

Bellahouston Academy

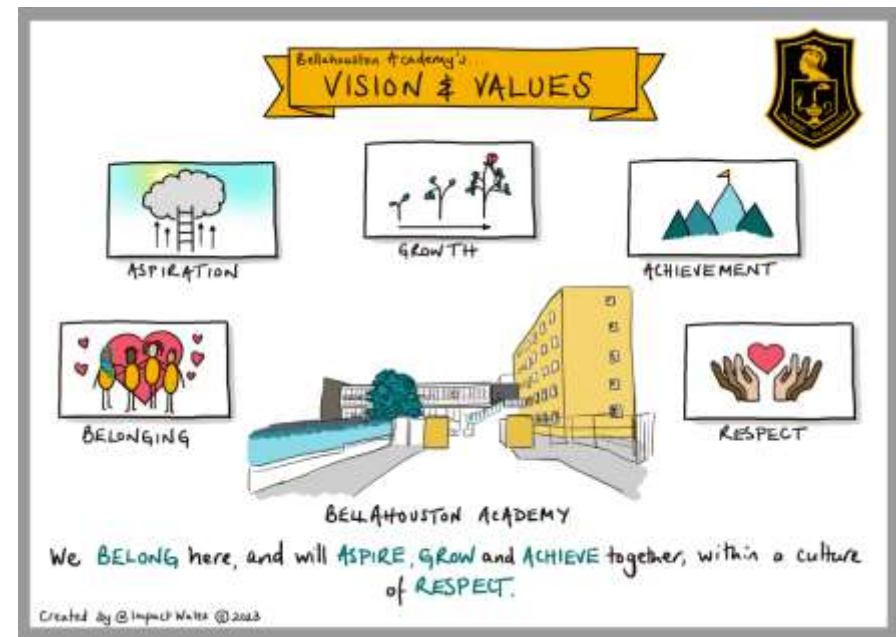
Headteacher's
Update
Sept-Oct 2024



One of our School Improvement Priorities for this session is to continue to develop the ways in which we communicate with our parents and carers; we want the families of our learners to feel welcome at Bellahouston Academy, to understand that their input is valued, to know what is happening at our school, and realise how they can support learning at home.


Following discussion with our Parent Council, we agreed that we would trial a regular Headteacher's Update. I hope that this, the first, gives you some insight into life at Bellahouston Academy, particularly if your child has just started in S1, and you are still getting to know our school.



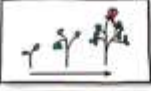


In session 2022-2023, our whole school community participated in a consultation activity, to revise our school's vision, values and aims so that they better reflected both the school that we are, and the school that we are striving each day to become. Our revised school values - Belonging, Aspiration, Growth, Achievement and Respect - were launched at the beginning of last session, and highlighted in the sketch-note below.



These revised values are reflective of the wellbeing indicators - Safe, Happy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included - highlighted within Scottish Government's Getting it Right for Every Child policy (GIRFEC); the overlaps between our values and these wellbeing indicators are made clear in a sketch-note below.



Bellahouston Academy's
SCHOOL VALUES and their links to GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD







	BELONGING	We INCLUDE everyone regardless of background or circumstances. Our school is a SAFE space where people are valued and RESPECTED .
	ASPIRATION	Bellahouston Academy is a place where we feel emotionally SAFE and optimistic. It is a place where hopes and expectations are encouraged and NURTURED .
	GROWTH	Every day is an opportunity to improve as learners and as people. We must be RESPONSIBLE for our own determination to ACHIEVE . We should be ACTIVE , so we can be physically and mentally HEALTHY .
	ACHIEVEMENT	We believe in equity. We INCLUDE everyone in our commitment to NURTURING skills and talents, and ACHIEVING the best possible qualifications and awards.
	RESPECT	Feeling RESPECTED and INCLUDED in our school helps us to feel emotionally SAFE and mentally HEALTHY . Each of us should feel RESPONSIBLE for ensuring others are RESPECTED .

In session 2022-2023, we also launched our Rights Respecting Schools Charter; at the time of writing, we have achieved our bronze award, and will be aiming to achieve silver soon. The links between our Charter rights (selected by our young people) and the school values are highlighted in a sketch-note below.

UNICEF Bellahouston Academy's RIGHTS & SCHOOL VALUES

<p>ARTICLE 2 - The Right to Non-Discrimination</p>  <p>We celebrate and are proud of our diversity, and will not accept prejudice, discrimination or bigotry. We all BELONG here, and will be RESPECTED.</p>	<p>ARTICLE 28 - The Right to Education</p>  <p>Education is key to unlocking our potential, and to ACHIEVEMENT. We expect every pupil to ASPIRE and GROW, both academically and in other areas related to the wider life of the school.</p>
<p>ARTICLE 19 - The Right to Protection from Violence/Abuse/Neglect</p>  <p>We must RESPECT the rights of everyone to enjoy a safe and supportive school environment, so that we can all GROW as learners and as people.</p>	<p>Article 12 - The Right to Respect for the Views of the Child</p>  <p>We are committed to ensuring that every pupil has the opportunity to give their views on matters which affect them; pupil views will be RESPECTED, so our young people develop a sense of BELONGING.</p>

I hope, as you read this update, you will see that our revised values are steadily becoming embedded in all areas of the work that we do.

