



# Prospectus Detail 2024/2025

Dear Parent/Carer

The time has come to choose a high school for your child - a time that seemed far off when they were born, but it is here already! It is one of the biggest decisions that you will make. However, I hope that you will see why Balshaw's has been the school of choice in Leyland since 1782.

The important thing is to get a sense of the community at Balshaw's and the strength of the relationships. Our deeply rooted Christian values are key drivers to the success of the school and how we interact with each other.

If choosing a high school was as simple as looking at student outcomes, OFSTED and SIAMS reports, or DfE league tables, then choosing Balshaw's as your child's high school would be easy. But it's not just about labels and good exam results. You want to be assured that your child will be known and cared for, you want to know how students and staff work together, what extra-curricular opportunities there are and you want to know what the atmosphere is like to be a student in this school.

The primary aim of our school is to create students, whatever their faith or world view, who will be able to go into the world and reflect Christ's love through their actions to make the world a better place. Great outcomes are a happy by-product of this moral commitment to their education as we light their path to excellence through our Christian vision and its values. You can read more about our Christian distinctiveness later in this booklet.

Balshaw's blends traditionally high standards of uniform, attendance, behaviour expectations and manners with an innovative approach to learning in which every student at the school has a laptop device which parents buy into so that your child can work in a blended learning environment. Our standards are applied rigorously at Balshaw's and we follow our policies clearly and unambiguously to ensure that we are firm, but fair, in the way that we treat all of our students.

Our parents say:

*"The support and encouragement offered by his teachers and the leadership has ensured that he has received a top class education. It is daunting trying to choose a high school when your children are in year 5/6. We are so glad that we chose Balshaw's and know that we made the right decision."* (Year 11 Parent)

*"It is no exaggeration to say that he is a changed boy. He is happy and settled at Balshaw's and this has meant a noticeable gain in confidence meaning that he takes more responsibility, is happier and has made new friends. Your staff have positively affected an entire family, not just the pupil."* (Year 7 Parent)

I hope that you will feel a sense of 'coming home' when you enter our school and realise that it is the body of people motivated by Christian love that is the strength of the Balshaw's family.

Mr Steve Haycocks  
**Headteacher**

**Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path (Psalm 119, vs 105)**

**Lighting the path to excellence through Christian vision and values  
Forgiveness Friendship Humility Kindness Love Patience Truth Respect**

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## Celebrating Our Achievements

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### Awards

- Diocesan Inspection declared us to be an Excellent Church School 2019
- Judged to be a Good school by Ofsted where leaders are ambitious for all students and teachers have high standards for students' academic achievement and their behaviour
- The first Secondary School in the county to receive Race Equality Award
- The school is recognised by The Schools' Network as a High Performing Secondary School
- The Business and Computing Department is a Computing at School 'Community of Practice' Network
- A number of teaching and support staff have had excellent work recognised with national awards
- Dominate across the district in all areas of sport
- South Ribble Rotary Technology Tournament: Our Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students took part in the event
- Pilot partners with CAMHS on developing early intervention to support students and families
- Students have led on Lancashire MH:2K Mental Health and Diversity Project
- Best practice partner for The Parliamentary Review
- Awarded the Achievement for All Quality Mark
- Following on from previous successes, our English-Speaking Union Public Speaking Teams got through to the regional finals in 2024. Our Public Speaking Teams also found success at Rotary Youth Speaks; winning in both the Intermediate and Senior sections, winning Best Chair in both sections, Best Speaker in the Intermediate section and Best Vote of Thanks in the Senior section. Our Year 9 public speaking team won the inaugural Great Lancashire Debate organised by Lancashire County Council in 2023
- Our Eco Council achieved the Eco Council School Green Flag Award with Merit for 2023-24. Attended the NW Eco-Schools Sustainability Conference at Blackburn Rovers' Ewood Park Football Club. The Year 7 team won the Production Line Challenge and the Year 8 and 9 students were involved in the STEM Challenge winning the best logo design. We have also installed new solar panels to our school roof as a result of successful lobbying of LCC for funding by the Eco Group



## Personal Achievements of Some Students and Former Balshavians

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- Liv Cooke: UK's first female professional freestyler, freestyle football World Champion and seven times World Record Holder. In June 2023, it was reported in a BBC news article, that Liv secured her 7<sup>th</sup> world title by landing 76 sit-down alternating crossovers with a football on a cruise ship in Barcelona. Liv was a Champions League Match Day Reporter and UEFA Ambassador. She appeared in a Channel 4 advert promoting the UEFA Women's Soccer Championships in the Netherlands. She previously competed in the 2015 World Freestyle Football Championships. In 2016 Liv appeared in a BBC3 documentary and achieved 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the world championships in Melbourne. Liv visited school in September 2021 to meet our students and promote her book 'The Way to Win'
- Philip Jones: former Manchester United player with 169 appearances for the team and played in the World Cup for England. He has been involved with the Manchester United Youth Teams and started a Global Football Sport Directorship Course
- Clarke Carlisle: former professional footballer who has appeared on Countdown and TV programmes on racism and depression. A former Chairman of the Professional Football Association and wrote a book 'You Don't Know Me, But ... A Footballer's Life' and has worked with UCLan to develop a specialist mental health advocacy course
- Marian Clayden: textile artist and designer to the Hollywood stars. Retrospective exhibition at the Harris Gallery and Museum 2014
- Margaret Maughan: won GB's first Paralympic gold medal in 1960
- Kim Libreri: won an Academy Award in 2015 for Technical Achievement. Worked on many films including Star Wars: The Force Awakens. Nominated for many other awards and has worked with the Lucasfilm companies since 2004. Kim presented prizes at our Awards Evening 2016. He is a part of the team behind the cult game 'Fortnite'
- Professor Sir John Lawton: a British ecologist, RSPB Vice President, President (former Chair) of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, President of The Institution of Environmental Sciences, Chairman of York Museums Trust and President of the York Ornithological Club
- Danny Mayor: former player for PNE and Sheffield Wednesday. Currently plays at Fleetwood Town
- Michael Douglas: Former *One Show* hairdresser and has been in the hair industry for 35 years. Michael previously visited our Fairtrade Fashion Show and presented prizes at Speech Night in November 2014. Michael also took part in Celebrity Googlebox on Channel 4
- Tom Bidwell: nominated for an Oscar in 2011 and a BAFTA in May 2014 and went to work in Hollywood. Writer of the Channel 4 drama My Mad Fat Diary and BBC1 adaptation of Watership Down, along with being Executive Producer of The Irregulars on Netflix
- Rebecca Eastham: actress who starred in All the Ordinary Angels, Coronation Street, Emmerdale and Ted Lasso. Rebecca visited school in January 2020 and ran a workshop for our GCSE students
- Tisha Merry: actress and former character on Coronation Street, who also starred in the BBC Drama 'Brinkburn Street' and the independent film 'Tamla Rose'. Tisha opened the Family Fun Day and Spring Fair in May 2017 and came along to watch our school production of Oliver Jnr! in July 2022
- Trevor Mather: CEO of Auto Trader and previously CEO of Thoughtworks Inc.
- Marcus Bleasdale: documentary photographer who currently works for National Geographic and Human Rights Watch
- Jan Sargeant: a retired education advisor and now exhibiting her paintings internationally as "Woman with Stick" and spokesperson for Parkinson's Disease
- Adrian Lascom: an artist who works on many projects as photographer, illustrator, art director and senior graphic designer
- Emma Dovey: played for the England Netball Squad and Manchester Thunder Netball, and also taught at Balshaw's from 2012-13
- Kiera Collier: current secretary and player for the UCLan Rams American Football team, a coach for the u19s at Chorley Buccaneers and officially made it to the 75-woman roster for the Great Britain Lions
- Alex Moran: appeared in the touring version of 'War Horse' and in 2017 in 'The Invisible Man' which he also directed. This ran in London initially and then toured
- Billy Gunnion: accepted on an Acting degree at the prestigious London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. Has appeared in several programmes including Vera, The Reunion and Saint Vassily planned for 2024



