



BEDFORD  
FREE SCHOOL

[www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk)

12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Dear Parents / Carers & Pupils,**

**Christmas Assembly – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December:**

We will hold our annual Christmas assembly on the last day of term, Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December. Pupils will be accompanied and walk together to St Pauls Church in the afternoon. All pupils are expected to attend. This is a really lovely celebration of the term, of our family life and holidays and is a great event. We welcome families but the very limited extra space (advertised by text last week) has now already been requested and allocated. **All pupils** will be dismissed from school at approximately 3:30pm on Friday.

**Respecting our community:**

For safety and community minded reasons the police have asked us to ensure that pupils/parents do not walk through the carparks in between our school and Farm Foods. Pupils have been reminded of this daily via the Student Bulletin. In the name of keeping everyone safe any pupil who breaks this rule will be issued with a correction.

**EVENTS/ACTIVITIES & ELECTIVES:**

**‘Remember Together John McCrae 150’**

BFS Y9 pupils had the opportunity to take part in an online collaboration between British and Canadian schools. They met to explore the work of Canadian war poet John McCrae who wrote the World War 1 poem ‘In Flanders Fields’. The pupils took part in various activities inspired by the poem and the symbol of the poppy (used in remembrance due to the poem). Pupils were given 5 minutes to write a poem based on what they had learnt that afternoon. Abdullah in Y9 was asked to read his out to the 2,000 plus participants. His poem was latterly selected to be read by a descendent of John McCrae on John McCrae day, celebrating 150 years since the poet’s birth.

[https://twitter.com/CanUKFoundation/status/1597928270619869184?s=20&t=r\\_PclVzJZM8a3kQt5ylAHg](https://twitter.com/CanUKFoundation/status/1597928270619869184?s=20&t=r_PclVzJZM8a3kQt5ylAHg)

This was a fantastic honour for Abdullah and the school. *Thank you to Mr Cox who led this.*

Yours to Remember

Bodies remain dead on the morning dew  
The war is over yet the impact is everlasting  
They are not coming back  
So remember the times you had with them  
And cherish it  
As it is yours  
And yours to remember

*By Abdullah y9*

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**RESPECT • HONESTY • HIGH EXPECTATIONS**

## BFS PE



What a first half term BFS PE has had! Pupils have attended over **100 fixtures** including: football, netball, dodgeball, cheerleading and ultimate sports hall athletics. There has been great effort by all making every single fixture a delight to attend. A particular huge achievement was from Y10 girls who played so well in their Table Tennis matches that they progressed to compete at County Level, where they gained the silver medal! Well done to the team! We are looking forward to the new year with new sports to learn in PE lessons and many fixtures to come including more netball, handball and indoor cricket. Merry Christmas and happy new year from BFS PE.



## Oxford University Visit



This term has seen a new group of BFS Year 10 pupils selected to start on the exciting enrichment scheme run by Wadham College, Oxford. The Wadham Project consists of a series of seminar sessions throughout Years 10 and 11 that aims to increase pupils' knowledge of the opportunities available through university education as well as increase confidence and aspirations. The first session for Y10, led by Ms Entwistle, brought them together with pupils from other Bedford schools and focussed on Genetics and aspects of Politics and Economics. They are looking forward to the next seminar on The Law and also a trip to visit the University of Oxford in 2023. Our Year 11 group received guidance on choosing A Level or equivalent subjects and had the opportunity to hear from University admissions staff as well as undergraduate pupils currently studying at the University of Oxford. They were able to ask questions about the reality of studying post-16 and making applications to University courses.

## Creative Writing

In the Creative Writing elective with Mr Garwood, a number of pupils have been working on stories to enter into the Integer story writing competition, details of which may be found here:

<https://www.youngwriters.co.uk/competitions/KS3-5/integer>.

Pupils have also been working on Haikus (a Japanese poem of seventeen syllables) two of which are below, laid out beside the image that inspired them,

*Air so still and cold  
House of God left in silence,  
Faith has failed this one.*

By Bethan M Year 10



*An Autumn night  
Leaves swirling about me  
Flying in my eye*

By Kinga U Year 7

### **History Society:**

The pupils in History society have been on several visits this term to better understand Bedford's history, including a trip to the Higgins Museum and a historical walking tour of Bedford. We also enjoyed a visit from Albion Archaeology, who taught us how to date churches using the design of their windows, and a memorable trip to Bedford Archives, where we were taken up to the stack rooms, and shown an original seal of Henry III's from the thirteenth century. (Mr Normanton)

### **REMINDERS:**

#### **Drop off and pick up...**

...should be in Melbourne Street Car Park and **never in Cauldwell Street** or outside of school. Melbourne Street Car Park (opposite Kids World) is totally free and dropping off/picking up your child from there avoids compromising safety and upset for local neighbours and businesses. It is advisable that you park and wait towards the back of the carpark where it is quieter.