Barry Mochan
Headteacher, Bellahouston Academy

Parental Involvement and Engagement Calendar

At the beginning of October, we issued a **letter** to parents and carers, highlighting the various ways in which we will interact with them throughout the session.



RESPECT

We want parents/carers to know how their child is progressing, and learn more about their child's experiences in the

classroom and in the wider school. We also want to empower our parents by giving them a voice in our continuing improvement journey; this reflects our school



BELONGING

values of Belonging and Respect, as we believe the views of those connected to the school deserve to be heard and actioned where possible.

The points of the session at which parent and carers can expect to hear from us about their child are identified in our Parental Involvement and Engagement Calendar. We hope that you can make it along to one of the many events taking place in our school this year; we are very much looking forward to working in partnership with you to support your child. At each of these events, we issue a QR code which allows you to access a satisfaction survey, so you can give us your views on how effective the event has been. We will use these views to plan for events which follow, so we can continue to improve these events over time.

Parental Involvement and Engagement Calendar 2024-2025

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5-S6
August-October	October: Settling-In Tracking Report 1	October: Settling-In Tracking Report 1	October: Settling-In Tracking Report 1	October: Settling-In Tracking Report 1	October: Settling-In Tracking Report 1
	7 th of October: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Transitions 19 th of August: Parent Council Meeting 16 th of September: Parent Council Meeting				
October Break					
October-December	23 rd of October: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Interdisciplinary Learning	November: Tracking Report 2 20 th of November: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Pathways December: Tracking Report 3	6 th of November: S3 Parents' Consultation Evening	November: Tracking Report 2 20 th of November: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Pathways 4 th of December: S4 Parents' Consultation Evening	December: Tracking Report 2 20 th of November: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Pathways
	13 th of November: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Supporting Adolescent Challenges (P7-S2)		29 th of October: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Study Skills		
	21 st of October: Parent Council Meeting 25 th of November: Parent Council Meeting				
	Parent Partnership Survey/Focus Group 1: Curriculum/Learning and Teaching				
Christmas Holidays					
January-April	February: Tracking Report 2	15 th of January: S2 Parents' Consultation Evening	March: Tracking Report 3	January: Tracking Report 3	January: Tracking Report 3
	19 th of March: S1 Parents' Consultation Evening 13 th of January: Parent Council 3 rd of March: Parent Council				
Spring Break					
April-June	May: Tracking Report 3		June: Tracking Report 3		
	12 th of May: Parent Council Meeting Parent Partnership Survey/Focus Group 2: Parental Involvement, Engagement and Communication				

On Monday the 7th of October, we had our **Transitions** Parental Information and Workshop event. We welcomed our S1 parents, and the parents of Primary 7 pupils at our associated primaries. Parents/carers and young people had the chance to see some classrooms, and hear about the learning which takes place there. In the Assembly Hall, they heard presentations from some senior staff members in the school.

On Wednesday the 23rd of October, our S1 parents were invited to our **S1 Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) Showcase** event. Pupils talked to parents about the S1 IDL activities they had undertaken in their first term at Bellahouston Academy, which promote our school values of Belonging and Respect.

On Tuesday the 29th of October, parents of pupils in S3-S6 attended our **Study Skills** evening,

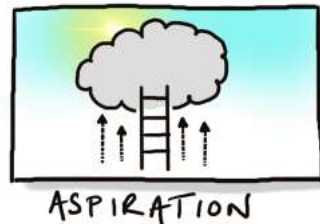
where Senior Pupils led workshops detailing the most helpful Study Skills they had

used in previous sessions, so that parents/carers and other pupils could benefit from their positive experiences.



School Improvement

We are very proud of our school, and want it to be the best it can possibly be, so that we are well prepared for whatever challenges the future might bring; as we value Aspiration, we believe that the school will always be on a continuous improvement journey.



Our School Improvement Plan Missions for this session are:

1. To raise attainment by embedding the equity-focused principles of our revised Curriculum Rationale and LEARN policy into our BGE and Senior Phase curricular offer and its delivery.

This means that the courses we deliver and the way in which we deliver them will meet the diverse needs of all pupils, so that they can achieve their best potential.

2. To better meet needs by embedding our revised Vision, Values and Aims, LEARN Policy and Rights Respecting Schools Charter

into all practice, so that we may deliver learning, wellbeing and inclusivity provision which is contextually-responsive.

This means that we will support the learning and wellbeing of all pupils, in a way which reflects the unique character of our school and the community it serves.

3. To develop - in a manner reflecting the key principles of the School as a Learning Organisation (OECD, 2016) - an increasingly consistent, collegiate and collaborative approach to quality assurance, self-evaluation and school improvement, and evaluate the impact of these approaches on the experiences of young people.

This means that all of those involved with the school - pupils, parents, staff and partners - will work together to make sure the support we offer makes a positive difference; we will offer the highest-quality professional learning to staff, and empower our pupils and parents so that all can participate effectively.

