

Victoria College Belfast

(incorporating Richmond Lodge School)

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ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS

For the Year
2010 / 2011

(Incorporating Richmond Lodge School)

GOVERNORS' ANNUAL REPORT

The following is a summary of the work of the Board of Governors, under the Chairmanship of Dr Bryan Gregory, during the academic year 2010/2011.

Board Business

The Board met on seven occasions and was supported by the work of its committees.

Transfer Arrangements

Throughout the year the Board of Governors and Senior Staff continued to be fully engaged in discussions surrounding the Transfer 2011 arrangements. The Chairman and Headmistress attended meetings of the Association for Quality Education, the Post Primary Transfer Consortium and also engaged with the Department of Education and local MLAs.

Having given due regard to the Guidance issued by the Minister the Board took a decision to maintain academic criteria in order to select pupils for admission to the College in Year 8 in 2011. The College did not face any challenges to the criteria it used for admissions and will continue to use academic criteria to select Year 8 pupils in 2012. Members of the Board of Governors also considered Special Circumstances applications as part of the Transfer procedure.

The College has consistently taken the view that there should be an agreed form of entrance assessment for admission into any Grammar school and the Headmistress and the Chairman have been actively involved in discussions between AQE and PPTC to reach such an agreement. In the meantime the Board of Governors are fully committed to embracing the College's ethos of inclusivity to ensure that admission to the College is open to pupils from all social backgrounds and religious and ethnic communities.

Composition of the Board and Committee Structures

The Board of Governors wish to ensure that the composition of the Board will best meet the needs of the College for the future so that it can continue to provide active support, advice and leadership to allow the College to continue to grow as a centre of educational excellence. A Skills Audit, based around the National Audit Office guidance, was produced and completed by governors and potential gaps within the composition of the Board were identified. Meetings took place with the Department of Education and the Skills Audit provided a useful tool to highlight any skills which the Board would require now and in the future. The term of office for six Departmental nominee governors has now been completed and the Minister for Education is currently considering these appointments and the Board looks forward to welcoming new appointees who will strengthen and extend the Board's skills base.

Governors and senior staff met in June to discuss the College's vision for the future. At Board and committee level a review was also carried out of its committee structure. The Board acknowledged that it was important that the governance and committee structure should be tailored to meet the needs of the Board and to ensure that a balance of responsibilities across the committees was maintained. It was agreed that from the start of the academic year 2011-2012 the College Committee should replace the former General Purposes Committee and that it should advise the Board of Governors and oversee arrangements and matters relating to education, pastoral care and personnel and any other issues which the Board delegates to it. The Board also agreed that separate committees should discuss Finance matters and Audit and Risk matters and that this would follow the best practice advice set out by the College's Auditors. An independent convenor was also appointed for the Audit and Risk Committee. A Strategic Planning Committee was established as a Standing Committee to replace the former ad hoc Futures Committee.

Use of External Facilities

A sub-committee of the Board was established to discuss the College's facilities and the potential for it to be used by external bodies. Health and safety and security issues were considered and steps were taken to minimise any identified risks. The Board approved the sub-committee's recommendations that the swimming pool should be made available for hire and a schedule of external use is now in operation. The Board of Governors welcomes the increased links with and benefits for the local community which have been established as a result. The arrangements are reviewed on a regular basis and are currently operating successfully.

Curriculum Review

The Board of Governors was consulted fully on the Curriculum review carried out by Senior staff in preparation for the Entitlement Framework. Governors also participated in the Curriculum Provision survey which had been circulated to parents and staff. Academic excellence is central to the Board's vision for the College and Governors and Senior Staff wish to ensure that pupils of all abilities have the opportunity to receive an excellent education which will best meet their needs for the future. The College will continue to offer a choice and breadth of subjects so that pupils can reach their full potential and to facilitate this Senior staff regularly review the subjects offered to pupils in-house. Subject collaborations with other schools will continue to be investigated and during the academic year 2010-2011 collaborations with RBAI and Hunterhouse facilitated Theatre Studies, Classical Civilisation and Health and Social Care.

Review of School Uniform

The Board was fully involved in discussions which took place during 2010-11 in relation to proposals to introduce a new skirt. Senior staff had liaised with other schools and various options had been available for pupils and parents to view. Parents had been consulted and their options sought, including those of the Board of Governors. Following consideration of all the views expressed the Board and staff agreed to retain the current school skirt, with steps to be taken to ensure that it was worn at an appropriate length. This matter will be kept under review by the Board.

Investors in People

An Investors in People exercise was carried out at the College from 28 February until 2 March during which twenty members of staff were interviewed, both teaching and non-teaching. The Board of Governors was also involved in this process. Governors and staff were delighted when the College met the standard required and retained the Investors in People Award.

Pre-School/Preparatory Department

Building on the success of the establishment of the Pre-School and the refurbishment and alterations to the Vitaglass accommodation, the Board approved the expansion of the Pre-School to accommodate 24 pupils, thus providing a strong feeder to Preparatory 1.

Committee Business

General Purposes Committee

The Committee supervised various staff appointments, both for external and internal positions, as well as applications from staff for changes to their contracts. The Committee also reviewed admissions criteria, staff attendance, Child Protection issues, a range of College policies and procedures and also oversaw the review and implementation of the College's School Development and Strategic Plans and Performance Review and Staff Development. The Committee established a Policies Sub-Committee to review schools policies and to reports its deliberations to the General Purposes Committee. This ensured a continued thorough focus on policies whilst also enabling the

General Purposes Committee to concentrate more fully on advising the Board on educational, curriculum, personnel and pastoral care matters. The Committee reinstated the Futures Sub-committee to consider various College issues and its membership was enhanced by the

appointment of independent external members. Issues discussed included the exploration of ways to develop and enhance the Boarding Department so that it can continue to make a positive contribution to the school. The sub-committee also oversaw the restructuring of staffing within the Boarding Department and the internal appointment of an Acting Head of Boarding.

Finance and Audit Committee

The Committee oversaw the College's financial affairs and planned expenditure and advised the Board accordingly. In the current financial climate the challenges for the Board and the College in the context of a tightened budget were recognised. The Committee reviewed and amended the College's credit control and charging policies and new arrangements were introduced for the schedule of and the payment of fees. An internal and external audit took place during the year and a clean bill of health was received. In the internal audit the College was rated as "Substantial" in all but three areas and received an overall "Satisfactory" rating and it is the Committee's aim to obtain an overall "Substantial" rating next year.

Estates and Support Management Committee

The Committee oversaw the upkeep of the College, liaised with the Department to obtain grant aid and carried out maintenance work throughout the year, including the carrying out of repairs to burst pipes during the severe winter and the upgrading of fire alarm panels. The Committee oversaw renovations and the redecoration of the Sixth Form Centre and established a cashless cafeteria system within the Sixth Form centre which is linked to the canteen. The Committee, in liaison with the Risk Management (including Health and Safety) Committee, reviewed Health and Safety issues and were pleased to report a fall in the number of health and safety related incidents.

Risk Management (including Health and Safety) Committee

The Committee reviewed Health and Safety related incidents and the College's Risk Register to identify and assess and to take actions to minimise and manage risks. The Risk Register was revised in relation to specific areas and a comprehensive Health and Safety report was presented to the Board.

Development Committee

In view of the Department's postponement of Capital Projects during the current financial climate, the Development Committee has been suspended and any pertinent issues to be covered by the newly reformed Estates Committee. Discussions with the Department have been organised to highlight the College's shortfall in accommodation and an application for Minor Works has been made.

Board Membership

There are 28 Governors of Victoria College. Fifteen are Foundation Governors, six are nominated by the Department of Education, three are Parent Governors elected by parents and three are Teacher Governors elected by their colleagues. The Principal is *ex officio* a member of the Board. The Board's Secretary is Miss Nicola Mawhinney BA. The Board approved Mr R Telford's transfer of status from Departmental nominee to Foundation Governor. One Departmental nominee vacancy was outstanding following a prior resignation. The current Departmental nominees' terms of office have been completed and the Department of Education is currently considering the appointment of these six vacant positions. The four current Departmental nominees will remain on the Board until these appointments have been finalised.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Date of which term of office ends</u>
Dr B J Gregory BSc PhD CEng MICE MIEI FCIWM FGS (Chairman)	Foundation Governor	N/A
Dame Joan Harbison BA MSc (Vice Chairman)	Foundation Governor	N/A
Ms P Slevin BA MEd PGCE PQH (Headmistress)	Ex officio	N/A
Mrs L Beatty BSc	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr N Brown ACII	Parent Governor	Nov 2013
Dr B Callender MB MRCP	Foundation Governor	N/A
Dr R Clarke MB Bch BAO FRCP	Dept of Education Nominee	Aug 2011
Miss A Curry BA MBA CEd MCMi FSTBE ILTM	Dept of Education Nominee	Aug 2011
Mr J N Finlay BSc CEng FICE FIEI FCIWEM MConsE	Foundation Governor	N/A
Lady Froggatt	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr J A B Gibson MBE JP BSc DipEd	Foundation Governor	N/A
Professor D R Hadden MD FRCP	Foundation Governor	N/A
Dr A Helmy MBBCh MSc MRCPi	Parent Governor	Nov 2013
Mr M H Hunter FCA	Foundation Governor	N/A
Dr M S Johnston MB BCh BAO	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mrs H Lavery BA PGCE PGCCG	Teacher Governor	Nov 2013
Mr C G Maccabe CB LLB LLM FRSA	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr S McKillop BEng CEng MIEI	Dept of Education Nominee	Aug 2011
Mr A M Robinson	Teacher Governor	Nov 2013
Mrs E A Robinson	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr A Sayers BSc	Dept of Education Nominee	Aug 2011
Mr R Telford BSc DIS MRICS MAPM	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr E Thompson BSc PGCE Dip HE	Teacher Governor	Nov 2013
Mrs G Wells MB BCh BAO MRCP MFCH	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr J W Wilson QC	Foundation Governor	N/A
Mr M Yousaf MBBS FRCS FRCS (G: Surgery) MPhil	Parent Governor	Nov 2013

In June 2011 the Board approved changes and revisions to the Committee structure. The College, Finance and Estates Committees were established under the convenorship of Dr Callender, Mr Hunter and Mr Telford respectively. The Strategic Planning and Audit and Risk Committees were also established under the convenorship of Dame Joan Harbison and Mr A Sayers respectively.

Subject Choice in Year 12, Year 13 and Year 14 [2010/2011]

GCSE Subjects offered in Year 12

Additional Mathematics; Art and Design; Biology; Chemistry; English; English Literature; French; Geography; German; History; Italian; Home Economics (Food); Information and Communications Technology; Mathematics; Music; Physical Education; Physics; short course Religious Studies; Spanish and Technology and Design.

All GCSE courses were externally examined.

AS Latin was available to Year 12 pupils.

AS Level Subjects offered in Year 13

The AS Level subjects available in 2010/2011 were:

Art and Design; Biology; Business Studies; Chemistry; Classical Civilization; Design and Technology; English Literature; French; Geography; German; Government and Politics; Health and Social Care; History; History and Appreciation of Art; Home Economics; Information and Communication Technology; Italian; Mathematics; Further Mathematics; Music; Physics; Religious Studies, Spanish and Theatre Studies.

Additional Subjects for which a certification was awarded

Young Enterprise; Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (COPE).

A2 Level Subjects offered in Year 14

All the above AS level subjects were available in 2010/2011.

