.3	5838	4.0

The percentage of authorised absences has unsurprisingly risen again this year. Attendance at school is back to being compulsory and this explains the rise in unauthorised absences. Since January, 1029 letters have been issued regarding low attendance in school. 506 have been sent to arrange attendance meetings in school.

Understanding unauthorised absence

In cases where a student's attendance is a concern and no improvement has been seen despite meetings and personalised interventions, the school can decide to prosecute a parent. In order for the school to be able to prosecute a parent, their absences need to be unauthorised if no medical evidence is provided. So, although it may seem like an alarming percentage of unauthorised absences, this is necessary in order for us to prosecute families where they are providing no acceptable reason for a student's absence. Our percentage of unauthorised absence also highlights to external bodies (eg. DfE and Ofsted) that we are sending the correct message to families and not allowing students to have unnecessary absences. Our percentage of unauthorised absence is also proportionate to the overall low attendance of the school. If we were to simply authorise these absences, it would result in the same overall attendance figure, but show that we are not taking the appropriate steps to improve attendance and issue fixed penalty notices where no improvement is seen.

What we aim to see is the percentage of unauthorised absences to reduce and the overall attendance percentage of the school to increase. That is when we can categorically state that we are outstanding and successful in our approach to tackling the school's low attendance. In order for us to get to that position, we need to make a sacrifice in our unauthorised absences for about 1 year (or more given the situation of covid-19) so that the message to parents can be clear – poor attendance is unacceptable where there is no valid reason. This will mean an increase in prosecutions and the subsequent increase in unauthorised absences until there is a cultural change across the community and families support our aims of improving attendance.

Orion groups

Outdoor Education

The plan for this year, now that covid restrictions have been lifted, is that students will be able to take part in their outdoor expeditions as they did prior to the pandemic.

Year 7 students have the opportunity to go on an activity camping expedition, with woodland adventure activities on day one and a history focused visit to Beeston Castle and the Cheshire Ice Cream Farm on day 2. The activities are aimed at team building, communication skills, strengthening independence and resilience in unfamiliar contexts.

Year 8 have the opportunity to participate in a Canoe/Kayak expedition. On the first day, the students navigate to a location, set up camp, cook their food and then take part in team building activities. On the second day the students, alternate between canoes and kayaks on a trip along the Cheshire Canal.

The Year 9 curriculum plan continues to ensure that all students continue to study key aspects of the statutory KS3 curriculum but are also able to opt for their KS4 courses. For example, students continue to study core Computer Science and Religious Studies and have a Cultural Studies lesson, through which they learn about aspects of language and culture from around the world.

Year 10 will have an Expedition to Anglesey for two nights, coasteering, paddle boarding and kayaking, further developing aspects of their character, linked to team building, communication, resilience, confidence and a sense of place in the world.

For the academic year 2021/22, all Year 9 students have continued to study both Geography and History in one of the option blocks for two hours each fortnight. In the summer term of Year 9, students will then have a second options process when they will opt for their chosen humanity subject. If, after studying and enjoying Geography and History during year 9, they wish to continue to study both subjects they will have to choose which of their other option subjects to replace with either Geography or History.

From September 2022, we will move to a 3 year KS3 and 2 year KS4, which means that current Year 8 will continue with their KS3 curriculum into Year 9 and will choose options in the spring of Year 9. This will ensure they have access to a broad and balanced curriculum for the full 3 years of KS3, will allow for staff to focus on catch up and the recovery curriculum, alongside a huge focus on learning outside the classroom, to provide meaningful and memorable learning experiences, directly linked to the curriculum in order to build the foundations of key knowledge needed for future success and to make up for the opportunities missed during the pandemic, as well as contributing significantly to their cultural capital.

Key aim – To Develop key, personal qualities: aspiration, motivation, confidence, independence, resilience (surveys, personal development).

LoTC/ Culture Capital / Personal Development Spring Term 21/22

Year 7

Orion group attend Outdoor Ed sessions weekly

Diversity Workshop planned for the 30th March THR

Year 8

Orion group attend Outdoor Ed sessions weekly
Holocaust Event at Chester Cathedral OWE
Diversity Workshop planned for the 30th March THR

Year 9

Orion group attend Outdoor Ed sessions weekly
Diversity Workshop planned for the 30th March THR

Year 10

Gecko Theatre Company workshop SAJ
Shakespeare for Schools' Festival at the Floral Pavilion SAJ
Blood Brothers at The Palace Theatre MCZ
Diversity Workshop planned for the 30th March THR
CSASS Workshop 'The Prevention Project' SAJ/THR

Year 11

Diversity Workshop planned for the 30th March THR
CSASS Workshop 'The Prevention Project' SAJ/THR
King's School diversity project STO

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Starting this year, Duke of Edinburgh has been relaunched with existing groups and work has begun on their Volunteering, Physical Activities and their skill section of the award. Students have been able to fit in volunteering around lockdown restrictions and have managed to get experience in, Charity shops, Officiating sports, assisting with the running of clubs both, within school, and outside of school as well as helping with internal events. The Year 11 students however were lucky enough to be able to take part in the expedition section of their award. This was slightly different than normal as they were not able to do the camping section of the expedition however, they experienced all other aspects such as, cooking outside, navigation and a planned walk, teamwork with raft building, shelter building and bush craft as well as canoeing. This was a brilliant experience and all students were a credit to themselves and the school, throwing themselves into all tasks.

Plans are in place to run the year 10 expedition at the start of June allowing the students to hopefully complete their Bronze award before the end of the school year. We hope that this will be a full expedition however with the success of the year 11 expedition this is a good alternative.

As with the Duke of Edinburgh award the outdoor trips are also planned for early June again with the option to camp but alternatives have been discussed to give them the best opportunity to get the full experiences that previous years have had.

LORIC

The Blacon Character Award



Students in KS3 and KS4 continue to engage with the Blacon Character Award, completing statements every 2 weeks in tutor time using resources on Google Classroom. Spring Term 1 focus was Resilience and year group assemblies were delivered by Mr Cairns. Mrs Salisbury tied in resilience cards, flip your thinking to KS3 with resilience being a key feature of our school values. Spring Term 2 focus in departments is Independence and Mr Cairns will be delivering assemblies before Easter.

The Blacon Character Awards will be awarded to KS3 and KS4 students in the summer term in assemblies to feedback on engagement and achievement.

3. To develop and sustain the BEV partnership by exploring every opportunity for collaboration and the sharing of good practice.

The table below shows the breakdown of applications from the 5 BEV schools. Further analysis will be undertaken in March when we know the places offered.

Primary School	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
The Arches Community Primary School	37	40	28	30	22
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School	13	13	21	17	19
Dee Point Primary School	56	55	47	49	41
Highfield Community Primary School	17	13	23	15	20
J H Godwin Primary School	19	20	21	14	23
Other	8	7	5	17	17
Total	150	148	149	142	142

4. To ensure the school remains financially viable, meets demand and achieves, or exceeds, progression for students in line with National Average.

Finance

We are currently anticipating a deficit of £236,743 at the end of the financial year, the three-year plan approved by the LA forecast a deficit of £219,700. The main pressure points experienced by school in the spring term that have been the cost of food, our expenditure has almost doubled compared to this time last year, supply due to both long-term sickness and recruitment issues, and the increased costs of supplies and materials. The cost of paper has increased 6 times during this term. In terms of income, we have received a greater amount of growth funding than initially anticipated, along with government covid grants, which have been crucial to remaining on target with our approved three year plan.

For the financial year 2022-23 we currently on anticipating to end the year with a small surplus, however this has meant a reduction in the number of support staff we have been able to appoint. Schools contribution for the new build has been confirmed and is £80,000. This is less than anticipated so this too has contributed to the ability to set a surplus budget, meaning that the school will no longer be under an LA notice of concern.

School lettings

In addition to the information below, we have also held two dance shows this term, both in the school hall on a Saturday.

5pm - 9pm	Monday	Chester FC Flexi 11 Blacon Boxing Phoenix Basketball
5pm - 9:30pm	Tuesday	Saughall FC Flint FC Cheshire Roar Basketball Brewers Basketball Chester Wind Band
5pm - 9pm	Wednesday	Blacon Youth Saughall FC Phoenix Basketball
5pm - 9pm	Thursday	Saughall FC Upton FC Flint FC Paul Wallbanks Roller Skating Karate Amy Porter Netball Peter O'Toole Football
5pm - 9pm	Friday	Chester All Stars Upton FC Blacon Youth Saughall Colts Futsul
9am - 1pm	Saturday	Saughall Colts Netball Paul Wallbanks Roller Skating

6th Form Feasibility Study

Exploring the feasibility of post 16 provision at Blacon High School remains part of our key strategic plan. After submitting our views on the One City Plan in Chester, the outcomes were shared in December and we look forward to working with the Council and local partners to address this educational inequality in Chester with regards to post 16 education. We will continue to work on our Business Plan and consultation document over the next 30 months so that when we receive Good in our next Ofsted inspection, we will be ready to launch the consultation to implement this study. This time will also enable us to secure funding and develop a 5 year financial plan to support the building as we move to consultation in 2024.

5. To ensure successful transitions into Key Stages 3, 4 and 5

- KPI High satisfaction rates of parents, students and partner Primary schools on KS2/3 transition - 90% and above
- KPI - 60% of Year 11 onto Level 3 A Level, Applied & Technical courses
- KPI - 40% of Year 11 onto Level 2 and Foundation courses
- KPI - 0% NEET Not in education and employment

Primary School	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
The Arches Community Primary School	37	40	28	30	22
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School	13	13	21	17	19
Dee Point Primary School	56	55	47	49	41
Highfield Community Primary School	17	13	23	15	20
J H Godwin Primary School	18	20	21	14	23
Other	9	7	5	17	17
Total	150	148	149	142	142

Admissions Preference	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
First Preference	161	137	151	148	134	114	103
Second Preference	15	13	12	16	12	10	9
Third Preference	10	15	15	18	12	7	6
Late First Preference	n/a	3	6	15	13	6	15
Late Second Preference	n/a	0	0	2	3	0	1
Late Third Preference	n/a	0	0	0	2	0	1
Placed By L A	n/a	0	0	1	1	1	6
Total Applications	186	168	184	200	177	138	141

Highest number of first preference since recorded.