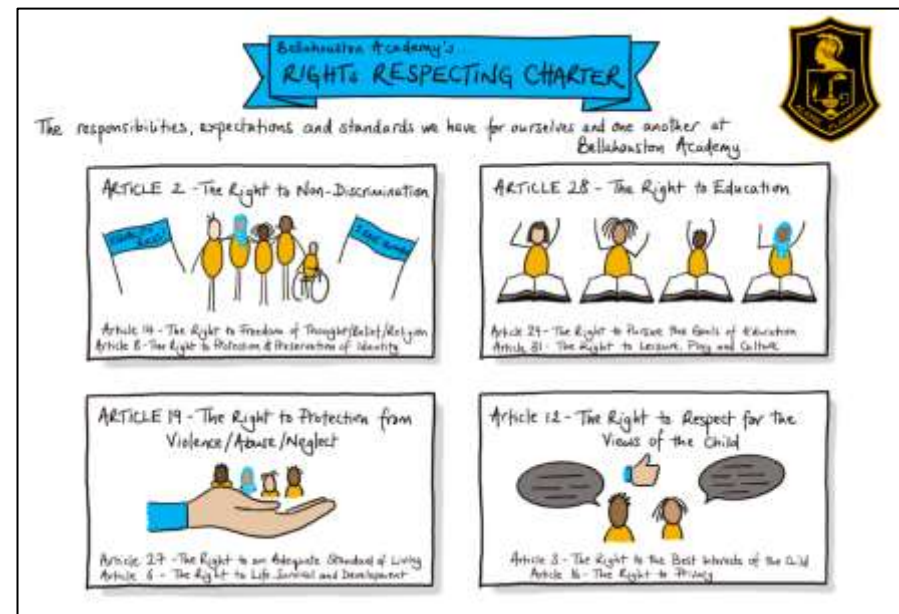
The full version of our **School Improvement Plan** for session 2024-2025 - which identifies the commitments we will make to ensure these missions become a reality - can be accessed on the school website, along with our **Standards and Quality Report** for Session 2023-2024, which details the successes we had achieved in delivering school improvement last session.

Pupil Empowerment

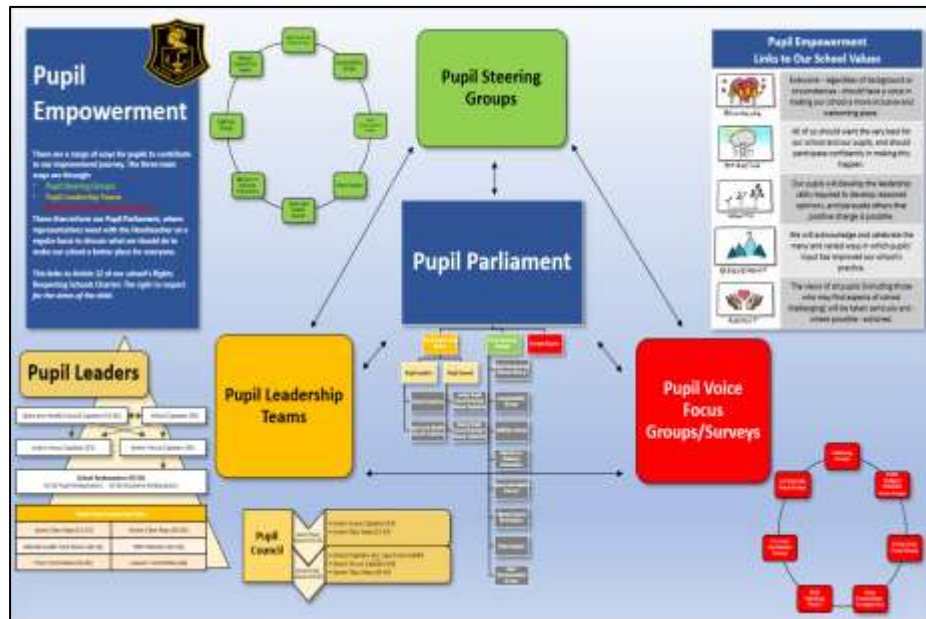
Last session, we developed our processes for ensuring that pupil voice played an important role in our school improvement journey, and were able to publish our new Pupil Empowerment Strategy at the end of the session. Our school value of Respect and our Rights Respecting School Charter articles (particularly Article 12 - The Right to Respect for the Views of the Child) mean that we encourage pupils to share with us their thoughts on what we do well, and how we can improve further. Our Rights Respecting Schools Charter is available as a sketch-note.



This is our UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Charter; in addition to promoting and embedding our vision, values and aims, our Pupil Empowerment Strategy gives us scope to involve our young people in the school's efforts to uphold the rights within our charter. The articles on which our charter focuses are drawn from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and were chosen by our young people.



Our Pupil Empowerment Strategy shows how our various Pupil Leadership Teams, Pupil Steering Groups, and Pupil Focus Groups/Surveys feed into our new Pupil Parliament; our Pupil Parliament gives young people the opportunity to participate in decision-making about our school's improvement priorities. The pupil representatives involved in our first Pupil Parliament co-created (along with the Headteacher and Mr Devlin, the staff co-chair) our Pupil Parliament's constitution, which describes the way in which this will work.



