



# BCA Newsletter

N° 28 / 17 November 2022



BEING BRITISH

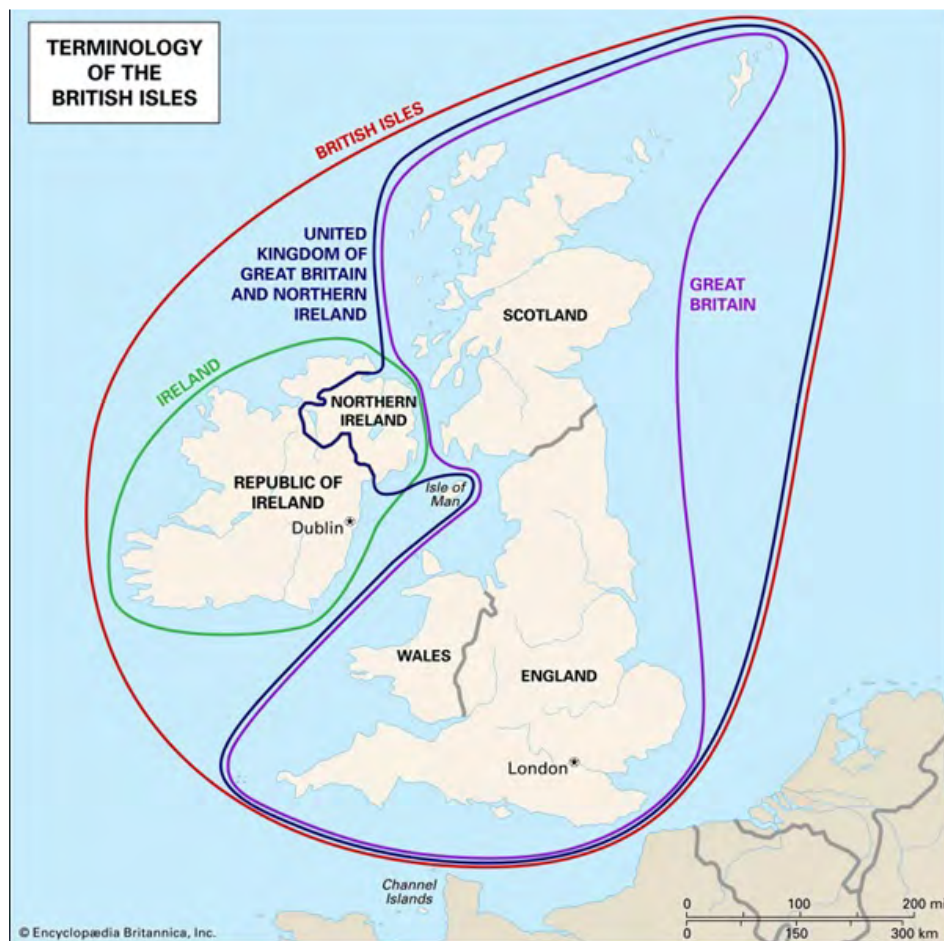


In this newsletter, many of the stories of student learning have a connecting theme of Britain, and in doing so we take a look at the identity of the College. You may remember that in the BCA Parent Survey in June 2022, we asked “What does the term ‘British education’ mean to you?” This word cloud is a way of representing the stand-out ideas from the results:



A British education means different things to different people, but there are areas of strong agreement. There is agreement that the child is in the centre. This is not always the case in all systems and schools.

First, some deconstruction. There actually isn't a place just called Britain! We all know roughly what and where we mean when we talk about Britain and the British, but we actually have to choose one from 'the British Isles', 'the United Kingdom', or 'Great Britain'. And you'll certainly incur the wrath of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland if you equate Britain with England!



Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/United-Kingdom>

In the same way, there isn't strictly a 'British curriculum'. There are four different national curriculums for each of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and, from 2022, Wales. At BCA we follow the [National Curriculum for England](#) up until the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, for which we are a candidate school, but there is much to be learned and perhaps incorporated from the other national curriculums of the United Kingdom, particularly in terms of innovative pedagogical approaches (notably the Curriculum for Scotland). Perhaps surprisingly, most English schools don't have to follow the English curriculum. Around 80% of English state secondary schools and nearly 40% of state primary schools are classed as 'academies', and can in principle follow any curriculum, including one of entirely their own design. The same applies to all private schools. In practice, most schools do align pretty closely with the national curriculum, but modify it for their own context and guiding principles.


Finally, it could be argued that there is not really a 'British system', either. One of the great strengths of a British education is its diversity and actually the lack of a rigid system. It is important that the system adapts to the needs of the child and the school, and not the other way round. Schools should be student-centred, not system-centred. There is certainly a high level of government-driven accountability in schools in England but, apart from that, a 'system', as defined in the dictionary, is not much in evidence, rather a multitude of approaches to organising the educational experience of young people. In England alone, there are Academies, Faith schools,

Free schools, City technology colleges, State boarding schools and Private schools, and among them schools offering a specialist Montessori, Steiner, Waldorf or Reggio Emilia approach.

Now some reconstruction. If it's not so much about a mandated curriculum or managed system, then what defines a British education? The Council of British International schools provides a [list of characteristics of British schools](#) that parents can expect to see. I list some of them here:

- Have a holistic approach to the curriculum where pupils are given a range of opportunities in and out of the classroom to help develop important learner attributes - like being enquiring and open-minded - and human qualities like care, tolerance and respect for others
- Encourage students to engage actively, ethically and purposefully with the world around them and to learn about, and respect, other cultures and beliefs
- Are committed to educating the whole child and to learning which embraces a range of appropriate teaching styles
- Are committed to a learning environment which is secure and stimulating
- Have caring pastoral systems which support the learning and welfare of all children
- Use common UK-style models of assessment, feedback and reporting
- Have staff who have open access to Continuous Professional Learning and Development
- Offer the ability for students to transfer to the UK, or to other British international schools
- Provide quality guidance for students applying to higher education around the world

Binding this all together is the quality of teaching and specifically the quality of the interactions between educators and students, including the pastoral (or tutorial) dimension. This, I believe, to be a defining feature of British education (this is not to say that this individualised approach is lacking in other national systems, but it may be less in evidence). Students, parents, staff and visitors frequently comment on the warm and friendly atmosphere at BCA. It has been said that “No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship”. I believe that it is the importance and quality of these relationships that lie at the heart of a British education.

  
**Mr Harry Lock**  
Principal



## Language Learning- kind request to complete follow up survey

We recently held an open meeting at the school for parents, on the topic of Language Learning. The meeting with parents was necessary as part of our move to the IB Diploma Program, to gain stakeholder input. We repeated the meeting with all of the BCA staff, later that day.

We sought, and received, excellent ideas from the parent meeting, which will be considered alongside educational research and best practice in teaching, as we move forward.



would like to emphasise that we are not feeling under any pressure to add more hours of instruction in languages other than English. BCA is a British school with English language at the heart of the instruction, and pervading the learning experience. Rather, we are seeking to review the curriculum time that we do have available, to provide the best possible progression pathways. We must also ensure we appropriately value the increasingly diverse home languages of all our students, because these are linked to the students' own sense of identity and place.

As a next step, we want to ensure that all parents have had an opportunity to provide important information and feedback. Our BCA Language Coordinators request that you please complete this [home language survey](#) by 21st November, to help us understand more about your child's language background and to gain a greater understanding of your thoughts on language learning at BCA. If you have more than one child attending BCA, please complete a form for each child. You do not have to answer all of the questions. The responses will be for internal school planning only.

## Fees for Academic Year 2023/24

Dear BCA parents,

You will have noticed how our school has been in constant growth in terms of the number of students, teachers and facilities. Next year we will have a new laboratory, and more educational and play areas.

In order to maintain the financial balance of the company, and to continue with the projected investments, it is necessary to revise the fees for the next academic year 2023/24, which will grow by 3%, significantly lower than the CPI registered in Andorra.