Student Numbers- March 2022

Year	Males	Females	Total
Year 7	73	76	149
Year 8	89	59	148
Year 9	74	66	140
Year 10	81	46	127
Year 11	64	54	118
Totals	381	301	682

In Year Transfers and Leavers

In Year leavers – as of 11.03.22

Year Group Leavers	Number of Student leavers full Autumn term	Number of Student leavers Spring to 11/03/2022	Total Number of student leavers for this academic year to 11/03/2022
Year 7	1	0	1
Year 8	1	0	1
Year 9	3	2	5
Year 10	2	2	4
Year 11	0	0	0
Total	7	4	11

In Year Starters

In Year Starters as of 11/03/2022	In year starters before 01/09/2021	In year starters since 01/09/2021	Total in year starters
Year 7		2	2
Year 8	3	1	4
Year 9	9	1	10
Year 10	8	1	9
Year 11	22	0	22
Total	42	5	47

Careers and CEIAG events/updates Spring Term 21/22

Year 11 visit to LJMU THR

Women in Engineering event at Coleg Cambria THR/EVP

Learn to Earn workshop with all of Year 9 THR

Compass review to take place 30th March THR

Bank of America mentoring programme with begin on the 28th March – Year 10 students. THR

(Careers Fair for Blacon and the wider school community potentially to be held at school on the 11th May through The Pledge THR)

(Virtual Work Experience potentially planned for July for all of Year 10, 3-day event. THR)

Destination Data and Careers 1:1 sessions are ongoing. THR

6. To support staff to the highest standard of professional development including physical and mental health well-being in order to secure high quality learning and teaching.

CPD

CPD this term has focused mainly on the school's response to Ofsted and developing the curriculum. This has been really positive and has offered an opportunity for staff to work both in and across teams with clear, consistency of approach as we move towards the launch of a two year Key Stage 4. This process has been well received by staff. As well as training sessions on a Tuesday evening, there have now been two Inset days devoted to this, and work towards publishing the new curriculum in line with the school's vision and ethos, while ensuring we are in line with the Ofsted framework is well under way.

CPD has also included several session on 'Inclusion', which has been enhanced by the addition of an extra whole-staff briefing each Wednesday that has an SEN focus. Additionally, further work on the school's commitment to developing a trauma-informed approach is being led by Mr Carr.

Initial Teacher Training and ECT

In recent years the school has developed a very positive reputation for excellence in supporting initial teacher training (ITT). The school hosted seven trainees on their first placements from October 2021 to February 2022, and is now hosting eight on second placements. Mr Stockdale is the Professional Mentor for all trainees and we have a very well developed team of Subject Mentors across a range of subject areas. It is testament to the teaching staff at Blacon High School that, despite the challenges of day to day school life, they are able to deliver a high quality experience for the trainees we host. We have developed productive relationships with: LJMU, Edge Hill University; MMU; The University of Chester; and Liverpool Hope University. Additionally, the feedback that we get from trainees is superb. Finally, this work brings a not insignificant amount of revenue into the school.

The move from NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher) to ECT (Early Career Teacher) to combat the lack of an effective PGCE experience due to the impact of Covid has had a huge impact on the workload of those who committed to becoming ECT mentors. In some respects, the programme offers some significant CPD for mentors as they have to complete 95 hours of online training over the two year course. However, this was not made clear at the beginning when the scheme was launched and, as yet, there is no accreditation for this work. This issue has been raised by schools nationwide and it is hoped that accreditation in some form will be developed. We have two ECTs at Blacon High School who are up to date with their own portfolios of training and development as they move towards the end of their second review period.

Research/Pedagogy

The Research Team will be leading the way with a focus on thinking, to feed into the action learning groups on Teaching and Learning and Assessment but the main focus has been on curriculum design initially. There has been a positive start to this through researching Kate Jones' Retrieval Practice techniques and trialling these out from the start and the team has shared other strategies since: Ian Roberts, Geography Teacher, shared an excellent strategy for students to build on their retrieval skills called, 'Brain, Book and Buddy' (Teacher ToolKit 2012) which has been called 'very useful' and 'really good' by Year 11 student. This is now being trialled in English as it looks to be a transferable method across most subject areas and supports independent study along with a key school focus: giving our

students time and opportunities to think for themselves. Ian and the team will bring this to the new Learning and Teaching, Thinking Curriculum and Assessment Teams that will be launched this term. Staff have volunteered to join these three groups this year and once the school has been through a consultation on amending the school day next year, if successful, all staff will have the chance to work in one of these three key curriculum areas, to develop learning and teaching across the school, with staff working in pairs or triads to try out new techniques in the classroom.

Learning & Teaching

Learning and Teaching practice is currently under review. SLT have discussed the needs and at the moment, curriculum design is the focus. Karen and the team along with other key Heads of Department, namely, Laura Cockburn, Head of Science, have identified metacognition skills (thinking) and basic lesson planning as key areas to focus on ahead of 2022/2023.

Staff Wellbeing

The school continues to gather evidence towards achieving the Optimus Wellbeing Award. We firmly believe that the school is responsible, responsive and can demonstrate enough evidence to achieve the award, and it is expected that this will be submitted during this academic year.

The school completed a well-being survey in February that highlighted some areas for development. Much of the work to address concerns is already underway. For example, the school has developed a Leadership Promise, which makes clear what staff can expect from leaders and demonstrates our commitment to the people who work in the school community. Additionally, whilst classroom behaviour continues to be good, staff raised concerns about behaviour during unstructured times: lesson changeover, break and lunchtime. SLT have committed to maintaining an enhanced presence at these times and their increased visibility, along with regular drop-ins during lesson time is helping to maintain an orderly environment.

In terms of accommodation, staff have always wanted a base so, whilst they are still on our site, we have developed a staffroom in one of the mobile classrooms. Fully resourced tea and coffee making facilities, along with a fridge are already over there. Additionally, the school has sourced some comfortable seating in an effort to create a space where teachers can relax during break and lunch. Additionally, staff expressed concerns about the lack of access to an appropriate workspace during non-contact time so, to combat this, appropriate desk space will be placed in the same area to enable them to work in a comfortable environment without interruption; the mobile classrooms already have Wi-Fi connectivity.

Staff have been very involved in the work around rewriting the curriculum. They have worked independently, in subject teams and in cross-curricular groups, sharing progress and agreeing consistent approaches at every step. The trust in, and commitment to, the skills and expertise amongst the staff body is supporting the process, and staff have responded really well to this acknowledgement; they feel that they have ownership of the direction the school is moving in and are being consulted at appropriate intervals; feedback has been very positive.

Senior staff have reflected and considered the expected behaviours we would want to see in staff when they are demonstrating the core values. This work has been developed into 9 key areas and has formed our promise to staff, as leaders of the school. This will be created into a 360 profile where staff will be able to evaluate their line managers on their effectiveness and support, to use as a self-reflection and improvement tool.

OUR PROMISE AS LEADERS

We Will...



**Communicate openly,
honestly and consistently**



**Listen
and make time**



Trust and support



**Value you both
professionally and
personally**



**Recognise and
celebrate success**



**Set a positive
example**



**Involve you in
decision making**



**Challenge behaviours
not in line with our values**



**Support professional
development**

OUR PROMISE AS LEADERS

We Will...



Relationships

Communicate openly, honestly and consistently

Ensure that all communication is clear, appropriately timed and relevant to your role.

Involve others in decision making, consulting and valuing opinions.

Be open to feedback and listen to ideas for improvements.

Provide clarity over roles and how they contribute to the whole school aims.



Relationships

Listen and make time

Listen to opinions and recognise different ideas.

Ensure that agreed actions are acted on within an appropriate timeframe and outcomes communicated.

Have clear agendas, minutes and actions for meetings so the purpose is clear.

Maintain an open door policy.

Be patient, allow time for thinking but remain ambitious.



Relationships

Trust and support

Demonstrate a clear understanding of others' roles and responsibilities.

Be aware of the abilities of all colleagues.

Listen, in a culture of openness and honesty.

Promote a team ethic.

Reinforce the vision of the Head and the school.



Respect

Value you both professionally and personally

Recognise the challenges and experiences that can affect professional life, showing support and empathy.

Build strong connections with staff, students, parents, Governors and the wider community.

Respect and support a work/life balance.



Respect

Recognise and celebrate success

Recognise success and achievement and 'going the extra mile', on a formal and informal basis.

Will recognise the contribution of staff through our staff recognition scheme and show genuine appreciation.



Respect

Set a positive example

Model best practice and will be an ambassador for our values.

Act with integrity and honesty with our values at the heart of our actions.

Aim to inspire, enable and encourage.

Be committed to improving and achieving the highest standards.



Resilience

Involve you in decision making

Create innovative approaches to solving problems together.

Be committed to honest reflection and continuous improvement.

Be solutions orientated as a team.

Work collaboratively when making decisions.



Resilience

Challenge behaviours not in line with our values

Have professional conversations when needed to address, clarify and resolve behaviours which do not reflect and promote our values.

Be consistent, respectful and fair, even if it is a difficult or awkward conversation.



Resilience

Support professional development

Be committed to supporting the training and development needs required to enable success.

Adopt a coaching and mentoring approach to support all staff to be successful in their role.

Be ambitious and determined in our belief that everyone can achieve.

