



# THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF KUWAIT

## AWARDS EVENING 2018 Higher Phase Head Teacher's Annual Report

Al Baraka Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 10 October 2018

### Opening Remarks

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for joining us here this evening for this celebration of success – our annual Awards Evening. The achievements of the Middle Phase students whose successes we have already celebrated here this evening are very impressive indeed.

In recognising the achievements of these extraordinarily talented students a number of things are clear for all to see. Firstly, there is the diligence and maturity with which they approach their studies; these young people are independent and enthusiastic scholars who relish the opportunities they have to make the most of their lessons and to extend their knowledge outside of the classroom. Secondly, their approach to their education is balanced; they see the importance of studying hard but this is not at the expense of their involvement in the many extra-curricular activities, service and leadership opportunities on offer to them at BSK. Lastly, and I would say most importantly of all, they are well-mannered, kind and compassionate members of our school community. As I am sure you would agree, academic achievements are of little significance if such qualities are absent and in my capacity as Head Teacher of the Higher Phase, I look forward to seeing these students develop still further as they pursue their studies in the Upper Department and, eventually, the Sixth Form.

### Academics, Examination Successes and University Destinations

The Middle Phase students whose successes we have already celebrated here this evening are a credit to themselves, their parents and to BSK, and of course we look forward to seeing them flourish as they continue their education with us. For the Higher Phase students whose accomplishments we will come to celebrate in just a little while, the external examinations at the end of Years 11, 12 and 13 are even closer at hand.

Of course, there can be little doubt that the students here with us this evening are firmly on track for continued success. The journey every student takes is a unique one and although they will all undoubtedly forge their own paths I hope the award winners here this evening will take further inspiration from the achievements of our senior students in their external June 2018 examinations.

At GCSE and IGCSE our Year 11 students continue to excel in their end of Key Stage 4 examinations, with 93% of all grades achieved in the high A\*-C range. This was also the first year in which BSK students had some of their GCSE and IGCSE examinations assessed using the new 9-1 grading system introduced by the UK government. That 19% of all BSK entries for 9-1 graded subjects obtained the top Grade 9 is a testament to the hard work of our students and teachers and compares highly favourably when measured against UK averages. For instance, whilst only 2.6% of all GCSE entries for English Language achieved Grade 9, a staggering 26% of BSK candidates obtained the top grade in this subject with an extremely impressive 67% achieving the A\*/A equivalent grades of 9-7. A truly remarkable achievement.

When it comes to the accomplishments of individual students a few of the many individual success stories: Noor Alkadi achieved an excellent 7 A\* and 3 A grades, Siddhant Singh obtained an

impressive 9 A\* and 2 A grades and Rekha Ravikumar excelled with 10 A\* grades and 1 A grade. Former student Narrayan Raam Sankar achieved an astonishing 12 A\* grades. Current Year 12 student and Assistant Senior Prefect, Maria Elias, achieved an absolutely incredible 13 A\* grades, a BSK record. Of course, these represent just a few of the numerous students who enjoyed tremendous success in their public examinations, many of whom are now continuing their studies at AS Level in the Sixth Form.

In Year 12, at AS Level, the overall A-E pass rate was 96%. Ali Alsharaawy obtained an incredible five A grades, whilst Omar Almutoteh and Mark Sedhom each achieved four A grades and one B grade. Rashid Karam, Alexandru Moraru and Mohammed Raza Syed each achieved four A grades. Both those who opted to return for Year 13 (many of whom are here with us this evening in their capacity as Senior Prefects) and those who proceeded to university this year, are undoubtedly well equipped to meet the challenges of their undergraduate courses and future careers.

At A Level, BSK students once again had an A\*-E pass rate of 100%, with 89% in the A\*-C category. Grades at the "high pass" range of A\*-B now stand at an impressive 71%. As ever, there were some exceptional performances this year and, as you will have seen from the event programme, our Year 13 graduates have been able to pursue the next stage of their education at prestigious universities worldwide.