PUPIL COUNCIL IMPACT		
YOU SAID	VS	WE DID
Pegs for bags and jackets in the toilets		Mr Mochan has raised this with the improvement team.
More water fountains		Mr Mochan is looking into how viable this is.
Celebrate Achievements		Award ceremonies will be taking place during this year.
Celebrate Achievements		Merit scheme being fully embedded.
Hoodies for the Pupil Council		Agreed by Mr Mochan

Our Pupil Council, which is led by Ms Notman, meet on a monthly basis, are they are already able to identify some of the changes we are making, in light of their views this session.

We are hugely proud of the Bellahouston Academy pupils who - on behalf of Glasgow City Council Education Services - led focus groups at the Glasgow Primary Schools Forum on the 8th of October at the City Chambers, helping younger pupils make their voices heard in discussions about participation and inclusion. The organisers of the event had this to say about our wonderful pupils:

"Thank you for organising the young people to act as facilitators at the Primary Forum. They were all a credit to the school, families, and themselves. Many commented that the young people reacted well to them which is credit to how they interacted with their primary audience."

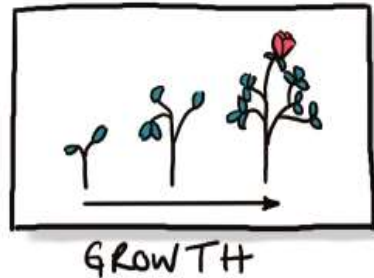
Once again, our Bellahouston Academy pupils have shown what a very special group of young people they are.



Curricular Enrichment

We refreshed our school's Curriculum Rationale at the end of last session, and our staff are keen to offer the most vibrant and engaging activities to supplement classroom learning.

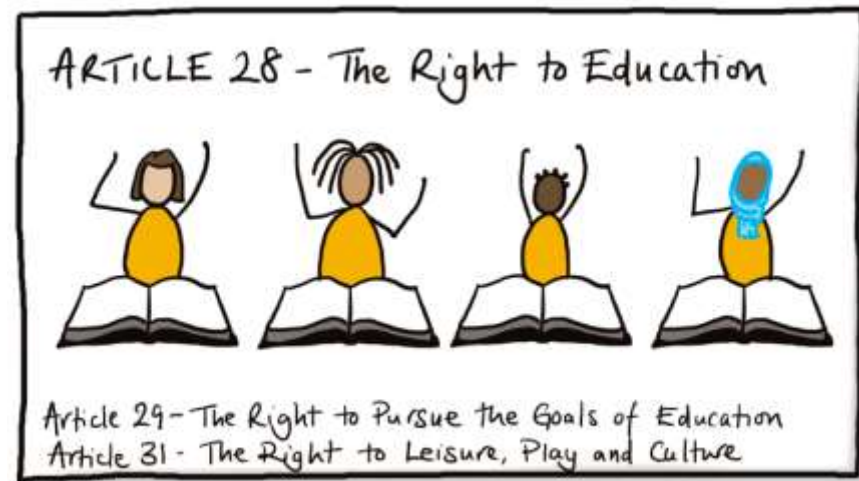
Our staff and our partner agencies offer a very wide range of curricular enrichment activities throughout the session, through excursions, clubs, events, and other activities. These activities are relevant to our value of Growth, in that they encourage young people to use the skills and knowledge they have learned in class in new and different ways, and connect this learning to other situations in a more independent way. They also allow young people scope to develop new skills and knowledge.



Curricular Enrichment is also relevant to our value of Belonging, in that it cultivates positive relationships between peers and staff, building confidence and independence, and our value of Achievement, in create it creates opportunities for wider achievement and, in some cases, alternative qualifications.



There is also relevance to some of the articles (specifically those related to Article 28 - The Right to Education) within our Rights Respecting Schools Charter.



Recently some of our young people have benefitted from a range of excursions and events:

One of Senior Phase RE classes visited a local **Sikh Temple**; this helped them to better understand the learning they have been undertaking in class about different cultures and faiths.

The Advanced Higher Chemistry students have just completed a four week practical chemistry course hosted by the **University of Glasgow**. The course was to enable pupils to gain a better understanding of the Advanced Higher Chemistry course and how to apply the theory learned in the classroom to laboratory based experiments. The experience gained here will enable our chemists to complete their Advanced Higher Practical projects far more easily in due course.

S3 Physicists have been to the **Glasgow Science Centre Flight Academy** where pupils were given the opportunity to utilise their knowledge of vectors and velocity to plan a simulated flight and rescue mission. The simulation took place using state-of-the-art facilities to allow the pupils to “fly” a light aircraft around the Norwegian coast to rescue the crew of a capsized vessel. Fortunately, our intrepid physicists were up to the challenge having studied Dynamics as part of the S3 physics course and a successful rescue ensued!

The Higher Human Biology classes undertook a pharmacogenetics practical at the **Glasgow Science Centre**, where they performed practical work to highlight the importance of using genetic information to better understand disease progression, and to

determine an individual’s most effective drug treatments and dosages.

Senior Pupils undertaking their Silver level qualification for the **Duke of Edinburgh's Award** undertook and overnight hiking and camping expedition in Blairgowrie; this helped them to put into practice, in an independent way, the skills they have learned.