OUR SCHOOL VALUES

CORE VALUES

BEHAVIOURS



RELATIONSHIPS

- Supportive
- Empathy
- Team ethic
- Communicate with clarity
- Honesty and integrity
- Making time for people
- Acknowledge others' opinions and challenge appropriately
- Inspire, enable and encourage
- Listening to ideas and being open to feedback
- Culture of trust
- Positive language
- Building positive interactions
- Making time for people
- Reinforcing the vision of the Head and the school



RESPECT

- Leading by example
- Showing awareness of others' role and responsibilities
- Model best practice
- Respecting others' roles and responsibilities
- Recognition of success and the contribution made to the school
- Fairness
- Punctuality; being on time for meetings, lessons and appointments
- Availability; being available for others
- Acting with integrity and honesty with our values at the heart of our actions
- Building strong connections
- Support work/life balance



RESILIENCE

- Creative approaches to solving problems together
- Commitment to honest reflection in order to drive continuous improvement
- Collaborative work
- Being open to feedback
- Challenging in order to drive up standards and achieve ambitions
- Solutions orientated
- Positivity
- Flexibility
- Patience
- Supporting professional development and training
- Ambitious and determined in our belief that everyone can achieve

The school recently achieved its 'Investors in People' award, which it has held for over 10 successive years; this is not an insignificant achievement. There is nothing additional to say about this but please find a selection of quotes from staff:

'Our Head and senior leaders are very approachable – they will chat with you and it's not always about school. I like that style.'

'I feel well informed. The key priorities are shared during inset days, through links in briefings and in additional whole school training like being a trauma informed school. Reading and literacy, attendance/ punctuality and wellbeing are all current priorities.'

'I would say we are a school with strong values. Relationships and support are the schools' strong areas.'

'Getting access to information is good – there hasn't been a time when I have had to think about where I get something from. Also there are regular meetings: once a week after school for the department, staff meeting twice per week and the line management.'

'I know how I'm doing through fortnightly line managements which are on my timetable. The appraisal happens mid-year and end of year – I look forward to that chance to talk.'

'I absolutely love the job. The SLT will talk to you about something which is going on as you see them in the corridor. We had an evening and received certificates with nice comments from staff on the certificates'

'I feel valued and appreciated and got a progress lead TLR. Appreciation comes from the senior team. Staff celebration evening with certificates - it was really nice and gave you a little boost. People are fantastic here and the opportunity to tell people has been good.'

'I know what is expected of me and what I'm accountable for. When I feel I'm getting near out of my depth I talk with colleagues in the team to assist me.'

Pearson National Teacher Awards

There are challenging times in all schools and, sometimes, it is easy to focus on those challenges and forget the fantastic relationships that underpin the amazing work that is the hallmark of everything we stand for at Blacon High School. As such, it is always great when we have the opportunity to celebrate something. It is with pleasure that the school submitted two entries for the Pearson National Teacher Awards 2022; the entries were prompted by the feedback we received on National 'Thank a Teacher' Day. The nominations are for the whole school in the 'Making a Difference – Secondary School of the Year' category. This award is for a secondary school that can demonstrate its power and effectiveness in transforming the life chances of local children while, at the same time, enriching the local community. The awarding body advises that schools entering this category are likely to have many challenges but tackle them creatively and constructively. The second nomination is the Inclusion Team for the 'Unsung Heroes' award, which accurately describes the selfless commitment demonstrated by the entire inclusion team each and every day.

A copy of the document submitted for the award for 'Making a Difference - Secondary School of the Year' is part of Governors' pack. The submission was supported with extensive evidence in terms of

parent, staff and student voice, positive comments from Ofsted and reference to the recent IIP report.

Entry One for the Pearson National 'Making a difference – Secondary School of the Year' award

Blacon High School - More than just a school!

Blacon High School is in an area of significant social and economic deprivation; high rates of low paid and unskilled jobs, along with high rates of unemployment are a feature of the area. 55% of the school's cohort is Student Premium, and approximately 30% of students are SEN, both significantly above the national average. As a result, the school frequently faces a variety of additional challenges but, despite this, maintains the highest aspirations for all of its students and fosters the belief that anything is attainable. This was particularly apparent during lockdown as, once staff had spent the first couple of weeks delivering essential food parcels to families in the community, the school worked creatively to combat IT poverty by providing students with appropriate resources to enable to access remote learning, with virtually no funding support. The success of the school rests firmly in the relationships it develops with its students and this is supported by the new strapline: 'More than just a school,' which was coined by a member of staff on an Inset day in response to the question: what really defines Blacon High School?

The expectation of a positive attitude to learning and excellent behaviour among the student body is underpinned by the school's core principles, which were written in collaboration with student leaders some years ago, and they continue to be the language of the school.

The cohort has grown in recent years from 395 in 2015 to 684 in 2022. For the fourth year running, the school is over-subscribed for September 2022 and the cohort is expected to grow to 750 by 2023. There are five primary schools in the area and, following the extensive collaborative work of the BEV (Blacon Educational Village), Blacon High School is now the first choice destination for almost every child in Blacon. The increase in student numbers is a reflection of the community of Blacon's ongoing confidence in the school, confidence that was rewarded by a new build that it took ownership of in September 2016. The consistent rise in students who want to attend Blacon High School from the community of Blacon and beyond has already seen further investment in an additional annexe to the school, built in order to accommodate its growing numbers.

One of the impacts of the new facility is how the school has become a hub that is central to the community of Blacon. When the school was being built, the FA subsidised the building of a 3G pitch, which is in use almost every evening and at weekends by local schools, clubs and societies. It also hosts inter-school and inter-club tournaments; the school car park is often still full at 9.00pm in the evening. Additionally, the school is the base for Blacon Boxing Club, which has had a huge impact on developing positive attitudes, reducing unsociable behaviour and improving the confidence of the young people in the community.

Inclusion – Learning for Life.

There is an understanding that some students face a variety of challenges in order to access education and Blacon High School is determined that every young person in the school community is supported to achieve their full potential, and enable them to make positive choices and take successful next steps.

At the heart of the new building, we have 'The Sanctuary.' Within this safe and secure base, a nurture-based environment has been created that enables the delivery of additional, focused support to help students fulfil their potential. They are provided with the tools to access learning successfully, build key skills and develop their social and emotional awareness. Resources include a sensory room, ICT suite, kitchen, and who wouldn't want a cuddle from Paddy, the therapy dog? Additionally, the school has developed bespoke, alternative curriculum pathways for small groups of students, which offers them the opportunity to develop their own skill sets both within and outside of the school environment during their outdoor education sessions.

The SENDCo and family support team work closely in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies, while our pastoral team, enhanced by a dedicated mentoring team, works tirelessly to underpin success for all students. The impact of these initiatives is to ensure that all students remain in full time, mainstream education, enjoy their time as part of the Blacon High School Family, fulfil their potential and leave us as confident young adults.

Widening Participation - To infinity and beyond!

In terms of widening participation, the school offers a huge range of extra-curricular activities covering academic, sporting, vocational and leadership opportunities including but not limited to: team and individual sports where we compete successfully at all levels; The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme; School Parliament; Combined Cadet Force; Performing Arts clubs including Drama, the School Band and School Choir who all offer performances throughout the year at a variety of venues within and beyond the community. It is notable that students at Blacon High School benefit from free music lessons and instrument hire, which is a unique opportunity in terms of widening participation and enables them to learn new skills.

In recent years, the school has developed several international links and now runs an annual, subsidised, exchange trip to its twinned school in Bulgaria. For many students who take part, this is their first experience of foreign travel and offers them an opportunity to experience a culture that is very different to their own. The school's stated aim is to ensure that every student experiences at least one residential trip during their time at Blacon High School. A focus on developing cultural capital and learning outside the classroom is supported by a team of innovative and creative teachers who find opportunities for theatre trips, Geography field trips, History trips and visits to galleries and concerts, amongst a host of others.

The 'BEV' (Blacon Educational Village) - Success through Partnership.

In many respects, the 'BEV' functions like a MAT without any formal obligation or joint management, rather, it is a voluntary commitment by the leaders of the five primary schools, along with the secondary school, to work collaboratively in order to secure the most positive futures possible for the young people in the community; the relationship is truly unique.

Teachers from Blacon High School deliver Music, MFL and PE in the BEV primary schools, which helps to forge vital first links with KS1 and 2 students. Additionally, students from Blacon High School support a number of events in the school calendar. For example, they organise and run the BEV sports day, which is a highlight of the year. This further enhances the relationships between primary and secondary, while developing independence, resilience and leadership skills amongst the high school students.

Blacon High School has one of the most unique and effective transition processes in the secondary education sector. Largely as a result of the fantastically positive and enduring relationship between the schools in the BEV, rather than having the traditional 'Open Evening' early in the academic year, it hosts five 'Open Mornings,' one for each of the five primary schools in Blacon. On these days, primary school students come to the high school along with their parents and carers to get a feel for life in the secondary sector. Following a presentation by the headteacher, parents, carers and children are escorted around the school and are able to go in to classrooms to observe a number of lessons across a range of subject areas in real time. Nowhere is off limits! Unlike a traditional Open Evening, where schools often select their most able students in order to 'showcase' the best they have to offer in a closed environment, the Open Mornings at Blacon High School are a reflection of the confidence it has in its curriculum offer, the superb quality of teaching and the engagement of its students; this can't be staged.

The Bursary Scheme – Driven by excellence; values every one; transforms lives.

Blacon High School maintains the highest aspirations for all of its students and is committed to closing the education gap by supporting all of them, regardless of their ability, to secure the best post 16 destinations. For the last nine years, it has been working with the Hope Opportunity Trust, in conjunction with the Springboard Foundation, and has coached almost forty of its more able students through a significant selection process to enable them to study for their A levels in some of the top independent schools in the country on fully funded bursary places. To date, three students have won coveted places at Eton, which is at the head of a long list of other, life-changing destinations including, but not limited to: Fettes; Gordonstoun; Bradfield College; Dulwich College; Merchiston Castle and St Peter's School, York. Almost all of these students have gone on to higher education and our ex-students are now employed in a range of professions including Veterinary Science, Physiotherapy, Accountancy and Chemical Engineering amongst others. For these students, the opportunities that they accessed as a result of achieving places on the bursary scheme were completely life-changing. Their success has had an enormous impact on the community of Blacon who are conscious that its young people can stand shoulder to shoulder with their more affluent peers, and succeed.