Additional Subjects offered in Year 14

In addition pupils in Years 12, 13 and 14 were entered for examinations offered by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

	UK	NI	VCB
A*/A grades at A2 level	27%	34.5%	36.6%
A*/A grades at GCSE	23.2%	27.7%	44.2%
A*-C grades at A2	76.2%	84.2%	88.2%
A*-C grades at GCSE	69.8%	74.8%	94.5%

KEY STAGE THREE 2011

	Level 5 or above		Level 6 or above	
	VCB	NI	VCB	NI
English	100.0%	77.5%	93.2%	50.8%
Mathematics	96.3%	75.7%	83.6%	49.5%

VICTORIA COLLEGE RESULTS COMPARED TO N.I. AVERAGE FOR GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

	2007/2008		2008/2009		2009/2010	
	VCB	NI	VCB	NI	VCB	NI
5+ GCSE A*-C	95	96	98	97	98	97
7+ GCSE A*-C	92	91	93	91	93	92
3+ A LEVEL A*-C	83	74	79	75	70	78
2+ A LEVEL A*-C	99	99	100	100	100	100

GCSE 2011

Number of pupils entered for 5 or more subjects	124
% achieving 5+ A*-C grades	97.6%
% achieving 5+ A*-B grades	83.1%
% achieving 7+ A*-C grades	91.1%
% achieving 5+ A*-A grades	42.7%

A LEVEL 2011

Number of pupils entered for 3 or more subjects	93
% achieving 2+ A*-C grades	100%
% achieving 3+ A*-C grades	74.2%
% A* grades achieved	9.3%
% A*-A grades achieved	36.6%

PUBLIC EXAMINATION RESULTS 2010/2011 GCSE RESULTS BY SUBJECT

Subject	Entry	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Art and Design	58	31.03	36.21	22.41	10.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Biology	100	8.00	25.00	37.00	27.00	1.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Business Studies	31	3.23	41.94	22.58	22.58	9.68	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Chemistry	51	13.73	37.25	35.29	13.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Design and Technology	18	0.00	22.22	38.89	33.33	0.00	5.56	0.00	0.00	0.00
Drama	27	11.11	55.56	18.52	11.11	3.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
English Language	125	12.80	33.60	36.80	14.40	2.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
English Literature	123	2.44	32.52	56.10	8.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
French	59	8.47	25.42	28.81	27.12	10.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Geography	48	10.42	45.83	29.17	14.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
German	26	3.85	11.54	30.77	26.92	26.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
History	62	16.13	37.10	30.65	11.29	3.23	1.61	0.00	0.00	1.61
Home Economics (Food & Nutrition)	28	10.71	67.86	14.29	7.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Information Technology	47	23.40	61.70	10.64	2.13	2.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Italian	16	12.50	37.50	25.00	12.50	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Latin	5	20.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Law	15	0.00	0.00	33.33	26.67	13.33	0.00	6.67	13.3	0.00
Mathematics	125	11.20	23.20	30.40	28.00	6.40	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mathematics: Additional	28	14.29	28.57	35.71	17.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.57
Music	7	14.29	71.43	14.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Physics	65	13.85	20.00	38.46	18.46	9.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Religious Studies	111	11.71	27.03	39.64	16.22	4.50	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00
Spanish	26	19.23	30.77	19.23	11.54	19.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sport/P.E. Studies	13	61.54	15.38	7.69	7.69	7.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Percentage TOTAL	1214	12.19 148	32.21 391	33.28 404	17.05 207	4.37 53	0.41 5	0.16 2	0.16 2	0.16 2
Religious Studies (Short Course)	15	0.00	0.00	13.3	13.3	33.3	33.3	6.7	0.00	0.00

% of Year 12 Pupils Achieving no passes in either GCSE or other qualifications Nil

OTHER EXAMINATIONS

Name of Awarding Body	Qualification	Number of pupils entered	% Achieving Qualification
O.C.R. Examinations Board	Level 3 Certificate in Enterprise (Young Enterprise)	13	84.6
C.C.E.A. Examinations Board	Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (COPE)	17	100.0
Key Skills	Information Technology – Level 3	21	100.0

PUBLIC EXAMINATION RESULTS 2010/2011 A2 LEVEL RESULTS BY SUBJECT

Subject	Entry	% of pupils achieving the following grades						
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Art and Design	28	28.6	32.1	25.0	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Biology	31	6.5	35.5	22.6	19.4	12.9	3.2	0.0
Business Studies	22	4.5	9.1	31.8	36.4	13.6	4.5	0.0
Chemistry	22	13.6	36.4	31.8	13.6	4.5	0.0	0.0
Chinese	2	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Design and Technology	11	0.0	27.3	27.3	36.4	9.1	0.0	0.0
Drama	11	0.0	36.4	36.4	18.2	9.1	0.0	0.0
Economics	1	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
English Literature	26	7.7	15.4	23.0	19.2	26.9	3.9	3.9
French	3	66.7	0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Geography	10	0.0	30.0	50.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
German	2	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Health and Social Care	15	0.0	33.3	46.7	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
History	18	0.0	44.4	33.3	16.7	5.6	0.0	0.0
History of Art	5	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	40.0	20.0	0.0
Home Economics	4	0.0	0.0	75.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Information Technology	18	5.6	16.7	44.4	22.2	5.6	5.6	0.0
Italian	1	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mathematics	26	11.5	30.8	38.5	11.5	0.0	7.7	0.0
Mathematics (Further)	2	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Music	5	0.0	60.0	20.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
Physics	8	12.5	37.5	0.0	37.5	12.5	0.0	0.0
Politics	9	0.0	0.0	44.4	44.4	11.1	0.0	0.0
Religious Studies	14	14.3	28.6	50.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spanish	5	0.0	60.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sport Studies	3	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0
Turkish	1	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Percentage TOTAL	303	9.3	27.4	33.3	18.8	8.6	2.3	0.3
		28	83	101	57	26	7	1

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Name of Awarding Body	Qualification	Number of Pupils entered	% Achieving Qualification
Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	Grades 1-8 Theory Exam.	110 (Yrs 8-14) 10 (Yrs 8-14)	100% 90%

No. of Yr 12, 13, 14 Leavers 2010/11	Destinations - Leavers to						
	Higher Education	Further Education	Employment	Another School	Job Skills	Modern Apprenticeship	None of other categories
147	93	23	3	20	3	0	5

ANNUAL ATTENDANCE RATE (ALL PUPILS)

Total days attended by all pupils on roll as % of total possible days of attendance = 94.1%

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Summarised Department Aims

Through a balanced and varied programme, the Physical Education Department aims to contribute to a pupils growth, development and general fitness, to encourage each pupil to develop to their full potential and that each pupil should have an understanding of the importance of exercise, and its benefit to health.

ALLOCATION OF PE IN CURRICULUM PER WEEK i.e. 5 DAYS

Year 8	2 hours per week	Year 11	2 hours per fortnight, not necessarily on separate weeks.
Year 9	2 hours per week	Year 12	1 hour per week (excluding Additional Maths group).
Year 10	2 hours per week		

Extra-curricular activities from 3.25 - 5.00 pm Monday to Friday each week available to all pupils. Saturday hockey fixtures - September to March.

PE FACILITIES

In School:

Cranmore Campus

1. 4 Astroturf tennis courts (also used extensively for hockey).
2. Gravel Hockey Pitch (also used extensively for Athletics).
3. Swimming Pool.
4. Gym.
5. Assembly Hall.
6. Great Hall.
7. Long Jump pit/runway.

Richmond Campus

1. Gym.

Off Campus

Queen's Astroturf Pitch for Hockey
QUB P.E.C. Minor Hall for Netball
YMCA, Stranmillis.

FACILITIES HIRED OR USED

1. Rugby Pitches at Queens, Malone for cross country (occasionally).
2. Osborne Park (RBAI) - rugby pitches for occasional use.
3. Leisure Centre for netball matches - P.E.C., badminton
4. Leisure Centres.
5. Ice Bowl.
6. Ten Pin Bowling.
7. Lagan Water Sports.
8. Indoor Tennis Centre.
9. YMCA Stranmillis.
10. Belfast Boat Club.

KEY STAGE 3/4 ACTIVITIES

Aerobics	Gymnastics
Athletics	Health Related PE
Badminton	Hockey
Basketball	Life Saving
Boxercise	National Dance
Creative Dance	Netball
Circuit Training	Rounders
	Rugby
Cricket	Sports Leadership Course
Cross Country	Swimming
Equestrian	Swiss Ball
Fitness Suite	Table Tennis
Football	Tennis
	Trampolining
Golf	Volleyball
	Yoga

These may vary as some are after school activities.

CAREERS DEPARTMENT POLICY

Careers Education Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is the educational process which enables pupils to acquire the skills, attitudes and abilities they will need to chart their way through life with confidence and to be effective in a variety of adult roles and spheres of life. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop the skills of career decision making not only at key transition points but also in the context of changing circumstances throughout life. Careers Education forms a vital and integral part of the College curriculum in preparing our pupils for life-long learning in a rapidly changing economic environment.

The Careers programme for Years 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14 is delivered through timetabled classes with the emphasis in Years 8, 9 and 10 on Education for Employability and pupils are guided through understanding themselves, where there is the opportunity to reflect on their self development and to consider how their attributes and ambitions relate to future life styles, education, training and employment opportunities. Beginning in Year 8, pupils build up an Employability e-portfolio, providing a record of their work. With the increasing use of computer technology pupils are made aware of the various opportunities at local, national and European level and the relationship between what they are studying at school and possible routes into higher and further education and employment. Learning for Life and Work is a statutory requirement at Key Stage 4 and our Year 11 and Year 12 pupils follow a diverse programme of activities covering employability, career planning, enterprise and entrepreneurship. All Year 12 pupils are entered for an AQA Level 2 qualification "Preparation for Working Life". In Year 10, all pupils participate in a work placement day by visiting an organisation in small groups accompanied by a teacher. There is a commitment to provide personal career planning for all pupils as part of an on-going process beginning in Year 8 and continuing into the post-16 programmes.

The Careers officer from the Northern Ireland Careers Service provides support in the delivery of the Careers programme through individual interviews with Year 12 pupils on request and attendance at the biennial Careers Convention.

Pupils are introduced to the world of work through taught classes and talks by representatives from the professions and the business world. In Year 13 pupils have the opportunity to workshadow in a wide variety of placements and through a Business Insight Conference to test their marketing skills and gain valuable management experience. In the summer term a UCAS preparation evening for pupils and parents lays the foundations for the formal application process.

In Year 14, pupils are guided through application to institutions of further and higher education via the UCAS and CAO systems. A mock interview evening is organised to allow each pupil to experience a formal interview situation. This event relies heavily on the strong links which the school has established with professionals within the local community.

The Sixth Form programme includes visits from many Further and Higher Education Institutes across Ireland and Britain. Pupils applying for Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine, Art and Design and other courses involving Additional Admissions Tests are given additional support and guidance.

Careers Education is dynamic and under constant review and development responding to the changes in Higher Education, employment and society as a whole. It is therefore appropriate in this context that Careers Education is delivered by specialist teachers.

The department is accommodated in a purpose designed suite with a well resourced teaching area which includes the careers library and two terminals connected to the school network with access to up-to-date Careers software and the Internet.

With a greater understanding of themselves and investigated opportunities pupils should have the skills and confidence to reach, review and evaluate decisions.

SPECIALIST SCHOOL REVIEW

In May 2009, after a highly rigorous application process the College was designated a Specialist School for Science. Challenging targets were set out for each year of specialist status, together with activities to achieve them. A community plan set out targets for the contributions that were made through the specialist subjects to the work of partner schools and community groups. The broad aims of the specialist programme may be summarised as:

- Raise standards of teaching and learning in the specialist subjects
- Raise achievement for students of all abilities
- Extend the extra curricular opportunities available to students
- Develop a school character and ethos related to the specialism
- Strengthen links between the College and community groups
- Benefit other schools and the community in the local area.

In March 2009, the then Education Minister Caitriona Ruane announced that, due to financial pressures, the Specialist Schools Programme for 2009 would be severely curtailed with immediate funding only being available via the Innovation Fund for a limited number of schools with specialisms in science, technology and mathematics, of which Victoria College was one.

During the early part of the first year after designation, the Specialist School team spent time condensing the original 4 year action plan to a 2 year scheme whilst still aiming to enhance and enrich the curriculum for students in our school, our partner and feeder schools, and the wider community.

The programme, and additional funding enabled us to consolidate our relationships with partner schools, community and business links and thereby offer a wide range of educational experiences to students, affording them the opportunity to experience the world of work and enterprise with a particular focus on STEM careers.

The benefits enjoyed by pupils and staff within the Science Department included the whole school emphasis on data analysis and target setting as a means of raising pupil attainment, the growth of the VLE as a medium for encouraging independent learning and an opportunity to participate in Science clubs and extra-curricular activities. Sixth Form pupils delivered lessons in local primary schools – an activity which tested their communication and organisational skills to the full.

We were extremely fortunate in the appointment of a Learning Mentor for the duration of the programme. Miss Deborah Hatton worked closely with a group of pupils in Key Stage 4 in order to help establish their preferred learning style, set aspirational yet realistic goals and targets and help improve time management skills and revision techniques. Miss Hatton very quickly established an excellent working relationship with her pupils and communicated her high expectations to them during each mentoring session and also through personal example.