A group of our Senior Phase travelled to **Edinburgh's Lyceum Theatre** to see a performance of "A Streetcar Named Desire", supporting their classroom learning in Higher Drama.

Our Higher Music class have recently delivered a well-attended **lunchtime concert**, showcasing the incredible standard of musicianship we have at Bellahouston Academy.

S1 pupils in the Modern Languages department took part in an event in the Assembly Hall to mark **European Day of Languages**, and celebrate the diverse range of cultures within our school community.

Our commitment to financial inclusion means that we do not ask young people to pay for excursions or events such as these.

You can read some more about our lunchtime and after-school clubs in the next section.

Wellbeing and Inclusion: Social Times

Moving to a bigger and busier Secondary School may feel quite daunting for some pupils in their first few weeks, particularly at social times (lunchtimes and intervals) when they are sharing corridors and social spaces with pupils from other year groups. To help pupils manage this transition and embrace of school value of

Belonging, we have a range of measures and supports in place to ensure that social times feel safe, calm and comfortable.



We have a **staff supervision rota**, so that multiple members of staff are in the Fuel Zone, corridor and playground areas at intervals and lunchtimes; this means that young people who might be experiencing challenges at these less structured times of the day can access support if it is required. Members of our Senior Leadership Team supervise the pupil toilet areas at intervals and at the beginning and end of lunchtime; this means that these spaces should always feel safe, clean, calm and hygienic for those who need to use them.

We also have a large group of senior pupils trained as **Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)**, who assist with corridor supervision, and ensure that younger pupils have a trusted person to go to in times of need; these senior pupils can be easily identified by the bright red hoodies they wear. These pupils also deliver lessons to younger pupils in PSHE, where they promote respect for one another, and make clear that violent, aggressive, and/or discriminatory behaviour should never be accepted in our school or in wider society.

Lots of different **clubs** are available at lunchtimes to cater for a wide range of needs, and to allow young people to develop new friendships with those who share the same interests; S1 pupils were given a taster session of these clubs at our recent Freshers' Fayre, and they are promoted regularly through the weekly bulletin, which is displayed at Tutor Time. Clubs on offer this session include:

Creative Writing Club; S1-S4 Football Club; S5-S6 Football Club; Anime Club; Book Club; Board Games Club; Calm Crafts Drop-In; and the Anti-Discrimination Group.

At intervals and lunchtimes, we also offer **Mental Health First Aid Safe Spaces**, for those who may be finding the day particularly challenging or overwhelming; in these spaces - which are run by trained staff and senior pupils - quiet activities promoting mindfulness and wellbeing can be undertaken.

At intervals, pupils can also visit our **Grub Hub**, which is run by our school's Youth Worker, Deborah McAuley in the school Social Area; here, pupils will have access to free snacks, if they require them.

We do not tolerate anti-social or bullying behaviour at social times, or any other time of the day; our school's **anti-bullying policy** is entitled We All Belong Here. It makes clear that we expect all pupils to make others feel welcome, valued and included, and gives examples of how pupils, staff and parents can work in partnership to address any instances of bullying behaviour.

This is our anti-bullying policy's advice for pupils:



This is our anti-bullying policy's advice for parents:



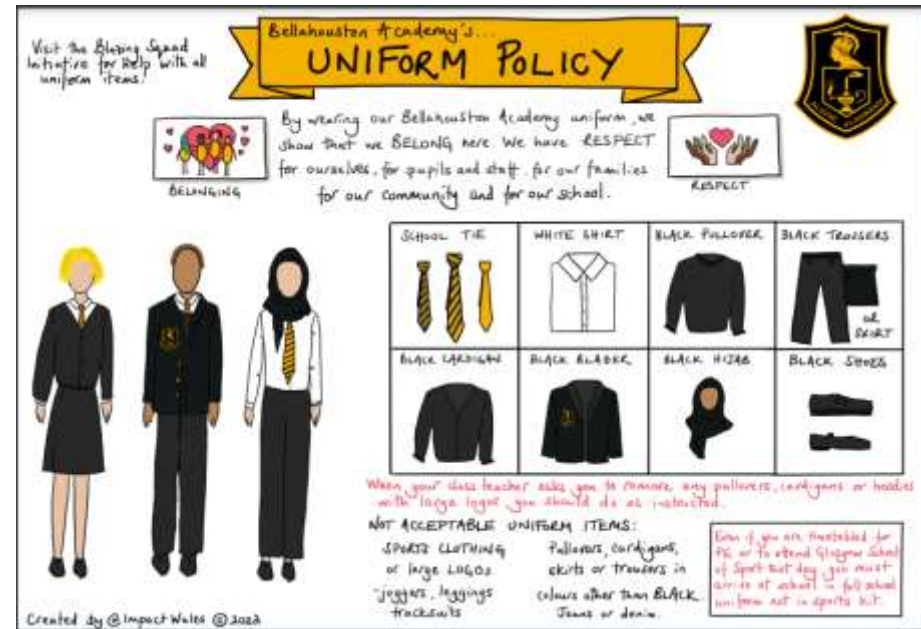
This is our anti-bullying policy's advice for staff:



Uniform

Feedback from our staff, parent and pupils tells us that our school community values the wearing of our uniform. We see uniform as being most relevant to our school values of Belonging and Respect; by wearing uniform, pupils show that they are proud to be a part of our school, and that they feel connected to our school community.