Mr Stockdale – 3rd March 2022

Entry Two for the Pearson National 'Making a difference – Secondary School of the Year' award

Our Inclusion team at Blacon High School are the unsung heroes of our school community.

Context

Blacon High School is in an area of significant social and economic deprivation, 55% of the school's cohort is Student Premium, and 29% of students are SEND, both significantly above the national average. As a result, the school frequently faces a variety of additional challenges but, despite this, maintains the highest aspirations for all of its students and fosters the belief that everyone can achieve, irrespective of their starting point or background. This was particularly apparent during lockdown as the school worked creatively to combat IT poverty by providing students with appropriate resources to enable to access remote learning. The success of the school rests firmly in the relationships it develops with its students and this is supported by our strapline: 'More than a school,' which defines who we are as a school and what we stand for.

Our Inclusion Team

The team is led by Adrian Carr, Assistant Headteacher who is wise, calm, supportive, approachable and inclusive in his approach to staff, students and parents alike.

‘Adrian works incredibly hard and cares about each and every student, ensuring those that are sometimes harder to reach are supported. As a senior leader in school, he has built a great team and department, making sure that everyone feels valued and trusted.’

Our SENDcos Victoria Rose Davies and Catrin Kenyon Owen, supported by Kate Henshall are three key staff who work tirelessly to secure additional funding and support for the high numbers of students with SEND within the school.

‘Vicki is incredibly hard working and is the font of all knowledge when it comes to all things SEND. She is always very approachable and offers support and advice. She wants the best for all of our students and will put her all into getting it for them. Vicky always listens and values other people’s skills and qualities. I don’t think I’ve ever seen her without a smile on her face too!’

‘Catrin has worked really hard to get the students tested for their access and listening to their worries. ‘

‘Kate is great at supporting some of the most vulnerable students and spends many hours listening to them and making them feel valued. She is a pleasure to work with.’

Our SEND teacher, Jodie Fisher works with some of our most vulnerable and complex students, delivering the curriculum in a creative way, to meet their varied needs in the safety of The Sanctuary.

‘Jodie is 100% dedicated to the students she supports, and works tirelessly to support them in every way. Jodie is skilful in managing behavioural issues, supporting mental health and motivating all students to improve on their skills and focus on learning in lessons. Jodie is inspirational as a teacher and as a professional, and is kind, funny and a good friend to her colleagues. Jodie is a fantastic addition to our team, she really understands the complex needs of our most vulnerable children. She is making a huge impact in their lives and is enabling students who might otherwise be unable to maintain a place in a mainstream school achieve the very best outcomes possible. She is incredibly nurturing and nothing is ever too much for her.’

The SEND team have tripled the amount of top up funding for students with additional needs, in just two and a half years, which has enabled us to grow our team of Teaching Assistants and Family support.

Stephen Webster, Ruth Holton, Shelley Mackintosh, Josh Jones and our recently appointed Charlotte Johnson form our team of Family Support, working closely with our Assistant Head on safeguarding and family welfare. 10% of our school are linked to safeguarding in some way and so these staff work tirelessly supporting students and families on plans, helping not just in school but also wider family life. 30% of our school have been affected by multiple traumas including SEND, Young Caring duties, safeguarding plans, bereavement, medical needs, substance abuse and domestic violence.

‘Steve is amazing. The impact that his support has had on students and families is invaluable. He goes above and beyond supporting some of our most vulnerable students and offers a range of support which has a significant and positive impact. In addition to being a support line for students, he is also a great listening ear for staff too. Steve’s experience and compassionate nature are a constant in the lives of our vulnerable students. He always looks at the cause of behaviour without giving excuses. He supports each student who confides in him to help them cope better. Steve is incredible. Nothing is ever too much for him. You make such a huge difference to so many of our young people. School wouldn’t be the same without him.’

‘Ruth’s genuine care for our students is inspiring. She always goes that extra mile to support our more vulnerable students and families. She ensures she looks out for their needs and is compassionate and dedicated to do her best for them.’

‘Shelley has done some incredible work with challenging students. She has an amazing, calming influence with them and makes school a brighter and less frightening place for so many of them.’

‘Josh is an asset to The Sanctuary and family support. He brings humour, care and fun to The Sanctuary. Josh helps to support both students and staff and we all really appreciate most things he does! He is a fantastic member of the school community and 100% student focused. Josh fulfils many roles in Blacon High and does these all to a very high standard.’

Staff have turned school refusers into students who not only attend, but thrive in school. Through their perseverance and creative, flexible approaches, students and families have built up trust that school will help in a range of aspects of life. The staff at Blacon High School are driven by a strong moral purpose that we do not want to fail them. There is a very clear and consistent trauma led approach

Trauma Informed Practice

The team have led whole staff training on trauma informed approaches which means keeping the possibility of trauma on our radar and being sensitive to the vulnerabilities of people who may be trauma survivors. It means being respectful, acknowledging and understanding and this team show these skills, qualities and characteristics in abundance each and every day. It is as much about the little things; paying attention to the way we engage with other people, as well as to ‘what’ we do. It also means thinking about what may have happened to someone, rather than judging what is ‘wrong’ with them. We recognise that one size doesn’t fit all, we are creative in our approaches to meet need through our Sanctuary provision for students with additional needs, a quiet room as a safe space to support students and families, helped by our therapy dog Paddy and our Orion provision which enables students with complex behavioural and emotional needs to access the curriculum, in a bespoke, creative way, supported with outdoor education as part of the delivered curriculum. Staff set clear boundaries and routines as identified through the Core Principles in our Behaviour policy but it is applied with common sense and compassion.

Core Values; Respect, Relationships and Resilience

Our unsung heroes practise self-care and emotionally intelligent behaviours, they model positive, respectful behaviours amongst each other and help us to create the right climate for the school. We never underestimate the capacity and power of positive interactions, even in routine interactions, to be soothing and validating. Humour and laughter are key parts of this team’s time in school which reduces the traumatic response in the brain for staff and students alike.

Lockdown

During lockdown, the team were in school every day, contacting families by phone, providing emotional support, a listening ear and practical help through food parcels and signposts to sources of help and advice. Quite simply, this team save lives each day. They always have a smile on their face, will respond in a calm and professional manner and deal with an incredible range of challenges each and every day. Our core values of relationships, respect and resilience are at the heart of what they do, what they believe and how they act in this role. Building relationships is key to the success of their work and is the foundation on which Blacon High School is built. They support students and families to develop resilience in the challenging situations they may find themselves in and also show huge levels of resilience themselves.

Safeguarding and student welfare at the heart

Safeguarding and student welfare is at the heart of everything we do at Blacon. Through investing in this team, we have been able to provide early help and support, counselling, Learning Mentors and Family Support Workers who work with families in a highly effective and engaging way. Staff are consistently secure in identifying students who may be at risk, there is a strong culture of safeguarding, staff are vigilant and know our families well. Training is strong, high profile and valued in school and lived out in every day practice. This extends to parents through a safeguarding bulletin to engage families in understanding what they can do to protect children in the modern, fast paced and changing world.

Our ambition to give children the best chances in life, is clear and understood by all of the staff within this wonderful team and across the school as a whole. It is our mission to develop all aspects of the child; mind, body and character, for them to enjoy learning, to think and be inspired in order to prepare them for a successful and happy future. This team break down barriers, both physically and emotionally and support families at some of the most challenging moments of their life. This team of staff are incredible, they make a difference each and every day, in every way.

Parent Feedback and Recognition for the Inclusion Team

Parents have nominated several members of staff within the Inclusion Team through the staff recognition scheme at Blacon High School. They have taken the time to write in to tell the Headteacher about the difference that these unsung heroes, make every day. This was felt so much more so during the recent lockdown, when staff worked tirelessly to maintain contact and support with families.

“Both Mrs Macintosh and Mr Jones have gone out their way to help my son since year 7 with his anxiety. That included coming down to reception to collect him. Also there were days when Mrs Macintosh had to spend a good while outside to encourage him to come into school. I don't think I personally would have coped with getting him to school without the help and care from Mrs Mac. His confidence has grown over the two years and this is definitely been as a result of the help we received.”

“Mr Jones has kept in touch with my daughter during lockdown to check in on her mental health wellbeing. He has taken the time out to speak to her and myself, to ensure she is coping and what she can do if not. She has had a few dips during the 3rd lockdown and speaking to Mr Jones has lifted her spirits. Poor Mr Jones, even had to endure my emotional breakdown on the phone to him.

He has been an inspiration to my daughter and to myself. (Couldn't decide on which category, as falls into so many). Thank you Mr Jones. My daughter says 'big thank you Sir'.

Staff absence

From the figures you can see clearly the effect that social distancing has had, absence increased once restrictions were lifted.

