



# THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF KUWAIT

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

**Al Baraka Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 10 October 2018**

Honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my very great pleasure to stand before you this evening representing my Middle Phase team to talk about all of the exciting things that our students, your children, have been involved in over the last year.

Last academic year was an exciting year for Middle Phase with many new opportunities and events for our younger secondary student to get involved with, details of which I will give later on in this speech.

### **Awards Philosophy**

This evening we are celebrating the achievements of over 200 award-winning students who were in Years 6-10 during the academic year 2017-2018.

All the students who we will recognise here this evening are extremely dedicated and highly capable young people. As the evening progresses you will have the opportunity to see and hear for yourselves the variety of fields in which they continue to shine.

Some have excelled in specific areas of the curriculum, obtaining the top marks in their end-of-year examinations and thus achieving the status of Subject Prize winners. Or they may be a rising star in that subject and been placed second and third in a subject with a Commendation.

Others, who having achieved an A grade in at least 60% of their subjects, will be recognised as Excellence Award winners. Of these students, those obtaining A grades in over 80% of their subjects will receive an 'Excellence Award with Merit' and those with over 95% A grades will receive an 'Excellence Award with Distinction'.

As we have already seen, at BSK we not only celebrate students who have excelled academically, but also those who have enjoyed notable successes in extracurricular pursuits and we have already celebrated their accomplishments in a diverse range of areas including creative writing, Quran recitation and Model United Nations.

Moreover, we have also recognised the students in each of our four Houses; England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales who have excelled in the Housepoint Competition, achieving impressive numbers of positive points and minimal negative points. These are the students who day in and day out maintain a very high standard.

At the end of this event, the Head Teacher's Award will be presented to the one student in each year group whom it is felt has best exemplified the overall achievements and attitudes which we value here at The British School of Kuwait. These students are not only academically successful but also take part in the wider life of the school and the community.

## **Extracurricular Successes**

Large numbers of our students enjoyed conspicuous extracurricular and personal successes during the course of 2017-2018, too many for me to list this evening. Nevertheless I will endeavour to highlight a few notable successes.

In music, BSK musicians participated in The Young Musicians of the Gulf competition in Bahrain and our twelve person La Camerata group placed first in the large ensemble category as well as overall Young Musicians of the Gulf ensemble winners. An outstanding achievement once again, given the intense competition.

Vivian Sequeira reached the second round of the solo instrumental category on violin, as well as Hai Wei Li reaching the semi final on violin and the grand final on piano.

Piccoli trio, members Sarah Al Dashti, Luaidh Williams and Hai Wei Li were placed in the top two of the small ensemble category which enabled them, for the first time, to progress to the semi final of the competition. A highly commendable achievement given the high number of entries in this category.

In French BSK has worked with the Institut Français to prepare students in Years 6-10 for the French Government DELF A1 and A2 exams. Our first two groups of students, in November and May, achieved a 100% pass rate. We have already met some of those students this evening.

Twelve BSK students achieved success in German government language examinations most students achieving a Merit or Distinction.

BSK's continues to build on its status as a German Government Partner School, BSK students being invited to take part in a Goethe-Institut German Language Camp in Oman with students from other Partner Schools in the Gulf Region.

Every year several of our students are awarded a three-week Goethe-Institut study scholarship in Germany, and in August 2018 four BSK students travelled to Germany where they took part in intensive German language classes and enjoyed a variety of cultural and sight-seeing activities.

Finally in this section about modern foreign languages the Spanish Embassy has continued to give us its regular support and encouragement, with Senora Carmen, wife of HE the former Spanish Ambassador being a regular visitor to BSK and participating actively in our very popular Spanish clubs.

In Debating Mr Richard, a BSK English teacher, took the Kuwait National team led by three BSK students to competed in the World Schools' Debating Championship in Zagreb Croatia. Our students took on some of the biggest worldwide names in debating and performed admirably. They gained two landslide three to zero wins over Liberia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as taking points from England. The students were individually commended for their performances and left with a sense of pride and achievement.

It was another fantastic year in the field of Visual Arts. Our very own Euston Art Gallery hosted four very successful exhibitions; the annual whole school visual arts and design technology Exhibition, the GCSE/A Level exam work Exhibition, a Year 9 Surrealism exhibition and finally a Career in the Arts Exhibition.

BSK Art Students remain strong participants in many local competitions. These included the Art Olympiad and Bridges Art Competition organised by the Kuwait Industries Union where Year 10 Student Hasan Yahya was awarded second prize.