Uniform is also important in maintaining security and safety within the school and the local community; it is very easy to spot young people who are not pupils of Bellahouston Academy if they are the only ones not wearing our uniform.



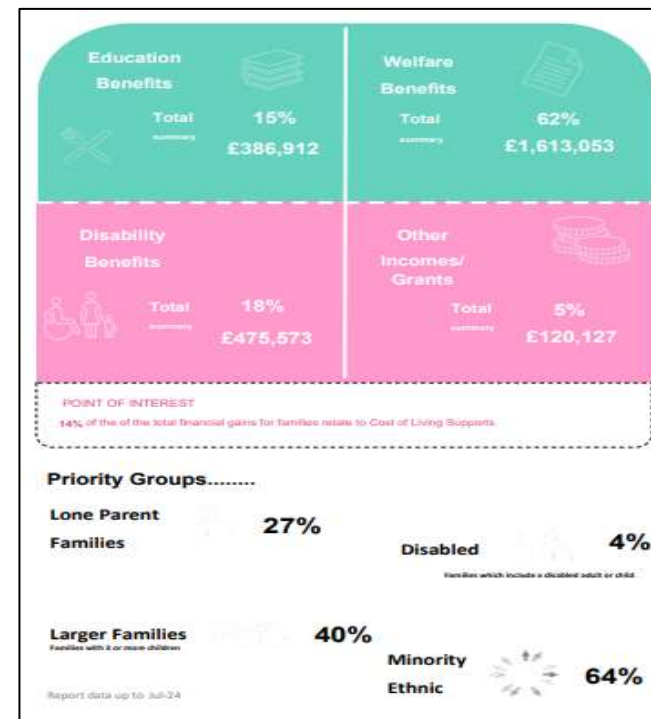
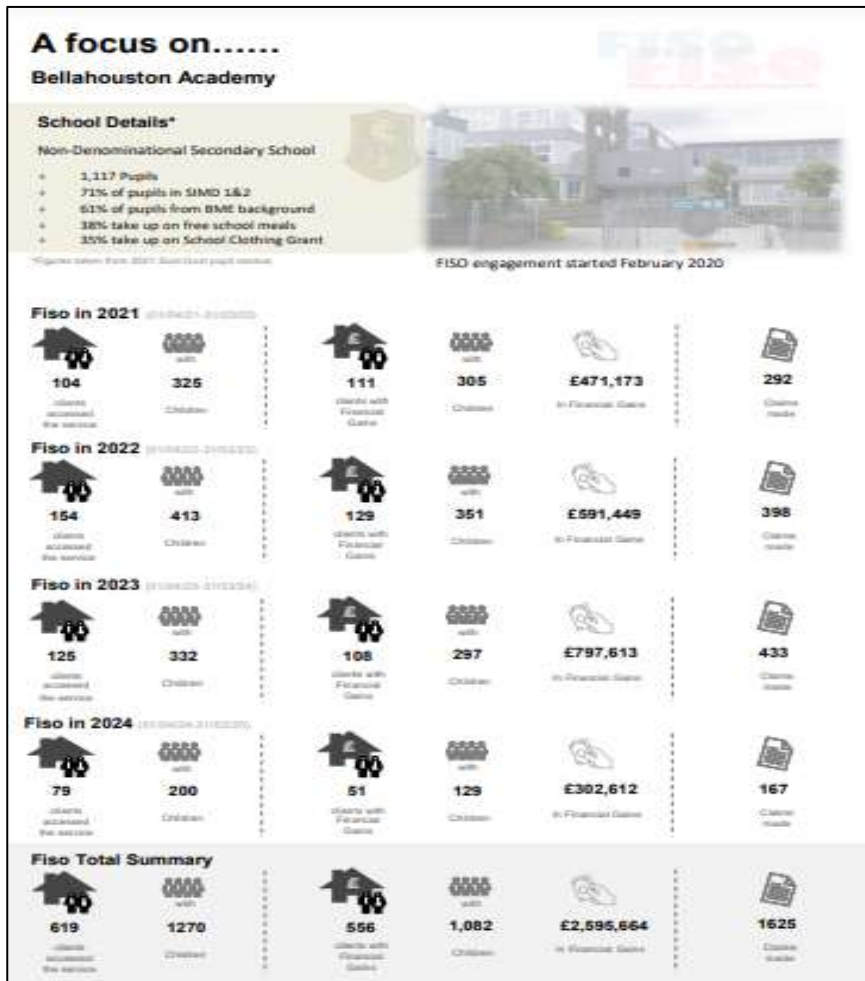
Whilst we never punish pupils who do not wear uniform, it is a shared expectation that all pupils will wear it; we focus on promoting our uniform policy's benefits for everyone, and on finding solutions to issues which may be preventing young people from wearing uniform: our Blazing Squad initiative, managed by Ms Mohammed and Ms Gibson in our Technologies Faculty, allows young people to borrow new or pre-loved uniform items; should financial



hardship cause difficulties, we direct parents towards our Financial Inclusion Support Officer, Sharon Graham, who has helped our families claim over £2 million in benefits and entitlements since her role was created in 2019.