## Personal Achievements of Some Students and Former Balshavians

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- Drew Dawson: took part in BBC TV programme Singing for Britain: The Choir with Gareth Malone. Drew was selected to sing "Bass" in the Hallé Youth Choir. Drew has secured a place on the Musical Theatre degree at the prestigious performing arts academy Urdang London from Autumn 2024
- Jack Baxter: having previously secured a two year apprenticeship at PNE FC Academy for the U18s team, Jack played with the PNE Youth Team and then secured a professional contract with PNE in Summer 2020. Jack played for Stafford Rangers and has transferred to Bamber Bridge
- Safaa Hafiz: won Student of the Year at Runshaw College for 2022
- Finley Hough: was ranked 5th in the European BMX Championships in 2023. In 2024 Finley won the Lloyds Bank British Cycling National BMX series
- Beth Adam: has continued with her swimming success and represented Balshaw's in the British Schools Biathlon Championships. Beth was awarded 3rd place for Britain in this event
- Ollie Settle: plays for the Cheshire County Cricket team
- Nadia Breska: overall World gymnastics champion in her category of the IGC World Championships with 4 golds and 1 bronze medal 2023
- Mia Dodoo: won 2 gold medals and 1 silver medal at a gymnastics competition in Leicester
- Sam Waddington: In 2023 Sam was awarded the Sanderson Golf Trophy, a prestigious award commemorating the memory of Barry Sanderson, a beloved teacher and fellow golfer at Leyland Golf Club. In 2024 Sam came first in the National Championships at Lincoln Golf Club
- Sam Collier: has been selected for the American Football U17 Great Britain squad
- Sophie Reynolds: selected to play for Lancashire U12 hockey squad
- Emmy Monk: won first place in the North West Regional Competition of the Translation Prize, which is run by Queen's College, Oxford University. Previous winners of this competition have included Isabel Pearson
- Jess Bailey: secured a place as a member of the National Youth Theatre
- Honor Luckhurst: Achieved 3rd place in the winter regionals and then placed 2nd in Britain for all girls born in 2009

You can read more on our News webpage - [www.balshaws.org.uk/news](http://www.balshaws.org.uk/news).

We are always seeking information about our current and former Balshavians so please let us know if you have any information that we can share.



## Some of Our Sporting Achievements 2023/2024

### FOOTBALL

- **Year 7 Boys:** League - 4<sup>th</sup> Place
- **Year 8 Boys:** League - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- **Year 9 Boys:** League - 4<sup>th</sup> Place
- **Year 10 Boys:** League - 5<sup>th</sup> Place
- **Year 11 Boys:** League - LANCASHIRE COUNTY CHAMPIONS and South Ribble League - Winners
  
- **Year 7 Girls:** Lancashire Cup - Semi-finalists
- **Year 8/9 Girls:** Lancashire Cup - Semi-finalists
- **Year 10/11 Girls:** Lancashire Cup - Semi-finalists



### BASKETBALL

- **U13 Boys:** Participation in Local League Fixtures
- **U15 Boys:** Quarter-finalists of Lancashire Schools Cup and South Ribble Tournament - Winners



### GYMNASTICS

- 20 medals won at the South Ribble Contest

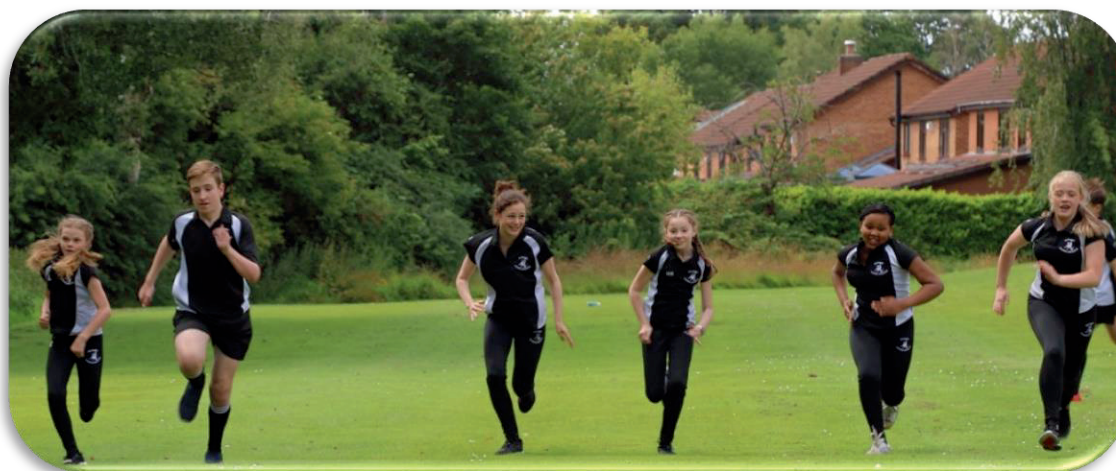
## Some of Our Sporting Achievements 2023/2024

