



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

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15.12.23

Dear Parents / Carers & Pupils,

Best GCSE results ever!

It has been such a busy and purposeful Autumn Term. A particular high note was the celebration event held for the Class of 2023. The ex-Year 11 collected their GCSE certificates and nominated subject prizes, heard speeches from School Leaders and watched a video (thanks to Miss Damon) summarising their time at BFS in photo images and short reels. Here is an extract of my speech:

"Bedford Free School is a centre of excellence. It is a school where conduct is so good that all pupils can hear and listen to their teachers, who teach great knowledge, really well, and as a result of great behaviour pupils can learn all of that knowledge and make amazing progress. Success is desirable, demanded and achievable - and achieved. 2023 GCSE results placed BFS 1st in Bedfordshire and 76th in the country - out of about 3500 secondary schools. Amazingly - this year YOU achieved the best set of results that pupils from Bedford Free School have done, so far - which is pretty good considering your predecessors GCSE results have already been phenomenal."

Reminders:

Drop off / Pick up

For new and old parents/carers this is a reminder that a section of the agreement between us and you states that you:

- **...only drop off / pick up your child in the designated travel plan place of Melbourne Street Car Park, (and absolutely NOT outside school).**

This arrangement is in accordance with requirements from the Local Authority and in order to keep pupils, families and others safe.

More events this term...

This term there have been various trips including in September when 54 **GCSE RE** pupils visited 2 iconic London religious building, London Central Mosque and St. Paul's Cathedral, where they learnt first-hand how Muslims and Christians practice their faiths.

On 1st November nearly one third of Year 11 pupils travelled to a very wet and windy but beautiful Dorset coastline where they had an exciting three days conducting **geography field studies** which will feed into knowledge they must have for 30% of the geography GCSE paper.

Later on in November, Miss Entwistle took 5 Year 10 pupils to their first **Wadham (Oxford University) Project** seminar at Biddenham School. They joined approximately 50 other Year 10 pupils from a range of Bedford state schools and were congratulated on being selected to be part of the project run by Wadham College, Oxford. They were given in-depth seminars on Genetic Research and History of Art to develop their GCSE knowledge, broaden their horizons and start to consider options for study at university. They all got fully

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involved and travelled back to school with lots to discuss from each seminar. We look forward to the next seminars in January.



In **PE** pupils have taken part in a huge variety of fixtures including, netball, football, badminton, sitting volleyball, table tennis, indoor athletics, gymnastics, cheerleading, dodgeball, and basketball. Year 11 have been working hard on the theory elements of their GCSE in preparation for their mock and actual GCSE exam later in the year. We have also started our Advantage Schools varsity between Bedford Free School and Houstone School and we look forward to more varsity fixtures in the future. The PE department and school are so proud of all pupils who have played in fixtures this Autumn Term and congratulate you for your efforts. We can't wait to welcome the new year and new term with indoor sports in lessons, and Spring fixtures which will include handball, cross country, football, and rugby, to name but a few!



The school **choir** have had a busy couple of weeks, performing in Bedford. On Sunday 3rd December, they performed at the Bedford Christmas Flea Market and brought festivities to passers-by on Riverside Square. They then performed at the BFS Winter Showcase at the Salvation Army Congress Hall on 7th December. Both performances were hugely enjoyable, and students were complimented greatly on their wonderful singing and enthusiasm. They look forward to performing in the End of Term Christmas Assembly on the final day of term. Thank you to the music and drama teachers for coaching and supporting them in this.



In early December the English Department entered and supported 3 of our pupils in the English-Speaking Union (ESU) **Public Speaking Competition** 2023. Elizabeth, Abbie and Rua, all from Year 9, were outstanding, and their performance meant that BFS was amongst three schools out of six to progress through to the next round in February. Congratulations to these talented girls and the very best of luck to them for the stage of the competition.

Thank you to the families of Bedford Free School who donated individual food items to the **Christmas in a box** appeal. We managed to give 19 Christmas hampers to charity, packed with Christmas essentials. Tremendous generosity by our community.