Once again, quality universities in the UK have proved to be the most popular choice for our graduates. Former Head Boy Yousef Mahmoud has now commenced his studies in Electronic and Electrical Engineering at University College London, and former Head Girl Rodina Gad (having obtained three A\* grades in her A Levels) is now at the University of Southampton studying Medicine. Our former Deputy Head Boy, Dylan Peacock is now reading for a degree in History at the University of Portsmouth, whilst former Head Girl Monica Elias has opted to pursue her studies in Pharmacy at the University of Nottingham. Having also served as Deputy Head Girl in her final year at BSK, Aikaterini Konstantinidou (having obtained three A\* grades and one A grade at A Level) has now commenced her studies in Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry at St Edmund Hall College, University of Oxford.

Other Year 13 graduates have also headed to the UK to pursue degrees in a range of fields. Computer Science has proved to be particularly popular with Akanksha Sharma, Sarah Albader, Shobhit Jain and Musaddiq Lakhana choosing courses at Imperial College London, Cardiff University, Loughborough University and Queen Mary University of London respectively. Doyoon Kwon and Rawan Abou Zahr have both opted to continue their studies in mathematics at the universities of Warwick and Surrey. Shahd Abdelhameed is reading Law at the University of Birmingham, whilst Guneesha Chowdhry is studying Law and Business at the University of Edinburgh.

Other graduates have chosen to pursue their studies in North America, with former Deputy Head Boy Matthew Nakouzi studying Biochemistry at Queen's University in Canada and Pooja Gupta and Namrah Suhail both attending the University of British Columbia to read Engineering and Commerce respectively. In the USA, Sayed Abdulmohsen Al-Hashemi is continuing his studies in Computer Science at the University of Colorado Boulder and Renata Gelevska is at Bentley University reading for a degree in Economics.

Reflecting the diversity of their interests and abilities, our graduates have also joined quality universities elsewhere in the UK and Canada, as well as the USA, Australia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Hungary - undertaking a range of courses including Social Research and Public Policy, Biochemistry, Biomedical Sciences, Tourism with Management and Film and New Media.

## Values

The academic year 2017-18 was an exciting one for BSK in a number of ways, not least of which being that it marked the beginning of our new partnership with Nord Anglia Education. Through a shared commitment to excellence in education and to the philosophy of supporting every child to succeed we are sure that this partnership will serve to enrich further the educational journeys of our students. Our students have always been ambitious and we look forward to continuing to help them to achieve more than they might ever have thought themselves capable of, as they take full advantage of the opportunities afforded them by attending a world class school.

An important initiative in 2017-18 was the formation of the Higher Phase Prefect Team, the development of which continues this year. With the new process for applications now embedded and the formation of far more focused sub-teams the students who take up these roles will have the opportunity to serve the school community and develop their own skills. Under the leadership of Head Boy Mohammed Rabbani and Head Girl Rian Mohammed the Senior Prefect Team now supported in their work by a newly appointed group of Assistant Senior Prefects from Year 12. Indeed, the combined efforts of this team can be seen in the smooth running of this evening's event, of which they are an integral part. These senior students are themselves former award winners and I am sure that in a few years' time we will see some of tonight's prize winning students serving in the same capacity.

The Higher Phase at BSK is a community in which students and teachers work alongside each other and share a common ethos. Whether you have just moved from Year 8 into Year 9 or are in your final year of studies in Year 13 the principle here is fundamentally the same – if you strive every day to be the very best version of yourself then that is all any of us can ever ask of you. Be sure to challenge yourself; you will not know what you are truly capable of until you do. Do not forget the importance of balance; to put too much pressure on yourselves and focus purely upon academic studies is to deny yourself enriching opportunities in so many other areas. Always support one another; individual accomplishments are important but you of course achieve far more when you work together.

## Concluding Remarks

In just a moment we will move on to the Higher Phase awards, but before we do so I would like to share with you just a few words more.

To each and every one of our award winners - my sincere congratulations. You really are exceptional role models for our younger students.

To my hard working and devoted colleagues - thank you for always taking such excellent care of our students. Your immense efforts are sincerely appreciated by us all.

To our parents - thank you for continuing to work alongside us. The trust you place in us to care for and guide your children is something we treasure.

Please do enjoy the rest of the evening and thank you all very much.

*Emma Bowie*

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Head Teacher