Other notable events this year included the GCSE Photography trip to Souk Al-Mabarakiya where students were given the opportunity to capture the atmosphere of this culturally rich environment.

In the dramatic arts, students took part in the terrific school production of Annie and outstanding performances were seen from students in Years 6 to 12. Tremendous talent was evident not only onstage but also backstage; many of our students working as stage managers, costume designers, stage hands and aiding technically with lights and sound. Subsequently, GCSE students gained valuable work experience supporting BAIA with technical support for their Musicality Dance extravaganza.

In the very successful Middle Phase Variety show our drama club students gave fantastic performances of extracts from the classic "The Arabian One Thousand and One Nights" book. Additionally students in the Middle Phase performed at the annual Festival of Achievement, acting in a courtroom drama scene presenting an argument on the importance of the Arabic language.

In sports, The British Schools of the Middle East (BSME) sports competition is the height of sporting competition available to schools within the Middle East.

Our Under 13 teams represented BSK superbly, a highlight being in athletics where current Year 9 student Alhussaini Alqabandi won gold and set a new BSME record for the javelin.

Our Under 15 team produced further fantastic results as the boys claimed the bronze medal for the volleyball competition, whilst the girls went one better and won the silver medal in the netball competition. The girls football team did so well that they were treated to a coaching session from the British Army Football Team.

Locally BSK competes in the International Schools Athletics Conference Kuwait (ISACK). The swimmers had a great season over two swimming galas where we won 9 bronze medals; 10 silver medals; and 11 gold medals. With the majority of these medals won by our younger swimmers, the future looks bright for BSK swimming. In other ISACK sports, BSK reached 16 semi-finals throughout the year, winning 14 of those to make the final. This led to an impressive 8 ISACK championships.

Last year at this ceremony I reported to you that Miss Lindsay our PSHE coordinator was introducing a new and exciting curriculum that included what is currently the largest global educational initiative, the F1 in Schools STEM Challenge. I am very happy to report that this was a huge success last year with over 200 year 7 students participating. This year a new cohort of year 7 students will have the same opportunity, whilst many of last year's F1 students have formed a new F1 club to carry on developing the skills they learnt in PSHE last year.

In this initiative our students learn industry standard design software, used by professional Formula 1 designers, to design, analyse, manufacture, test and then race miniature compressed air powered Formula 1 cars. This amazing opportunity allows students to use physics, aerodynamics, design manufacture, branding, graphics, leadership, teamwork, media, marketing and financial strategies and apply them in practical, imaginative, competitive and exciting ways.

The regional organisers of this challenge were so impressed with our students that BSK has been invited to send teams to the Middle East regional competition at Yas Marina in Abu Dhabi this December. We look forward to great success for our F1 teams in the future.

## **New Developments**

A new Chess Club was started part way through last year to allow students a chance to play against each other and to work on improving their tactics. Chess is not limited by the player's age and some of our younger players are very talented, regularly beating older ones and sometimes beating teachers (or often beating teachers, depending on who the teacher is).

Last year students played and won in a friendly tournament against The English School Fahafeel. There are a number of other schools in Kuwait who also have chess clubs and BSK is keen to expand these competitions to include more schools.

Also for the first time this year, students in Year 12 have been given the opportunity to undertake an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) alongside their AS Level studies, and we look forward to hearing more about their exciting explorations later in the year.

As you are all aware, last year BSK partnered with Nord Anglia Education and this partnership has brought with it a number of new and exciting opportunities for our students.

In Design and Technology students will be engaging in a Project Based Learning experience initiated by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and supported by Nord Anglia. The students will gain knowledge and skills by working together on an extended investigation to try and solve problems such as:

- How will technology effect jobs in the future?
- How can coastal communities adapt to rising sea levels?
- What is the future for self driving cars?

Students will be encouraged to design and create their own solutions to help solve these global problems. They will be creating a unique display using techniques and other skills learnt throughout the their curriculum.

### **Concluding Remarks**

I could go on to tell you about the wonderful Sports Days that we had, or the brand new Enrichment Days, or the new Bonus Badges awarded to students for acts of kindness and being good citizens. However, I know that we have so much more to celebrate tonight, so in conclusion I hope you enjoy the rest of the evening and I look forward to meeting many of you afterwards.

Thank you all very much.



**Nicholas Smith**  
Head Teacher