The amount spent on supply

2020/21 - £41,439, this was offset by £15,000 insurance claim

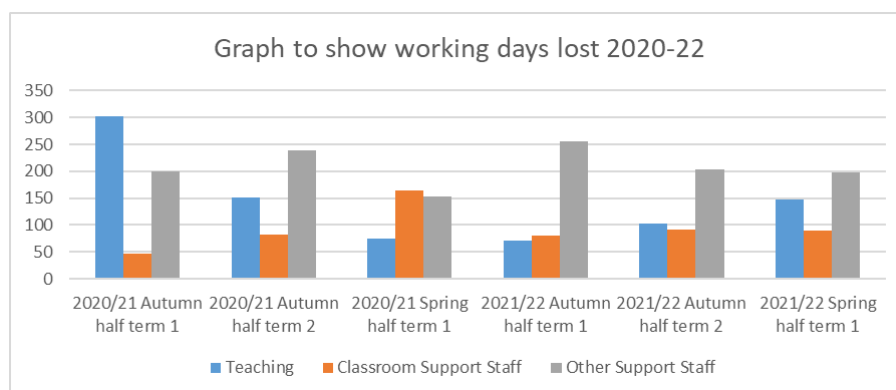
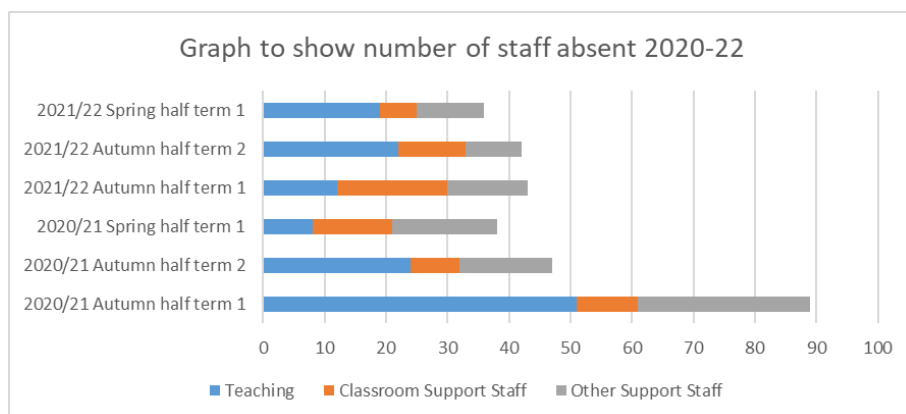
2021/22 - £43,918 we have been able to claim £2,228 towards a maternity absence

Tables to show the number of staff absences 2020-22

Number of staff absent 2020 -2022						
	2020/21 Autumn half term 1	2020/21 Autumn half term 2	2020/21 Spring half term 1	2021/22 Autumn half term 1	2021/22 Autumn half term 2	2021/22 Spring half term 1
Teaching	51	24	8	12	22	19
Classroom Support Staff	10	8	13	18	11	6
Other Support Staff	28	15	17	13	9	11
Total	89	47	38	43	42	36

Table to show the number of working days lost to staff absence 2020-22

Number of staff absent 2020 -2022						
	2020/21 Autumn half term 1	2020/21 Autumn half term 2	2020/21 Spring half term 1	2021/22 Autumn half term 1	2021/22 Autumn half term 2	2021/22 Spring half term 1
Teaching	303	152	74	70	102	147
Classroom Support Staff	47	82	164	81	92	89
Other Support Staff	200	238	153	256	203	198
Total	550	472	391	407	397	434



Behaviour Data

Exclusions ASP	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av	BHS	N av
Pexclusions as % of pupil group	0.45	0.12	0.26	0.13	0	0.15	0.25 =1	0.17	0.71 =3	0.20	0.44 =2	0.2	0.57 =3	0.20	0.16 =1	0.13	0.44 =3	
% pupils with FTE							4.33 =17	8.56	6.86 =29	9.40	2.88 =13	10.1	6.84 =36	10.8	5.27 =32	7.43	5.21 =35	
% pupils with 1 or more FT exclusions	11.7	3.86	3.32	3.68	4.46	3.97	2.80 =11	4.31	3.55 =15	4.62	1.33 =6	4.71	4.18 =22	4.93	3.29 =20	3.69	3.42 =23	
% pupils with 2 or more FTE			1.79	1.34	2.89	1.51	1.53 =6	1.68	1.42 =6	1.82	0.66 =3	1.91	1.52 =8	2.03	1.15 =7		0.74 =5	

Fixed/ Permanent Exclusion Data

17/18 Au	17/18 Sp	17/18 Su	18/19 Au	18/19 Sp	18/19 Su	19/20 Au	19/20 Sp	19/20 Su	20/21 Au	20/21 Sp	20/21 Su	21/22 Au	21/22 Sp
8	2	3 +(2pex)	17	12 +(2pex)	7 +(1pex)	16	15 +(1pex)		19 +(2pex)	3	13 +(1pex)	18	33

Step Out Data

18/19 Au	18/19 Sp	18/19 Su	19/20 Au	19/20 Sp1	19/20 Su	20/21 Au	20/21 Sp	20/21 Su	21/22 Au	21/22 Sp
6	1	2	5	1		1	0	0	1	0

Internal Exclusion Data

<u>17/18</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Sp1</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Sp3</u>
4	8	7	15	15	19	35	22		27	7	14	48	41+93*

SSA Data

<u>17/18</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Sp1</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Sp</u>
98.2%	97.78%	97.32%	97.8%	97%	96.6%	96.9%	96.1%		97.5%	97.3%	96.7%	96.9%	96.3%
0.42%	0.5%	0.45%	0.55%	0.62%	0.78%	0.82%	1.1%		0.8%	0.9%	0.75%	0.8%	0.9%

SIG Group Data

<u>17/18</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Sp1</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Sp</u>
11	28	19	14	33	21	27	30		16	34	30	22	46

On Call Data

<u>17/18</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Sp1</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Sp</u>
76	59	62	95	136	129	286	305		257	41	124	297	183

Remove Room Data

<u>17/18</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>17/18</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>18/19</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Sp1</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>19/20</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Sp</u>	<u>20/21</u> <u>Su</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Au</u>	<u>21/22</u> <u>Sp</u>
41	40	37	83	104	99	218	193		182	34	98	241	173

Exclusions

Exclusions this term have been far higher than ever before. This highlights some of the significant challenges we are facing with a key group of students who are consistently failing to follow the Core Principles in the school, along with the after effects of the pandemic and the amount of time that students have spent out of school. This group of students have been identified as most at risk of permanent exclusion and are in need of an alternative package that meets their needs, removes them from mainstream lessons and allows the large percentage of students within the school to flourish. Discussions have begun around how to best meet the need of these students and are continuing. This is a key priority for the school.

Step out

Despite being able to use 'step outs' again, there has only been the need to use this with 1 student in school.

Internal Exclusion

There has been a significant increase in the number of IEs this academic year, the reintroduction of the SLT isolation room has meant that senior leaders have picked up an extra 5 lessons over a fortnight where they supervise key students who have persistently failed to follow school rules. This has been done to prevent a further number of exclusions. Alongside the SLT isolation room, IEs have taken place with PLs and tutors for one off and first strike incidents that need a significant sanction. This term we have also taken a firm stance on uniform and 65 students on 86 occasions have been isolated with their tutors for failing to have the correct uniform in school. This proved impactful with 75% of the students who were in IE not returning.

SSA grades

SSA grades continue to be the heartbeat of our behaviour system in school. Every student is still graded for their A2L in every lesson and the grades they receive feed into our rewards and sanctions processes. Positive A2L and engagement in lessons is on a slight decrease across the whole school community, with some of these grades shifting to passive learning and a small amount to negative and disruptive A2L. We have had a significant push with our approach to rewards and the innovative work on SSA analysis (led by HAI) has meant that we are more informed when selecting students. HAI will report on this separately.

SIG data

The Significant Intervention Group is formed from students in each year group who have the worst A2L across all of their lessons. Progress leaders identify these students through data analysis and create behaviour plans that are shared with students and parents. Students are placed on report and must report to their PL at the end of every day to monitor their progress. This forms part of our whole school Behaviour and Inclusion Map. If students are unsuccessful with their PL, they escalate up the SIG process to SIG2 where the PL works alongside CAA to identify if there is an underlying issue leading to their behaviour. So far this term we have 27 students in the SIG process.

On Call data

Gary Stroyd, our behaviour manager is 'On Call' every lesson of every day and this provides consistency to our approach with the collection and potential reintegration of students into lesson when support is called for. The number of On Call requests has been high, however this growth is reflective of the growth of the school. New staff in school are responsible for the vast majority of the ONC requests in school and STG is often used as a support measure for the teacher.

Remove Room data

A higher percentage of the students who had received On Call support were removed from lesson than last year. This reflects the level of disruption the students are causing to lessons and the need to remove these students in order to allow learning and teaching to continue without disruption.

Staffing of the Remove Room has meant that Danny Hughes, our KS4 Learning Mentor now picks up lessons 1 and 5 as part of his responsibility to mentor and support students.

CCF Combined Cadet Force

We currently have around 15 cadets attending regularly. It's been a struggle recently with covid to increase numbers again but the team are confident that the activities planned will engage more students once more. The most recent activities have been air rifle shooting in the hall, but soon we hope to have a permanent range set up in one of the containers in the top car park. On Monday, Cadets have an introduction to weapons handling at Fox Barracks and then a paintballing session planned before Easter. On the 25th of April we have the rescheduled visit of the Queens own Yeomanry, where they will have a display of all their equipment for the students to look at and be able handle. In May it is planned for staff to take the Cadets for a whole weekend to Fox Barracks, where a number of activities will be planned for the students. The plan is for all the Cadets to work on getting to a place where they are prepared for annual camp which will be in June/July.



Part 2 – Highlights from the Spring Term

Humanities

Events & Competitions

Antarctica Flag Project - winner of the Antarctica competition for 2022 was Ellie Green in year 7. Her Flag was displayed by Dr Klara Weaver at location: Lat. 71°19'59"S, Long. 68°16'40"W (<https://www.bas.ac.uk/polar-operations/sites-and-facilities/facility/rothera/fossil-bluff/>)



Holocaust Memorial

Day January 2022 - Blacon High School has regularly participated in activities at Chester Cathedral to commemorate this important event. HMD was first held in January 2001 and has been on the same date every year since, and events at the Cathedral have been organised at least as far back as 2012. Last year students listened to the story of a Holocaust survivor via zoom, as part of a national event, due to Covid Lockdown. This proved to be very popular and was well attended. However, this year we have been able to return to the cathedral. On the day itself Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines, who was due to talk about The Winton Train, was too ill to attend so she recorded a film about her experiences. This was disappointing for the students, but has the benefit for staff in the department to have a recording of this to use in school with other classes. The recording can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/n1upZ6rCS28>

The activities which then followed after lunch were designed to complement the knowledge they gained from the presentation, using the medium of art. Staff at the Cathedral were extremely complimentary about all our students. The artwork is now on display in classroom 301.

