**Bedford Free School FAQs for Students**

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| Why does BFS have a longer school day?  | We have an extended school day so we can give you lots of high quality lessons. We have Prep time at the end of every day, to carry out homework. It also allows for us to provide extra curricula activities through our Elective programme  |
| What is Prep time?  | Prep happens at the end of every day here at BFS. It is 40 minutes long and takes place in your tutor bases with your Form Tutor or a member of SLT. This time is for silent study, allowing students to make a head start on their homework for that day, as well as providing a good opportunity for revision or reading your favourite book! |
| Who do I talk to if I am experiencing problems?  | As well as speaking to your Form Tutor or Pastoral Coordinator for your Year group, you can go and speak to any teacher if you are experiencing problems.  |
| Where do I go if I have lost part of my uniform?  | Lost Property is located on the ground floor outside Student Reception. If you cannot find your lost piece of uniform there then you need to go to the Pastoral Office on the 2nd floor, where they will endeavour to provide you with uniform. Parent/ Carers may be called to bring in uniform if there is nothing available in school. We endeavour to ensure all students are in full school uniform at all times. If you are not in full school uniform then you will lose a credit on your achievement card.  |
| How does the BFS Behaviour system work?  | All our systems are founded on being positive with students. When students do not meet our very high expectations of behaviour, our system is in the form of the Consequence Staircase. It is designed so that students are well aware of the consequences of the actions they are choosing. This can be found in your student planner and is on the wall of every classroom.  |
| What happens if I get a detention?  | If you are issued with a detention, you will be reminded by your Tutor during Prep time. You will already have been notified of the sanction by your lesson teacher. A courtesy text message will be sent to your parents/carers to let them know you will be staying late after school.  |
| What is Isolation?  | Isolation is located within the Pastoral Office on the 2nd floor. This is the place you go to if you have worked your way up the Consequence Staircase for poor behaviour and have been removed from a lesson. Or you have done something very serious. Isolation consists of individual booths for students to sit and do their work calmly and silently under supervision. Students will remain in school until 4.45pm on that day and a parental meeting will be scheduled for that day or the following morning. You will remain in Isolation until the meeting has taken place.  |
| Where can I go at break and lunch times?  | The areas available for students to go to during break and lunch-times include the following: the playground and caged tarmac area outside, the library (which holds different activities every lunch time including Collectable Cards and Film Club), and the Restaurant.  |
| Are there clubs after school and at Lunchtimes?  | During lunch times there are clubs in the Library that you can go and participate in such as Collectable Cards and Film Club, you can join in with sport activities in the cage. After school you can sign up for local sports fixtures and compete against other schools, or you can attend Homework Club in the Library. Teachers may also organise for revision intervention clubs during the year for extra support.  |
| How does the Restaurant work?  | It is situated on the ground floor and is open before school for Breakfast Club, during break time to purchase drinks and snacks, and during lunch time for a range of hot and cold dinners, drinks and snacks. You may not eat in the building. |
| What is Homework club?  | Homework Club is situated in the Library after school and runs until 6pm Monday – Thursday and 5pm on Friday. Students can stay in school to complete their homework quietly, and where there is access to books and computers for students to help with their studies. Students who wish to attend Homework Club simply need to arrive at the Library at 4pm on the day they wish to attend and sign in/sign out with the teacher who is there. You will be asked to sign a contract on your first visit. **Homework club does not run on Fridays before a school holiday**  |
| What is Show My Homework?  | Show My Homework is a website for students and parents to log into to keep track of a student’s homework that has been set for any given week. The school will issue each student a log-in for themselves and their parent/carer. The student’s account will outline the subject, the details of the homework, and the deadline. The teacher will often upload the homework sheet too if it’s electronic.This can be accessed; [**https://www.showmyhomework.co.uk**](https://www.showmyhomework.co.uk)If you do not have a login, please contact: **elogan@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk**  |
| What happens if I don’t do my homework?  | If you fail to do your homework on time then you will be placed in an Extended Prep session. These usually last for 45 minutes after school. **The date for this is non-negotiable.** These sessions are to support you in understanding your homework and/ or completing your homework to the expected standard. |
| How do I inform the school if I am unable to come to school?  | To inform the school about an absence you can do one of two things: If it is a planned absence (e.g. doctor’s appointment) **then a note will need to be written in your planner by your parent/ carer with the details of the appointment or you can provide us with an appointment card.** If it is an unexpected absence your parent/carer **MUST** contact the absence hotline via the main school phone: **01234 332299 Option 1** or **01234 332283** by 8:15am and leave a message explaining why you cannot come to school that day. **This must be done on each day of your absence** On your return to school you need to bring with you an absence note written and signed by a parent/carer. **REMEMBER:** you can lose your Golden Time if you do not bring in a letter to explain your absence.  |