Please find the 2023/24 fees by clicking [here](#).

Thank you as always for your understanding and support.

## Charity Fundraising

We are pleased to report that our dress up day and bake sale before half term raised over 800 Euro. The Student Council looked at some options for where to transfer these funds, all equally valuable, in different ways, and settled on a UNICEF Andorra project providing basic services to a community suffering from poverty and climate change.

UNICEF Andorra will participate in a project with rural communities in Madagascar to develop 1 of 20 eco-villages in Androy, a region in the south of the country which is one of the most severely affected by drought.

The eco-villages will receive 100 percent solar- powered electricity services to power schools, health centres and water services. They will have sustainable water supplies for domestic, community and agricultural use, as well as improved toilets to combat the harmful effects of open defecation. The villages will also be connected to the internet to facilitate better coordination of health services and better education outcomes for children at school.

We hope that the funds from BCA will help generate a measurable and significant impact.



## BCA Skiing Programme

It is not well known that the [British invented skiing](#), in the 1920's, as a recreational activity.

100 years later, our BCA Ski Programme for 2023 is taking shape.



*The British in the Alps, 100 years ago.*

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/ski/true-story-british-pioneer-invented-ski-racing-switzerland/>

In December we will send parents an email with the complete information, such as dates and prices.

### **Children from Reception up to Year 6**

The ski programme will take place at [Valnord-Pal Arinsal](#), with transport each day from school and back in the afternoon.

### **Secondary**

The BCA ski programme for Secondary students will be concentrated into a single week, for educational reasons.

## Buying the Ski Pass

All students will require a valid ski pass, obtained in advance (note the comment above regarding the Secondary skiing week- it will not be necessary to buy a season pass, although parents may still want to buy one anyway for their secondary child).

The information can be checked in the Ski Andorra website:

<https://skiandorra.ad/en/menu-15/extracurricular.html>

If your child was born in 2017 or 2018, you can obtain their skipass for free at the Vallnord ski station (Pal) ticket offices. You should bring a passport photo of your child and an identification card (CASS/NIA) with the date of birth of your child.

For all other ages of children (children born from 2016 and before) who have got the Andorran residency, the season ski passes 'FORFAITS' are available from 'Ski Andorra'.

These passes are subsidised by the Government of Andorra.

Sales period: Until the 31st January 2023

PRICE for 2022/2023: €133,00

## Renewals

School children who have the school children's Government ski pass from a previous season can renew and pay for the pass through online payment, via:

[https://recarrega.skiandorra.ad/ventas\\_forfaits.php?what=R](https://recarrega.skiandorra.ad/ventas_forfaits.php?what=R)

## First Time Applications

School children who have their Andorran resident permit, who are applying for the first time (e.g. born in 2016, or new students), must complete the application form which is only available at 'Ski Andorra'. Please also take a passport photograph and proof of residency.

Ask Ski Andorra in advance if you need a certificate from the school to prove your child is enrolled in BCA. Please contact [gema.sanz@bcandorra.com](mailto:gema.sanz@bcandorra.com) to request it.

The pass must be paid for by cash or credit card and the pass will then be issued immediately.



Passes are valid for a period of four years but they must be renewed and paid for annually at [www.skiandorra.ad](http://www.skiandorra.ad).

Children who do not have their residency yet, will need to pay a different rate.

## DUPLICATES

If a pass is lost, you can request a duplicate pass at the offices of 'Ski Andorra'. This will cost €20. It is mandatory to present another recent photo to get a duplicate pass.

The information in this letter is all the information that we have been given by 'Ski Andorra'. If you require any further information, please contact 'Ski Andorra' directly:

**CONTACT: C/ del Valira, 2, ground floor**  
**AD500, Andorra la Vella, Andorra**  
**(+376) 805 200/ [skiandorra@skiandorra.ad](mailto:skiandorra@skiandorra.ad)**

## SECONDARY SCHOOL MUSICAL, with a request for parent help

The Secondary school is pleased to announce that we are putting on a production of the classic musical, Oliver!