Humanities Club – Students have created a draft website page to outline what the club stands for and to attract new recruits. They are working towards completing a Blue Peter green badge award.

ASDAN

From September 2022 Core Religious Studies will introduce an ASDAN course in Beliefs and Values. Both X and Y bands will access this course for half a year in both Year 10 and Year 11, before switching to Computer Science where they will also be working towards achieving ASDAN credits.

The aims of the course are:

- Develop respect for different beliefs and values
- Develop an understanding of how religion contributes to a multicultural society
- Develop an awareness of the laws needed for a just and fair society, and how to be a responsible citizen
- Develop the ability to respond to contemporary ethical themes
- Develop an understanding of religious practices and expression of faith

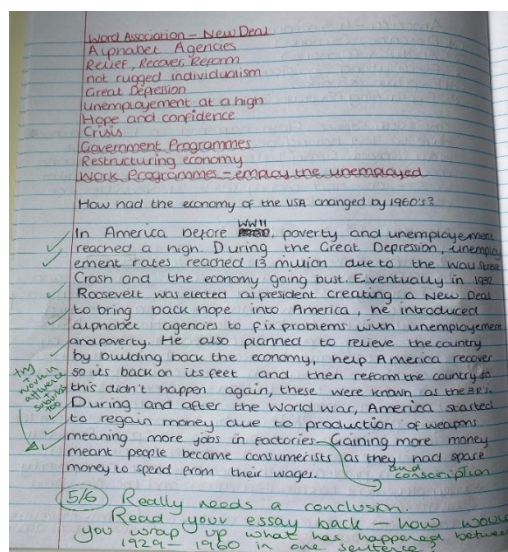
Students will complete a variety of modules. Each module takes approximately 10 hours to complete, with each 10-hour period equating to 1 credit. These credits will be combined with those in Computer Science, and other ASDAN qualifications run in school, to enable students to leave with a more developed certificate. Students will not sit an exam, as all work will be completed during lesson time.

Trainees:

Since September the History department has welcomed two trainee History teachers, one from the University of Chester, and one from Manchester Metropolitan University. The first trainee completed Placement A successfully; teaching a broad range of classes across KS3 and supporting with team teaching in KS4 classes. She completed her placement just before February half term and has gone on to her second placement school. Our current trainee has already begun to teach successfully to a broad range of classes across KS3 and KS4.

Both trainees have covered a variety of topics with their classes including: Migration to Britain, The Norman Conquest, World War I, America in the 1920s and Elizabethan England. A key part of the training process for these students has been around observing a variety of expert teaching styles across the Humanities department, this focus has allowed them to understand various strategies and to embed these across their teaching practice. During their weekly mentor meetings with PRF the trainees are able to reflect on the lessons they have taught, discuss effective teaching strategies, behaviour management, targets for the following week and pedagogical approaches to teaching different aspects of history. This time also allows them to be given formal and informal feedback to be used against the teaching standards so that they can complete their portfolio at the end of their PGCE.

Example of student work: Year 11 History revision.



Transition

Links with primary schools have been developed with a booklet that has been shared with each primary school by Ian Roberts to enable Year 6 to complete a transition project. This will help to build the key skills to support the building blocks of knowledge on which to develop at Blacon.

What is Geography?? Activity 2

Geography comes from the ancient Greek word 'geos'. This is the study of the world. There are three different parts of Geography that we study:

- Physical Geography which is the study of things that humans have no control over such as weather or earthquakes.
- Human Geography which is the study of how human beings have affected the earth's surface such as cities or transport.
- Environmental Geography is the study of how humans have affected the environment. This can be in both positive and negative ways such as planting trees or causing global warming.

Physical	Human	Environmental
Volcano	Roads	Global Warming

Complete the table above by adding examples of physical, human and environmental Geography.

Grid References? Activity 8

Choose the correct answer by using the map extract to give the correct four figure grid reference for:

The School: A) 3246 B) 3346 C) 3145

The Lodge Farm: A) 3044 B) 3045 C) 3046

Fredley Manor: A) 3144 B) 3244 C) 3245

Cowslip Farm: A) 3145 B) 3146 C) 3245

The Well: A) 3045 B) 3344 C) 3146

PE department

PE department has seen a successful return to extra-curricular clubs and fixtures in the spring term after Christmas despite Indoor Sports hall athletics, Badminton and Handball being cancelled due to COVID in January. The department offer before school, lunch time and after school clubs. Since September, students in KS3 and KS4 have the opportunity to attend Running, Netball, Badminton, Table Tennis, Football, Handball, Climbing and Dance clubs delivered by a range of staff.

Boys Football

Year 7 Boys Football team beat Ellesmere Port College 9-0 in a friendly game. They lost 7-1 to Christleton High School in the Chester Cup Quarter Final. The 7 aside team finished bottom of the group at the Chester and District 7 aside tournament and have areas to develop as a team.

Year 8 Boys football team beat Wrekin College 2-1 AET in Round 4 of the ESFA Cup, a very close game decided by Denis. They beat Leighton Middle School 6-1 in the ESFA Quarter Final and have a home Semi Final tie against Bowland High School before Easter on the 3G. The year 8 b football team were 4th in the Chester and district tournament, lost to Queens Park, Heber and drew with Kings.

Year 8/9 Boys football team lost 1-0 to Ellesmere Port College in a friendly game. The Year 9 B football team beat Bishops Heber 3-1 in a friendly.

Year 9 Boys Football team beat Kings High School 4-3 AET in Chester Cup Quarter Final (Billy Mullen x 4) from being 3-1 down. They lost 7-3 to a good Tarporley High School in the Chester Cup Semi Final. The year 9 Futsal team came 4th at Chester and District tournament, drawing 1 but losing 2 games.

Year 10 Boys Football team lost 5-2 to Ellesmere Port College in a friendly game. They lost 7-0 to Tarporley High School in Chester Cup Quarter Final. The Year 10 b 7 aside team were runners up in the Chester and District 7 aside tournament.

Year 11 Boys Football team lost to Kings 6-0 in Chester Cup Quarter Final. They did beat Chester Catholic High 2-1 in a friendly with goals from Ashton Crimes and Adam Jones.

Girls Football

The U16 Girls Football team won the Cheshire Cup Quarter Final 2-1 against St Nicholas High School thanks to two goals from Polly McGregor. They play against a strong Wimslow School team before Easter. The U15 Girls Football team play Christleton High School in the Chester Cup Semi Final before Easter.

U13 Girls beat Tarporley High 4-0 in the Chester Cup Round 1. They then beat Kings 5-4 in a 9 goal thriller with Edie Byrne hat trick. They play Christleton High School in Semi Final before Easter.

Basketball

The year 10/11 Boys Basketball team beat Chester Catholic High 44-22 in final game of the season (George Scott 26 points).

The year 8/9 boys' team played their Chester and district tournament, winning against Queens Park High but lost close games against Catholic, Kings and Bishops Bluecoat.

Year 7 Boys Basketball team are Chester and District tournament runners up winning two games against Queens Park, Catholic High, drawing against Kings but lost against Bishops in the deciding game.

Netball

Year 8/9 girls played competitive friendly games against Upton High and Abbeygate College. Year 10 Girls are Chester and District b champions winning 3 matches against Catholic, Abbeygate and Heber to claim the medals. Year 7 have their tournament before Easter holidays and have been training hard for the event.

Other Sports and PE News

The U13 Boys Table Tennis team came 3rd at the Chester and District tournament up against Catholic High and Kings. The year 7 Boys Dodgeball team won Chester and District tournament against Queens Park High School. U15 Boys and Girls are Chester and District Volleyball champions from winning their matches against Chester Catholic High School – both teams would represent Chester at the County tournament but due to COVID the tournament has been cancelled.

Year 10 Leaders Billy Jamieson, George Scott, Max Bragg, Megan Ortega and Macy Wilkinson trained as 'Mental Health champions' for the Youth Sports Trust programme 'Active Mind project' to support KS3 students who have struggled with mental health, engagement with PE since the pandemic. Professional skating athlete Jenna Downing spend a day with our year 10 leaders, Mrs Beyer delivering the programme and every lunch time on Wednesday, 18 KS3 students take part in a PE club delivered by our leaders. It's having a positive impact on their confidence, social skills and anxiety when engaging in sport.

KS3 Boys and Girls attended PE Reward trip to Everton v Boreham Wood in FA Cup to experience watching professional football live.

Year 9 and 10 girls umpired and scored the year 3/4 and 5/6 High 5 Netball Chester competition at Blacon High School.

Year 11 student Tia Lockley has played for Cheshire u16 girl's football team against Lancashire and Merseyside.

Alice Joynson is delivering BTEC Dance workshops to year 8/9 to prepare them for new qualification starting in September 2022

Mr Cairns and Mrs Carr managed the Chester and District Cross Country team at Knights Grange Sport Complex, Winsford.

Year 8 student George Davies plays for U16 Chester and Warrington Water polo team all over Britain at the weekends.

Ex-student Henley Dowridge delivered an LLS assembly to Examination PE year 11 students about careers in sport and spoke about his coaching journey and upcoming trip to coach football in the USA.

Mr Williams from Science has registered Blacon High School into the ESFA FIFA 22 Tournament. One student can represent Blacon High School in May and currently students have been playing matches at break and lunch time organised by Mr Williams to determine the winner. Over 100 students took part and we are at the quarter final stage.