Specialist school funding was used to set up the Accelerated Reading (AR) Scheme on the Junior Campus in September 2010. This is an innovative software package that encourages and motivates pupils with their reading. In addition, the software helps teachers and librarians manage and monitor a pupil's independent reading practice. Accelerated Reader is now regularly used by pupils in Years 8 and 9. Since starting Accelerated Reader Victoria College pupils have read and successfully passed over 2000 book quizzes which equates to over 105,000,000 words read!

One of the highlights of the summer term during both years of the specialist school programme took place in junior school. During the week, two groups of pupils were enjoying the sights and sounds of London and Paris whilst back at home Year 8 pupils had the opportunity to explore, investigate and discover STEM subjects in a stimulating learning environment. In addition, girls participated in trips during the week to W5, Crawfordsburn Country Park, Oxford Island and the Armagh Planetarium.

The activities that Year 8 completed helped to improve pupils' creative thinking and problem solving skills. Pupils worked together in small teams on design projects and practical workshops.

The College has been successful in delivering most of the activities set out in the two-year plan for specialist status, successful in meeting most of the associated targets and in achieving a

high impact on learners and on the life and work of the school more broadly. The College has remained faithful to our mission statement to provide the best quality education for girls but used specialist school status very effectively to provide important resources and benefits in a way that was highly conducive to school improvement.

'BAKER' DAYS AND SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DAYS 2010-2011

The College places a strong emphasis on continuous professional development for all staff and recognises the importance of self evaluation and reflective practice within all departments. In 2010-2011 the school chose to take five School Development Days (SDD) for the purposes of school improvement and school/staff development in addition to five 'Baker' days.

During 2010-2011 the School Development Days and the 'Baker' days were used for:

- staff training in the use of SIMS for the new *assessment and reporting* arrangements throughout the school
- ongoing *curriculum development* for the KS3 revised curriculum
- *curriculum development* for the recent changes to the KS4 curriculum
- *self evaluation and review* within and across departments
- *target setting and monitoring of pupil progress*
- training in the *use of ICT* to enhance the learning experience for students
- staff training in developing further the school's *virtual learning environment*
- staff training in strategies to meet the individual needs of pupils with *additional educational needs* such as dyslexia
- staff training in using *lesson monitor* to register attendance
- staff training in *health and safety* procedures, *risk assessments* and monitoring processes
- review and development time for the school's *pastoral teams*
- health and safety training including *First Aid at Work* and *Defibrillator Training*

SOUTH BELFAST AREA LEARNING COMMUNITY

Post-primary schools have been encouraged to deliver the Entitlement Framework by working collaboratively in Area Learning Communities. Members of ALC will be able to offer an increased range of courses to all young people in the 14-19 age group within schools and FE Colleges. The ongoing requirements of the Entitlement Framework which is concerned with providing additional choice and flexibility ie twenty four subjects at GCSE and twenty seven subjects at 'A' level both of a General and Applied nature can only be met within a framework of shared provision. The College is an active member of the South Belfast Area Learning Community along with 12 other post-primary schools and pupils and staff now have increased opportunities to learn and work together. Sixth form pupils from Victoria College, RBAI, Rathmore, Hunterhouse College and Methodist College work together for the delivery of German, Classical Civilisation, Health and Social Care and Theatre Studies. At GCSE level, pupils from partner schools have been taught together for the delivery of Islamic Studies and Irish. In addition, GCSE pupils have opportunities to attend joint workshops to develop skills in enterprise and entrepreneurship. Collaborative models allow schools to retain their ethos, while providing opportunities for their pupils to experience diverse teaching and learning contexts. The young people of within the South Belfast area will be given opportunities to gain academic or vocational qualifications as well as invaluable experiences that they can use in their journey towards adulthood. Teaching staff have benefited from a range of joint staff development training sessions including an annual seminar hosted by Victoria College for newly appointed or aspiring middle managers and seminars for pastoral leaders. Cluster meetings for Heads of Subjects to share best practice within curriculum areas are held on a termly basis and are proving to be a helpful means of getting to know colleagues in partner schools whilst planning for the delivery of the revised curriculum and controlled assessment.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

The international dimension in the curriculum is recognised by the College actively maintaining their second International School Award. Students and staff continue to be committed to developing and maintaining our international links.

As part of the Bachpan Bonding **Global School Partnership** Program, organised and Sponsored by Shruti Foundation. In collaboration with The British Council and Belfast Education and Library Board. Miss McMackin, Miss Hatton and three senior pupils, Molly Gilmartin, Dara Murphy and Cristina Larkin along with staff and pupils from Ashfield Girls' High School visited their partner schools in India, 9-17 January and also presented at The World Educational Conference in Delhi. The visit proved a very enriching experience for all involved and empowered pupils and staff through the sharing of good practice. Moreover, the visit enabled the development of transferable skills and relationships on a social, personal, academic and professional level. All involved are enthused following the visit and now strive to develop and maximise the potential of this fruitful partnership. The College is now preparing to host a visit from Him Jyoti School, Dehradun India. In line with this partnership, in June, a group of Year 9 pupils participated in a **Sharing Education Programme** (SEP) with Ashfield Girls' High School. This programme focussed on Performing Arts, ICT and the Citizenship element of Learning for Life and Work.

In partnership with Methodist College Belfast, the College continues to contribute to a three year **Connecting Classrooms** Project involving three schools in Cameroon and three in Tanzania. The aims of the Project are to create international links with African schools, to develop cross curricular links within the schools and to share knowledge of environmental issues. Throughout the academic year a range of pupils from the College have communicated by snail mail with pupils from our partner schools. Pupils have really enjoyed reverting back to this traditional method of communication and it has enhanced their literacy skills. In addition, pupils from both countries are thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to discover more about other countries, cultures and traditions through their pen pal letters. In February Ms Slevin participated in a study visit to Mwanza Tanzania to continue to develop our partnership further.

During this academic year the **EuroScola** competition, organised by the European Studies Office and facilitated by Miss McMackin required entrants to research and design an A4 leaflet on the MDG's (Millennium Development Goals). A selection of our Year 13 pupils participated in the competition. The standard of entries from Victoria College was commended by the judging panel and the overall winner, Miss Jessica Lockhart and 7 students were awarded, as first prize, a fully funded trip to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, February. The competition proved an innovative and excellent opportunity for pupils meet with students from educational establishments across Europe and to develop many links and transferable skills.

This year to celebrate **International Women's Day** on the 8 March many Year 10 pupils participated in a competition organised by the Equality Commission for NI. To mark the centenary of International Women's Day pupils submitted posters and creative writing pieces portraying inspirational women. Jordan Allen was highly commended in the poster category and invited to attend an awards ceremony on April 1 at Equality House in Belfast to collect her prize.

On 28 March we warmly welcomed a group of **Malaysian visitors** to The College. Our visitors were treated to a power point presentation of the school, a tour of the senior campus and an informal chat with Year 10 students. Our visitors were from a charitable group visiting Northern Ireland to discover similarities and difference between our cultural and education systems. The visit was very successful, enjoyable and informative for all involved. Participants profited from the opportunity to meet and converse, while comparing their cultures and education systems.

This year, in line with our Comenius project, to recognise **Climate Week**, March 2011 a group of pupils from the College participated in a national challenge designed to inspire young people to think and act environmentally. The challenge required pupils to use their creativity and innovation to generate ideas to help combat climate change. National and regional winners were selected by a celebrity panel, and the College's Key Stage 3 team entry was highly commended.

In April, two staff and 9 pupils visited one of our **Comenius** partner schools in Italy to share work and progress with our environmentally themed project. Pupils valued this visit as an excellent opportunity

to compare education systems across Europe. As a result of the visit, links have been strengthened and communication enhanced between the European partner schools.

A group called **International Study Programmes** visited the College in April of this academic year. A group of international English teachers from all over the world visited Belfast to do refresher classes in English and to also learn more about the education system here. The teachers toured the campus, visited lessons and talked to staff and pupils, absorbing the ethos of Victoria. On reflection, there were many things which impressed our visitors. All involved had an opportunity to reflect and discuss the comparisons and differences between European education systems.

A selection of Post 16 students celebrated **Europe Day**, 9 May by beginning their preparations to represent the European Commission at the annual mock Council of the European Union. They were joined at their school by Mr Maurice Maxwell, Head of the European Commission in Northern Ireland. The students had an opportunity to hear firsthand from Mr Maxwell about the role the Commission plays in the Council of Ministers meetings. The group was also joined by staff from the British Council, who provided an overview of how the mock Council would run and answered questions from the students.

On 21 October 2011 four Post 16 pupils were delighted to be invited to represent the European Commission at in the **Mock Council of the European Union**, an event organised by the British Council in partnership with the European Commission Office in Northern Ireland. This year, pupils from schools across Northern Ireland representing 27 Member States debated on migration and the digital agenda.

During this academic year students involved in the increasingly popular **European Studies Junior and Senior Programmes** worked collaboratively with students from schools across Europe to develop their mutual understanding and cultural awareness. Each participating student received a certificate for the sharing of their work. In addition, some students have used this work to contribute towards their accreditation for the **ASDAN International Award**. In October, as a part of the European Studies Enrichment programme pupils entered the "My Vision For Europe" competition. My Vision For Europe is a creative competition which gives students the chance to think more about the European Union. Entrants created and directed their own video which they uploaded and shared with other schools on a Virtual Learning Environment.

On 21 June, we hosted a visit from a group of American high school students taking part in the **'People to People' programme**. The delegation comprised of 33 delegates and 4 leaders from across Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. Guests were treated to a power point presentation about our school, a tour of the senior campus and an informal chat with students and staff over refreshments in the welcoming school library. The visit came to an exciting end with presentations and some impromptu break dancing from our visitors. The visit was a hugely successful and highly beneficial to both the American delegates and our pupils. It provided them with the opportunity to meet and converse with global students their own age and to compare their education and social systems.

A group of Year 14 pupils was delighted to be placed third in their very first participation in the **European Youth Parliament UK National Session** at St Aidan's College, Durham. Following intense regional forums in March, Victoria College was delighted to be one of two teams selected to go forward to represent Northern Ireland at the EYP National Session in September. Fourteen groups of enthusiastic and eager delegates from prestigious schools across the UK participated.

Evidently, in line with the promotion of the International Dimension, partnerships with other schools both locally and internationally continue as a strong feature of the community life of Victoria College.

POLICY ON DRUGS EDUCATION

The College aims to provide in its pastoral role and as an integral part of the curriculum a drugs education programme which is appropriate to the needs of all its pupils. The programme within Learning for Life and Work recognises the dangers of a drug-using culture and emphasises the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Through it pupils should not only acquire the knowledge and understanding to enable them to consider the effects of drugs and other substances, but also develop the values and skills to make informed and responsible decisions about their use.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Policy statement:

Victoria College aims to provide a broad, balanced, coherent and challenging curriculum which promises the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of the pupils in order to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The school's policy for Special Education ensures that each pupil has the greatest possible access to that curriculum.

Special educational need:

A pupil has special educational needs if she experiences difficulties which require special educational provision to be made:

- if she has an emotional or behavioural difficulty;
- if she is significantly more able intellectually than her peers;
- if she has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age;
- if she has a physical disability or medical condition which prevents her or hinders her from making use of the educational facilities provided;
- if she has language difficulties which hamper understanding.

Special educational provision is additional to or different from the provision made for pupils of the same age in a school.

Aims of the policy for special education:

1. To ensure that pupils with special educational needs are identified as early as possible upon arrival at the College and appropriate provision is made by the College's learning support team.
2. To keep an up-to-date register of all pupils at the College with special educational needs.
3. To ensure that, where necessary, the pupil is referred to the appropriate agency - the Educational Psychology Department or Education Welfare Service of the Belfast Education and Library Board, Social Services or the family doctor. It is accepted that referral may be made by the school, by another agency or by a parent.
4. To ensure that the provision or recommendations are made by the appropriate agency.
5. To ensure that the advice given by that agency is communicated to and followed by the relevant teachers.
6. To encourage close co-operation between all agencies.

7. To ensure that, as far as possible, all relevant information communicated by the pupil's previous school is available to the appropriate teachers.
8. To take into account the wishes of the pupil in all aspects of the identification and provision of her educational needs.
9. To take into account the wishes of the pupil's parents in the identification and provision of their daughter's special educational needs.
10. To provide professional support to parents, pupils and, through the Curriculum Advice and Support Services, teachers involved with special needs provision.
11. To review annually the progress of each pupil with a special educational need.
12. To follow the procedures and stages laid down by the Code of Practice in providing evidence to the Education and Library Boards for the statutory assessment or statement of special educational need.
13. To advise parents of their right to access to an independent system of appeal should they be dissatisfied with any aspect of special needs provision for their daughter.
14. To report annually to parents on the College's policy for the identification of and provision for special educational needs.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Rationale:

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff of Victoria College recognise that we have a duty of care and responsibility towards our pupils. We aim to provide a broad balanced, coherent and challenging curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of the pupil in preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

2. Definition:

Definition of a child:

For the purpose of this policy, a child is a person under the age of 18 years of age as defined in the Children Order.