| What do I do if I have to leave school to attend an appointment?  | **First and foremost the school strongly discourages any appointments during the school day. However, if completely unavoidable and it is a planned absence (e.g. doctor’s appointment) then a note will need to be written in your planner by your parent/ carer with the details of the appointment or an appointment card.** You will need to take this note to the Pastoral Office on the 2nd floor (first thing in the morning), the Pastoral Coordinator for your Year group will issue you with a yellow slip that gives you permission to leave school during the school day. You will need this when you sign out at Student Reception Without this yellow slip, you cannot leave class/ school. |
| What is Student Reception for?  | Student Reception is located on the ground floor by the main entrance to the school and can help you in many different ways. The medical room is found there. You sign in and out of school there if you have an appointment. Student reception is **ONLY** open at the following times: * Before school from 8am until 8.25
* At break time
* At Lunchtime
* After school until 5pm
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| What happens if I arrive late?  | If you arrive in school later than 8:25am you will be issued with a detention. * **To be carried out on the day that you are late**
* 3 or more lates will necessitate a Friday 6pm detention and a parent meeting.
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| Can I chew gum in school?  | NO. If you are seen chewing gum in school you will be issued with a detention. |
| How will I find my way around school?  | You will be issued with a map of the school on your first day. Otherwise you will see that each door has a room number on it and there are various signs around the school to help you know where you are. The best way is to ask any one of our lovely students who will be more than happy to help. |
| How do I pay for a school trip?  | Signed reply slips are to be returned to school.All trips are paid for through ParentPay.  |
| What support can I expect from my Tutor?  | Your tutor is often the first and last teacher you see every day, therefore they are the main person you will be able to get support from if you have any questions or worries. This support can be both academic and pastoral, which means they will try their best to help you with any problem you have so never hesitate to ask. |
| Can I use my phone in school?  | The policy on mobile phones in school is that you can have the phone on you but, it should be switched off and in your bag. You are not allowed to use your phone during the school day. If we see or hear your phone it will be confiscated. For the first occasion it will be for one day. Second occasion for 5 school days. Third occasion will necessitate a parent meeting to get the phone back.  |
| What is an Achievement Card?  | An Achievement Card is given to every student every week to track their behaviour. It is your responsibility to look after your Achievement Card and earn credits. You gain one credit per lesson, as well as registration, break and lunch-times. This is a great way to show your Form Tutor how well you are doing, and is the key to earning your Golden Time at the end of every week.  |
| What happens if I lose my Achievement card?  | If you lose your Achievement Card then you need to report it to your form tutor, who will issue you with a replacement red achievement card for the rest of that week. This means that you have automatically lost your Golden Time that week. |
| What are credits?  | Credits are gained each day during the week, and are recorded on your Achievement Card. They are also recorded electronically on the register. This credit system allows teachers and parents to track your progress each week, as well enable you the chance to achieve Golden Time every Friday.  |
| What is Golden Time?  | If you successfully earn your Golden Time you can leave school early at 3.15pm on a Friday. It is awarded to those students that have achieved 55 or more credits. You need to make sure your parent/carer signs your Achievement Card to give permission for you to leave school early on a Friday and that you keep your card neatly and safely. **GOLDEN TIME IS LOST IF:** 1. I have lost my Achievement Card
2. My card is not signed
3. I have lost too many credits
4. I have an outstanding absence note/s
5. My attendance is below 95%
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| What happens if **I DO NOT** achieve Golden Time?  | If you do not achieve your Golden Time you will remain in school until the normal daily departure time. Medical appointments or travel should not be arranged on Friday afternoons as students may need to remain in school until the normal time.Remember Golden time is a privilege.  |
| How do I gain House Points?  | You can gain House points for various different good deeds. It can be for displaying the school values of Respect, Honesty and High Expectations in a certain situation, as well as for excellent work and effort in class.  |
| What are Electives?  | Electives take place twice a week during the school day and are part of your timetabled lessons. They are opportunities to learn new skills including Bollywood dancing, Quilting and Soduko or simply a chance to spend time doing something you love. |
| Do I get to choose my Electives?  | Yes you do! An Elective handbook will be given to each student so that they can read through all the elective choices and choose their top 5 favourite electives. It is not always possible to allocate first choices If an elective has a charge attached to it, this must be paid **in advance** of starting the Elective. Non-payment will result in you being removed from that Elective and placed into a non-payment Elective.  |