#### **Parent to school communication:**

*"Parental support is eight times more important in determining a child's academic success than social background. The more parents are (positively) engaged in the education of their children, the more likely their children are to succeed in the education system. Research consistently shows that parental engagement is one of the key factors in securing higher pupil achievement". DfE, 2011*

The section below of the Home School Agreement is 'Parent-School Communication'. You have signed to say:

*I will communicate with the school in a timely and polite manner, in line with the School's values  
I will read all reports carefully, attend all parent meetings and check and sign my child's Achievement Card each week*

Please be reassured that we always want the best for your children and will achieve this working alongside and in harmony with you. Please remember this when you are talking to staff. You will get the best from them if all conversations remain civil and all parties operate with the knowledge that there is a shared common purpose: to garner success for your child. As a response to feedback about school communication we are employing another receptionist to help with answering the phones.

To alleviate the very high number of incoming phone calls, please put plans in place so that your child knows exactly what to do if they are leaving school earlier or later than usual. For example, pupils with a sibling in school should both know what to do and where to go if the other gets a correction or has an intervention. Sometimes it is very difficult or even totally impossible to get messages to pupils in the time frame some parents expect.

## Attendance

Attending school every day is so important for your child. You can check their attendance percentage which is updated on a weekly basis on their Achievement Card. Please compare your child's attendance to the table below. At BFS we aim for 100% and pupils should attend school unless they are genuinely too ill to do so.

*Please note all government guidance now states that pupils should come to school if they have covid unless they are too unwell to do so.*

<b>100% - 98% No concern</b>
<b>98%-95% Monitor carefully</b>
<b>95% - 90% Concern; at risk of underachievement</b>
<b>90% -85% Severe risk of underachievement</b>
<b>85% Very probable underachievement</b>

## Scarlet Fever advice

Please see attached advice sent from Amy White, Senior Officer for Public Health Children & Young People, Bedford Borough Council.

## In case of snow

We have never closed the school due to snowfall. In case of further snow please send your child to school as normal and ensure they are wearing warm clothes and waterproof footwear and jackets. Keep an eye on the BFS Facebook page where we will confirm that school is open (as we did today).

## And finally...

### Christmas in a box

We teamed up again with All Nations Church to take part in their 'Christmas In A Box' campaign. All Nations Church ask for food and drink hampers that cover the basis of a Christmas dinner along with tea, coffee, squash and some sweet treats too. These are donated to local families in need. We are proud to say that again this year, every single form class filled a hamper and we donated 20 boxes! Thank you to so many of you who generously sent in donations.



And on that 'Christmassy' note - I wish you and your family a restful Christmas Holiday break. We look forward to welcoming all pupils back for the Spring Term on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Kindest Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JHerron'.

Jane Herron  
Principal



Please see key dates below

<b>Bedford Free School – Key Dates 2022-2023</b>	
<b>Spring Term</b>	
<i>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2023</i>	<i>Bank Holiday (School is closed)</i>
<b>Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023</b>	<b><i>Staff training day (school closed for pupils)</i></b>
Weds 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Pupils back to school
Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Year 10 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Year 9 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2023	Year 8 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2023	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
<i>Mon 13<sup>th</sup> – Fri 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023</i>	<b><i>HALF TERM</i></b>
Mon 20 <sup>th</sup> – Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2023	Year 11 Mock Exams
Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2023	Year 7 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2023	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	Year 9 GCSE & Options Evening (normal finish time – 4pm)
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	Year 11 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
<i>Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> April – Fri 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023</i>	<b><i>EASTER HOLIDAYS</i></b>
<b>Summer term</b>	
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	<b><i>Staff training day (school closed for pupils)</i></b>
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	Pupils back to school
<i>Mon 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023</i>	<b><i>BANK HOLIDAY (School is closed)</i></b>
Thurs 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Year 10 Information Evening (normal finish time – 4pm)
Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Year 8 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
<i>Mon 29<sup>th</sup> May – Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023</i>	<b><i>HALF TERM</i></b>
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Pupils back to school
26 <sup>th</sup> June – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Year 10 Mock Exams
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup> July – Fri 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Activities Week/Year 10 Work Experience
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Sports Day (tbc)
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Year 10 Progress Evening/next steps event (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2023	BFS End of Year Celebration Assembly
<i>24<sup>th</sup> July – xx September 2023</i>	<b><i>SUMMER HOLIDAYS</i></b>