Definition of Abuse:

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.

Schools and teachers have a vital role in ensuring the protection and well-being of the children entrusted to their care and they are well placed to identify distress and harm. The College, therefore, is committed to practices which protect children from harm. These involve staff and volunteers associated with this school. The staff of the College

- accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.
- recognise our pastoral responsibility to undertake whatever is necessary to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare and safety.
- endeavour to achieve this by:
 - (i) adopting child protection guidelines including a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers;

- (ii) sharing information about child protection and good practice with pupils, parents, staff and volunteers;
- (iii) sharing information about concerns with the agencies who “need to know” and involving parents and children appropriately;
- (iv) following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers; and
- (v) providing staff and volunteers with effective management through supervision, support and training.

Regular liaison will be maintained with staff of the Belfast Education and Library Board and the Belfast Health and Social Services Trust who have designated staff available for consultation.

All parents can access the pastoral care policies through the School Office. This includes details of the Learning for Life and Work programme.

The Designated Teacher with specific responsibility for child protection is the Deputy Head and in her absence the deputy Designated Teacher who has been nominated by the Board of Governors. In the event of the absence of both the Designated and deputy Designated teachers, the Principal has responsibility for child protection.

The designated Governor with specific responsibility for child protection is the Governor who has been nominated by the Board of Governors.

Awareness in Child Protection

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, are trained in child protection awareness and implementation of procedures as outlined in Section 5 and will be alert to the signs of possible abuse and aware of the procedures to be followed. **Visitors to the College are asked to report to either office and to sign in on arrival and are issued with a visitor’s badge. Where visitors are to talk or interact with pupils a teacher must always be present.**

Pupils will be advised, as part of the curriculum, about actions they and the College can take to keep themselves safe and how to access help when needed.

Prevention is the preferred approach and the College will take steps to reduce any potential for abuse to occur. For example, any situations which involve one-to-one contact between an adult and a child will be managed and monitored so that they take place in close proximity to available supervision and assistance.

Photographs of Children

Photographs are taken at all school events throughout the academic year to reflect the richness and diversity of school life. **Parents should inform the Principal in writing if they do not wish their daughter’s photograph to be taken or published in any school associated publicity including the website. Parents should be aware that photographs are taken internally for school records and administration purposes. These photographs are not for public/external use and are not accessible via the internet.**

Concerns and Complaints

Parents and children will be informed of opportunities to make representation to the school staff, the Board of Governors and/or the Education Welfare or Social Services staff in the event of concerns and/or complaints.

The College undertakes to resolve concerns and complaints as speedily as possible. Any complaints handled will be reviewed annually, be reported to the Board of Governors and be subject to inspection by the Education and Training Inspectorate.

3. Categories of Abuse:

Introduction

It is not necessary for members of staff to have detailed knowledge of what constitutes abuse nor to investigate the causes. Both diagnosis and investigation are the responsibility of the medical, social work and police services. However, concerns may result from staff member's own observation or from a child's self report and it is important that you take what the child says seriously and take action straight away. Whatever the reason for abuse it should be stopped and preferably prevented. It is always wrong and it is never the child's fault.

The child may be abused by a parent, sibling, or another relative, a member of staff, a fellow pupil, a carer, an acquaintance or a stranger, whether an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure to provide proper care or both. Particularly in the school context, bullying is a form of abuse which should be dealt with as seriously as any other form of abuse. In its persistent form it should lead to the invoking of child protection procedures.

Emotional Abuse - is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that she is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as she meets the needs of another person. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

Physical Abuse - is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

With the rapidly changing E-world there is the potential for a child to be exposed to abuse in a variety of contexts. Where this occurs the child protection procedures will be invoked.

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

Young Person whose Behaviour places her at Risk of Significant Harm

A child whose own behaviours, such as alcohol consumption or consumption of illegal drugs, whilst placing the child at risk of significant harm, may not necessarily constitute abuse as defined for the purposes of this policy. If the child has achieved sufficient understanding and intelligence to be capable of making up her own mind then the decision to initiate child protection action in such cases is a matter for professional judgement and each case should be considered individually. The criminal aspects of the case will be dealt with by the PSNI.

4. Possible Signs of Abuse:

- Abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.
- Bruising.
- Physical neglect.

- Attention seeking behaviour or excessive dependence.
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or precocity.
- Inappropriate distress.

It should be noted that the above symptoms may be due to a variety of other causes, including bereavement or other disruptions in family circumstances, drug, alcohol or solvent abuse. Alternative medical, physiological or social explanation may exist for the signs and symptoms described.

It is the role of the staff member or volunteer who suspects that a child has been, or is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or neglected to bring this to the attention of the designated teacher. In preparing the information the staff member or volunteer should not unduly probe the child's situation but rather listen and observe explaining that they have a responsibility to bring it to the attention of senior colleagues and child protection agencies. As soon as possible after the observation or disclosure has occurred the staff member or volunteer should record an account of what has occurred.

5. Procedures to be followed:

1. Where there is a cause for concern about a child, the teacher or other member of staff should consult the Designated Teacher.
2. The Designated Teacher will consult with the Principal and together they will agree the subsequent action and who will undertake it. This will normally be the Designated Teacher.
3. The Designated Teacher may seek advice from the Designated Officer for Child Protection at BELB and/or local Social Services.
4. When the decision to refer is made, the Designated Teacher should make the referral to Social Services in writing, using the standard referral form. This form should be copied to the Designated Officer for Child Protection at BELB.
5. A parent/carer will be told by the College that a referral is to be made to Social Services unless the parent/carer is the subject of the allegation.
6. The Designated Teacher should make a record of all the discussions held and actions taken within 24 hours of a referral.
7. If an acknowledgement of the referral is not received from Social Services within 5 working days, then the Designated Teacher should follow this up.
8. After referral, the College and BELB staff will co-operate with the child protection investigation. This can involve providing factual information about the pupil for the purposes of the multi-agency assessment of risk and the Child Protection Plan. College staff may be invited to contribute to a Child Protection Case Conference if appropriate.

Dealing with disclosures:

When dealing with a disclosure from a pupil, the member of staff should employ the 5 R's:

- Receive
 - Reassure ("You did the right thing to come and tell me.")
 - Respond (let the pupil know who will now be told and what happens next "I am going to talk to <name of Designated Teacher>. She has helped other people in the past with this type of problem and will know what to do.")
 - Record (Date, time and brief notes using the child's own words)
 - Report (following the procedures outlined above)
1. Approach the pupil with tact and understanding avoiding asking leading questions or imposing adult assumption, such as "did they do XXX to you"? Rather seek clarification such as "tell me what has happened?"
 2. Make it clear from the outset that no promise of confidentiality can be given. It will be necessary to pass on the information to the designated teacher and in turn to other professionals whose responsibility it is to investigate allegations of child abuse.
 3. If the pupil is recounting information freely do not interrupt.

4. Wherever possible have another person present to take note of the following: time, date, place, persons present, discussions and comments made both by the teacher and the pupil. Describe in detail signs of physical injury observed but do not remove clothing. Any indication of distress should also be noted.
5. Write up these comments as soon as possible afterwards, preferably quoting the words actually used. The written up notes should be agreed as an accurate record of the discussion by both teachers if two were present.
6. Remember that the notes of discussion with the pupil may be used in subsequent court proceedings. Report objectively and accurately.
7. Do not carry out an investigation into the case of suspected abuse or make extensive inquiries of pupil's family, but where comments are subsequently made by a parent, carer or another person about where injury has occurred these comments should be recorded.
8. Report the information to the Designated Teacher immediately. The Designated Teacher will inform the Principal immediately.

As exceptions to the above, if the incident involves

- (i) the Designated Teacher, the matter should be reported directly to the Principal;
- (ii) the Principal, the matter should be reported directly to the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

If abuse is suspected or an allegation has been made, the Principal will inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors (or such Governor who may be nominated by the Board of Governors to act in his/her absence) and the Designated Governor and the Designated Teacher will refer the case to the Principal Social Worker, Family and Child Care, of the Belfast Health and Social Services Trust using a UNOCINI pro forma or the Inspector in charge of the CARE unit of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The Senior Education Welfare Officer of BELB will also be advised. The Protocol for Joint Investigation of Alleged and Suspected Child Abuse, between the police and social services entails that whichever organisation first receives information it is automatically passed on to the other.

If abuse is disclosed or suspected the Designated Teacher will inform the parents/carer unless the parent/carer is the subject of the allegation (in accordance with section 3.98.5, 'Regional Policy and Procedures').

What Happens when Child Abuse is Reported?

Immediately a referral is received by Social Services or the Police it will be communicated by telephone to the other agencies. A social worker will consult the child's doctor or other people with relevant knowledge of the child and her family. There is consultation between the organisations to achieve an agreed process for inquiries. The Joint Protocol between social services and the police aims to make the process as sensitive and as unobtrusive as possible. The over-riding aim is to do what is in the child's best interest. It is important to remember that a teacher checking out concerns does not necessarily lead to an investigation.

6. Review and Evaluation:

The pastoral care provision and practice in child protection in this school will be open to inspection. The Child Protection policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Governors and kept under review by senior members of staff who will keep Governors informed of any difficulties that may arise.

SOME EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE 2010/2011 ACADEMIC YEAR

These extracts show the achievements of our pupils in all spheres of school life - academic, musical, cultural and sporting - during the past academic year.

Sport

In 2010-2011 pupils from Victoria College competed in Ulster, Irish, British, European and World Championships. Pupils represented school in the Ulster finals in table-tennis, tennis and rugby and in Ulster and Irish finals in swimming, athletics, life-saving and cross country.

Athletics

Seventeen pupils qualified for the Ulster Athletics finals. The Intermediate Relay Team – Katie McComb, Aine Gordon, Sophie McFall and Rachael Henderson - won bronze medals. Sophie McFall, Year 12, was placed 4th in the long jump. Rebecca Harvey, Year 11, was placed 4th in the 1500 m and Rachael Henderson, Year 12, was placed 5th in the 300m. Georgia Dick, Year 10, won the Ulster (Junior Girls) 800m title and Zoe Jane Dickson, Year 9, was third in the Junior Girls' Triple Jump. Year 8 pupils Alex Dick and Sarah Lemon were third in the Long Jump and High Jump respectively. Year 10 pupils, Jane Matthews and Ella Davis were fifth in the 800m and seventh in 1500m respectively. Zoe Jane and Georgia qualified for the Irish Schools' Athletics Championships in the Triple Jump and 800m respectively during which Georgia was placed 4th in the Junior Girls' 800m. Georgia Dick was selected onto the Ulster Schools' Athletics team and will be competing in the Interprovincial Championships in Santry in Dublin at the end of June. Zoe Jane Dickson and Rebecca Lobo were selected onto the South Antrim Athletics team and Rebecca Harvey also represented Northern Ireland in the London Mini-Marathon.

Cross Country

The Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 Cross Country teams all won cups for 1st place at the Belfast Schools' Cross Country Championships. At the South Antrim District Championships the Year 8 team was placed third and the Year 9 and Year 10 teams were placed first. Georgia Dick finished in second place individually and Ella Davis was placed third. The Year 8 team – Nicole West, Caitlyn Harvey, Amy Edwards, Aria Moazzen, Robyn Chambers and Meabh O'Hagan – was placed fourth at the Ulster Schools' Championships. The Minor Team (Year 9) – Harriet Gilmore, Rebecca Getty, Rebecca Lobo, Helen Francis, Esmée Hall and Olivia Pattison – was placed second in the Ulster and ninth in the Irish Championships. The Junior team (Year 10) – Georgia Dick, Ella Davis, Megan Halliday, Jane Matthews, Elizabeth Lawther, Zoe Edwards and Emma McAllister – was placed first in Ulster and second in the Irish Schools' Cross Country Championships.