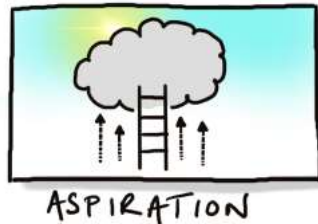


The vast majority of our young people wear uniform to school each day. However, a small number of pupils continue to wear jogging trousers to school, despite repeated reminders that these are not uniform items. Similarly, a small number of young people are arriving for school in PE kit or Glasgow School of Sport training kit (if they are scheduled to undertake a physical activity lesson during period 1), or are attending classes in sportswear (having not changed back into uniform following a physical activity lesson - either in PE or in the Glasgow School of Sport - earlier in the day). We would appreciate your support in reiterating the messages within our Uniform policy.



Supported Study

Our Supported Study programme for Senior Phase pupils has now started. This programme is intended to provide additional support for young people who may benefit, particularly in the lead-up to our assessment schedule in December. Our staff offer these Supported Study opportunities as they are very keen to invest time in our young people so that they strive to achieve their potential; this reflects our school value of Aspiration.



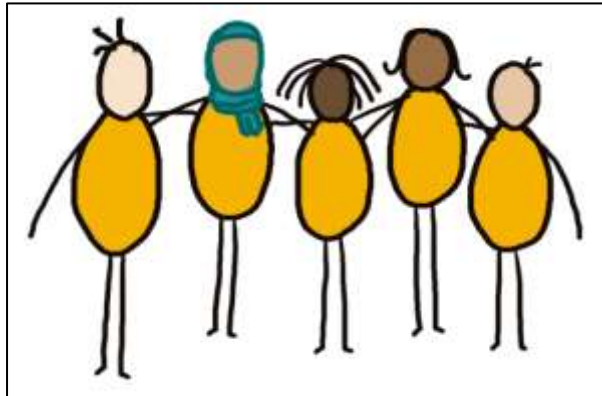
The Supported Study schedule can be accessed via the school website.

Young people are encouraged to prioritise subjects where they may be finding aspects of the course more difficult. It would be appreciated if you could encourage your child to attend and take advantage of the support on offer.

House Group System

In June 2024, we made some improvements to our current House Group System. We

established House Teams, which are comprised of a Principal Teacher of



Pastoral Care, and a House Group Depute Headteacher, who are supported by Tutor Teachers, Junior and Senior House Captains, Class Representatives, and S5-S6 Pupil Ambassadors.

Pupils attend Tutor Time (8.50am-9.00am) in House Group classes of mixed year groups

Mull Iona Arran Skye



(from S1-S6) so that our House Team Pupil Ambassadors can - on a daily basis - support younger pupils in meeting standards and expectations regarding attendance/time-keeping, bringing iPads and other materials, uniform, etc.

We consulted with parents at a Parent Council meeting last session, with pupils, and with the staff most directly affected by this change, and identified the following benefits of the changes we were making:

Our House Teams would promote ethos and the school values by developing positive House Group identities;

PTPCs and DHTs in each House Team would, on a regular basis, meet together to discuss the progress of pupils within their House Groups. This more streamlined approach would allow us to follow-up swiftly and effectively on any identified issues regarding academic achievement, attendance/time-keeping, merits/de-merits, etc.

These House Teams would develop more lasting relationships with their caseload of young people (and parents/carers), as they will work with the same group of pupils (and parents/carers) throughout their time at Bellahouston Academy. Pupils (and parents/carers) would no longer be passed

from one Year Group DHT to the next at the end of a school session.

Parents/carers with children in different year groups would work with one House Group DHT (not up to four Year Group DHTs)

We now have a House Group Assembly programme, so that key messages and expectations regarding attendance, punctuality, and uniform can be communicated to our young people on a regular basis.

If you wish to speak to a member of staff about your child, your first contact would usually be with a member of their House Team. A reminder of our current House Teams is given on the next page.

	Arran	Iona	Mull	Skye
PTPC	Ms S. <u>Dadgostar</u> (Acting)	Ms L. Kennedy	Ms A. Summers (Mon-Tues) Mr M. <u>Ruiseil</u> (Weds-Fri)	Ms S. Rashid
DHT	Mr S. <u>Atha</u> (Acting)	Mr M. Macdonald	Ms C. Cutler	Ms L. Galloway

Partner Agencies

Over the last few sessions, we have gradually built up our Partner Agency Team. These partners offer targeted support to young people who might benefit from additional help, supplementing the support delivered by our teaching staff.

Our Partner Agencies work together in The Hub, which is located beside the Pastoral Care office and near to the offices of the Senior Leadership Team. This means that our Partner Agencies are in regular contact with House Teams, so that young people who might benefit from targeted support are identified by the people who know them best, and can be provided with the help they need. This reflects our school value of

Growth; we believe that all young people, regardless of any barriers they may face, can make progress with the correct support.