### **ATHLETICS**

- **U14 Team:** South Ribble Runners Up
- **U16 Team:** South Ribble Runners Up

### **CROSS-COUNTRY**

- **Overall School Team:** 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 11 schools
- **Year 10/11 Girls:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 10/11 Boys:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 8/9 Girls:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 8/9 Boys:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 7 Girls:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 7 Boys:** 4<sup>th</sup> Place



### **NETBALL LEAGUE**

- **Year 7:** A Team 3<sup>rd</sup> Place and B Team 1<sup>st</sup> Place
- **Year 8:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- **Year 9:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 10:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 11:** League Winners

### **ROUNDERS**

- **Year 8:** South Ribble 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **Year 9:** South Ribble 5<sup>th</sup> Place
- **Year 10:** South Ribble 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

### **TABLE TENNIS**

- **U13 Boys:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
- **U16 Boys:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

### **RUGBY LEAGUE**

- Participation in Local Friendly Fixtures

### **CRICKET**

- **U13 Boys:** Participation in Local Tournaments





## Musical Achievements

### *A SELECTION OF MUSICAL EVENTS DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024*

- Carol Services
- Resurrection Rock
- Music for Open Evening
- Music for Awards Events
- Family Fun Day and Balfest 2024
- School Musical Production – We Will Rock You - School Edition



The following students were successful in Music exams:

**Rosie Holland – Piano Grade 7**  
**Christopher Fish – Theory Grade 5 Distinction**  
**Gabi Moss – Musical Theatre Grade 3 Distinction**  
**Felix Thackeray – Trombone Grade 3 Merit**  
**Ruby Hunter – Musical Theatre Grade 5 Merit**





## Celebrating the Past

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Richard Balshaw, a Leyland man with business interests in London, founded the school in 1782, “for instructing the youth of the middling and lower classes of Leyland”. It occupied buildings on Golden Hill Lane until moving to the present site in 1931. Building extensions were made in 1984 and we continue to develop our facilities to meet the demand for places. The school became voluntary controlled in 1951 and has the status of a Church of England Voluntary Controlled High School.

Headteachers of Balshaw's			
1786 - 1790	William Boyer	1899 - 1903	James D Wilde MA
1790 - 1792	John Singleton	1903 - 1931	F Jackson MA
1792 - 1799	Stephen Hayhurst	1931 - 1960	V U Oldland BA
1799 - 1850	Robert Kellett	1961 - 1973	F E Bleasdale MA
1846 - 1849	George Bennett	1973 - 1994	P J Ingram BSc
1849 - 1870	George Singleton	1995 - 2014	Josephine M Venn BA
1870 - 1899	John De Pennington	2014 -	Steven Haycocks BA

We have a fascinating online archive which we recommend you visit via the About the School section of our website.

## Preparing Students for the Future

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There are three things that are important to us at Balshaw's:

That your son/daughter leaves us-

1. as a well-rounded individual, prepared to make a positive contribution as they take up their place in society
2. as an individual whose academic potential has been fulfilled with a set of excellent qualifications that open the doors to the next stages of their lives
3. as someone, whatever their faith or world view, who will reflect Christ's love within our community and wider society

We have close ties with our partner primary schools and with Runshaw College, which the majority of our school leavers attend. We also send some students to Hutton, St John Rigby, Preston College, Wigan & Leigh College, Cardinal Newman College, Winstanley College and Myerscough College. Increasingly many of our students are entering apprenticeships and employments.

Students will receive visits from a range of employers during their time at Balshaw's from the Army, NHS, BAE Systems, as well as many more at careers events. The school also has very strong connections with Leyland Trucks who regularly employ Balshaw's leavers.

## Laptops for All

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It is important to know that the parents of all students who take up a place at Balshaw's are invited to join our “Laptops For All” scheme. For a monthly fee your child will get a laptop that is theirs after 36 months. During that time it is fully supported, insured, covered by comprehensive warranty and installed with the software that they need.

Laptops are part of a blended learning environment – they do not replace writing or discussion, but they do transform the ability to personalise, extend and deepen learning. Should you choose Balshaw's for your child, we will provide you with all the information that you need. Please ask students about how they learn using their laptops.



## Christian Values and Distinctiveness

### Lighting the path to excellence through Christian vision and values.

Gospel values of love, forgiveness, friendship, kindness, truth, patience, respect and humility are the foundation for decisions made in the Balshaw's family.

Our aim: to develop students whatever their faith or world view, who reflect Christ's love within the wider community.

Balshaw's Church of England High School has Christian values at its heart and our aim is to create students, whatever their faith or world view, who will act in Christian love in and beyond school. Our principles are based in the following scripture:

"Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path." (Psalm 119:105)

The Word of God being a light in the darkness is a vital idea about the purpose of education. In a challenging world with lives that can be challenged, Balshaw's Christian purpose should be to shine a light in that darkness and provide a light to guide our young people to a path shaped by love. It can be a path to faith, a path to success, a path to self-worth and ultimately a path to a better world if we send students out to reflect Christ's love in the wider community.

That idea about working for the good of others is also captured in the school's original Latin motto:

*Non sibi sed aliis*

This means: not for self, but for others. This notion of selfless love and courageous advocacy for others underpins our culture of fundraising and charitable giving. The education we give to our students is integral to building a fairer and more sustainable world for everyone. Courageous Advocacy equips them with the skills, tools, confidence, and opportunity to speak up and take action on issues of justice.

Developing your child's spirituality is also important. At Balshaw's we talk of this as a three stage process: In, Out and Up:

In	→	Looking in: to understand yourself.
Out	→	Looking out: to understand the world.
Up	→	Looking up: to develop reflection on what our higher purpose for being might be.

Balshaw's has its own chaplain who is available to all students whatever their faith to support their spiritual, faith and religious needs. Students engage in worship every day, whether that be formally in a school-led Act of Worship or through daily prayer with their tutor at the start of every day.