Gaelic Games

Following two pre-season challenge matches, the U14 team played three fixtures in the Ulster Ladies' League. Two pupils, Maria McPolin and Grace McEvoy, Year 10, have again been selected to represent County Antrim. In June almost fifty pupils and staff visited Croke Park in Dublin to celebrate the end of another exciting season of gaelic football, during which they received a showing of the film 'A Month of Sundays', depicting the happenings at the stadium on the first and third Sundays of September when the venue hosts the biggest annual sporting occasions in Ireland, the All-Ireland Hurling and Football Finals. The girls also received a detailed tour of the stadium, viewed an exhibition of the history of the founding of the GAA and were presented with our own Player of the Year awards in Croke Park presentation area.

Hockey

The U14 hockey team – Megan Halliday (Captain), Kathryn Brown, Ella Davis, Georgia Dick, Rachel Hanley, Victoria Johnston, Charlotte Law, Elizabeth Lawther, Tori Loughed, Emma McAllister, Rachel Milligan, Sophie Mills, Kathryn Shane and Claire Windrum - reached the semi-final of the Ulster Schools' Junior Cup. Rachel Hanley, Year 10, was selected onto the Ulster U16 hockey squad. Year 10 pupils, Kathryn Shane, Megan Halliday, Rachel Hanley and Elizabeth Lawther, played on the Belfast Area U15 team which won the N.I. Area Tournament. The U14 and U13 hockey teams also travelled to Dublin in June to watch international hockey matches at UCD.

The 1st XI reached the semi-final of the Senior Schools' Cup following wins against Hunterhouse College, Foyle and Londonderry College and Omagh Academy. The team was –

defeated 1-0 in the semi-final by Wallace High School. The 2A XI defeated Cambridge House in the McDowell Cup but

lost on penalty strokes to Hunterhouse College in the next round. In the Plate they reached the quarter final after wins against Carrickfergus Grammar School and Regent House. The team lost to Lurgan College.

Rachael Henderson, Year 12 and Katie Watson, Year 13, were selected onto the Belfast U17 hockey team which won the Northern Ireland Area Tournament. Olivia Blundell, Year 11, was selected onto the Belfast U15 hockey team which also won the Area Tournament.

The 1st XI hockey team participated in an enjoyable tour to Amsterdam, during which they won all their matches.

Netball

The Intermediate Netball team – Rebekah Milligan, Sophie Pollock, Emily Mills, Katie Johnston, Rachel Hanley, Victoria Murphy, Rachael Andrews, Olivia Blundell - won the Belfast A league and reached the Belfast Cup Final. The team lost to Rathmore A team in the final. Year 12 pupils Rebekah Milligan, Sophie Pollock, Emily Mills, Katie Johnston and Victoria Murphy were all selected at trials on the Belfast U16 netball squad and Katie Johnston and Victoria Murphy, Year 12, were selected for the N.I. U17 netball team. Bronagh McCann, Natalie Clendinning and Eve Harrison were selected, following trials, for the Belfast U13 RDA Netball Squad.

Swimming

At the Ulster Minor Swimming Championships the relay team – Katie Hayes, Emma Henderson, Evie Dougan and Esmée Hall – were placed second in the freestyle and third in the medley relay. In the 50 metres butterfly Year 9 pupils Esmée Hall and Evie Dougan were placed first and second respectively. Esmée was placed first in the 50 metres breaststroke. The Junior relay team also obtained a second and third place in the Grammar Schools' Championships. At the Secondary Schools' Championships the relay team members of Katie Hayes, Victoria Johnston, Esmée Hall, Emma Henderson and Evie Dougan won gold in the freestyle and bronze in the medley relay.

The Senior Relay Team – Jenna Orr, Sarah Henderson, Sarah Sharkey and Rachael Henderson – won gold in both the medley and freestyle relay at the Ulster Championships and the Grammar Schools' Championships. Individually Sarah won gold in the 50 metres breaststroke and the 100 metres Individual Medley and Jenna won bronze in the 50 metres breaststroke. The senior team won the overall Senior Grammar Schools' Cup.

In Lifesaving at the British Speed Championships Emma Henderson, Year 9, won one gold and three bronze medals, setting a new British record. In the British Surf Championships Emma won a further three golds and set another three new British records. Emma has been selected onto the Great Britain junior squad.

On an individual basis, Esmée Hall, Year 9, was selected to compete on the Ulster team at Interpro for the Interprovincial Challenge Trophy, during which Ulster were runners-up. Victoria Johnston, Year 10, qualified for the Irish Age Group Swimming Championships in Limerick in June. Aoife Polly, Year 10, also competed at the British Speed Championships. She was placed second in the Ulster Championships and qualified for the All Ireland competition.

Twelve Year 11 pupils successfully completed their bronze lifesaving medallion. At the British Speed Championships and British Surf Championships Sarah Henderson won seven British titles and Rachael Henderson won two silver and four bronze. Sarah was selected to represent Great Britain at the European Championships in Belgium where she won a European Gold. She also represented Great Britain at the World Championships held in Egypt in October where she made three finals. Both Sarah and Rachael have been selected for the Northern Ireland team to compete at the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games to be held in South Africa in September 2011.

Tennis

The Year 8 team (Nicole West, Sophie Hunter, Kristina Bell, Emma Salmon and Stephanie Hamilton) reached the final and the Junior Tennis team (Lauren Russell, Rachel Hanley,

Megan Halliday and Chloe Haylett) reached the quarter final of the Ulster Cup. The Intermediate Tennis Team reached the quarter final of the Ulster Schools' Cup.

For the second year running, Victoria College won the Ulster Schools' Senior Cup. The team - Shannon Andrews, Lucie Fraser, Emma Dornan and Holly Tisdale – defeated Ballymena Academy, Coleraine High School and Foyle and Londonderry College to reach the semi-final. Unfortunately the 'A' team had to play against our own 'B' team – Tara Conlin, Tori Kerr, Kathryn Welshman and Cara Bell. The 'B' team had defeated Belfast Royal Academy, Friends' School and Grosvenor Grammar to reach the semi-final. The final was contested between Victoria and Strathearn School and the Victoria team was victorious after an exciting final.

Other Sporting Activities

Rachel Houston, Year 9, was selected to represent Ireland at an international equestrian competition which was held in Wales. The team won the Gold Medal and Rachel won the biggest class at this show for her age group as an individual competitor. Rachel also qualified to ride in the International Arena in the Royal Dublin Horse Show and finished 7th in the final. Rachel is now one of only three young people from throughout Ireland to be selected to receive training which will be funded by Horse Sport Ireland. Rebecca Getty, Year 9, represented Ulster in Badminton at the U15 and U17 level. She was part of the Ulster U15 team which finished third in the English Inter Counties Tournament in March in Hatfield – this was Ulster's best ever result. Rebecca was also part of the Ulster U17 Badminton team which finished fifth in the Harrod U17 Inter Counties Tournament in Nottingham in April – Ulster's best result since 1972. Rebecca represented Ireland at U15 level in the Quadrangular Tournament in Milton Keynes in April and was Irish U15 Mixed Doubles Champion. She was also the winner of the Kent U14 Open in May and was a recipient of a Coca Cola Bursary from Lisburn Borough Council and the Mary Peters Trust Sports Bursary. Furthermore, Rebecca has just been selected to represent Northern Ireland and Victoria at the U17 UK school games which will be held at the beginning of September.

Petra Wells, Year 10, was placed second in the Hip-hop section of the Northern Ireland Creative Movement and Aerobics Championships. Ruth Aicken and Rachel McComish competed in the U14 Irish Water Polo tournament in May and Ruth also competed in the Under 16 and Under 19 tournaments in February and November respectively. Ruth was also a member of the Ireland team to play in the Under 15 Ireland Water Polo International in June. Georgia Dick and Ella Davis, Year 10, have been selected as Young Ambassadors to represent Victoria College by Youth Sport Trust to promote the 2012 Olympics.

Pupils represented the Diamond Dance Company at the Northern Ireland Creative Movement and Aerobic Championships in March and Kathryn Kerr and Rosie Cheevers, Year 9, obtained the Gold Medal in the Junior Dance section. Kathryn, Rosie and Sophie McConn, Year 8 and Olivia Pattison, Year 9, were awarded bronze medals in the Junior Exercise Section and Tori Kerr, Year 13, was awarded the Gold Medal in the Senior Exercise section. Hannah McVeigh, Year 14, was placed first at the British Open Irish Dancing Championships in Reading and is the Under 18 British Champion 2010. Sophie McCoo, Year 12, was selected for the Irish Gymnastics team and competed in Norway in the International Gymnastics Competition during which she was placed fifth individually and the Northern Ireland team was placed second.

Sarah Sharkey represented the Air Cadets at a swimming competition in England and received two bronze medallions and one silver medallion in the Royal Life-Saving Awards. Meanwhile, Sarah McClelland, Year 12, represented the Northern Ireland Army Cadets in swimming, hockey and football at national level. Tyne McGee, Year 11, was awarded the All Ireland silver medal in Ladies' Golf at Malone Golf Club and Jessica Bamber, Year 11, also represented Royal Portrush Golf Club in a competition. Eden Dinsmore, Year 12, was placed second in the U17 aged group at the N.I. Trampolining Championships.

The College's Table Tennis team – Bronwyn McLean, Shannon Andrews, Katherine Welshman, Tori Kerr, Hazel Wong, Crystal Ho and Megan Halliday – won silver medals at the Ulster U19 Girls' Table Tennis Championships and runners-up in the Ulster U19 League. "A" team of pupils were also regional finalists at the Ulster TAG Rugby Championships.

Other Activities including Links with the Community

Art and Design

During the autumn term AS and A2 students benefited greatly from short presentations given by past pupils studying Art and Design at third level education and this information inspired many A2 students to apply for third level education in Art and Design. In December pupils from Year 13 and 14 visited Stranmillis Primary School and supported P7 pupils in the use of various materials so that they could learn new techniques, including felting with this work linked to the P7 Titanic project. In June past pupil Seainin Passi and artist, David Hood, held artist workshops with Year 9 pupils based on the technique of Chromatography. This was a new technique to the Art Department and greatly inspired the pupils involved, enhancing creativity and learning within a new medium.

This year the pupils involved in the Digital Enrichment Programme took the theme of 'Empowerment of Women'. This involved them capturing images of women in roles that are viewed as stereotypically male. The final photographs formed an inspirational display that manifested the pupils' talents in taking photos, light direction and photo-editing software.

Video Club members met at lunchtimes for a series of workshops on taking videos and how to use editing software. Members then had the opportunity to make a short video promoting Victoria College. This was shown on Open Day and was made available to view on the school website. The Junior Art Club is taken by Mrs Clarke at lunchtimes in the Richmond Art Room. This year has been very successful with pupils creating a variety of artwork that was displayed on the Junior Art Club Notice Board each week. The creative work was an inspiration to all the other pupils across the classes.

Mrs Clarke introduced the Year 10 pupils to the traditional skill of crochet. Pupils had the opportunity to design and make their own crochet blanket based on the colour combinations of the designer Missoni. This blanket was then balloted with all money donated to the school charities.

Careers

This has again been a busy period for the Careers and Learning for Life and Work (LLW) departments. LLW is delivered to pupils at KS3 and KS4 through timetabled LLW lessons, other subjects or alternative vehicles such as Festival and Assembly. There are also a range of special events such as the Human Rights seminar day which Year 10 pupils attended at St Mary's University College in June.

In the Sixth Form the focus of the careers programme is on preparing the pupils for Further and Higher Education. This involves a thorough examination of the various options open to them and aims to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to make the right decisions. Throughout the year the pupils build up a portfolio of work reflecting the issues we have researched. Topics include choosing institutions and courses, discovering one's potential, using prospectuses and league tables and recognising skills. The pupils become familiar with a range of careers guidance software and pertinent websites. We also aim to help the students to consider whether or not a Gap Year would be appropriate for them. Pupils are given guidance on how to make the most effective use of Open Days, Taster Events and residential courses offered by universities. All Year 13 pupils and their parents/guardians attend the annual UCAS/CAO Preparation Evening.

In October the Year 13 pupils participated in a Business Insight Conference organised by the Business Studies department. They also attended a very effective seminar presented by the 'X the text' campaign; this aimed to educate young people about the dangers of texting whilst driving. We are very grateful to Allstate for their leading role in the campaign. In January the pupils spent a week on work experience placements in Belfast and elsewhere. This provided them with the opportunity to experience many of the ideas discussed in the taught programme. Pupils then reflect upon the skills and knowledge they had developed and it is hoped that this will help them to make more informed decisions regarding their careers. In addition to the annual work shadowing organised by Mr Thompson and undertaken by our Year 13 students in January, a number of our students availed of the opportunity to complete placements at other

times, many of them related to careers in STEM areas. Throughout all three terms our students also attended various open days at local hospitals. All aspects of medicine, nursing and allied health professions were covered. Students also attended the Psychology Open Days at Knockbracken and Hollywood Arches.