Oliver! is based on the Charles Dickens novel set in Victorian London, where a misfortunate orphan, Oliver, is thrown out of the workhouse, sold to a funeral parlour, escapes and is taken in by pickpockets. Oliver meets some 'colourful' characters along the way, and after a lot of misadventure, manages to find a safe and permanent home.

Important dates:

- 27th March 2023 - All day technical rehearsal at the Andorra Park Hotel.
- 28th March 2023 - Performance 1, 6pm
- 29th March 2023 - Performance 2, 6pm

We are extremely grateful to the [Andorra Park Hotel](#), who are sponsoring our production and allowing us to use their stage, which gives our students the opportunity to experience performing on a real stage.

Auditions and casting have taken place over the last 2 weeks.

Congratulations to all of those who auditioned and won a main role!

Being involved in a musical is one of the most rewarding, educational and creative experiences you can have during your secondary school career.

Auditions were open to Years 7-10, and all year 7s and 8s will be involved regardless, as the chorus members (Dodger's Gang, and the Workhouse Children), rehearsing in their performing arts lesson over this term and next.

Rehearsals for the main roles will begin in the coming weeks, and will take place after school. If you are involved, please return the form with your availability!

In order to make the production as professional as possible, we need convincing costumes and a set/ props. We will start planning for this over the coming months, but we hope that parents can help us in providing costumes, props and even building sets if possible. If you would like to contribute, please email Ms Newlin ([stacey.newlin@bcandorra.com](mailto:stacey.newlin@bcandorra.com)).



On Friday 11th November a selection of students, along with two of our teachers, presented a special assembly to Secondary students and a small group of parents, commemorating Remembrance Day, a memorial day observed in Britain and Commonwealth member states since the end of the First World War to honour armed forces members who have died in the line of duty. There is a wider significance to remember all those who have fallen or made sacrifices (and continue to do so around the world) in defending democratic freedoms and a peaceful way of life.

The students explained:

- how John McCrae's poem *On Flanders Field* gave the UK its use of the poppy as a symbol of remembrance;
- how Wilfred Owen's *Anthem for Doomed Youth* laments the wasted lives of the young people who fought, while *Dulce Et Decorum Est* gives the lie to the Latin saying *Dulce Et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori* (It is sweet and right to die for one's country);
- how Cesar Vallejo's *Masa* showed the human face of death during The Spanish Civil War.

Mr Craig also spoke about the Picasso painting *Guernica*, and Mr Gonzalez-Brown spoke about the traumas suffered by those who survived The First World War. You can find some of the poems, images and readings [here](#).







In the British system, children learn phonics in a different way from other educational systems. From the Early Years, the children begin learning the different phonics sounds through listening to stories, rhymes and songs. They are then introduced to the written form of the sounds, starting with set 2 - s,a,t,p,i and n.





This phonics knowledge is used to build their literacy skills, and enable them to start reading and writing, like we can see in Robins' class.





The highlight of our science topic on sound was to make our very own telephones.

We have learnt that sound travels in waves through the bottom of the cup, along the string through vibrations and into the cup on the other end. The telephone was invented by British inventor Alexander Graham Bell in 1876, who discovered vibrations due to the fact that both his mother and wife were deaf. Could the telephone be the greatest British invention?







In English, Hawks have been reading 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' by William Shakespeare. A lot of the story is set in a magical woodland. They visited the forest above school to use their senses to help them to gather vocabulary so that they can write authentic descriptions of the woodland setting.



# CHARITY FAMILY FAIR



COLLABORATIONS:



3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER  
2022

10AM TO  
14PM

RAFFLE  
PERFORMANCES  
REFRESHMENTS  
CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES  
CONCERTS

PRICE 10€ PER PERSON (School Front Desk)

\*INCLUDES 1 TICKET FOR THE RAFFLE AND JOINING EVERY ACTIVITY

\*RELATIVES ARE WELCOME PLEASE CONFIRM ATTENDANCE