Balshaw's enjoys strong relationships with a number of local churches, especially St Andrew's where students worship at Easter and Christmas as well as St Ambrose and Buckshaw Village Community Church.

Christian values permeate all aspects of the curriculum and the way that we interact with others. All students study Religious Education to GCSE, all subjects seek to make explicit Christian values in their teaching and our rewards and sanctions are also based upon our Balshaw's Gospel Values.

Of all the values that we hold dear, love is the most important and is what makes Balshaw's distinctively different.

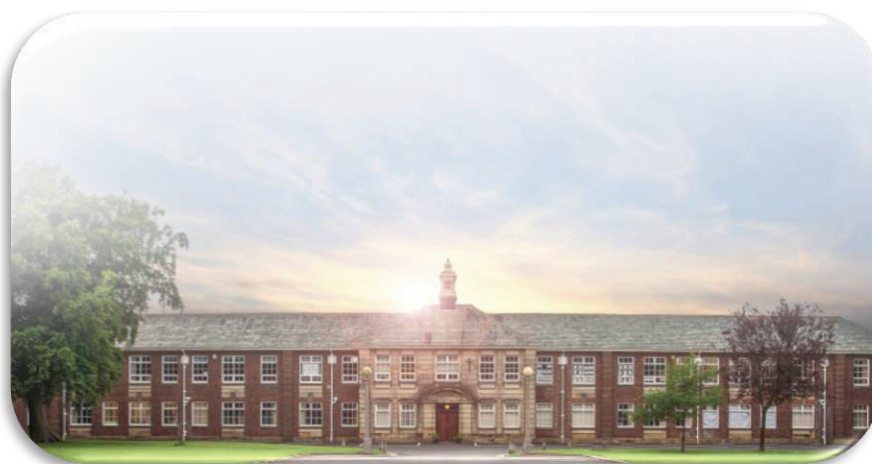


## Examination Results

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One of the reasons for Balshaw's continuing success is the examination results that our students attain. It is particularly important to note that, in the majority of the government's measures, Balshaw's is above national averages of attainment and progress from students' starting points. That means that whatever the level of prior attainment, Balshaw's will do its best to ensure we maximise the progress of all our students.

Headline figures for 2023-24 Exam Results	
Average Total Attainment 8	51.79
Progress 8	TBC
Number of Students	177
Average Entries per Student	8.0
Average Entries per Student (GCSE only)	7.8
Students Achieving 9-7(A*-A) in English and Maths	11.9%
Students Achieving 9-5 (A* -B) in English and Maths	57.6%
Students Achieving 9-4 (A*-C) in English and Maths	79.7%
Students Achieving 5 Standard Passes (9-4) including English and Maths	76.8%
Students Achieving 5 Strong Passes (9-5) including English and Maths	52%
Students Taking 3 Single Sciences (GCSE only)	19.2%
Students Entered for the EBacc	62.7%
Students in COHORT Achieving the EBacc (Standard Pass)	45.2%
Students in COHORT Achieving the EBacc (Strong Pass)	27.1%
Ebacc Average Point Score	4.8





## The Curriculum

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At Balshaw's, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. This ensures that students at Balshaw's leave school with a comprehensive range of qualifications that prepare them fully for their futures; giving them the skills, confidence and resilience for college, apprenticeships and employment.



## The Learning Week

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Students are taught 25 lessons per week, over a two week timetable. The Curriculum is broad and balanced with core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, Modern Foreign Languages, Design Technology, Physical Education and Religious Education all studied. Humanities subjects of History and Geography are studied with increased time in Year 9.

Other subjects taught in KS3 include Art, Computing, Drama and Music. At KS4 there are two academic pathways, one which includes the full suite of EBacc subjects (English, Maths, Science, Geography or History and French or Spanish) and a Non-Ebacc pathway which offers some students an alternative provision of subjects. Other subjects at KS4, which are not included in KS3 are Business and Film Studies.

Subjects are taught in mixed ability groupings as we aspire for all students to be able to access the very highest grades possible in a supported environment.





## Curriculum Diagram

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11					
1	English	English	English	English	English					
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8			PSHE							
9	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths					
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										
16						PSHE	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE	
17						Science	Science	Science	Combined Science (Trilogy)	Combined Science (Trilogy)
18										
19										
20						Design & Technology	Design & Technology	Design & Technology	Option 1: History or Geography	Design & Technology or Separate Sciences
21										
22						French/Spanish	French/Spanish	French/Spanish	Option 2: Business, Computer Science, Drama, Film Studies, Fine Art, GCSE PE, History, Religious Studies (full course GCSE)	Option 1: History or Geography
23										
24	History	History	History	Option 3: Business, Fine Art, Food Preparation & Nutrition, French, GCSE PE, Spanish	Option 2: BTEC Music, Business, Computer Science, Drama, Film Studies, Fine Art, GCSE PE, History, Religious Studies (full course GCSE)					
25										
26	Geography	Geography	Geography	Option 4: Business, DT Graphics, DT Resistant Materials, Food Preparation & Nutrition, Religious Studies (full GCSE), Separate Sciences	Option 3: Business, Child Development, Fine Art, French, Spanish, Sports Science, Construction L2 (Preston College)					
27										
28	Religious Studies	Religious Studies	Religious Studies	Religious Studies (short course GCSE)	Religious Studies (short course GCSE)					
29										
30	Art	Art	Art	PE	PE					
31										
32	Drama	Drama	Drama	PE	PE					
33										
34	Music	Music	Music	PE	PE					
35										
36	Computing	Computing	Computing	PE	PE					
37										
38	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					
39										
40	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					
41										
42	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					
43										
44	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					
45										
46	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					
47										
48	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					
49										
50	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE					

\*There are opportunities within the curriculum time for students to experience accelerated learning and to receive targeted intervention and specialist support.

## SEN, Additional Needs and Pastoral Care

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Through quality teaching, appropriate intervention, effective use of Teaching Assistants and, above all, a caring approach, we meet the needs of all our students with additional or Special Educational Needs. The school keeps an up-to-date register of all students with Special Educational Needs. All staff are involved in the process of producing a supportive student passport for those who require additional support. We have a nurture group in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for students who need additional support. Additional literacy and numeracy support is also available.

In our Pastoral Hub we have a base to meet the needs of all students. Members of the Pastoral Team and SEND Team work together to support all students who have additional needs either through small group tuition, individual withdrawal lessons, or support for students with social, emotional or mental health difficulties.