In February the school hosted a very successful biennial Higher Education, Further Education, Careers and Gap Year Fair. Delegates from nearly seventy universities, colleges, employers, Sector Skills Councils and other stakeholders attended the event from all over Ireland and Britain. The hundreds of pupils and parents who attended also had the opportunity to attend seminars presented by a dozen different institutions including Oxford, Liverpool, CAFRE, Strathclyde, Dublin City University and NUI Galway. We also welcomed representatives from many Irish and British universities and agencies who visited the school throughout the year, including all the Scottish universities, UCD, NUI Maynooth and several English universities. Many of our pupils also attended the open days at Queen's, Ulster and Stranmillis in addition to the Law and Medicine symposia at Methodist College. Sixth Formers participated in a range of science workshops covering careers in pharmacy, forensics and engineering. Other pupils attended a day of practical research and laboratory experience organised by the QUB Centre for Cell Biology and Cancer Research.

Our Oxford and Cambridge applicants were afforded many opportunities to learn more about the application process. In addition to meetings at school, girls attended an Oxbridge Information Day hosted by Victoria College in September. Our pupils were joined by pupils from Methodist College, Hunterhouse and Rathmore Grammar. Students also took the opportunity to attend the annual Oxford and Cambridge Student Conference at Lagan Valley Conference Centre in Lisburn and two residential taster events at Cambridge University. We are delighted that three students in Year 14 received offers to study at Cambridge University: Sarah Bennett to read Linguistics at Pembroke College; Christina Larkin to read Natural Sciences at Murray Edwards College and Clio Griffin to read Mathematics at Trinity College. Clio has opted to read at Harvard University.

In Year 14 the focus has been on preparing our students for UCAS, CAO and direct College applications. As part of their induction in August, students spent a half day learning about the application procedures and registering with UCAS *Apply*. Those students requiring additional information, advice and guidance were provided with targeted assistance; these included students applying to CAO, Oxbridge or Art Colleges and those hoping to read Law, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry. In November all Year 14 students were given the opportunity to participate in a mock interview evening. This proved to be a very successful event and we are very grateful to the many representatives from a wide variety of occupational sectors who gave up their time to interview the students. Art and Design applicants were afforded the opportunity of a mock portfolio interview where they practised discussing and evaluating their work in the presence of an external interviewer.

In Years 8 and 9 the Education for Employability programme continues to develop. This covers three key dimensions: work in the local and global economy, career management and enterprise and entrepreneurship. All pupils now create an e-progress file when they commence Key Stage 3 and this is updated throughout KS3. This online file allows them to record all of their academic and other achievements and also helps them to identify their progress in developing the key skills that employers and colleges look for. The Careers department is certainly not the only one to provide LLW and careers information; there were many events organised by a variety of departments throughout the year including the STEM event at Stranmillis College and the visits to W5 and the Armagh Planetarium. In June Year 9 pupils travelled to BMC Castlereagh Campus to explore careers in broadcasting, IT and Fashion and Textiles.

The Year 10 Careers programme examines a wide range of issues including occupational sectors and related employment patterns, transferability of key skills and community needs. The GCSE options process formed an important focus of the programme in the spring term following the Year 10 Subject Information Evening. The girls have commenced drafting their Personal Development Plans and the intention is that they will revisit their PDPs at regular intervals over the coming years. Year 10 pupils have also developed their awareness of a range of employability issues by visiting six local companies as part of their Experience of the Workplace Day in May. In March all Year 10 pupils attended a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) theatre workshop at Hunterhouse College. The event used

current media and popular cultural references to convey positive messages to young people based around STEM subjects. The presentation followed the lives of a group of young friends and their experiences when discovering the vast array of careers available to them in this field. It dispelled the myths around certain industry sectors and promoted learning pathways and career progression routes. Also in March, students attended an intensive weekend Gaeilge course at An Droichead where they developed their competency in the language. Year 11 pupils attended the annual Entrepreneurship Masterclass at RBAI in June, working with the boys in teams to complete a range of entrepreneurial challenges. Year 12 pupils accompanied by

their parents attended a Subject Information Evening in January as they prepare to make crucial decisions regarding AS Levels. We also provide a taught programme of careers education, advice and guidance; this sits alongside the Learning for Life and Work programme. In addition to examining issues such as stress management, employment rights, planning for revision and money management, the pupils are taught how to produce a CV and letter of application. They are also coached in interview skills. As part of their Preparation for Working Life Level 2 Certificate coursework, they are required to submit a completed CV and covering letter and a written assignment on interview techniques. A crucial part of the programme looks at the various post-16 options available to the pupils at VCB and elsewhere. In the spring all pupils were offered an interview with a representative from the Northern Ireland Careers Service.

We look forward to another busy and profitable year next year.

Charity Work

The College aims to promote global awareness and citizenship through its fundraising activities. Fundraising and concern for others is an integral part of the College's ethos and it is wonderful to see the amount of effort that pupils have invested both inside and outside school to raise money for our chosen charities. We enlisted the help of the whole school to decide on our charities and all the pupils voted for the ones they wanted to support via the VLE, from a shortlist. The chosen recipients this year were **Action Cancer** and **Save the Children**. Since September 2010 I am delighted to report that the College has raised £2813.43 for Action Cancer and over £2000 for Save the Children. Our Charity Prefect, Grace McVeigh, and her team of prefects gave a lot of time and effort to the organisation of the numerous events throughout the year.

Clubs and Societies

Year 8 pupils had the opportunity to take part in Junior Science Club activities including making rockets, firewriting, crystal gardens, rainbow columns and making slime.

The Critical Thinking Society exists to expose our most able pupils to concepts and debates that they might not ordinarily come across in their Sixth Form curriculum due to the constraints of the specifications. Pupils were invited to attend a range of events during the year including the Oxbridge conferences at Lagan Valley and Victoria College, summer schools at Oxford, Cambridge and UCD, Psychology seminars at Knockbracken and Holywood and a workshop at Ashfield investigating cultural issues in Belfast. Mr McCracken delivered an erudite presentation on the incredible work of Seamus Heaney and Dr Ingrid Allen from Queen's University visited us to deliver a fascinating talk on Medical Ethics. A group of Year 10 pupils visited St Mary's University College to attend a seminar on Asylum Seekers and Refugees and to debate to complex issues involved.

Comenius Project/Connecting Classrooms Project

Pupils from Years 8 and 9 participated in the European Studies programme. The programme links schools across Europe through sustained collaborative projects, furthering tolerance, mutual understanding and an appreciation of the cultures of others. Five pupils were successful in achieving their certificates in European Studies – Aria Moazzen, Francesca Drumm and Erin Burnett from Year 8 and Divya Puri and Rachel Harris from Year 9. Divya Puri, Leigh Hutchinson, Rebecca Lobo and Sarah El-Tanani carried out an E-Twinning project with a Spanish school. One class of Year 9 pupils (9WOO) participated in a Sharing Education Programme with Ashfield Girls' High School on 8-9 June.

In October 2010, three Year 13 students – Molly Gilmartin, Ruth Ware and Dara Murphy – joined 27 other schools from Northern Ireland and Ireland to gain first hand experience of the

cut and thrust of international politics at the sixth Mock Council of the European Union. The debate took place in the Senate Chamber in Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

As part of the Post 16 Enrichment Programme nineteen Year 13 students participated in the European Studies Programme, with the course requiring pupils to complete a number of cross curricular projects, which they then shared with our partner schools across Europe. All nineteen pupils obtained a Certificate in European Studies and these certificates were presented at the Senior Prize Distribution.

Pupils – Molly Gilmartin, Sorcha Foster, Dara Murphy, Jane Markey, Holly Bennett, Cara Bell, Sian Wells, Katie Watson, Ruth Ware and Alex Thompson - also participated in the European Youth Parliament with the 2010/11 regional forum taking place in Belfast in March. The event involved nine

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schools, two MEPs, the British Council Northern Ireland and the European Commission Office in Northern Ireland. Each of the schools, with a team of ten students, formed a committee and presented, explained and debated resolutions on a range of topical issues including security and defence, social affairs, fisheries and international trade. Victoria College was one of two teams selected to go forward to represent Northern Ireland at the EYPUK National Session in Durham in September.

This year the Euroscola competition, organised by the European Studies Office and facilitated by Miss McMackin, required entrants to research and design an A4 leaflet on the Millennium Development Goals. A selection of our Year 13 pupils – Jessica Lockhart, Danielle Bowers, Sophie Jackson, Corrie McGowan, Catherine McCollum, Rose Ross, Emma Rowney, Farah Hassan – participated in the competition. The standard of entries from Victoria College was commended by the judging panel and the overall winner, Jessica Lockhart and seven students were awarded as first prize, a fully funded trip to the European Parliament in Strasbourg from 9-11 February 2011. The competition proved an innovative and excellent opportunity for pupils to develop many transferable skills.

Climate Week took place from 21-27 March and this was a supercharged national occasion that offered an annual renewal of our ambition and confidence to combat climate change. This year, in line with our Comenius project, a group of Year 10 and 11 pupils – Alix Bell, Amy Cheevers, Wiktoria Slomkowska, Beth Garrett - from the College participated in a national challenge designed to inspire young people to think and act environmentally. The challenge required pupils to use their creativity and innovation to generate ideas to help combat climate change. National and regional winners were selected by a celebrity panel and the College's Key Stage 3 team entry was highly commended. In April the same four girls along with two teachers, Miss McMackin and Mr Winning, travelled to Grottaglie, Italy after being selected to partake in a Comenius project, funded by the European Union. During their visit the group further developed their link and relationship whilst enhancing their awareness of the Italian education system, language and culture.

As part of our Global School Partnership within the College, from 9-17 January Miss McMackin, Miss Hatton and three senior pupils – Molly Gilmartin, Dara Murphy and Christina Larkin, along with staff and pupils from Ashfield Girls' High School visited their global partner schools in India. During their visit pupils were also invited by Lady Shruti Rana from the Bachpan project to present at The World Educational Conference in Delhi. The visit proved a very enriching experience for all involved and empowered pupils and staff through the sharing of good practice. Moreover, the visit enabled the development of transferable skills and relationships on a social, personal, academic and professional level.

Pupils travelled to India again in July with two teams of students and staff visiting India as part of World Challenge. This also proved to be a wonderful, challenging experience for the pupils, the memories and experience of which will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

In March a Year 10 form class (10MMA) welcomed and hosted a group of Malaysian visitors interested in our education system. Presentations and a question and answer session were enjoyed by all.

Community Work

Sarah Livingstone and Shannon Kincaid, Year 10 pupils, were members of the Belfast City Council Youth Forum. Sarah had articles published in the City Matters Magazine. Shannon became a Young Youth Leader and was part of the Lower Shankill Residents Voice, an

association which helps in the community. She also participated in a play at the Grand Opera House and modelled her own Eco fashion design at the Waterfront.

The College was highly commended in the Large School category of the 'Best Kept School' Competition.

Competitions/Achievements

Four girls – Chloe Haylett (Year 10), Kathryn Shane (Year 10), Jessica Carter (Year 9) and Niamh Monaghan (Year 9) took part in the regional final of the Junior Team Maths Challenge in April. Jordan Allen, Year 10, was highly commended in a competition organised by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland for which she designed a poster to celebrate 100 years of International Women's Day. Jane Matthews, Yemaya Moffett and Ellen Beattie were commended in the same competition.

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In February a team of Technology students - 'Victoria Vipers' – won the fastest car award in the regional heats of the F1 in Schools competition, qualifying for the national finals in London. Twenty-eight teams from around the U.K. took part in the national finals to try and win a place at the World Finals. The competition consisted of researching, designing, manufacturing and racing a model sized balsa wood F1 car. Other aspects included marketing and a short presentation. Three girls representing the team – Rachael Lockhart, Corie McGowan and Michelle Gowan – competed over two days and as a result have been offered a place to represent Northern Ireland in the World Finals in Malaysia. The students participating in the Rocketry competition performed very well on the day of the event, representing the College at the highest possible standard and narrowly missed out on a chance to compete in the national finals in England.