Currently, the following Partner Agency colleagues are working with us on a day-to-day basis in The Hub:

- Deborah McAuley - FARE Youth Worker
- Paula Di Bona - Home School Support Worker
- Sharon Keenan - Developing the Young Workforce
- PC Jaz Ahmed - Campus Police Officer
- Ish Khan - MCR Pathways Co-ordinator
- Isabella Ellwood - Paths for All
- Tamla Feeney and Alison McLean - Skills Development Scotland.

Our School Community

Our school has a long and proud history of serving our diverse catchment in the southside of Glasgow. In fact, in 2026, our school will celebrate its 150th anniversary.

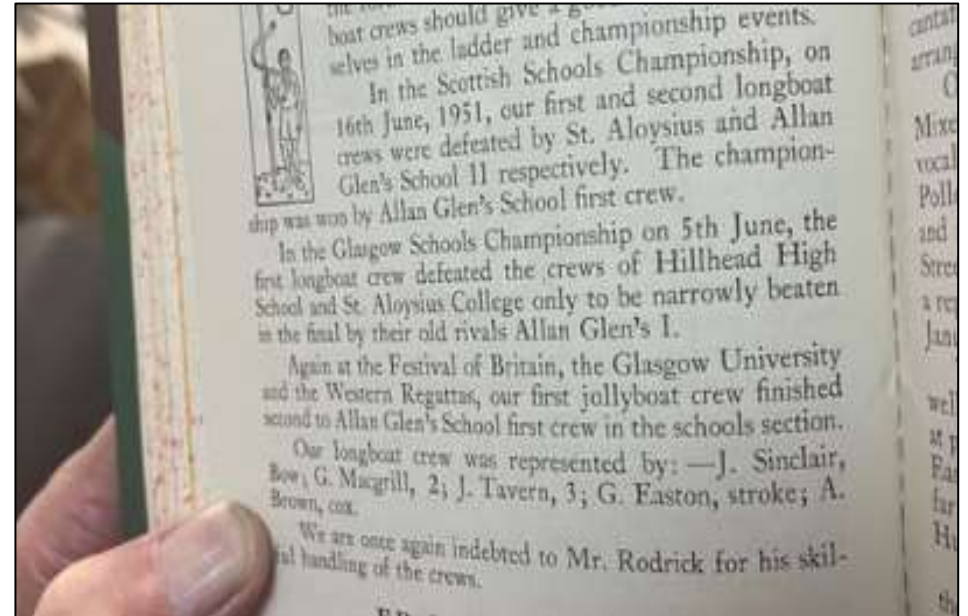


On occasion, we are visited by former pupils who wish to reminisce about the happy times they spent at Bellahouston Academy as pupils. Earlier this month, we were delighted to be visited by Mr George Magrill, who was a pupil at Bellahouston Academy in the 1950s. He now lives in Canada, but visited us whilst he was on a family trip to Scotland.

Mr Magrill enjoyed a tour of the school with members of his family, and was given some mementos of his visit.



We were able to find a mention of Mr Magrill who was a member of our rowing team - in one of the school magazines we keep in our archive.



Special Achievements

In each Headteacher's Update, we will celebrate the many achievements of our young people and staff; these successes are a result of hard work and resilience, and we are very proud of those within our school community who have shown the dedication required to achieve.



Two of our S3 Glasgow School of Sport pupils won the bronze medal in the Men's Doubles event at the recent **European Badminton Championships**.

Two of our S6 pupils presented research posters at a prestigious event in Glasgow University, having successfully completed

Nuffield Research Placements over the summer break.

Pupils from across various year groups have made this session's first **Merit List**.



A group of our pupils were successful in the recent **UK Maths Challenge**.

Two of our S3 pupils were selected by the National Theatre of Scotland to appear in their next production of **Thank U, Next**, a show developed and performed at our school last session



Key Dates

October is a busy month, and the following key dates may be of interest:

Tuesday the 2nd and Thursday the 4th of October: Child Flu Vaccinations

Week beginning 7/10/24: Issue of S1-S3 Settling-In Tracking Report

Monday the 7th of October: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Transitions (P7 and S1)

Friday the 11th of October: In-service Day (Pupils not in School)

Monday the 14th of October-Friday the 18th of October: October Holiday

Week beginning 21/10/24: Issue of S4-S6 Settling-In Tracking Report

Wednesday the 23rd of October: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Interdisciplinary Learning (S1)

Tuesday the 29th of October: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Study Skills (S3-S6)

Other key dates for later in the term are:

Monday the 4th and 11th of November: S1 Mental Health Workshops

Wednesday the 6th of November: S3 Parents' Consultation Evening

Wednesday the 20th of November: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Pathways

Wednesday the 13th of November: Parent Information and Workshop Event: Supporting Adolescent Challenges

Monday the 25th of November: Parent Council Meeting

Monday the 25th of November: School Panto (Merit List Rewards Activity)

Wednesday the 27th of November: Winter Concert

Monday the 2nd of December: Beginning of Senior Phase Assessment Diet

Monday the 9th of December: Senior Phase Assessment Diet Study Leave

Wednesday the 4th of December: S4 Parent Consultation Evening

Friday the 20th of December: School Closes for Christmas Holidays

We hope that you have found this first edition of the Headteacher's Monthly Update an enjoyable read.