



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

12th October 2018

Dear Parents, Carers and Pupils,

As we find ourselves nearly half way through the Autumn Term, school is busy. It is also calm and focussed. Through our weekly themes we have already considered and discussed 'Climbing the Mountain to Success', what our motto 'Go the extra mile' really means and reflected on our school Values; Respect, Honesty and High Expectations.

We have had two open events inviting prospective families into school and had more than double the number of visitors compared with last year. Our fantastic pupils have been leading a multitude of tours with parents, carers and their children, all of whom want to have a look at how the school operates during the day. All families have told us they are very impressed.

We have also already welcomed parents from three of our current year groups into school; Year 7 to monitor how your child has settled into school, Year 10 for the 'Welcome to Year 10' and Work Experience (last week of June 2019) session and Year 11 to listen to advice on how to get the best from your children in their final year of GCSE study and secondary school.

Emergency closure

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all families and pupils for the calm and sympathetic way you dealt with the emergency closure on Friday 28th September. This is the first time in the school's history that we have closed and we only did so because we were given direct instructions to do so from the police. Staff were not even allowed into the building. We sincerely hope that not too much inconvenience was caused.

The canteen:

The canteen extension is coming along at a speedy pace. The company managing the development have been brilliant and as a result the building work overall has had very little if no negative impact on the day to day running of the school. We are really excited that very soon after half term we will have loads more room in the dining area and pupils will be able to sit and eat more comfortably! A huge thanks to Mrs Edge and Mrs Taylor who have overseen this project to ensure it has run so efficiently and smoothly.

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RESPECT • HONESTY • HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Sports news:

News from Mr Cox is that the BFS sports teams are already out in force with 29 fixtures having been played since returning from the summer holidays. This includes Year 7s representing the school for the first time. There will be plenty more opportunities for all years in the coming weeks and months. We are delighted to inform you that our under 15 girls football team are currently undefeated in their league and putting in some strong performances.

In other news 14 of our sports leaders attended Kings Oak Primary on the 3rd October to run a competition for Year 3 and 4 and 240 pupils benefitted from cricket coaching from our Year 9s.

Our annual trip to MK Dons will be coming up shortly. Pupils who represent the school in sport will receive a letter first and should return the reply slip as soon as they can as places always sell out very quickly.

We would like to congratulate Faith in year 8, who is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu fighter. She won the Silver Award at World Level and more recently she competed in the European Competition where she was also awarded the Silver Medal. Faith is now a black/grey belt. Well done we are very proud of you.

Performing Arts:

Miss Damon and Mrs Goodship would like to let you know that well over 50 pupils have been working incredibly hard this term in preparation for the school show. 'Legally Blonde Jr. *the musical*' follows the transformation of Elle Woods as she tackles stereotypes, snobbery and scandal in pursuit of her dreams. The musical is a fabulously fun journey of self-empowerment and expanding horizons. The show's instantly recognizable songs are filled with humour, wit and sass.

We are thrilled to be collaborating again with Bedford College on this production. BFS teams up with Bedford College's technical and theatrical makeup students and we know from previous years how enriching this is for the performance, the pupils at BFS and for the Bedford College students.

The performances will take place at The Bedford College Theatre on the 28th and 29th of November at 7:00pm and tickets will go on sale the 5th November. For the past three years all of the musicals have sold out so please don't rely on buying tickets on the door. Miss Damon believes that this is our best show yet!

The Salvation Army musical participants are increasing, we now have two bands. Year 7s have applied to take part and aural tests will be taking place after half term. We will then hopefully have over 40 players in all!

Next half term we will be preparing for the Music Festival - watch this space.

Combined Cadet Force (CCF):

Our CCF programme continues to be an appreciated and well utilised part of BFS' Enrichment Curriculum offer. Well done to all of the new Year 9s who have chosen to make the most of this amazing opportunity and have joined the current Year 10 and 11 recruits. They are currently

enjoying their four-week induction programme. Nearly 20% of the year group have joined in all, making them the year group to have had the highest uptake so far. We know that taking part in the CCF can help development and offer further opportunities in so many ways and as proof of that I'd like to congratulate ex BFS pupil and CCF member, Caleb Savery, now in Year 13 at Bedford Modern School and a Cadet Colour Sergeant. Caleb recently attended a special ceremony at the Dunstable Community Fire Station and is one of only seven to be chosen from across the county to be a cadet for HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Helen Nellis. Well done Caleb!