Two A-level students – Clio Griffin and Christina Larkin – took part in the British Physics Olympiad. This competition is designed to test a student's basic understanding of the principles of physics taught at the A2 and GCSE levels and enable them to compare their attainment with those of students from all over the United Kingdom. Molly Gilmartin, Jessica Lockhart, Christina Larkin and Clio Griffin took part in the Irish Chemistry Olympiad in January. In February five Year 14 pupils participated in the British Biology Olympiad competition, which took the form of an extremely challenging two hour online examination. Rudaina Farouki and Harriet Davis both achieved Highly Commended certificates. Sarah Bennett achieved a Bronze medal and had the opportunity to attend the Biology Olympiad Awards Ceremony in London at the end of June.

A team consisting of Emma Gilmartin, Georgia Dick, Kirsty Carruthers, Emily Coyle and Beth Garrett were highly commended in the National Key Stage 3 Climate Change Challenge. As part of this challenge the pupils created a product of a colourful wristband made from recycled rubber, which included a memory stick with information about environmental issues. This product helped increase awareness of climate change to young people in the community.

In November 2010 all Year 13 and Year 14 Mathematics pupils took part in the Senior Mathematics Challenge, during which one gold certificate, two silver certificates and five bronze certificates awarded. Clio Griffin from Year 14 obtained the gold certificate and she was also awarded the 'Best in School' certificate. Also in November a team of four AS and A2 Mathematics pupils took part in the regional final of the Senior Team Mathematics Challenge at Stranmillis College. This is a demanding mathematical competition and the team of Clio Griffin and Christina Larkin from Year 14 and Sorcha Foster and Alex Thompson from Year 13 enjoyed an afternoon of working on and solving a range of challenging mathematical problems.

Sixty-five pupils from Year 11 took part in the Intermediate Mathematics Challenge in February. There were two gold certificates, seven silver certificates and six bronze certificates awarded. Aya Helmy and Jennifer Salmon obtained the gold certificates and Aya was also awarded the 'Best in School' certificate.

Sarah Patterson, Year 11, was chosen with one other person to go to London to celebrate the success of the Borderlines Scheme.

The Debating Team have made admirable progress this past academic year, going to great lengths to organise contests within school and participate in high ranking competitions. Molly Gilmartin and Dara Murphy have worked enthusiastically to think up engaging motions to debate with fellow pupils and other schools. They have been ably supported by Basma Salem and Alix Bell from Year 11 who have proven to be very capable public speakers. Overall, it has

been an excellent year for the Debating Society who have not only developed as critical thinkers but also have been a credit to the College. Year 13 pupils Dara Murphy and Molly Gilmartin and Year 12 pupil, Sarah Murray, competed in the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition in November. All three girls were commended for the excellent content in their speeches by the President of the N.I. Soroptimist Society. Molly was awarded first place for her speech and represented Belfast in the Northern Ireland Final in Lurgan College in March. Hannah Ingleton, Year 14, Sarah Murray, Year 12 and Cara Bell, Year 13, took part in the BPW Public Speaking Competition on the topic "The EU – melting pot or mosaic" and Year 11 pupils Alix Bell and Basma Salem prepared excellent debates on the motion, "This House believes the big society is a sham" for the N.I. School's Debate in November.

On 10 November 2010, captain Sarah Bennett (Year 14) led her team to victory against St Michael's Grammar School, Lurgan in Round One of the French Debating Competition, quite an achievement when you consider that Jane Markey, Sorcha Foster, Rachel Cox and Jordan Harman had only

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embarked on their AS studies two months earlier! Our speakers convinced the jury that 'Fastfood is the enemy of family life and young people's health' – all in French of course. Eight weeks later in Round 2, we argued that 'Today's young people have more advantages than their parents' generation'. We lost narrowly to Methodist College Belfast, who went on to win the final, attended by all our AS and A2 French pupils in March. Every time we take part in the French debate, the girls show what great team players they are, and gain in confidence in oral skills.

Conferences/Lectures/Training

In March Year 10 pupils received a talk from our local Action cancer organisation. The presentation raised awareness of different forms of cancer and health promotion. Year 11 pupils received a Healthy Lifestyle Talk given by Action Cancer and Year 12 pupils received a motivational talk at the beginning of the year. Year 10 pupils received an informative talk on CYBER safety. In May all Year 10 pupils visited local organisations and companies giving them a taste of the World of Work and its related skills and capabilities.

The author, M.G. Harris, visited the College in November to give a presentation to Year 8 and 9 pupils and local author, Colin Bateman, spoke to Year 8 pupils and Sheena Wilkinson spoke to Year 10 pupils in March. In October a group of pupils from Years 10-12 travelled to RBAI for the launch of the Northern Ireland Book Award. The guest of honour was Chris Bradford, author of the popular *Young Samurai* series of books. Chris gave an extremely amusing presentation and demonstration with his own samurai sword before signing copies of his books.

Drama and Music

The Junior Choir, consisting of 90 pupils in Years 8 and 9, have had another busy year, entertaining both inside and outside school. In November they once again participated in the Hollywood Music Festival and were awarded first place for their fantastic performances of Colours of the Wind and Macavity the Mystery Cat. In December they participated in 'The Sound of Action' concert organised by our new Head Girl, Molly Gilmartin, in order to raise money for Action Cancer. They performed a variety of festive music to a full audience in St Anne's Cathedral and the evening was very successful. They also performed in Fisherwick Church for our annual carol service in December. In March the joint VCB and RBAI production of 'Hello Dolly' was enjoyed by its audiences and wonderful performances were given by all involved, from the main cast members to the Junior Chamber Choir and the orchestra. The spring concert, 'April Ayres', was once again enjoyed by all, but one of the highlights was the finale of Junior and Senior girls with their rousing Abba Medley. Early in May members of the choir were once again proud to be asked to perform in a service of celebration at Fisherwick Church, organised by The Ulster Cancer Foundation.

Petra Wells, Year 10, successfully auditioned for a part in the Bugsy Malone production at the Grand Opera House. Connie Nicholl, Year 10, was awarded a place in the Youth Music Theatre and went to Plymouth to perform in Gershwin's Gals. She was also in the ensemble for Les Misérables with Peter Corry at Theatre at the Mill and at the Newtownards Air Show. She was awarded a part in the choir in Bill Kenwright's production of Joseph which will be performing in the Grand Opera House this summer. Emma Gilmartin, Year 10, was awarded a scholarship to study at the Royal Irish Academy of Music for piano. She played at the Chopin 200 concert at the National Concert Hall in Dublin and played in different concerts throughout the year such as the Newtownabbey Borough Council Music Concert and the Feis Ceoil in Dublin. Emma also played at the Ulster Hall as part of the School of Music Orchestra Concerts.

The Chamber Choir entered the All Island School Choir Competition organised by Co-operation Ireland and won a place at the Regional Final in October.

Year 12 GCSE Drama students participated in the Shakespeare Festival for Schools in the B.T. Studio, Waterfront Hall in October, during which they gave an original interpretation of 'The Tempest'. The Year 12 GCSE practical examination was held in March and involved a showcase evening to large audiences of students, staff and parents. The programme was varied with productions of 'After Midnight/Before Dawn', 'Living with Lady Macbeth', 'Steel Magnolias' and 'The Thwarting of Baron Bolingrew'. Year 13 practical showcases also took place in March during which parents and staff enjoyed monologues and duologues in the form of Eliza from 'Pygmalion' to Shirley Valentine, Anne from 'Anne of Green Gables' to Brutus from 'Julius Caesar'. The group performances were presented in May and productions of 'More Light', 'The Odd Couple' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' were given. The Year 14 devised performance was held in December and original pieces of theatre were produced entitled 'Playing for Time' and 'An Aspect of Love'.

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Drama students also enjoyed a number of theatre visits throughout the year. Year 11 pupils attended 'Blood Brothers' at the Lagan Valley Arts Centre, Lisburn in March and Year 12 attended 'The Crucible' at the Lyric in May. Year 13 and 14 students attended 'John Gabriel Borkman' at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin in November 2010. This play included a star-studded cast of Alan Rickman, Lyndsay Duncan, Fiona Shaw and a former Victoria College pupil, Amy Molloy (née Johnston).

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

The following pupils successfully completed their Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Awards and were presented with them at the Senior Prize Distribution – Alice Nicholl, Tori Hale, Dara Murphy, Alex Thompson, Nicola Gilchrist, Laura Bell, Orlaith Sonner and Lucie Fraser.

School Trips

All Year 11 Geography students visited the Crawfordsburn River in September and June to collect primary data. Year 13 Geography students enjoyed a two night residential at Magilligan Field Centre. This involved developing fieldwork skills and sampling techniques. Students collected information on river gradient, cross-sectional area, netted perimeter and also used quadrants to investigate vegetation sampling along a sand dune ecosystem. Year 14 students visited Newcastle to investigate the impact of the proposed National Park. Students used questionnaires to collect tourism data and also developed their knowledge of fluvial and coastal management. In the evening students visited Tollymore Adventure Centre to climb the dizzy heights of the High Ropes Course.

Thirty-five Year 12 History students and four members of staff participated in a trip to Berlin in October. The itinerary included a guided tour of Berlin, Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp and visits to a number of Berlin's museums. In October Year 14 Politics pupils attended a trip to London with their itinerary including visits to Downing Street, Westminster Abbey, a tour of Westminster and attendance at Prime Minister's Question Time.

The S.U. Weekend took place in Castletwellan Castle from 12-14 November and was enjoyed by nearly 30 pupils from Years 10-14. The Year 8 cross curricular trip to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum was held in October and a follow-up Year 8 Parents' Social Afternoon was held later that month. Year 10 attended a joint event at the Queen's Film Theatre to view a film on Irish history and the First World War from the "Digital Film Archive" and then visited the Ulster Museum to view the galleries on Irish history.

In January A-level Technology and Business Studies students travelled to Paris. The trip provided the girls with the opportunity to see the engineering behind such structures as the Eiffel Tower and the rollercoasters of Disneyland Paris, while Business Studies students considered the marketing and financing of Disneyland Paris. The pupils also visited numerous tourist attractions in Paris. Year 13 and 14 History of Art students participated in a day's visit to Dublin to visit a number of galleries.

The first ski trip in Victoria College for many years took place in March. Thirty-two pupils from Years 11-13 and five teachers met at Belfast International to depart for Northern Italy to ski for the week during half-term. They skied for six days with some of the girls not having skied before and their skills developed over the week so much that many caught up with the experienced skiers. This trip taught the girls many life skills such as how to develop new physical skills, how

to experience adventure, co-operation, independence, tolerance of others and give an insight into a different culture. It was a very successful trip and the girls were fantastic ambassadors for the school.

Sixteen Year 10 students enjoyed Outdoor Pursuits, involving high ropes adventure course and climbing wall, at Tollymore Outdoor Education Centre in May.

In June two groups of 47 pupils and five teachers each participated in Year 8 educational visits to Paris. Each group enjoyed a full day in Paris, including a two hour guided tour, stop overs at key sights (Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame), the views from Montparnasse Tower, time around Le Louvre, a stroll around Montmartre and an evening mini cruise on the Seine. A full day was spent in EuroDisney, with time on the last day to visit the The Stade de France or the Cité des Sciences and Cité de la Musique.

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Specialist School

The benefits enjoyed by pupils and staff within the Science department included the whole school emphasis on data analysis and target setting as a means of raising pupil attainment, the growth of the VLE as a medium for encouraging independent learning and the opportunity to participate in science clubs and extra-curricular activities. Sixth Form pupils delivered lessons in local primary schools – an activity which tests their communication and organisational skills to the full. One of the major areas for review throughout the programme has been pupil assessment and baseline testing has been introduced for Years 8 and 11. In conjunction with this initiative, departments have been reviewing procedures for how best to assess. Formative assessment is about the involvement of pupils in the learning process, the culture and ethos of the classroom and the quality of questioning and feedback. Teachers are committed to sharing best practice with colleagues through focused observations and dissemination sessions during staff training days. This process will take time to successfully implement as teachers will match course content with assessment opportunities and identify appropriate intervention strategies where relevant.

