



Balerno High School

A community built on strong relationships
and a commitment to success

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Head Teacher: Ros Ranger

Headteacher Update 11th September 2023

Staffing

As always, at the start of the academic year we have a number of staffing changes. These include:

- Evonne O’Doherty – DHT Curriculum and House Head for Cockburn
- Cara Prot – Acting DHT 2 days a week
- Rachel Ponder - Acting CL Maths and Business 2 days a week
- Gemma Anderson - Teacher of History and Modern Studies
- Kirsty Templeton – Learning for Sustainability lead (1 morning per week)
- Kate St Clair-Ford - Teacher of RMPS
- Jack Hardie - Teacher of Art & Design
- Stephanie Jack – Teacher of English (probationer)
- Margaret Pendreigh – Teacher of Business (Friday only)
- Hannah Vair- PSA
- Aliz Balogh – PSA
- Rosella Maucione - PSA
- Jemma Black- School Support Assistant in HFT
- Jacqui Kay – an additional School Counsellor (part-time)
- Sandra Boyd - has stepped down from her position in HFT
- Jonathan Coulson – moving to North Berwick HS Mon-Wed to take up the post of PT Expressive Arts 3 days a week, Jonathan remains with us on a Thursday and Friday.
- Shannon MacMillian – now full time permanent in Drama
- Martyn Howard – has taking up a Biology post at Tynecastle HS
- Jen Williamson – leaving us to take up a position in the NHS.
- Tony Currie is our new QIEO for the Learning Community
- Currently we have 2 live adverts for HFT.



School Events

Senior Phase Curriculum Evening – 24th August 2023

This busy evening offered parents and carers an opportunity to find out about subjects their child is undertaking in S4/5/6.

Some of the feedback included the following strengths:

- Useful to get an overview of the course content, expectations and how final exam is broken down.
- Very well organised- seamless. Informative sessions with ample question time. Thank you.
- Clear information about exam, folio (including weighting of marks), suggested supports.
- Opportunity to attend all subjects (for Nat 5) and info on e-Sgoil etc
- Teachers were all well prepared with their presentations, the event was well organised.
- Hearing about the curriculum and the teachers all said we could contact the school if we have any concerns or questions. It was a friendly and informative evening. We also enjoyed meeting the careers advisor.

S1 Welcome Evening – 30th August 2023

The evening was split into two sessions due to the rising roll. Parents and carers had the opportunity to learn more about the school and Mrs Nitsche, Mr May and Mrs Ponder provided information on Literacy, Health and Wellbeing and Numeracy.

Some of the feedback included:

- It was all useful. Lots of positives and ongoing improvements were evident.
- Different sessions covering key topics was useful - holding it soon after starting rather than pre-summer also helpful. Smaller session / room and chairs available also appreciated. Staff who presented were very welcoming and informative. Particularly enjoyed the Maths presentation, found her to be very engaging and passionate about her subject.
- The school's leadership effort to connect with parents and to keep us informed. It was good to hear about the communication and in what format parents can access this. The padlet is really good.
- As an S1 parent with a child at another school, I have been extremely impressed by Balerno and the communication. It's very refreshing and goes a long way to easing my concerns of my child being at the school. Well done to the staff who were very professional and helpful on the evening. Your care and nurture shines through in your enthusiasm!



P7 Open Evening – 5th September 2023

Over 200 young people, parents and carers attended the event last Tuesday.

We were delighted to welcome everyone and amended the format to take into account feedback from last year.

Some of the feedback included:

- Very organised and informative
- We enjoyed the chance to have a look around the different departments, our S6 guide was really helpful.
- Great idea, worthwhile session. Thanks to staff and pupils for their efforts. My P7 now has an idea of what the building is like inside and also what goes on in classes.
- Thank you to all the staff and young people that gave up their time to host the event.

Upcoming Events

Academic Awards Ceremony – 12th September 2023

We look forward to celebrating the academic success of our young people tomorrow evening.

Rory Mackenzie, former Headteacher, will be our keynote speaker.

Jeans for Genes Day – 15th September 2023

Our Senior Pupil Team have organised this event, one of our three dress down days in the year.

Christopher Cowe Memorial Football Match – 26th September 2023

This now annual fixture will fund raise for CRY, Cardiac Risk in the Young in memory of Christopher Cowe.

Other information

Our Balerno Way...dressing for excellence.

Many thanks to all parents and carers for your support with school uniform.

We are extremely impressed with the level of engagement by our young people and see a notable difference.



S1-3 Leadership event

All S1-S3 pupils had the opportunity visit stalls to find out about clubs and leadership opportunities they could join.

These included:

- House and Inclusion Groups
- Digital ambassadors
- Sports clubs
- Pupil Council
- Netball Club
- Hockey Club
- RRSA
- Equalities
- LGBT Charter Champions
- School Newspaper
- Wellbeing
- STEAM
- DYW
- Horrible Histories Club

International excursions

We are planning for 6 international excursions from January 2024.

The staff involved are currently working on the stage 1 CEC paperwork to gain approval and once this has been received, we will be able to share the full program.

Many thanks for your ongoing patience.

Extra-curricular clubs 2023-24

Our full program for extra-curricular clubs will be shared this week and will be available on the padlet.

Supported Study 2023-24

Cara Prot is currently finalising our offer; it will be shared this week and will be available on the padlet.



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Opportunities Fund

We are currently finalising the paperwork to enable parents/carers to apply for up to £150 per year to support with club fees and excursions. Our annual sponsored walk with top up this fund on an annual basis.



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