Gardening Club

Back in the summer at the end of last school year Mrs Sharma started up a new club for some of our younger pupils aimed at building a sense of comradery and to aid development of confidence skills. There has been really hard work and enthusiasm from the pupils in the gardening club. They absolutely love meeting up every Tuesday and can't wait for the next task. You can see the fantastic fruits of their efforts in the big planters outside the front of the school. They look beautiful from my office and I notice how many people pass by the school and stop to admire them too – and they are not even finished yet! The pupils are feeling really proud of what they have achieved so far – Sinan says it his 'favourite thing to do", Luis comes for 10 minutes every week before his music lesson as he doesn't want to miss out. Isaac loves to make jokes with Mrs Sharma whilst he gardens and Alyssa and Jamie want to chat constantly with her about gardening at lunch. Cameron is buzzing with information for everyone whilst Akif and Bethany quietly enjoy their time. Pupils really nurture each other, Mrs Sharma says it is so lovely to watch. Thank you to Year 11s Alex and George who have been amazing helping out and of course for Mrs Sharma for running the club.

Further information:

Kerri Rennie BFS parent and representative from the Bedford Borough Parent Carer Forum invites parents of children with SEND to complete the survey (attached). They are looking to receive data to help improve services to benefit all.

Please also see the attachment regarding the RELAY Scheme of which BFS is a part.

The third attachment is a reminder of our uniform and equipment lists. Please re-familiarise yourself carefully with this particularly with regards to expectations around hairstyles and jewellery.

Very best wishes,



Jane Herron
Head of School

Bedford Free School – Key Dates	
22 nd – 26 th October 2018	Half term holiday
8 th November 2018	Class of 2018 Graduation Ceremony (by invitation - presentation of certificates, details to follow)
12 th – 16 th November 2018	Year 11 Mock Exam week
22 nd November 2018	Parent Forum - 7-8pm
30 th November 2018	Year 11 Progress Evening & Next steps event (school finishes at 3.20pm, details to follow)
28 th & 29 th November 2018	School Musical
6 th December 2018	Year 7 Snowdon Parents Briefing – 6.30pm & 7.30pm
6 th December 2018	Year 11 Progress Evening & Next Steps Event
13 th December 2018	Christmas lunch (details to follow)
14 th December 2018	Christmas Assembly at St Paul's Bedford
17 th Dec 2018 – 1 st Jan 2019	Christmas Holidays
2 nd January 2019	Back to school
10 th January 2019	Year 10 Progress Evening
11 th January 2019	Staff Training Day (school closed)
24 th January 2019	Year 9 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
31 st January 2019	Year 8 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
7 th February 2019	Year 7 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
11 th – 15 th February 2019	Half term holiday
7 th March 2019	Year 11 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
19 th March 2019	Easter Concert (details to follow)
21 st March 2019	Year 9 Options Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
27 th March 2019	BFS Show: Romeo & Juliet
8 th – 22 nd April 2019	Easter Holidays
23 rd April 2019	Back to School
2 nd May 2019	Year 10 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
6 th May 2019	May Day Bank Holiday (school is closed)
9 th May 2019	Year 8 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
16 th May 2019	Year 7 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
27 th – 31 st May 2019	Half term holidays
24 th – 28 th June 2019	Year 10 work experience + Year 7, 8, 9 Activities Week
27 th June 2019	Year 6 transfer day
4 th July 2019	Year 10 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.20pm)
5 th July 2019	Sports Awards evening (provisional)
10 th July 2019	Summer Showcase
11 th July 2019	Sports Day (provisional)
19 th July 2019	End of Year Celebration Assembly
22 nd July – 5 th September 2019	Summer Holidays
9 th September 2019	Back to school