**WHO DO I NEED TO CONTACT?**

There will be occasions when parents and other parties will wish to contact the school. To put you in touch with the most appropriate person and ensure a quick response to your enquiry, please use the contacts below. We shall endeavour to acknowledge all calls, letters or e-mails within 24 hours and respond to the enquiry within 48 hours.

Please remember that teachers are not easy to contact by telephone during the school day, as they will be teaching, in meetings or preparing work. You may find it more convenient to send an e-mail to info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk and indicate in the subject box “For the attention of...” emails will be forwarded to staff regularly during the school day.

**After School Activities & Homework Club**
There are many activities for students taking place after school. For all enquiries, contact School Reception, on 01234 332299. Reception is open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8am to 4.30pm on Friday. If you wish to speak to Homework club after Reception has closed, please choose option 2 on the main telephone.

**Attendance**
For enquiries about your child’s attendance, contact the students Pastoral Leader for your child's year group.

**Change of Contact Details**
To ensure efficient communication between parents and the school, accurate contact information is crucial. If you have ***any*** changes to your details, contact Mrs Sexton on 01234 332299 or email hsexton@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk.

**Complaints Procedure**

Here at Bedford Free School we believe that any concerns should be handled as sensitively as possible. The school will respond to any complaint as soon as possible. Once we know about a problem we can usually deal with it effectively. However, sometimes a more formal framework is required and this can be found in a document entitled [Complaints Procedure](http://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk/top/downloads-policies.php) available to view on our website, [www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk)

Parents should address any concerns they have to the Principal in the first instance:

Mr S Lock
Principal
Bedford Free School
Cauldwell House
Cauldwell Street, MK42 9AD

Email: info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

**Finance Office**
Enquiries about any financial matters affecting your child please contact Ms Carter at finance@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk or 01234 332285.

**Lost Property**
Enquiries about an item of lost property, please ask your child to speak to or look at the Lost Property located by Student Reception

**Medical**
To advise the school of a medical issue regarding your child, or make enquiries about medical provision, Please call Reception on 01234 332299

**New Admissions**
For enquiries about admissions contact Mrs Sexton on 01234 332278.

**Student Welfare**
If you wish to speak to your child’s Pastoral Leader about any matter referring to their welfare or to discuss any concerns you have about your child’s progress please contact:

**Year 7:** Mrs Sexton – 01234 332278 or hsexton@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

**Year 8 & 9:** - Mrs Costin-Webb-01234 332292 or ccostin-webb@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

**Years 10 & 11:** – Mrs Runnegar Clark-01234 332275 or

arunnegar-clark@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

To speak to your child’s tutor, please contact the School Reception on 01234 332299 or via email: info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk