

6th January 2017

Dear Parents & Carers,

An exciting time ahead

And so we finally made it to the end of the longest term of the year! We had a calm and focused finish to things too – with staff going the extra mile to keep things smooth and tired students on the right track.

There was the usual end-of-term flurry of assessments, grade sheets, Progress Evenings, parent meetings, fixtures, performances and the like. **“Once On This Island”, our school musical, was a triumph!** The number and range of students involved was truly marvellous, and the overall performance stunning. Well done to Miss Damon, and all the other staff involved for overseeing such a show so successfully.

I also want to mention here that the last two days of term we had two of our loveliest and most dedicated **Year 11 students representing the Combined Cadet Force at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst** for the Sovereign’s Parade! **Caleb Savery** and **Sintija Rubene** are a credit to both BFS and the CCF unit that we are part of at Bedford Modern School; to have the chance to take part in such a prestigious event speaks volumes of the esteem in which they are held by everyone. I’m also delighted that we have been able to offer them this sort of opportunity as a school.

Year 10 Progress Evening – 12th January

As usual, key dates for this year are at the end of this newsletter – but I’d like to flag up that our Year 10 Progress Evening is next week, and we have already got students making appointments for this.

We always have good turnouts at our Progress Evenings – every parent at this school has committed in our Home-School Agreement to attend these– and given the success of our powerful recent Year 11 evening I wanted to remind Year 10 families that it’s their turn next to show up and support their children’s education.

Year 7 Progress Evening – 26th January

Just to flag up that Year 7 have their next Progress Evening on the 26th January. Whereas their last one of these was to see how they were settling in, this next one is much more focused on the academic progress that they have made since joining BFS. We’ll ask students to start making appointments with their teachers

Moving on

We are very lucky at BFS to have such a committed and stable staff body, however at Christmas we said farewell to two colleagues – **Mrs Crawford** and **Mr Bechoo**.

Our Science technician Mrs Crawford was part of our “day 1” team – the group of staff who were here when we opened BFS back in September 2012. A wonderful scientist, **she was an invaluable member of the Science department** – truly the glue holding the science team together, as well as making a massive contribution to the wider life of the school too. We wish her the very best in her new role, and are already missing her deeply.

Mr Bechoo was Subject Leader for Maths for two years, and did a great job of steering us through our first sets of GCSE exams, and leading the Maths team to some really solid outcomes in the

process! **He is one of the busiest people I know, always working hard on something**, be it school or one of his many extra-curricular activities. We look forward to hearing how his new ventures develop, and will miss his ability to remain serene under all circumstances.

Welcomes

BFS is extremely fortunate in having a strong reputation as a great place to work. Finding the right people who meet our high standards and values will always be tough – **we need every member of the team to meet “the Sophie Test”**.

With this in mind, we are particularly delighted to be able to welcome **Mrs Calver, Mrs Powell** and **Miss Webb** to the maths department, **Mr Bassin** as Science Technician, and **Miss Hale** to an additional member of the MFL team.

What 2017 holds in store...

It has been an extremely positive start to the term so far – students have come back in a really positive frame of mind, and seem to have rested up nicely over the holidays.

Alongside gaining possession of our new school hall and activities studio, I’m looking forward to 2017 as a time of yet more progress for BFS. **We’ve come a long, long way since we opened in 2012**, and the cumulative benefits of our long-term planning are starting to bear fruit.

At a time when other schools are undergoing major changes, we have the advantage of carrying on as we are. Whilst many face severe financial challenge, we are in an extremely healthy position – even being able to look at growth opportunities or additional staff appointments where we consider them helpful.

We heard just before Christmas that **we are successfully through to the next stage of our application for a new school in St Neots**, and we will be attending an interview at the Department for Education in London in a few weeks as a result. While I have been through this before – back in 2011 when working on the BFS proposal – I can tell you that we are taking nothing for granted and are diligently preparing for it, alongside our day-to-day activities with BFS.

Also just before Christmas **we received approval to form our multi-academy trust with Elstow School**, and so we are now working on the next set of activities to make this happen smoothly. **The consultation on our plans for this runs until next Wednesday – and we really would value any views or queries that you might on this.** You can find more information here: <http://www.bedfordreeschool.co.uk/about/multi-academy-trust.php>

That’s all from me for now. Have a lovely weekend and, as ever, we welcome and comments and feedback you may have for us as a school through the usual channels.

Mark Lehain.

Key dates for 2016-2017

12 th January	Year 10 - Progress Evening (students leave 3.20pm, appointments from 5.30pm)
26 th January	Year 7 – Progress Evening (students leave 3.20pm, appointments from 5.30pm)
13 th – 17 th February	Half term holiday
w/c 20 th February	Year 11 - mock exams week
16 th March	Year 11 – Progress Evening (students leave 3.20pm, appointments from 5.30pm)
23 rd March	Y9 – Progress Evening AND GCSE Options presentation (students leave 3.20pm, appointments from 5.30pm)
31 st March	Last day of spring term
w/c 3 rd & 10 th April	Easter Holidays **Y11 GCSE revision sessions will run during this time**
18 th April	Start of summer term
27 th April	Year 10 – Progress Evening (students leave 3.20pm, appointments from 5.30pm)
1 st May	Bank Holiday Monday – school closed
4 th May	Year 8 – Progress Evening (students leave 3.20pm, appointments from 5.30pm)
29 th May – 2 nd June	Half term holiday (Venice trip also away during this week)
w/c 19 th June	Year 10 – End of Year exam week
w/c 26 th June	Year 7, 8 and 9 core subject exam week & Development Days Year 10 – Work Experience week
21 st July	End of summer term