As a Christian school we care for the whole child and consider their development academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. We have two 'My Space' Clubs (Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4) which run at lunchtime for students who may feel vulnerable or who want a safe nurturing environment to be in.

Learning support is made available to all students via the Home Learning Club, which takes place after school, run by Support Staff.

## Pupil Premium

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At Balshaw's we value every individual and encourage every child to fulfil their potential. All students are regularly monitored, Pupil Premium students are tracked regularly and are provided with the support they need as individuals to ensure that they achieve the best possible outcomes. Where there are signs that the progress of any of our Pupil Premium students has slowed, measures are put in place to address this at the earliest possible opportunity. Booster sessions in both Literacy and Numeracy are our primary focus in Key Stage 3. Year 10 and 11 students who require support benefit from small intervention groups and one-to-one sessions if required.

In addition to the academic support, Pupil Premium students are encouraged to enjoy and participate in extra-curricular activities, music lessons and trips. Their enthusiasm and commitment to school has positive effects on their application within the classroom environment. Likewise, as with every student in Balshaw's, their welfare is of major importance and any child identified as needing pastoral support or sessions to boost self-esteem, are given the support in school via mentoring sessions or workshops run by our Student Support Worker.

## Religious Studies

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The Religious Studies (RS) curriculum at Balshaw's Church of England High School supports students to develop a deep and thorough knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs of the world in which they live. The RS curriculum enables students to undertake a shared journey along a pathway in search of truth and meaning in a safe space. This shared journey complements the school's vision of '*Lighting the path to excellence through Christian values and ethos*' in several ways; one of these is through a thorough study of the Balshaw's Christian values. Students study the values throughout Key Stage 3 and 4, exploring the theological context of the values and their different applications. Whilst the schemes of learning complement the Christian ethos of the school, RS is taught in a non-confessional manner and all six major world faiths are explored over the five years. Within lessons, students have the opportunity to reflect on their own values, beliefs and spirituality, whether that is faith based or not.

For each unit of study, students learn some of the different responses to interesting and thought-provoking key questions, such as 'Does God exist and if so, what is God like?', 'Which beliefs and values are important to the Sikh community?', 'What happens when faith and courage collide?', 'If there is a God, why do we suffer?'. Throughout Key Stage 3, students also study some of the concepts and units which are taken from the 'Illuminating Pathways' schemes

of work which were produced and developed by the Blackburn Diocese Board of Education. The aims of the department accord with the aims of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus.

There are a variety of teaching and learning activities used within the RS Department together with a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities also taking place. Some of these have included visits to Westminster Abbey, York Minster and trips to Krakow to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau. We have also welcomed visitors into school to talk about their faith and beliefs and some of our students have also heard Holocaust survivor's testimonies. The RS Department also takes part in workshops and activities organised by Blackburn Diocese. The excellence of the RS Department was recognised by a SIAMS report in 2019 and we aim to continually sustain and enhance the learning outcomes for students in the future.

## School Worship

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Balshaw's is proud of its Christian ethos and, as such, School Worship is considered a vital part of school life. Each year group enjoys an Act of Worship in the school Hall once per week. Collective worship also happens when students meet in their house families for a further Act of Worship later in the week.



The 'Thought for the Day' with an accompanying 'Prayer for the Day' are used in tutor time each day. These are linked to the theme of worship for that week, which is also further explored during tutor time. At Balshaw's, students take a very active and leading role in worship and prayer, with students delivering and planning Acts of Worship. Worship is evaluated by our Faith and Worship Committee. Students receive a varied diet of worship from visiting clergy from different churches, as well as other relevant outside speakers. To further enrich experiences of worship, students have also taken part in a number of 'RE-Treat' days which are led by the Blackburn Diocese with whom we have strong links. There are lunchtime groups which enable students to further explore the Christian Faith.

All Christian festivals are celebrated and voluntary communion services are held to mark Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Whitsun as well as at the beginning and end of terms. At Christmas we hold two Carol services at St Andrew's Church and all students are able to attend one of these services and take part. During Lent, students take part in a range of activities to reflect upon the significance of this time. Whilst some may choose to give something up for Lent, the majority of our students also choose to give something back and take part in fundraising activities, raising money for charities and putting our Christian values of love and kindness into practice. There are special services at Easter and the Music Department annually put on a 'Resurrection Rock' to mark Easter, with the whole of Year 7. To mark Remembrance, we have special services to remember former Balshavians who have lost their lives during conflicts.

Prayer is at the heart of all we do, during each act of Collective Worship there is the opportunity to participate in prayer and as mentioned above there is a prayer for the day every day. We have a Christian fellowship group for staff and a prayer group for students. We have close links with a number of local churches. Our School Chaplain, Luke Blakeley, who joined us in September 2020, continues to grow and develop the wide range of opportunities for worship and for spiritual development.

Each year, we hold a Memorial Service which is open to the wider community, enabling us all to take part in an act of remembering loved ones who are no longer with us. Representatives from our school have also taken part in Church services in the local community and in acts of Remembrance in the local area.

Through the inclusive school worship programme all students, whatever their faith or world view, are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their spirituality and hopefully come to faith.

Balshaw's SIAMS inspection rated the school as Excellent in all areas in 2019.

## Careers Education

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The basis of the Careers information and guidance offered at Balshaw's is the Gatsby Framework (see our Careers Policy on the School Policies webpage for more information). We work in partnership with the Lancashire Careers Hub to offer a rich and varied 'Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance' (CEIAG). The School offers all students access to an Independent Careers Service. The Careers Team in School organise annual Careers Events, Apprentice workshops, workplace visits, college taster visits, work experience and the Mock Interview programme in which every Year 11 is offered an interview from the world of work.

In every school year CEIAG is part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Curriculum, as this is a really important element in preparing students for life after Balshaw's. Opportunities to develop the transferrable skills needed by our students in order to make them desirable to employers are provided explicitly in careers sessions and further interwoven throughout the wider school curriculum.

## Sex and Relationships Education

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Sex and Relationships Education is provided for all children in a manner appropriate to their age and development. This is part of a wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic wellbeing teaching programme which emphasises the importance of family life and personal relationships against a background of Christian principles and the law. The school meets all the requirements according to the DfE Statutory Guidance.

## Music

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The Music Department aims to provide students throughout the school with a rich variety of musical experiences, which combine the principal areas of:

- **Playing:** Singing and Performing
- **Creating:** Composing and Improvising
- **Critical Engagement:** Listening and Appraising

Students follow a structured course of termly projects. Through explorations of both Western Music and World Music, students will develop skills and aural perception, recognition and appreciation of musical styles and cultures. A variety of practical opportunities are built into projects to develop performance skills in vocal and instrumental music. Students are encouraged to be creative and imaginative through composing activities. At all times, work is designed to stimulate and develop students' awareness, knowledge and appreciation of the subject. Students are encouraged to create, record, edit and mix their work on iPads, iMacs and other music technology equipment for the purposes of assessment for learning, and musical production. Balshaw's Music Department subscribes to the "Musical Futures Online" approach to learning. This resource is widely used in lessons and is available on our Learning Wall for students to access at home. In addition, "Focus on Sound" is also used.

## Instrumental and Vocal Music Tuition

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Along with classroom Music teaching, the Instrumental Teaching Service is well established at Balshaw's from beginners through to advanced players in the upper grades. The service is a fee-paying one and students have a 15 or 30 minute individual weekly lesson, the time of which is rotated, so as to avoid missing the same curriculum lesson each week. Further details of the peripatetic music service are on the school website under the Music Department section.





The following instrument groups are taught: guitar, drums, piano, keyboard and violin.

We are very proud of our instrumental teachers at Balshaw's who carry out the tuition with great enthusiasm and commitment. They are all appointed by the school, and are highly qualified, experienced and committed. Students are encouraged to take graded examinations when appropriate. They are expected to join relevant bands, choirs and musical ensembles when they are competent to do so.

Various concerts, shows, services and other events take place during the year which students are encouraged to take part in.

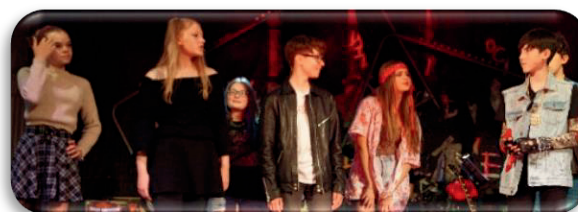
Please contact the Music Department on 01772 421009 if you have any questions.

For more information visit: <http://www.balshaws.org.uk/curriculum/music>

## Extra-Curricular Activities

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We pride ourselves on the wide range of cultural, social and sporting activities offered to students. Drama, various choirs and band practices are held throughout the year along with concerts, shows and productions. There are extra-curricular clubs in a variety of sports and many sports teams compete at House and at school level.



Previous trips have included – Year 8 'GET IT' trip to Amazon Web Services, GCSE Business trip to Jaguar Landrover and JCB World Headquarters, Business and Computing Department 'DigiGirlz' trip to Microsoft UK, Year 7 and 9 Geography fieldtrips to Blackpool Zoo and the Lake District and Year 10 fieldtrips to Morecambe Bay, The North West Sustainability Conference and Year 8 trip to Big Bang in Birmingham. An MFL trip to Lancaster University to see languages being taught at university level and a Year 10 trip to Manchester Jewish Museum. There have been English theatre trips including to see A Christmas Carol, as well as having a visiting theatre group in school to perform An Inspector Calls. Theatre trips are offered to widen the students' cultural experience have included trips to see Little Shop of Horrors, Blood Brothers, An Inspector Calls, Jesus Christ Superstar, along with workshops for students from industry professionals.

Previous residential trips have included, Modern Foreign Languages trip to Warsy in France for Year 7, 8 and 9 and a trip to Avila in Spain for Year 10 and 11 along with Barcelona in Spain for Year 9 and 10. Science trips to Geneva and Iceland for Year 9 and 10. An RE trip for Year 10 and 11 to Krakow exploring sites of religious and historical significance such as Auschwitz, Birkenau, the Jewish Quarter and Wawel Cathedral. A Maths trip to Disneyland in Paris and a Year 10 Battlefields trip to Belgium and France.

We have a number of amazing clubs, competitions and opportunities, which include: Young Writers Club, Art Club, Computing, Year 9 Computational Thinking Challenge, Cyber First Competition, Alan Turing Competition, Code Club, Cyber Discovery Challenge, Dungeons and Dragons, Faraday Challenge, KS3 STEM Club, Matrix Challenge, Student Investor Challenge and a Wellbeing group. Our Eco and Fairtrade Group have taken part in many activities including attending an Eco Sustainability event at Blackburn Rovers. Additionally, public speaking societies, Puzzles and Origami. We also offer Home Learning Club for all year groups.





There is something for everyone, and if students suggest a club and have enough proposed members, we will start one. Ofsted said that our students benefit from the many opportunities for their wider development at Balshaw's. We encourage all students and staff to get involved.

The curriculum is extended by offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are open to all students. These provide our students with a variety of opportunities in clubs, workshops, rehearsals, performances and visits. We hope students gain many

benefits, not least enjoyment, from participating in the Expressive Arts subjects as they strive for excellence and realisation of their potential.

A team takes part in the Rotary 'Youth Speaks' competition every year and our students have been successful in the national and regional finals. We were also Rotary Youth Speaks champions for South Ribble in 2022 and 2023. Also in 2022, our team of speakers reached the National Finals of the prestigious English-Speaking Union Competition in Cambridge. In 2024, one of our teams reached the Regional Finals of the of the ESU and our Year 9 team won the Great Lancashire Debate organised by Lancashire County Council in 2023.

MFL take part in two national competitions every year: The Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators run by Oxford University and GCHQ's National Language Competition for students in Year 9.

## Sporting Aims

Balshaw's aims to provide all students, irrespective of ability, with the opportunity to take part in a range of meaningful and enjoyable sporting activities during both curricular and extra-curricular time. All students receive core PE lessons and those who opt to study a PE qualification at Key Stage 4 receive a further five lessons over two weeks. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in the full and varied extra-curricular programme. We run lunchtime and after school sports clubs alongside our extensive involvement in competitive fixtures at a local and county level. We also run Inter-House sports competitions throughout the year and aim to encourage as many students as possible to join in to represent their House in competitive sport. The last few years, for example, we have had over 700 students who took part in our Inter-House Cross Country competition! All students follow the PE National Curriculum and during their time at Balshaw's, students will have the opportunity to participate in the following curricular activities: Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Cross-Country, Dance, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, Rounders, Softball, Tennis, Table Tennis, plus others if the timetable permits use of off-site facilities.