Year 10 pupils attended and participated in a STEM event at Hunterhouse College. Year 8 pupils undertook a STEM activity week from 13-17 June. Activities included trips to W5, Crawfordsburn Country Park, Oxford Island and Armagh Planetarium. Also included were workshops with Young Enterprise and Sentinus. Year 9 pupils participated in 'Water for the World' Engineering Workshop in November 2010. Two Year 9 classes took part in a workshop run by Young Engineers from Queen's University Belfast. During this they had the opportunity to make and use their own water filter and they were also made aware of the issues providing clean water for developing countries. Year 10 pupils attended a Royal Navy Workshop during which they worked on a propulsion system used by submarines. Nine Year 10 and Year 11 pupils visited one of the College's six Comenius partner schools in Grottaglie, Italy in April. The objective of this educational visit was to share and review the partner schools' work and experiences to date through our involvement in this innovative project. Pupils attended lessons, visited areas of cultural and historical interest and also augmented previous relationships established through our collaborative work to date.

In October AS Technology students participated in a ten-week online course using the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to help improve the quality of extended writing within the context of Product Design examination questions. A variety of interactive tasks were set through the VLE and communication between tutor and student was limited to the virtual platform. A group of pupils from Sullivan Upper also were involved in the course and all agreed that it was a valuable experience within a unique and innovative sphere of teaching and learning.

Thirty-eight Year 11 pupils visited CAFRE's Loughry Campus in Cookstown to take part in their 'Feed Your Mind' Open Day. The event allowed pupils to observe and take part in a number of practical demonstrations related to aspects of the food industry, including Nutrition Awareness, Hygiene Monitoring, Acids in Action and Packaging Technology. The Open Day also gave the pupils an insight into careers in the Food Industry and the variety of courses available at the Loughry Campus.

The annual Business Insight Conference run in conjunction with Sentinus took place in October. The event enable all of Year 13 to gain an appreciation of the world of business by

engaging them in marketing, production and human resource management activities. 'A Case of Identity' returned to Victoria College in October and a CSI investigator from New York explained the case of a murder and explained DNA profiling and other scientific procedures for obtaining evidence. The pupils loved the event and all agreed it had been a very worthwhile experience. Pupils participated in the B.T. Young Scientist Competition in October – Food for Fuel and were invited to a reception at Stormont with the Education Minister. A new GCSE course in Astronomy was also introduced. In April three Year 13 pupils, Megan Kerr, Lauren Dick and Alice Rodgers, attended a full day cancer research workshop at the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology at Queen's University, during which the pupils had the opportunity to take part in practical activities along with research scientists and to learn about the medical research ongoing in the centre.

As you will see from this report, the College offers our pupils a wide and varied experience which prepares them for the next stage in their lives.

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PLAYGROUP, PRE-SCHOOL AND PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

In September 2010, the Preparatory Department was delighted to welcome the Pre-School class to the Vitaglass room. The addition of this new class to the Preparatory Department has caused great excitement throughout the school from parents, staff and pupils alike. There has been much parental interest in the Pre-School and places have been in high demand.

The Pre-School pupils have been an asset to the Preparatory Department and have strengthened the Early Years' provision available at the school. From the age of two years and nine months, pupils may enter the Playgroup, located on the Richmond site. The Playgroup accommodates both boys and girls and facilitates a maximum of 16 pupils. The Playgroup and Pre-School join together for shared PE once a week and enjoy a number of visits and excursions throughout the year. In the Spring term pupils enjoyed a programme of Jo Jingles music sessions and in the Summer term they shared active weekly sessions from Jump, Jiggle and Jive. These shared sessions help to ensure smooth transition from Playgroup, to Pre-School and finally to the Preparatory Department.

Throughout the year 2010-2011, the Prep girls have enjoyed an enriched curriculum experience. Whole school activities included an exciting European Day, an enjoyable Healthy Living Week, a fun Eco Day and a productive Money Week. In the Summer term, Prep pupils from P2 onwards were involved in the Young Enterprise project which has been hugely beneficial for the girls and has also established effective partnership between the Prep Department and the staff at Ernst and Young. Prep 7 also benefited from the weekly visits of a link engineer from the Sentinus project.

From September 2010, personal target setting was introduced across the Preparatory Department. Teaching in the Preparatory Department continues to embrace the strategies of *Assessment for Learning* and research would indicate that this is reflective of best practice. The girls are taking ownership of their learning by self-assessing their own work and the work of their peers. In this way, formative assessment strategies are being used in the classroom to inform the learning process and to help the girls understand how their learning is assessed. This is in line with changes in the Senior School where school systems of formative assessment are also being developed.

This year, post primary transfer procedures remained unchanged, with two separate systems of examination in place. All of the pupils in P7 selected to undertake both the GL and AQE tests. Without doubt, all of the girls in P7 worked extremely hard and gave of their very best. We were delighted that all of the girls achieved a year 8 grammar school place, with 25 of the 26 P7 girls moving into Victoria College Senior School.

In the Summer term 2011, Prep 4 and Prep 7 pupils were involved in end of Key Stage assessments. The girls were assessed in Mathematics and English and were awarded a level of achievement. Results this year were excellent and a credit to the hard work of both the pupils and staff: In Prep 4, 64% of pupils achieved Level 3 in English and 86% achieved Level 3 in Mathematics. The Northern Ireland comparative percentages were 43% and 48% respectively.

In Prep 7, 72% of pupils achieved Level 5 in English and 92% achieved Level 5 in mathematics. The Northern Ireland comparative percentages were 32% and 43% respectively.

Thanks to the generous support and enthusiastic participation of the Prep girls and their parents, the Preparatory Department was able to contribute to a great number of charities during the academic year 2010-2011. In total, the Preparatory Department raised over £2,700 for a wide range of good causes. The charities supported included Kids Alive UK, The Cedar Foundation, Children in Need, Comic Relief and The British Heart Foundation.

There have been many special achievements across the Preparatory Department this year and the weekly Celebration Assemblies have celebrated personal pupil achievement in music exams, swimming galas and sporting tournaments. At a whole school level there has also been both sporting and musical success. In the Ulster Minor Championships, the relay team was placed third in both the medley and freestyle relays. Prep 6 and 7 sent a strong team of girls to compete in the South Belfast cross country heats; the team all ran extremely well and finished 2nd overall. The P6 and P7 hockey team made it to the Northern Ireland Hockey finals and were delighted to be placed fourth overall. Certainly, a highlight of the Prep calendar 2011 was the wonderful performance of The Peace Child. For the first time, Prep hosted the event in the Great Hall and two performances took place in the

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evening. All of the girls performed with such enthusiasm and both evenings were vibrant and entertaining. Miss Wright must be commended for co-ordinating such a wonderful performance. Miss McQuillan and Mrs Murray must be thanked for their support with this special event.

This year, Playgroup, Pre-School and Prep were delighted to establish our own Prep PTA, The Friends of Prep. Thanks to the Friends of Prep we enjoyed a Colour Me Beautiful night in October, a wonderful Easter Extravaganza and a shared school disco with Inchmarlo pupils in June. The money raised through these events has been used to purchase ICT resources for use across the Playgroup, Pre-School and Preparatory Department.

Clearly, it has been both a busy and exciting year in the Preparatory Department. Next year, we will look forward to many new developments in the Preparatory Department. In particular, we eagerly anticipate welcoming 24 new pupils to the Pre-school class and thus continuing to further develop our early years' provision on the Richmond site. We will also continue to develop pupil decision making in school by setting up another new pupil action group which will help ensure new pupils are welcomed to the school. ICT will continue to be a focus area for fundraising, as we begin to upgrade current ICT resources across the school in order to improve both quality and efficiency. The staff will attend training for the new assessment regulations which will commence in September 2012 and we will begin to phase in these new arrangements for assessment and reporting from September 2011.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their hard work this year and to thank the Governors for the continued support they show towards the Playgroup, Pre-School and Preparatory Department.

Dr R. Mitchell-Barrett
Head of Preparatory Department

BOARDING DEPARTMENT

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES 2010-11

At the end of August 2010 Drumglass House opened up its doors once again after its Summer Recess and welcomed back members of its boarding family from previous years as well as many new boarders, including 5 lively Year 8 girls who adapted with ease to our routine. This year our boarders came from Ireland, Great Britain, Hong Kong, China, Spain and Egypt. Our international community was completed by our Boarding Mistresses who came from Ireland, Spain, Germany and Canada.

As ever, boarders managed to cram an enormous amount of activity into their 24 hours. As soon as classes finished, books were quickly set aside and sports, musical activities and voluntary work outside of school were embarked upon with gusto. Our girls played hockey, table tennis, gaelic football, camogie and tennis and contributed to the school choirs, orchestra and the many drama productions including "Hello Dolly". Numerous girls also availed of the opportunity to have exclusive use of the swimming pool on Thursday evenings supervised by Miss Beirne from the PE Department. In their down time they made good use of the newly acquired WiFi and large plasma screen television.

Boarding entertainments this year included a visit to "Planet Fun" in early November, Christmas Shopping in Belfast City Centre and the Continental Christmas market in early December. In order to banish the January blues we also had our now traditional outing and front row seats to see the pantomime "Aladdin" in the Grand Opera House where May McFettridge singled out our girls for some of her special treatment!

The normal frenetic pace of activity slowed down in December as the heaviest snowfall in years descended on the city and caused traffic mayhem and travel disruption in the city for a period of 2-3 weeks. For many of our overseas boarders this made their journey home for Christmas very long and arduous as a result of postponed flights. However, I am glad to report that everyone arrived home safely in time for celebrations with their families, albeit with many tales to tell.

Food is always central to our daily life and to all our celebrations within Drumglass House. At Halloween boarders and staff alike put on imaginative costumes and enjoyed an autumnal feast followed by games to celebrate the end of our first half term. At Christmas Year 13 girls organised a superb evening of entertainment after a meal of traditional fare where we were joined by teachers from school and friends of Drumglass House. In January we had an authentic Chinese New Year celebration followed in February by a colourful Valentine's party with a competition for the best handmade Valentine card. In early April our Boarding Mistresses organised a "Mic Night Café" where they treated boarders to a range of delicious food items including artistically decorated cupcakes which they had prepared themselves. They also entertained and impressed us with their singing and allowed boarders to take up the microphone which they did with enthusiasm.

As the academic year 2010/11 approached its end in June the sun came out in time for our annual barbeque complete with bouncy castle. This gave boarders, staff, parents and old friends of Drumglass House the opportunity to meet and chat in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere. Special guests this year were Rosemary Sloan (née Bridgett) and Carolyn McCabe (née Dobbin) who had been VCB boarders in the 1950s. They regaled us with colourful and amusing anecdotes of life as a boarder under an austere regime of strict rules, rationed food, sparse entertainment and fire drills which involved having to climb out of an upstairs dorm window and abseil to the ground in a "safety sling". This was a world away from the reassurance of rigorous Health and Safety regulations, the enjoyment of a wide range of leisure and social activities and the comfort of instant communication via mobile phones and email which is part of boarding life today.

Once again we say good bye to our boarders who are proceeding on to the next stage of their educational career as well as to those who are changing schools. We wish you all well and hope that pleasant memories of Drumglass House will accompany you as you proceed in life. I also give my heartfelt thanks to our hard-working team: Matrons, Boarding Mistresses and the Domestic and Catering staff who have worked tirelessly to provide a happy and stimulating environment for all our girls.

Miss H Robinson, Head of Boarding

**VICTORIA COLLEGE BELFAST
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2011**

**PART-1
SCHOOL REVENUE ACCOUNT**

	2011	2011	2010	2010
	£	% (income)	£	% (income)
INCOME				
Government grants	4,178,853	73.63%	3,991,407	72.69%
Parents' Contributions	1,496,840	26.37%	1,499,739	27.31%
Total	<u><u>5,675,693</u></u>	100.00%	<u><u>5,491,146</u></u>	100.00%
EXPENDITURE				
Teaching salary costs	3,304,738	57.08%	3,188,115	58.06%
Other education costs	801,432	13.84%	821,823	14.97%
Premises costs	1,122,649	19.39%	1,171,543	21.34%
Administration costs	560,963	9.69%	435,781	7.94%
Total	<u><u>5,789,782</u></u>		<u><u>5,617,262</u></u>	102.30%
Surplus/Deficit for year	-114,089	-2.01%	<u><u>-126,116</u></u>	-2.30%
Total	<u><u>5,675,693</u></u>	100.00%	<u><u>5,491,146</u></u>	100.00%

**PART-2
SCHOOL CAPITAL ACCOUNT**

INCOME	
Government capital grants	18,882
Endowments	
Parents' capital fees	110,518
Total	<u><u>129,400</u></u>
EXPENDITURE	
Buildings	167,753
Total	<u><u>167,753</u></u>
(Deficit)/surplus for year	<u><u>-38,353</u></u>
Total	<u><u>129,400</u></u>