Please enjoy (below) Year 7 Sophie's brilliant and thoughtful **poem**.

'Big Ambition' National Survey

There is still time to complete the survey commissioned by Dame Rachel de Souza (Children's Commissioner)

[About this survey: The Big Ambition - Have your say! \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](https://smartsurvey.co.uk)

From catering services: Innovate Services Ltd (IFG)

Please refer to information from Innovate attached with this letter.

Happy holidays!

Term ends Tuesday 19th December with a final assembly to take place at St Paul's. School finishes at approximately 3:30pm once all pupils have been registered back at school. Pupils are expected back to school on Thursday 4th January 2024 with full equipment and school uniform (please see below for dates and attached for uniform and equipment list).

All the staff and I wish you all very restful break and a happy new year.

Yours faithfully,



Jane Herron
Principal

(See Key Dates below)

Sophie's poem:

The subjects we do every day,
We do to learn.
But the courage that burns your heart
Is the thing you earn.

Whenever you fall
You find that it is impossible.
But with your heart and soul
You're unstoppable.

That's why you'll
Be infinity.
Thanks to BFS
That possibility.

You'll be whoever,
you want to be.
and you'll
find yourself at victory.

Whenever you're sad
You'll let yourself cry.
But perseverance
Will never die.



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Whenever you can
You'll go the extra mile.
And to help you understand,
You'll add your own style.

That's why you'll
Be infinity.
Thank to BFS
Then Possibly,

You'll be whoever,
You want to be.
And you'll find yourself,
At victory.

That's why I'll
Be infinity.
And why people
Will remember me.

I'll be...
Who I want to be.
Achieve my goals,
Most definitely

We are infinity.

By Sophie

Bedford Free School – Key Dates 2023-2024	
Spring Term	
<i>Weds 3rd January 2024</i>	Staff training day (school closed for pupils)
Thurs 4 th January 2024	Pupils back to school
Thurs 11 th January 2024	Year 10 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 12 th January 2024	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
Thurs 25 th January 2024	Year 9 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 26 th January 2024	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
Thurs 1 st February 2024	Year 8 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 2 nd February 2024	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
Thurs 15 th February 2024	Year 7 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 16 th February 2024	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
<i>Mon 19th – Fri 23rd February 2024</i>	HALF TERM
Mon 26 th February 2024	Pupils back to school
Mon 26 th – Weds 6 th March 2024	Year 11 Mock Exams
Thurs 7 th March 2024	Year 9 GCSE & Options Evening (normal finish time – 4pm)
Thurs 21 st March 2024	Year 11 Progress Evening (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 22 nd March 2024	School starts later – gate closes at 8.55am
<i>Fri 29th March – Mon 15th April 2024</i>	EASTER HOLIDAYS (Good Friday - Fri 29 th March and Easter Monday - Mon 1 st April)
Summer term	
Mon 15 th April 2024	Staff training day (school closed for pupils)
Tues 16 th April 2024	Pupils back to school
Thurs 25 th April 2024	Year 10 Information Evening- destination and mocks (normal finish time – 4pm)
<i>Mon 6th May 2024</i>	BANK HOLIDAY (School is closed)
Thurs 9 th May 2024	Formal GCSE Examinations begin
Thurs 9 th May 2024	Year 8 Preferences Evening (normal finish time – 4pm)
<i>Mon 27th May – Fri 31st May 2024</i>	HALF TERM (BANK HOLIDAY – Mon 27th May)
Mon 3 rd June 2024	Pupils back to school
Mon 24 th June – Thurs 27 th June 2024	Year 10 Mock Exams
Mon 1 st July – Fri 5 th July 2024	Activities Week/Year 10 Work Experience
Thurs 11 th July 2024	Sports Day (tbc)
Thurs 18 th July 2024	Year 10 Progress Evening/next steps event (school finishes at 3.30pm)
Fri 19 th July 2024	BFS End of Year Celebration Assembly
<i>Mon 22nd July – xx September 2024 (return dates tbc)</i>	SUMMER HOLIDAYS