

Headteacher's Newsletter



Dear Parent/Carer/Student

Welcome back to a new term and our first full week of school. After a very wet August it felt a little bit like God was having a little joke by making the first week back one of the hottest weeks of the year! Despite this, our students managed extremely well and our new Year 7s have settled into school routine more quickly than any year 7s for the past few years.

I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and find some useful resources for discussing the impact of social media with your child and learn something about our founder Richard Balshaw.

There are also links to the online calendar to help plan for upcoming events.

Our Year 11 Leavers



Our Year 11 Leavers have now collected their exam results and moved on to college, apprenticeships or employment. We were delighted with the results of our students who, with the support of the dedicated staff in the school, have produced some of the strongest GCSE results in the county and performing above average nationally. You can read how our results were covered in the [local press here](#).

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Greener Energy

Over the summer Balshaw's has had a number of solar panels fitted in the first phase of our goal to use more environmentally friendly energy and to save long term costs for the school. Students in our Eco-Schools team have worked for years on initiatives to support our environment and using solar energy has long been an ambition for us.

Balshaw's Wins the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award (with merit!)

This week we were delighted to receive the news that our Eco-School group have been awarded with the Eco-Schools Green Award. This is a tremendous accolade that they have worked hard to achieve engaging in a number of projects from recycling, energy reduction and community engagement.

You can see the full report [here](#).





Richard Balshaw's Day

At the end of last term we introduced a new event to the school calendar: *Richard Balshaw Day*

This was an opportunity to think about the remarkable person who founded the school in 1782 who was centuries ahead of his time.

A trailblazer for Gender

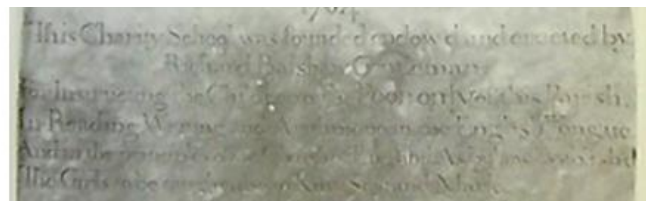
Some people, men (believe it or not!), complained that Balshaw's was wrong for offering exams to girls and also for educating working class children beyond 11 years of age.

This was the second key principle for Richard – he wanted to help educate the children of those too poor to afford the high fees of most schools in those days. There were, however, strict rules established for both staff and students.

One stated that any teacher with a child of his or her own must be immediately removed from the school. Richard Balshaw believed that teachers with their own children were too preoccupied with them to be good teachers!

An education for all – Balshaw's a trailblazer for Social Equality

Balshaw's has always exceeded expectation and limitation by aspiration and determination. From its lowly beginnings as a charitable school set up in 1782 for the education of "children of the poor of this (Leyland) parish" and accepting girls for education from 1790, Balshaw's has always bucked the inequities of the world and became a trail blazer not only for gender equality throughout its history but also resisted the attempt to make it a "middle class school" by a Mr. Tootell in the 1890s. He was vehemently rebuffed by a Balshaw's trustee, Mr Stanning, who claimed that the intention of Richard Balshaw was always to provide education for free to the children of the poor of Leyland and now education was free to all by virtue of the 1870 Education Act, Balshaw's should provide a higher education for the children of the working classes of Leyland:



“The very flower of the working classes,” he said, “were willing to make sacrifices for the benefit of their children and now they had a chance of higher education would perhaps be able to send their children to colleges and University”. He added, “that his father had made sacrifices for him and he wished every man imbued with that spirit.”

This sort of school became known as a Grammar School after 1898.

And so it was that the Charitable School on Golden Hill Lane began to provide an education that would enable its students to take examinations. This sort of school became known as a Grammar School after 1898.

Meanwhile, the old Grammar School, on the corner of the church yard of St. Andrews Church, by contrast had dwindling numbers and in “1865 a critical report from the Enquiry Commission stated amongst other things ‘reading and spelling were not very good...Geography and English grammar were poor.’ The writing was on the wall” and nine years later the school closed in 1874. Despite the recommendations of the Schools’ Inspector, Mr. James Bryce, in 1865 that Balshaw’s should merge with the Grammar School, the trustees of Balshaw’s repeatedly resisted a merger because they were well-run and better endowed financially than the Grammar School. However, petitions were guaranteed, finally, by the Education Department in 1897 and by Queen Victoria in Council in May, 1898 and the merger took place.

Although locally The Golden Hill School was known as “Balshaw’s Grammar,” the transformation of Balshaw’s to a “proper” Grammar School didn’t happen until the move from Golden Hill Lane to Church Road was completed. The Church Road site was planned in 1928 and built by 1931 to be opened to students – both girls and boys – in 1932.

And the rest is history!

Balshaw's went through countless changes, including only 14 headteachers since 1786, renovations to the building and the addition of extra land to the school's grounds; but they were always, from 1790 onwards, champions of gender and social equality: with both girls and boys from the working and middle classes having access to what they called higher education 80 years before this was even a possibility. In fact, Balshaw's school became so successful, Queen Victoria made us into a Grammar School in 1898.

The biggest change occurred in September 1932 when 165 pupils from Golden Hill moved to a new building on Church Road, the place where the school is situated to this day.

The official opening of the new Balshaw's took place on 8th June 1932, almost the anniversary of the setting up of the Foundation on 14th June 1782.



The old school badge, a cross saltire with a book in the centre featuring the motto “Strenue” (meaning Strength) was replaced by a silver griffin and the words “Non sibi sed aliis” meaning “Not for one’s self but for all”.

This is still our school motto today and is written on all students' blazer pockets.

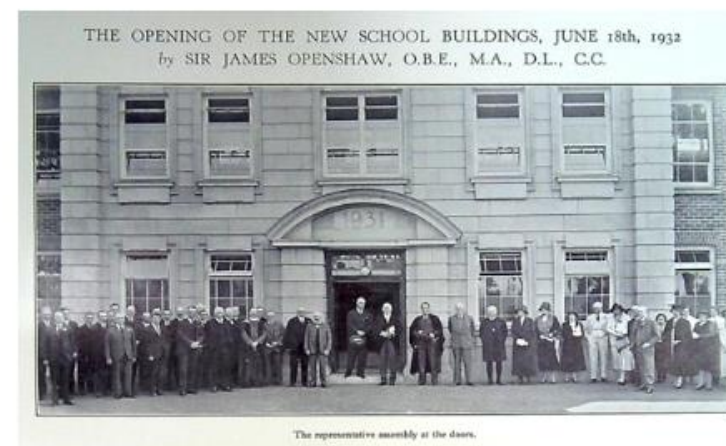


The four houses were named after local houses and areas, which could be why the griffin became the school's emblem - the griffin is a creature of heraldry. The prefect system was set up in school, which meant that senior students were appointed to reinforce discipline and help the school run smoothly. The scheme was a success and is still in operation today.

Through the World Wars...

During the First World War Balshaw's continued to flourish, despite the call-up of 30 boys and teacher, Mr Clements, to the fighting front. In 1915, Balshaw's had 153 pupils drawn from 21 different towns, by 1917 the number had risen to 192 pupils.

Throughout the six years that the Second World War raged Balshaw's continued to provide education for its students in spite of the loss of teaching staff and other difficulties.



Balshaw's Head starts Runshaw College

Many changes were made to the Curriculum in 1944, mainly in connection with the introduction of free secondary education for all and planned for the introduction of "O" levels in 1951 – which are like modern days GCSEs. Something Balshaw's 10th Headteacher Vic Oldland had been offering to both boys and girls for years.

Our next Head teacher Mr Bleasdale became an important figure in Balshaw's history. He campaigned for a separate sixth form to be set up, to benefit children who wanted to pursue further education. He won his battle and Runshaw College was set up on a site in Leyland. It was named Runshaw out of respect for the Chorley part of the catchment area and Mr Bleasdale was named principal.

This is why Balshaw's has such close links with Runshaw college today and every Balshaw's student is guaranteed a place at Runshaw College.



The School Calendar

Please use the school calendar to ensure that you are aware of key meetings and events coming up. [You can see the School Calendar here](#)

The greatest risk to your child's mental health and wellbeing



Low self-esteem, negative body image, fear of missing out (FOMO), anxiety, feelings of isolation, increase in depression, sleep disruption, encouragement to self-harm, exposure to age-inappropriate content, pornography addiction...

It's a list of a parents' worst nightmares for their child – yet if we allow children to use the phones, consoles, watches and computers without monitoring them then it is highly probable that your child has already been exposed to material that can lead to these outcomes!

As always, we encourage you to have open dialogue with your children so that they do not become secretive, but at the same time, you do need to be proactive in monitoring their devices – after all, in most cases you are paying for them so they are actually yours which your children 'borrow'!

What we will do to protect your child when they are using their laptops at home.

The Keeping Children Safe In Education guidance that applies to all those working with young people in education requires that appropriate filters are in place to protect young people from accessing social media and harmful content. This has long been the case in school, but we will also be **applying these filters to all laptop devices** and these *filters will continue to operate when your child uses their laptop at home*. You can be certain that they will not be able to access these sites on the laptop they use for school and if they try school will be alerted.

If you pay for your laptop, you can ask for these filters to be removed once your payments have finished and the laptop becomes yours. We hope that you will value these additional layers of protection that are in place for your child.

Ask the Awkward

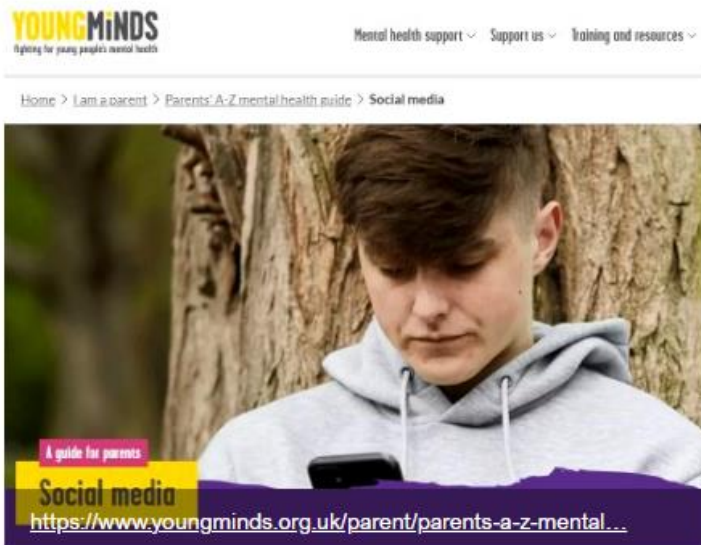


The CEOP website has a really useful set of short films and guidance for parents about having those awkward conversations. Online relationships are increasingly the norm for young people and with that comes the pressure to exchange nude pics and more.

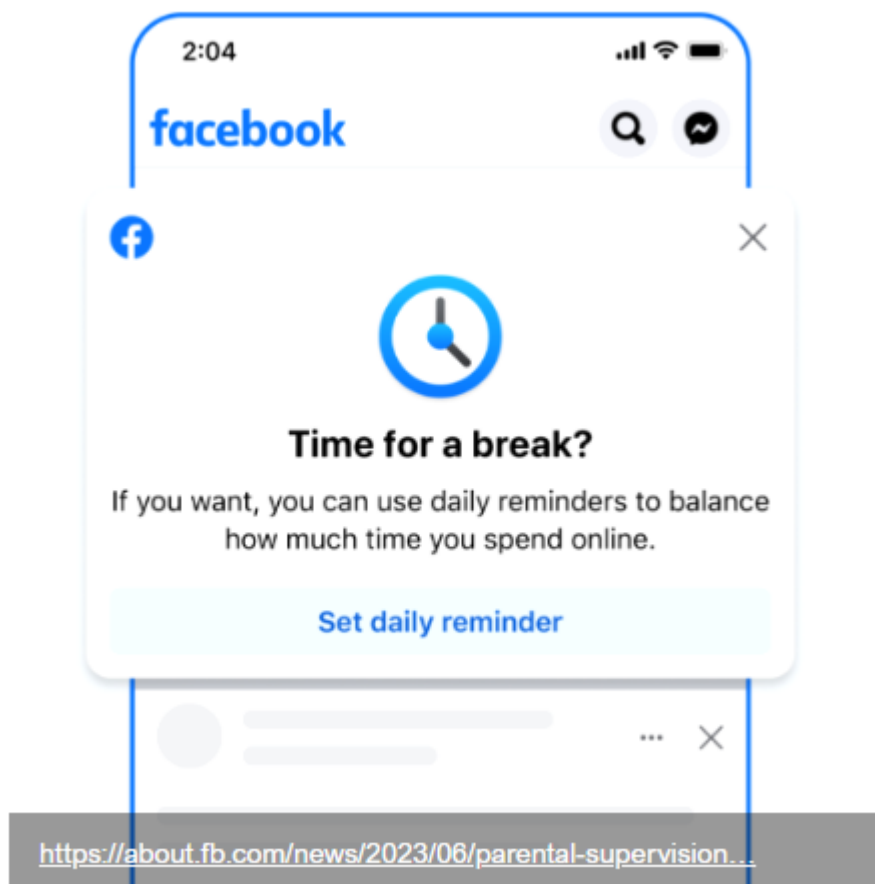
See the short films [here](#)

Access the guidance [here](#)

Young Minds



The Young Minds website has a section for parents and a section for young people and the link below takes you directly to the parents guide about social media: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/social-media/>



Meta introduces more parental super Meta have announced new features for some of their products. Firstly, they have added parental supervision to Messenger (users must be 13+), which includes the ability to see who your child interacts with. Also, Meta have added a feature to encourage teens to set time limits on Facebook (users must be 13+) and new parental supervision features on Instagram (users must be 13+). Find out more here:

[https://about.fb.com/news/2023/06/parental-supervision-and-teen-time-management-on-metas-apps/vision tools.](https://about.fb.com/news/2023/06/parental-supervision-and-teen-time-management-on-metas-apps/vision%20tools)

What is misogyny? Prevent and tackle hate online against girls.

What is misogyny?

Prevent and tackle hate online against girls

Misogyny is form of online hate that targets women and girls. It's promoted in different communities online where influencers promote a narrative that women should be treated as less than men.

Explore where misogyny is introduced to young people online and the effective actions you can take to challenge these ideas with this guide.



<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/online-hate/what-is-misogyny/>

Internet Matters have created this area on their website exploring misogyny, highlighting where children might see it online and discussing how we can tackle misogyny: <https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/online-hate/what-is-misogyny/>