Blacon Sports Village Sports

BEV Dodgeball, Football, Netball and Handball tournaments have all been a huge success at Blacon High School with all of our feeder primary schools participating. KS4 leaders have supported Mr Forbes with scoring and refereeing of the successful events with other 50 future sports stars competing in a friendly environment. The BEV indoor sports hall athletics was cancelled in January because of Covid.







Chester School Sport Partnership

School Games Organisers Claire Smedley and Elizabeth Newstead are based at Blacon High School which is the host site of Chester School Sport Partnership and they organise events and initiatives which are part of the Youth Sport Trust School Games Programme, funded through Sport England.

Membership

We have had 34 schools (primary and special) join the Chester School Sport Partnership this year where we deliver programmes which are not part of the national remit.

Competitions

Year 5&6 Sportshall Athletics - Wednesday 19th & Thursday 20th January at Ellesmere Port Sports Village.

15 schools involving 222 children took part in this event.

Year 5&6 High 5 Netball Competition- Wednesday 9th January at Blacon High School.

9 schools involving 68 children. 8 leaders from Blacon High School helped at the event.



Year 3&4 Bee Netball Festival - Thursday 10th January at Blacon High School.

6 schools involving 28 children. 8 leaders from Blacon High School helped at the event.



Cheshire & Warrington Winter School Games

Boccia competition - Friday 21st January at Cardinal Newman School in Warrington. Representing Chester was Chester Blue Coat Primary School who finished in 2nd place.

New Age Kurling competition – Friday 11th February at Cardinal Newman School in Warrington. Representing Chester was Tarvin Primary (1st place) and Dorin Park School (2nd place and Spirit of the Games award).

Cheshire Schools Cup – Primary Football January 2022

St Martins won the U9 Girls.

Upton Heath won the U11.

Both will represent Cheshire at the regional finals.

CPD

1. Primary school teachers CPD in dance. Virtual CPD session with Eve Murphy. Tuesday 1st February. 11 schools in attendance.
2. 60 Active Minutes virtual CPD session. Wednesday 16th February. 6 attendees.
3. 60 Active Minutes CPD staff meeting at Saughall All Saints Primary School. Wednesday 2nd March.

MFL – Modern Foreign Languages

In MFL, curriculum maps have been reorganised in line with the 3-year KS3. In Years 7 and 8, we have included two foreign film units. Each film focuses on specific cultural aspects of the relevant country and links directly to our wider school curriculum. Students will be able to produce their own film reviews for each.

In Year 9, we have woven some of our popular but outgoing Culture course into the new language curriculum. Students will spend some time learning about and researching the wider Spanish or French-speaking world, making comparisons to the UK. Many of the topics visited will link with other curriculum areas. Examples include Mexican mariachi bands, Colombian street art, African music and an array of national parks, waterfalls, volcanoes etc.

Students will be fully prepared for embarking upon the GCSE course and we are mindful that this will now need to be more succinctly delivered over 2 rather than 3 years.

Schemes of work have been written for all Years 7-11 and these will function as working documents. Amendments will be made as necessary, following regular departmental review.

Our Primary initiative continues to prove very successful at Dee Point and Highfield and we are currently awaiting the outcome of a bid, to secure its further development.

LOTC opportunities are a priority for MFL as we move out of covid restrictions and the team are looking to reward our language stars and best learners in the summer term, with local foreign restaurant trips.

Science

Science Week

British Science Week 2022 is upon us and students across each year group will be celebrating the event linked to this year's theme of 'growth'. Our students have shown immense resilience over the past two years and growth will be no stranger to them on a number of levels. The Science department are excited to encapsulate growth in all of its interpretations with a range of activities. Year 7 will enter the British Science Week national poster competition, designing posters on the theme of growth, from personal growth to growing herbs, fruits and vegetables at home. Prizes include RAF Shop vouchers, Biography Picture books and Robots. In addition, Professor Peter Strong from Sheffield Hallam University will host a virtual talk on Venomous Animals feeding the imagination and opening the minds of our youngest scientists at the school.

Year 8 will be planting their own seeds, developing their green fingered skills and their understanding of the science behind our wonderful botanical world. Students will be able to care for their newly founded gardens for the remainder of the year and with spring just around the corner we are expecting a Blacon High Jungle to be in place fairly soon. British Science Week also coincides with Mars Week 2022 with Year 9 students listening through a talk lead by Dr Becky Smethurst, on engineering in space and how STEM is pivotal to the success and completion of space walks on the International Space Station.

Our senior students in Year 10 and 11 will have an activity to complete in each of their science specialisms. Biologists will be looking at how bacteria and life can grow on other planets and whether we are alone in the Universe, Physicists will be building sky scrapers from spaghetti and marshmallows growing their small-scale cities and the Chemists are going to look into the science of rocket fuel. We are all very excited about British Science Week and hope to give the students of Blacon High School a week to remember.

Women in Engineering and Construction Event

Friday the 4th March saw 10 Year 9 and 10 girls travel to Coleg Cambria in Wrexham accompanied by Mr Evans to celebrate and promote a Women in Engineering day. During the day the girls had hands on experience with courses on offer such as Joinery, Metal work and Motor engineering. They were also given the chance to talk to a range of employers from around the North West with businesses as varied as Red Row Housing, The Royal Navy to Chartered Architects.

Science Club

The Science Club has continued to be well attended in the Spring term, which takes place every Thursday 3-4pm. Unfortunately some sessions have had to be cancelled due to the overlap with recent parents' evenings.

Students have had the opportunity to engage in a variety of practical activities including planting seeds and making lava lamps. The same students attend the club and they say they enjoy the variety of activities on offer. Students have even been asking to repeat some activities based on what they have previously experienced and enjoyed.

In the summer term, we have Chester Zoo coming in to do workshops with the Science Club based around sustainability and conservation. Every Thursday 3-4pm they will be hosting a series of ten

workshops from April to June, with the regular attendees of Science Club with a member of staff present (dates below).

Workshops are linked to the work Chester Zoo do in the UK and around the world to prevent extinction, and include hands-on activities and creative opportunities. The aim of the workshops is to reach students that would benefit from learning about conservation and might not get these kinds of opportunities otherwise. As part of this offer, they may potentially offer bursary places to 1 or 2 of the students for them to get involved in paid for courses at the zoo.

English

Yr10 Evening Trip to Chester Cathedral for a production of A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens



Mrs Lauryn Gibson-Tipping, KS3 Coordinator for English, took several of her top set Yr10 group to Chester Cathedral back in December 2021, following their study of the 19th Century text that they have read in addition to our set text, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. They thoroughly enjoyed the eerie production in the beautiful setting of our local cathedral and felt it really captured the story well.

KS4 Theatre Trip to the Palace Theatre in Manchester for a production of Willy Russell's Blood Brothers



Following the successful trip to see Blood Brothers at The StoryHouse in Chester last term, Miss Zara McFetridge, Second in the English Department, organised another trip to catch this show again at the Palace Theatre in Manchester last month (February). Our Yr10 students thoroughly enjoyed the show and all said how it supports their study of the text.

World Book Day: Thursday 3rd March 2022

Miss Alice Denny, English Teacher who has the responsibility of coordinating key events in English and promoting them across whole school, once again, organised a fantastic array of activities for this year's special World Book Day. (25th Anniversary of World Book Day). Not only did students all have an activity sheet to complete throughout the day, there was a fun activity in the library during break and lunch: *Blind Date with a Book*. Alice had wrapped up books, in plain brown paper with only a brief

description of what the book was about. Not only was it a way for students to be intrigued by only a hint of what book was inside, it was also a message about 'not judging a book by its cover' and therefore, not judging people at a first glance. Several students took part in this by taking books home to enjoy.



Literacy

Literacy across English continues to remain focused on key vocabulary and reading. This is a well-embedded practice across school where each half-term has a clear focus on key vocabulary for each new Scheme of Work and students complete key dictionary work to improve technical accuracy in spelling and comprehension.

The key words are selected carefully and are woven into the lesson plan over the weeks and revisited to ensure students begin to use these words in their own work.

Each KS3 group has a library lesson once per fortnight where there is a mixture of the following reading practices: independent reading of a book chosen by themselves, guided reading with a trainee/TA, 1:1 reading practice to develop fluency and guided reading as a class.

KS4 students are expected to start each lesson with 5 minutes of independent reading of a text of their choice or non-fiction material provided by the English Department. These resource include newspapers (First News/The Week) to develop cultural capital.

Furthermore, not forgetting writing skills – Team English are now all used to the new Ark Mastery Writing Programme where students are developing their technical accuracy in basics of writing and revisiting key subject terminology from KS1 and KS2 where grammar is concerned. All teachers report an improvement in extended writing in Years 7 and 8 and we feel that leading into the three-year KS3 programme, we will set the foundations for more accurate writers and this will be evidenced in GCSE outcomes.

Team English will continue to support literacy across whole school re: reading. It is thought that English Teachers will support through modelling reading lessons and being linked to a department where a 'Reading Champion' will be identified following Karen's CPD on reading across the curriculum.

