

Newsletter

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

I hope you have all enjoyed the Bank Holiday weekends. The weather looks to be improving so we can start to enjoy being outside.

BFS is very busy preparing Year 11 and Year 13 for the summer exam series that starts on Monday 15 May. There are some understandable nerves in the build-up but we have every confidence that they will do their very best.

I have been working through all the events and trips we have organised for the last term of this academic year and thought it would be useful for me to share the dates and events in one handy table.

Key Dates for Term 6 - all of these events will have letters explaining the details to follow soon.

Date	Activity
Mon 5 – 9 June	Y7 Exams Y12 Exams – used for UCAS
Mon 12 - 16 June	Y12 WEX - no lessons all week
Mon 12 –21 June	Y9 Exams
Thurs 15 June	Y10 Subject Evening
Thurs 22 – Sat 24 June	Y10 Silver Qualifying Expedition
Fri 23 June	Y11 Transition Day Sixth Form
Mon 26 June	INSET Day Y13 Prom Evening
Tues 27 June	Y11 Leavers Assembly and Shirt signing Y11 Prom Evening Event
Wed 28 June	Y6 SEND Induction Day
Thurs 29 June	Y6 Welcome Event and Meet the Tutor
Fri 30 June	FoBFS Quiz Night – Fund raiser
Tues 4 July	BFS Annual Awards Evening - 6.30-8pm
Wed 5 July	Y6 transition Day – all Bristol Schools
Mon 10 July	Y7 and Y8 STEM Day Y9 and Y10 Careers Day
Tues 11 July	Whole School Sports Day Stoke Lodge Virtual L1 and arrive at Stoke Lodge 11 am until 3pm
Wed 12 – Fri 14 July	Year 8 Camp – 2 day and 1 night in half Year Groups
Wed 12 – Sat 15 July	Year 9 Battlefields residential trip
Wed 12 – Fri 14 July	Y10 Paris residential trip

Year 7 parents will receive an invitation to attend an in-school event about Y7 assessments and stages from Mrs Jenkins. We are very much looking forward to seeing parents and carers face to face, so we can answer any questions you may have.

Year 10 have worked very hard on their mock exams and are getting their results over the next week. We will be sending their results home in the last week of this term.

Once again, I am delighted to tell you that BFS U16 and U14 Girls Football teams are the champions of Bristol! A huge thank you to all staff who supported them, and particularly Mrs Urch and Mrs Ballard for being their coaches. The trophy cabinet is filling up with our students' achievements!

Thank you for your continued support.



MRS S KING

ATTENDANCE

Please note that term-time holidays are not routinely authorised, unless there are exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. If you are thinking of booking a term-time holiday, please email admin@bristolfreeschool.org.uk for an Absence Request Form and return it to the same address as soon as possible. Your request will then be considered. Taking a term-time holiday may result in a Penalty Charge Notice from Bristol City Council. This is currently £60 per child per adult. So, if a two-parent family take three school-aged children on holiday, this would mean that each adult could receive 3 x £60 fines, taking the total penalty cost for the family to £360! This could then be increased, if the fine is not paid promptly or if prosecution is deemed appropriate by the local authority.

WIN RUGBY BOOTS!

Ms Giltrow has very kindly been gifted a pair of Charles Piutau's Size 12 rugby boots to give to one of our students. We will be holding a free raffle to win the boots, tickets can be collected from the BSR and the draw will be done on the last day of term.



FRIENDS OF BFS (FOBFS)

FOBFS will be running a Quiz Night on Friday 30 June to raise funds for school projects. Please put the date in your diary and look out for booking details in the next couple of weeks. Our AGM will be held on either Tuesday 6 or Wednesday June at a local venue - further details to follow.

Unfortunately we did not get enough attendees on 26 April to enable us to complete the AGM so we are trying again - please come along so we can keep FOBFS running. One simple way everyone could support our fundraising is to download the Easy fundraising app, select 'Friends of BFS' and then use it as a gateway for online purchases - including Amazon and eBay. This could really increase our fundraising and it is amazing how all the small amounts add up! Thank you



BFS CAREERS MR PARRY

HEAD OF BUSINESS AND CAREERS
LEADER



Today we were delighted to host representatives from KPMG for our Employer Talk about careers in the Financial service.

