

11th September 2017

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I am writing to introduce myself as the new Principal of Bedford Free School. I was delighted to be appointed prior to the summer and have been eager to start, to meet the pupils and to get to know the community. When the post of Principal was advertised I spent a lot of time getting to know the school and what is special about it.

Over the last week I have been hugely impressed with the attitude of the pupils and staff and their desire to further develop the school into a world-class school. The pupils have been a credit to the school – articulate, positive and keen to describe all of the areas they enjoy and value whilst being aware of areas that still need improving further. It is a real pleasure to meet them and work with them. Our new Year 7 pupils have grasped the very high expectations and our values and have done themselves real credit over the last week. Meanwhile, today all the other year groups have modelled the expectations and routines superbly. They have also made the year 7s, the new staff and myself feel very welcome.

The most recent GCSE results at the school are very pleasing. If you haven't seen the local press, our provisional results are very positive, with our English, History and separate Science results being outstanding. We had a raft of the new grade 9s at GCSE – reserved for truly exceptional performance. We also received word of our first cohort of pupils – the class of 2015 – who received their A-level results and moved on to university.

It is a tribute to Bedford Free School – the pupils and staff - that we are now building a legacy. Over the coming week, I will be talking to all year groups about their own personal aspirations. We believe that all young people should be able to go to university, and we aspire for our pupils to attend the most selective of universities, or a suitable alternative of their choice.

As parents, I know you will agree that there is still more that can be done in order to develop a world-class educational provision. This is what the pupils and community of Bedford deserve and it is my privilege to be able to lead them in striving to achieve this outcome. The key to our success will be working together as teachers, parents and pupils to ensure that every child achieves both their academic, personal and career goals.

This week I will be talking to all pupils about the expectations I have for their conduct, work ethic, and expectations of themselves. Bedford Free School is a place of learning, and disruptions to learning will continue not be tolerated. To this end, I ask that you support us in ensuring that pupils are properly dressed for school in full school uniform, that they are equipped and ready every day, and that you maintain contact with the school if there are any difficulties we should be aware of.



I am determined that we will ensure that Bedford Free School is a place where success is desirable, demanded and achievable in order that our young people are given the circumstances to achieve extraordinary things. This means the highest academic standards, impeccable conduct, and hard work. I am a firm believer that there are no short-cuts to success.

As I get to know the school and talk to pupils, parents, governors and staff, there may be changes to our procedures or policies where we can make further improvements. I am committed to building on the very many strengths of the school, while ensuring we address anything that might stand in the way of ensuring our pupils achieve at the highest level.

We have the highest expectations of pupils and teachers so that we can meet the aspirations pupils and parents have. We set the bar high and work towards excellence in all areas. A child's education is too valuable in their lives for it not to be given every possible opportunity to flourish. We have continued demanding, over the last week, that pupils "do it again, do it better, do it best", reflecting that we will not settle for standards that are not the very highest. We believe this applies to conduct, expectations, and aspirations.

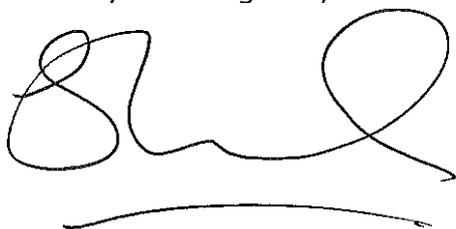
On Tuesday 3rd October, from 6.30pm – 8pm, I am hosting the first of my regular parents' forums. Here I anticipate that I will outline my vision of the school, consult with you on your impressions of the school, answer any questions, but most importantly get to meet you. I warmly invite you to attend. If you are unable to make this time, or would like to meet for any other reason, please contact me at the school using the above contact details to book in an appointment.

Please email Esther Logan on elogan@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk to confirm the number of places you would like to reserve to join the parents' forum meeting.

Please find below key dates this term for your diary.

I am looking forward to creating the best opportunities for our young people and developing the school into one which the community can continue to be proud of. I look forward to meeting you very soon.

With very best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Lock', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Stuart Lock
Principal

Key dates for the Autumn Term:

20 th September 2017	Open Evening 5.30pm - 8.00pm
30 th September 2017	Open Morning 10.00am - 12.00pm
3 rd October 2017	Parents' Forum, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
5 th October 2017	Year 7 Meet the tutor evening (details to follow) Year 10 Special welcome evening (details to follow)
23 rd - 27 th October 2017	Half term holiday
9 th November 2017	Class of 2017 Graduation Ceremony (presentation of certificates, details to follow)
13 th - 17 th November 2017	Year 11 Mock Exam week
30 th November 2017	Year 11 Progress Evening & Next steps event (details to follow)
6 th & 7 th December 2017	School Musical
14 th December 2017	Christmas lunch
15 th December 2017	Christmas Assembly at St Paul's Bedford
18 th Dec 2017 - 2 nd Jan 2018	Christmas Holidays
3 rd January 2017	Back to school