Maths

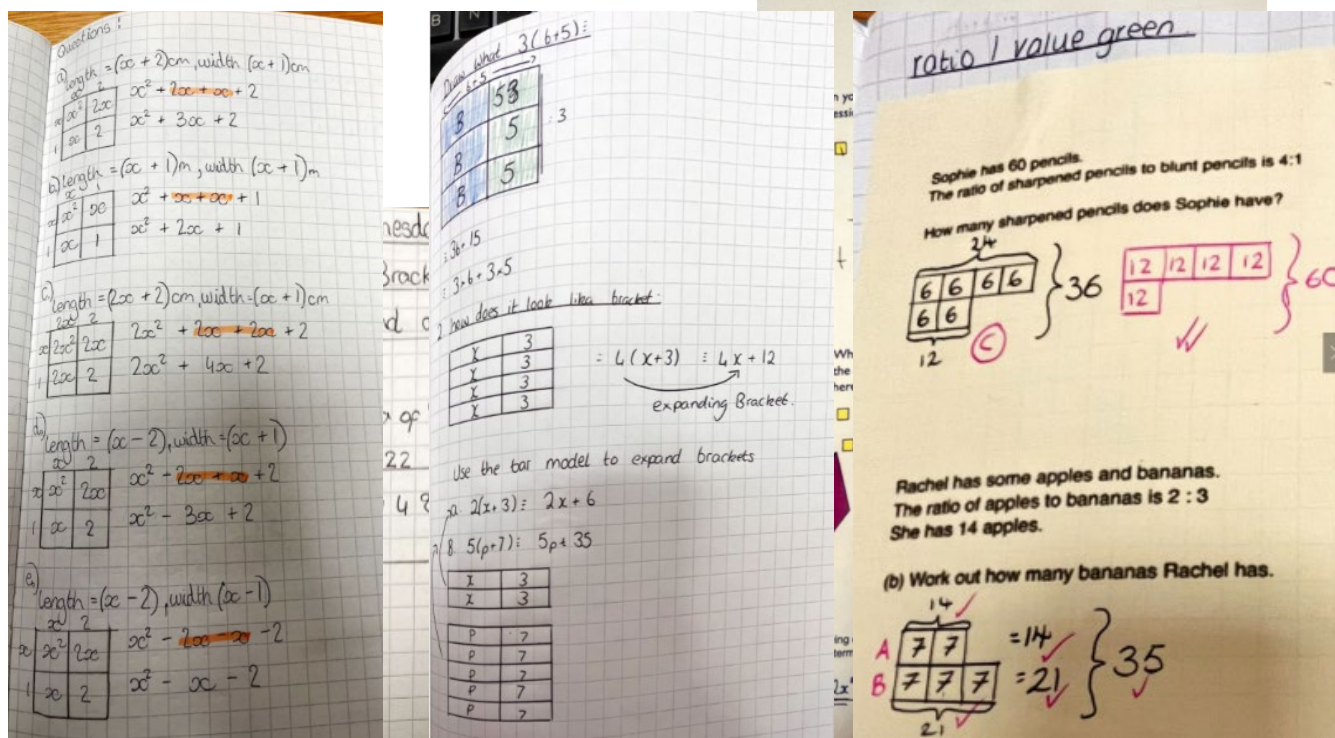
The Maths team are continuing with their mastery focus, working closely with the North West Maths Hub.

We are involved in three separate development groups this year:

1. **Subject Leaders** (Focus: Managerial implementation of new curriculum/methodologies) – *Head of Maths*

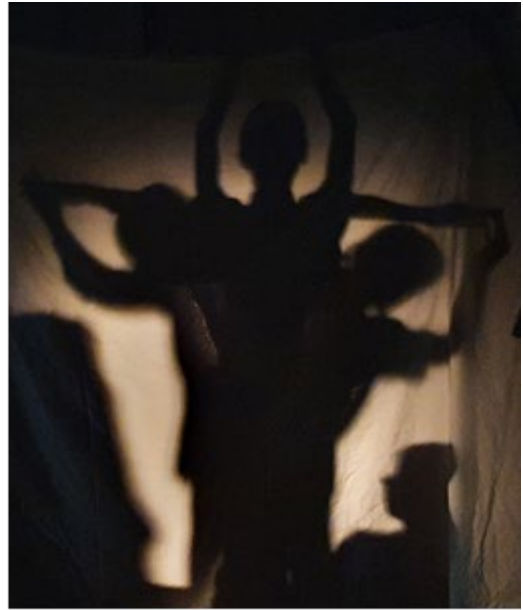
2. **Mastery Development Group** (Focus: Collaborative Planning/Trialling of new lesson structures) – *Head of Maths/Second in Maths*
3. **Mathematical Thinking Year 2** (Focus: Subject specific pedagogy) – Rhiannon Price & Joe Pedder.

The example of work has been taken from a range of classes, abilities and year groups, with a clear focus on representation and structure of key mathematical concepts. We are now using White Rose Maths resources and using these to help develop consistency across the department; supported through collaborative planning sessions during departmental meetings.



Performing Arts

Year 9 Performing Arts students have completed a creative and exciting piece of work using physical theatre in shadow performance. They demonstrated great resilience and creativity through a disciplined and practical approach and have secured a high standard of grades which will be used in their final submission of work at the end of the course. The focus of the work was to create performance using movement, light and sound.



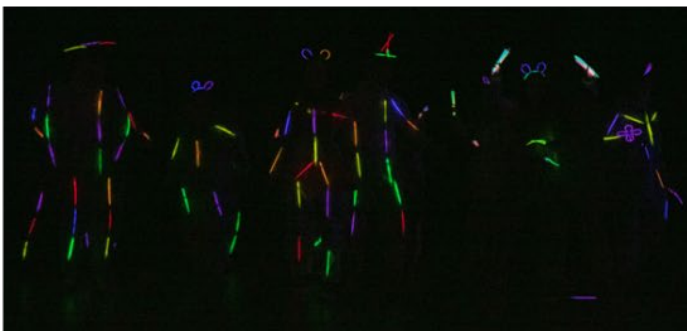
Mrs Salisbury took a group of Year 10 and Year 11 Performing Arts students to Storyhouse to watch a live performance of *The Wedding* by leading physical theatre company Gecko. The company features performers from countries around the world, who each perform in their own language, relying on movement and breath to convey their story. The students engaged in a Q&A session with the cast following the performance and were interviewed for Gecko's social media coverage of their tour. The following day, the students enjoyed a 3-hour physical theatre workshop from two of the company's leading practitioners, developing their performance skills and learning how to apply Gecko's methods to performance work.



Shakespeare's School Festival

Our talented year 10 and year 11 Performing Arts students performed in the Shakespeare Schools Festival on 15th February at the Floral Pavilion in New Brighton. Year 10 created tension and heightened emotions with their bloody and supernatural performance of *Macbeth*, shaped through intense and breath taking physical theatre techniques and focused stage combat skills, while Year 11 took the audience on a magical journey through the woods, with the help of fairies and glow sticks,

as they presented the story of A Midsummer Night's Dream through dance, storytelling and comedy. Two of our Performing Arts design students took on the roles of lighting and sound technicians and programmed the cues for Macbeth under the guidance of the theatre's professional technicians. Mrs Salisbury was delighted with the performances and extremely proud of our students, who showed great resilience and pride in representing our school in their first public performance in two years. In recognition of their hard work, excellent grades and professionalism in working in a national theatre, our creative performers were all rewarded with a Domino's after-show pizza party. Students attained secure grades for the workshops, rehearsals and performances which will lead to their final grades at the end of the course.



International links

Mr Stockdale remains in close contact with colleagues in the Vasil Levsky High School in Karlovo, our twinned school in Bulgaria. There is discussion around the feasibility of running a student exchange during this year, but Bulgarian schools are still facing a level of restrictions due to Covid, so it may not be possible. Despite this, communication is frequent with both sides committed to the relationship between the two schools. Ms Mancheva, head teacher at the Vasil Levsky High School, is more than happy for the exchange visits to recommence as soon as it is possible.

Student Parliament

The Student Parliament has been active during the year.

Four Year 11s from the Student Leadership Team visited The King's School in Chester on 2nd March to attend a planning session with other schools from the 'Chester Schools Together' affiliation. Chester University is hosting a 'Diversity and Inclusion' conference on 29th April that is aimed at Year 9 students from schools across the Cheshire West and Chester authority and the purpose of the planning meeting was to:

- bring students together from four Chester secondary schools to work in groups to discuss and promote Diversity and Inclusion
- Increase knowledge of various strands of Diversity and Inclusion
- Embed on-going projects promoting Diversity and Inclusion in all four schools

All the other schools at the planning meeting fielded representatives from both their lower and upper sixth forms but, as we have come to expect, our students were well received, had some great suggestions and contributed well to the cross-school groups that they worked in.

Along with their peers from the Chester Schools Together alliance, all four students will help to lead events at the Diversity and Inclusion conference in April. The Chester Schools Together alliance is a developing relationship that started in 2019 but has, necessarily, been less of a priority during Covid. However, it is an important opportunity for our students to work collaboratively with peers from across the authority.

Our two head students, Max Jones and Alisha Karabacak continue to lead discussion and chair the debates for the BEV Democracy group, which meets once every half term. The BEV Democracy Group is in its sixth year but, like almost everything else, has been affected badly by Covid and meetings between Blacon High School and representatives from the five primary schools in Blacon continue to be virtual. It is hoped that face to face meeting will resume before the end of the school year. Student Parliaments representatives from Year 7 join the debate.

Student representatives from across all year groups have been involved in the process for English, Science and Humanities appointments. As usual, they interviewed candidates as part of the selection process and, although they may not have the language to communicate their findings in the same way, prove to be extremely astute in their judgement of candidates.

Year 11s from the Student Leadership Team continue with the peer-mentoring programme, meeting with KS3 students once a week during tutor time to support basic skills (English and Maths) and emotional and social. These are lively sessions and mentors and mentees are both happy to take part.

The Bursary Programme

The bursary scheme continues to have an impact on students in the school who can see that it offers a fantastic opportunity. They are aware of students from our school community who have gone through the process in previous years and who are now either in the workplace or are at university; this is a powerful promotional tool.

Once again the school has been successful this year in supporting students through the selection process for the bursary scheme, and two students have secured places for September 2022. They have now both been told the names of the schools they have been allocated to and are awaiting a convenient date to visit.

The selection process for students hoping to achieve places for September 2023 has just started and Mr Stockdale has hosted a Zoom meeting with potential candidates, their parents and carers. Parents and carers will now make the decision about whether they want to proceed to application before the selection process begins in earnest. Approximately twenty students were identified initially from their data, but there is always an element of self-selection and there are usually around six who complete the application forms and go forward for consideration from Springboard; I expect it will follow a similar pattern this year.

Rachel Hudson - Headteacher