## Extra-Curricular - Sports

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Extra-curricular sports that are offered include; Aerobics, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Circuit Training, Cricket, Cross-Country, Dance, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Netball, Rounders, Rugby, Table Tennis and Tennis. We have recently invested a lot of money improving the sports facilities at Balshaw's. We now have brand new tennis and netball courts, a full size, floodlit 3G astroturf and a brand new state of the art fitness gym and dance studio. These facilities will help to enhance our curriculum and also provide excellent facilities for extra-curricular activities.



Balshaw's aims for excellence and has enjoyed considerable success in National, District and County competitions. We are justifiably proud of our 'Roll of Honour' and actively encourage students to extend their sporting interests outside school.

Many students are members of local sports clubs and teams, and students have represented South Ribble Schools, the County and beyond, in a variety of sports. Our dedicated, enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff, together with the facilities and equipment available, enables us to provide our students with a meaningful, challenging and enjoyable sporting programme.

## Fundraising and Supporting Others

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As a school we do an amazing amount of fundraising and support for both local and national charities. Our students are keen to engage in many fundraising activities to help those less fortunate than themselves. We sell poppies in school on behalf of the Royal British Legion to support those who have given their lives for their country or been injured in action.

In the Autumn term we ask for food donations for hampers to share with the elderly in the community, either directly to the care home or via Age UK. In November, we hold a talent show to raise money for Children in Need. We have trainer days in school that help to raise money for a number of different charities including Jeans for Genes, Save the Children and Lancashire Mind. There are numerous cake sales throughout the year and previous donations have included MacMillan Cancer Support, The Sanctuary Foundation and Blue Skies Hospital was supported by funds raised by our school production in 2023.

During Lenten Charity fortnight students decide which charities they would like to support and it is always a hugely successful fundraiser. In 2023/24 we raised a whopping £2,313.65 in just 9 days for our chosen charities, Alder Hey Children's Hospital and The Williams Syndrome Foundation.

Our Balfest and Family Fun Day raised over £1,800 for the PTA and during our 2024 school production of *We Will Rock You – School Edition!* £780.30 was raised and shared between Derian House and St.Catherine's Hospice.



We have completed a 5k cross-country fun run in school for students and money raised was split between Cancer Research UK and St.Catherine's Hospice. Over three hundred students took part in an indoor rowing competition. They rowed in 10 minute blocks for their House team and collected sponsorship money from friends and family to complete the challenge. In total the students rowed 668km and raised £2,500 for the HeartBeat charity. Our staff have also taken part in a number of fundraising football matches that have raised money for Lancashire Mind and Children in Need. Along with raising money we collected items of clothing and essentials for families evacuating to Poland from Ukraine. We have also collected items for International Aid Trust and donated many shoe boxes to this appeal for a number of years. Over the last 5 years our amazing team of staff, students and their families have helped to raise amazing amounts of money in the tens of thousands of pounds for a range of charities.

We are so very grateful to everyone for all of their support as we couldn't do it without them.



## Expressive Arts

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The school sets great store by its excellence in Expressive Arts. It forms one of the liveliest, most energetic and successful areas of the school, which for many students is a very important part of their life at Balshaw's. It provides a balance to the curriculum and unique experiences. Those who wish to do so will have the opportunity to study these subjects at Key Stage 4, where a high level of excellence is achieved.

## Art

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The Art and Design Department requires students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills through an integrated, practical, critical and contextual study, which encourages engagement with the work of artists, craftspeople and designers.

At both Key Stages, students learn to draw for different purposes, in a personal and creative way. In turn, these skills are developed further when they go on to evolve compositions and designs in areas including painting, printing, collage, graphics and sculpture. The Art and Design Department provides a range of extra-curricular activities on a weekly basis. Ultimately, our aim is to boost self-confidence, promote independence, resilience and collaborative skills, both within lessons and regular extra-curricular activities.

## Drama

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Drama emphasises active participation. Students participate in scripted drama, improvised drama and drama activities, all of which are designed to enhance confidence, creativity and presentation skills. Students are encouraged to reflect on their practical work and progress, often through discussion. The Drama Department provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities. From 2024 our Drama department has moved to a brand new, purpose designed drama studio. The space benefits from a portable stage and new lighting rig which enable the students to learn about technical theatre if they choose to do so.

We aim to include as many students as possible in theatre visits, drama workshops, showcase performances and productions. The Drama Department aims for and achieves excellence, notably in the quality of our school productions and in GCSE exam results. A number of our students go on to pursue acting at college and university. We are proud to have several professional actors in our alumni.

## Safeguarding and Child-Protection

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Because of day-to-day contact with children, schools are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. Parents should be aware, therefore, that where it appears to a member of staff that a child may have been abused, physically or emotionally, the school is required, as part of the Local Child Protection Procedures, to report their concern to Children's Social Care immediately.

Staff are trained to act professionally, recognising genuine concerns without jumping to unreasonable conclusions. There is a designated Teacher and a Governor with responsibility for Child Protection. Parents will be fully informed of all referrals.

Mrs A Wilson, Deputy Headteacher, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for all Child Protection and Safeguarding issues in school. The Governor for Child Protection is Reverend Paul Davies.

As a school we participate in Operation Encompass, a joint initiative with Lancashire Police to help ensure any children that witness domestic violence at home are well supported and cared for in school.



## Pastoral Care and Guidance

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### **What will we do at Balshaw's to support your child at school?**

The transition of your child from primary school to high school is always a time of uncertainty and sometimes anxiety. At Balshaw's we do our utmost to ensure every child is well cared for, nurtured and is well-known amongst staff through our outstanding pastoral system which is structured in Houses. Each child is placed in one of four Houses and then placed in a Tutor group. The House Form Tutor monitors each child's progress, behaviour and welfare. Our overall aim for all our young people, is for them to use the talents and abilities that God gave them and to be the best that they can be.

Through the encouragement of strong, supportive and positive relationships we encourage each individual child to aim at excellence in everything that they do – in their actions, in how they treat others and in their participation in the life of Balshaw's and the wider community. We ultimately want to help nurture, develop and encourage all our students to develop their own potential and necessary life skills, in order to become responsible and self-motivated young people who are able to take their place in the wider community.