KPMG are one of the world's leading professional services firms. They operate in 143 countries and employ more than 265,000 people. They offer Audit, Consulting, Deal Advisory, Tax & Law and Technology services.

The talk focused on the different employment opportunities and career progression routes at KPMG. One of the representatives was Sophie Headford, who attended BFS from 2013-2020. It was excellent to hear one of our alumni talking about her career journey since leaving BFS, and offering some advice and guidance to our students.

The students were told about the exciting array of apprenticeship schemes that they offer, in areas such as Audit, Consulting, KPMG Business Services, Tax & Law and Technology & Engineering nationwide. As an apprentice at KPMG, students will gain valuable work experience, develop professional skills and be supported in their studies towards funded professional qualifications and degrees - all whilst earning a salary. For more information, please see their [website](#).

If you would like to work with the school offering Employer Talks to the students then please get in touch with the Careers Department.





MENTAL HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING

Mental Health & Safeguarding Support, Advice & Information



Ms Townsend, Mental Health & Safeguarding Manager



Miss Hastings, Medical and Mental Health Officer

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK 15 - 21 MAY



We continue to work hard in the Mental Health & Safeguarding Department to support our young people with developing their own positive mental health. We offer various interventions and support via external agencies and professionals, as well as in-house expertise within the team.

Anxiety is the theme for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week. A low level of anxiety can sometimes help us get things done, feel empowered or emotionally attached. However, when these levels rise too high, we start to develop adverse side effects that can inhibit our lives and our interaction with those around us. Ways in which to keep anxiety in check are easy to follow and we teach these throughout the years at BFS.



Breathing – square breathing techniques to regulate the mind



On the move – exercise, however light, is great for the mind



Journaling – keeping a note of our worries and concerns helps us identify triggers and stress points



Connection – reach out and ask for support, connect with those that know you and can support you, and surround yourself with people that make you feel good!



Challenging thought – Overthinking or rumination is not always helpful. Challenge a negative thought with a positive one. Retrain the brain to have positive affirmation rather than negative put-downs

USEFUL LINKS



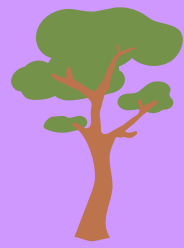
[Mindfulness](#)



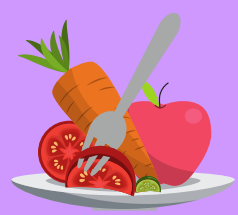
[Exercise](#)



[Cost of living](#)



[Nature](#)



[Diet](#)



[Helpline services](#)

TELLSOMEONE@BRISTOLFreeschool.org.uk



MENTAL HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING

Mental Health & Safeguarding Support, Advice & Information



Ms Townsend, Mental Health & Safeguarding Manager



Miss Hastings, Medical and Mental Health Officer

Our young people are entering a busy period of assessments and exams. These next couple of months can be challenging for students, but also for parents and carers. It can be difficult to connect with our children, and know what and how to support them.

LOOK FOR SIGNS OF STRESS



Stress is different for us all, but young people usually present as a change in behaviours when they are struggling. Sleep and eating are key indicators when things are changing for young people - keep an eye on this and try to encourage healthy sleep and eating hygiene.

TALK ABOUT STRESS AND NERVES



There are healthy levels of nerves and stress - talk to your young person about suitable levels and what to do if levels become too high. Remind them that there is support in school at any time they need it. Being able to talk through your feelings allows you to empty the stress bucket. Encourage your child to open up.

SUPPORT YOUR CHILD WITH ROUTINE

Routine is key. Bedtimes and meal times need to be regular - snacks and grazing might be helpful.

Do help and support with revision plans, timetables and splitting days up into chunks. Encourage them to take regular breaks - exercise is key. Discourage late night revision!



DO NOT ADD TO THE PRESSURE



Its hard to get the balance right with young people; when we try to support, it can be seen as applying pressure. Reassurance, positivity and perspective are key. Remind them that there is more to life and that you are proud of them no matter what.

MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE TO LISTEN



Listening and hearing are real skills and its difficult sometimes to really hear how our young people are feeling, especially as they struggle to express themselves generally.

Make time for your child, don't force the conversation, but let them know that you are there to listen.

HELP THEM UNWIND

Allowing recreation in between exams is so important for our young people. It is sometimes difficult to acknowledge that some students'

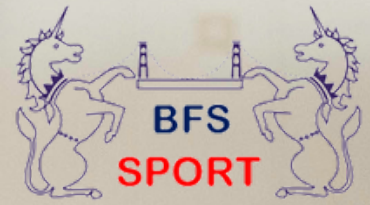


downtime choices are okay for them (gaming, on their phones, group chats etc). Young people view electronic use very differently to parents, mainly due to the fact that this is a communication tool for them. Please do encourage outdoor/fresh air activities, but sometimes a short, measured time on an electronic device can be the right downtime for them.

TELLSOMEONE@BRISTOLFreesCHOOL.ORG.UK We are here for all of our students. Please do remind them that they can come and have a chat with us, their Tutors and Heads of Year if they are struggling, as well as all other staff. Everyone of us is here to help!



BFS SPORT



MRS BALLARD

BRISTOL SCHOOLS TRIATHLON



On Sunday 7 May, over 820 7-13 year olds from local schools came together in teams of four, completing relays of swimming, cycling and running whilst raising money for Restless Development and hundreds of local charities in the Bristol Schools' Triathlon.

Max, Lilia, Laila and Kofi in Year 8 took part in the competition that was held at Clifton College. The triathlon consisted of each of them completing a 100m pool swim, 2k bike ride and 750m run. They completed this in 40.58 - 1st out of 18 teams and a whole minute ahead of the team that finished second!

Well done to the team. A brilliant achievement.



GIRLS FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS!

Our fantastic U14 and U16 Girls Football teams played in a double-header final against Bedminster Down for the title of Bristol Schools Champions for U14 and U16 respectively.

Both teams have been unbeaten throughout the group stages and demonstrated some excellent performances in the knockout stages.



U14 played first and despite a quiet first 10 minutes, Polly opened the scoring from an Emily through ball. The goals then kept coming and the final score was 7-0! Polly scored an incredible 4 goals, Emily and Chloe scored one each - both superb edge of the box strikes, and a big shout out to Rosie B who scored her first goal for the team with a first-time volley from a corner. Isla was nominated Player of the Match.



The U16 game followed which was a lot tighter and remained 0-0 at half time. They worked so hard throughout the game, never gave up and with 10 minutes to go, Chloe scored with an impossible-to-save top corner strike. The team battled and held out against the opposition and finished 1-0 winners (thank goodness for no more penalties!). Chloe and Emily were nominated joint Players of the Match.

What an achievement - both our U14 and U16 Football teams are Bristol Schools Champions - undefeated throughout the whole season. A massive congratulations to both teams, we are all so proud of you!

SPORTS COACHING SUMMER COURSE

Shine are running a 4-day Active Leaders course this summer for 14 - 16 year olds that want to take their first step into coaching. Please [click here](#) for more information and to sign up for the course.



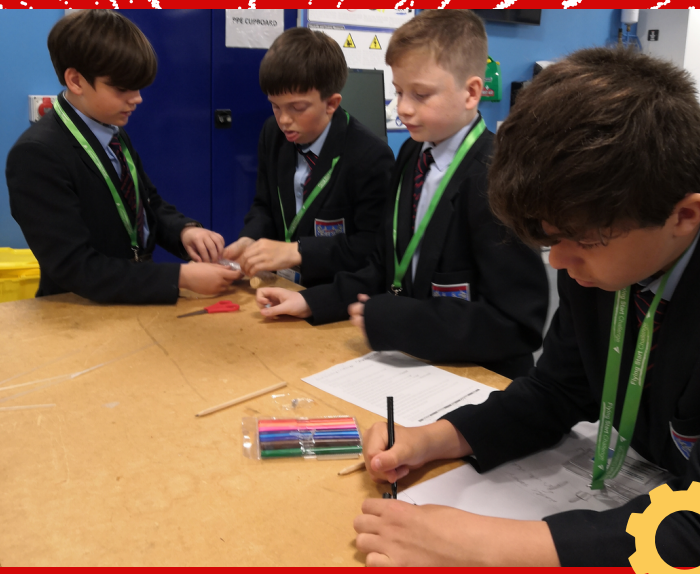
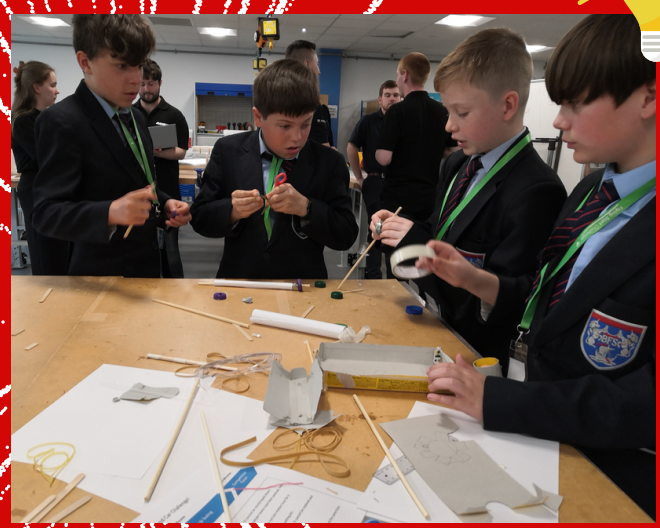


BFS DT

MR LAM FLYING START CHALLENGE GRAND FINAL!

Two teams from BFS qualified for the Flying Start Challenge Grand Final held at the Faculty of Engineering at Bristol University, competing against schools as far afield as Cheltenham and Beaminster. The students had to compete in a number of engineering tasks, such as building a cantilever that stretched out the furthest; an elastic-powered vehicle that can carry a payload; a floating boat that can carry the most weight and a fly-off to see whose glider can fly the furthest. They had a tour of the faculty that included seeing the wind tunnel and operating flight simulators.

Well done to Katherine, Emily, Bailey, Henry, Toby and Jack!





BFS CHEMISTRY



MISS BOARD

SALTERS' CHEMISTRY FESTIVAL

This Wednesday, four of our Year 10 STEMInists represented BFS at the Salters' Chemistry Festival at University of Bristol. We arrived to refreshments (the first highlight of the day!) and an introduction to the University by staff and students. We heard about the amazing research and discoveries taking place and future projects being worked on. Then, we donned our lab coats and goggles to begin the experiment. This had been kept secret from school staff, so we couldn't sneakily help our students. We were excited to learn that we would be synthesising aspirin, an A Level practical, meaning techniques and equipment that are brand new to us!



The team were methodical and diligent in the morning session, working quicker than a lot of the other teams. After lunch and time for a photos in front of the resident Palm Temple art piece, we were ready to recrystallise and finish our practical! We were so happy with our results, finishing ahead of time and feeling really proud of our work ethic and team work.

The day concluded with a short careers talk from former students at the University who now have careers in or linked to Chemistry. It was great to hear the different paths the panel had taken to their current careers and how Science can truly take you anywhere!

A huge congratulations to our outstanding team; Kate, Alyssa, Hettie and Jiya. You were simply the best!





MS CORRIGAN PUBLIC SPEAKING WORKSHOP

On Tuesday, Barney Grenfell from Ignited Presenting, with links to BEP, came in to train a group of Year 9 and Year 12 students in preparation for the BFS 'Youth Talks' competition. Students applied to be part of this scheme in Term 4 and have been eagerly awaiting this opportunity. They learnt how to structure their speech and practised their performance skills. It was a fantastic opportunity full of inspiration and students were very keen to express their enjoyment in it. In Term 6, we will have two evenings where students will perform their speeches in the form of 'TED Talks'. These evenings will be on 6 and 8 of June.



DR WILLARD WIGAN

Dr Willard Wigan, an artist from Wolverhampton who is known for making microscopic sculptures in the eye of a needle, has revealed his latest piece, a crown to mark the coronation of King Charles III.

The piece was hand-woven from a carved grain of sand, and embellished with real jewels before being painted with a paintbrush made from the artists own eyelashes!

Dr Wigan made an inspirational speech at Bristol Free School as part of our Awards Evening, before Covid. He was actually the first inspirational speaker at the first Annual Awards Evening led by Mrs King! He spoke at length about his challenges with autism, and how he has always struggled to fit in and find his place in life, but is now very successful in the art world, and has received an MBE for Art! You may also recognise his name, as we have a school cup named after him - the Willard Cup!