We also support parents because we understand the challenges of parenting in a digital age and the anxiety and mental health issues that young people face. It can be hard to know how to support your child and our guidance evenings have been praised for the help they have given.

### **Christian Ethos**

At Balshaw's we provide a learning environment where students are supported and challenged in their learning. All students are encouraged to value their learning and we promote a Christian ethos within which all students, regardless of academic ability, have the right to learn and achieve success in an environment that is free from disruption. All members of the Balshaw's community are asked to be polite, co-operate fully with all staff and be considerate of others around them.

### **Transition Programme**

Students are supported in a variety of ways to settle quickly into high school life through our supportive transition programme starting in March when secondary places are allocated. Students and parents are asked to attend a New Intake Evening in July in order for staff to get to know the children a little better. Pastoral staff visit primary schools to see the children in the summer term and speak to Year 6 teachers who know your youngsters so well. In July, a New Intake Day is organised in order that students can "sample" a day in the life of Balshaw's.

On the first day of term as true Balshavians, Year 7 have a special Introduction Assembly and go to tutor and get to know each other, their Tutors and Heads of House. A range of clubs and activities in the first term allow students to make new friends and spend time enjoying something new. Through Year and House assemblies, PSHE lessons and the Meet the Tutor evening for parents, students do settle quickly and confidently and within weeks feel like they have been at Balshaw's forever! There are some young people however, who do need extra support and we can offer a range of interventions in order to help students settle quickly, from places at Home Learning Club for help with organisation, a 'My Space' Club for those students struggling to form friendships or feeling overawed by the transition process, extra support in lessons for those with additional needs, a More Able Programme and Emotional Support for those who need greater provision to help their social and emotional needs.

We are ultimately very proud of our outstanding pastoral achievements at Balshaw's and highly privileged that we can play a small part in helping to develop, cherish and encourage all students to foster their love of learning and achieve their full potential within an environment that is both caring and Christian.

## The House System

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On entry to the school, Year 7 students are placed in House tutor groups. The composition of the tutor group is influenced by information provided by the primary schools, by parents and by the school's need to integrate students from many primary schools as smoothly as possible. The House Form Tutor is a key person in each child's school life in the giving of help and advice. Apart from the registration period, House Form Tutors teach their classes for the Personal, Social and Health Education lesson. House Form Tutors are responsible to their Head of House in an organisation that means senior members of staff work closely with colleagues to ensure that each student is cared for and guided as necessary, both academically and pastorally.

Parents will be kept well informed. We encourage parents to contact the school at an early stage with any concerns. Good communication and co-operation between home and school are very important in helping us to maintain high standards of behaviour and care. Members of staff are pleased to meet parents during the day when necessary, by appointment. It is important to request appointments in advance, since staff are not always immediately available, either in writing or by telephone, giving reasons for the request. This will ensure that suitable arrangements can be made and the member of staff who is best qualified to deal with the situation is alerted. The academic progress of any student is closely linked with general well-being, therefore every member of staff exercises a pastoral concern.

The Headteacher is available to meet with parents by appointment. Please contact the Headteacher's Personal Assistant if you wish to do so.

<b>Clayton</b> Head of House	Mrs D Lupton
<b>Cuerden</b> Head of House	Mrs C Leathard
<b>Farington</b> Head of House	Mr S Riley
<b>Worden</b> Head of House	Mr P Paize

## Policy for Online Safety

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Balshaw's recognises the many learning opportunities available from technological change: opportunities to further empower young people in their education and learning and opportunities to enhance their creativity and skills in communication. However, the school also acknowledges and seeks to protect its community against the inherent risks of new technologies, risks which cannot always be immediately identified, given the speed of change.

Overall, there is the belief that the educational and social opportunities of the new technologies far outweigh the dangers. The full policy document is available on request. The school aims to promote safe and responsible use of the new technologies, both within school and in the wider lives of students. As part of the policy all students, their parents and all staff are expected to sign and keep to ICT Acceptable Behaviour Policies.

Students receive Year assemblies, PSHE lessons and House assemblies informing them of Online Safety. Online Safety is also covered by Business and Computing teachers in all year groups. As a school we also participate yearly in 'Safer Internet Day'. Online Safety is also covered in student safeguarding updates.

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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As a Christian school we believe that each person is made in the image of God, which implies that we should respect the dignity of the individual. Therefore, all students have a right to learn in an environment in which they feel safe and supported and free from any form of bullying. Bullying can take many forms: verbal taunts, cyber bullying, homophobic, using derogatory terms for disabilities/disabled people, using religion/religious terms in a derogatory sense against another person, racial bullying and attempts to isolate an individual can be just as damaging to that person's self-esteem and confidence as physical threats. Bullying has no place anywhere in our school community, and this applies as much to the relationships between adults and students as it does to those between students themselves. School staff also have right not to be bullied by students, parents/carers or other staff. School staff have a right to come to work without facing abuse or vexatious emails or letters from parents/carers. The full policy document is available on request.

In the most recent Ofsted Inspection it states that *"Pupils are happy at Balshaw's. The atmosphere around school is calm and respectful and pupils say that there is always someone to talk to if they have concerns. Leaders deal effectively with any incidents of bullying and this helps pupils to feel safe."*

## Admission Policy

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All admissions to Balshaw's are managed and administered by the Local Authority. Balshaw's staff have no control over admissions. The admissions policy is available from <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>. This ensures that all applicants within the catchment area, without prejudice or additional entry criteria, have a chance to attend our wonderful school. The fact that we are consistently over-subscribed is a testament to this.



**OFSTED:**

“There is a strong sense of community and this helps pupils develop their confidence and character”.

“After talking to fellow Runshaw students I found that Balshaw’s had provided me with opportunities that other schools didn’t.”  
(Former student)

“I still look back fondly to my time at Balshaw’s, not only because of the amazing memories I shared with my friends, but also due to the wonderful staff who helped me through my GCSEs to get outstanding results.”  
(Former student)

“Balshaw’s is a brilliant school and I would like to thank the school and all the members of staff who inspired me and helped me to get where I am today.”  
(Former student)

SIAMS Extract			
Overall Judgement	How effective is the school’s distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent

