

Season's Greetings!





Weekly Update

Message from the Headteacher

It has been another very positive and busy week at BFS. On Monday our Year 11 received their mock 1 results in the Drama Hall. As to be expected, there was a range of emotions when students opened their envelope. There is, of course, still plenty of time to improve on those grades. Year 11 subject evening is on Thursday 10 January, so you can discuss in detail how your child is doing along with next steps. Please make your appointments through the [online booking system](#).

BFS celebrated Christmastime throughout this week. It started on Monday with our fantastic Year 7 Christmas panto and musical event. It was lovely to see so many families there. On Wednesday we held our first whole-school Christmas dinner, which was a great success. Our thanks go to Ann and her kitchen team, who worked tirelessly to serve over 400 roast dinners! Today we celebrated together in our end of term Christmas assembly, which included a message from our Head Boy, Dan Whetton, and Head Girl, Catrin Hale.

Today we said goodbye to Mr Keen who has been at the school for 4 years; we wish him all the best in his new position at Cotham School.

Finally I would like to wish our students, families and staff a very joyful and happy Christmas and remind you that term starts again on Tuesday 8 January (with Monday 7 January being an inset day).

Mrs S King
Headteacher

RET Creative Writing Competition

The awards ceremony for RET's inaugural Creative Writing Competition was held at the Poetry Café in London. We were delighted that Jennie Rooney agreed to join us.

Jennie proves that if you really want to write, it doesn't matter how busy you are, you can do it! In addition to being a lawyer and the mother of two very young children, Jennie has also published three novels to date. Her first, *The Opposite of Falling*, was shortlisted for the Costa First Novel Award; this was soon followed by *Inside the Whale*, described as 'an absolute tour de force'. Her third novel, *Red Joan*, has recently been turned into a film, directed by Trevor Nunn and starring Dame Judi Dench.

Jennie spoke about the importance of reading in her life and described her own approach to writing: she spends a long time planning her work, writes with a pen and then revises the text as she then word-processes the first draft. She encouraged the students to find time for their writing and told them just how impressed she had been with their short stories.

The theme of the Creative Writing Competition was *70 Years of the NHS*. Students had to stick to strict word limits, but could explore the theme in any way they wished. Entries ranged from the supernatural to war, but all managed to convey something of the key qualities of the NHS: care, compassion, courage, communication, commitment and competence.

Each school held its own, internal competition and the winning entries were then judged anonymously. The results were:

KS3 Joint Winners: Molly Lambert (King's) and Sam Barnes (Turing House).

KS3 Runners-up: Isabel Keefe (Becket Keys); Lena Radzins (Turing House); Isabella Hawkins (Bristol Free School), Sacha Wild (Bristol Free School); Luciano Spiers (St Andrew's)

KS4 Joint Winners: Lena Richards (Bristol Free School) and Caleb Golding (King's)

KS4 Runners-up: Abigail Carey (Becket Keys); Jess Holmes (Turing House); Candice Li (King's); Matthew Timmis (Bristol Free School); Stas Avraam (St Andrew's); Ethan Hope (Turing House)

KS5 Winner: Madeleine Williams (Bristol Free School)



A book of all the shortlisted entries will become available in the New Year.

Reading for Pleasure

We hope BFS students enjoy delving into the new Key Stage 3 and 4 suggested reading lists that have been sent home this week.

For any of you that still have last minute Christmas shopping to do, this might be a useful source of ideas. The quality and quantity of young adult fiction on the market continues to flourish and there is a wealth of books that suit both adult and teenage readers. Parents and carers might like to think about '1-for-2' in terms of gift buying this weekend and purchase the same text for two members of the family. It can be motivating for students to read a book at the same time as a parent and discuss their responses; so many young adult books offer an engaging quick read for adults too.

We know that there is a strong link between regular reading for pleasure and GCSE success. We hope that all our students, and adults too, find some time to curl up with a good book this holiday.

Sally Jenkins (Assistant Headteacher) and Esther Menon (Lead Adviser, Russell Education Trust)

Christmas Cake Club!

Congratulations to everyone that has attended Christmas cake club over the last four weeks.

The students have shown great skill in baking, covering, designing and decorating their cakes. The end results are fantastic, both in presentation and taste. With budding bakers like these, Marks and Spencer are going to have to pull their socks up!

Well done to everyone involved.



A small request to all the chocolate lovers out there...

The Food department would love any donations of empty chocolate tins, (Heroes, Celebrations, Quality Street etc).

These can be used throughout the year to help students transport their food home after lessons.

Many thanks in advance.

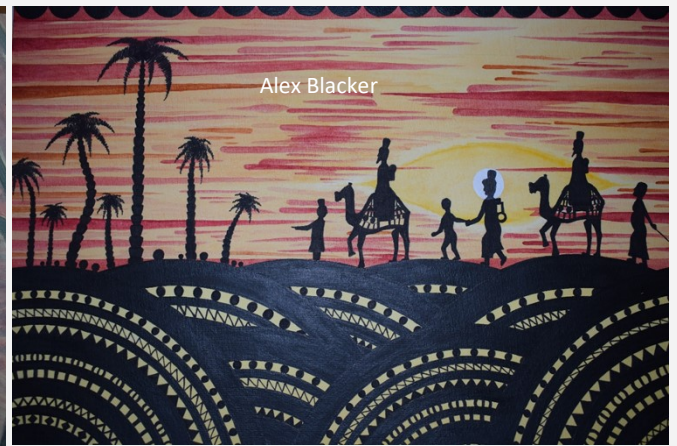


Art Mock Exam

The Art department would like to congratulate all Year 11 Art students who worked incredibly hard over the two day mock exam. Here is a selection of their work and a sneak preview of what will be exhibited next summer.

Well done!

Miss Dawson and Mrs Stokes



Clubs for Term 3 and 4

The clubs for the Spring Term will be shared in the first week back after the Christmas break.

There will be no clubs in the first week of Term 3, including homework club.

Uniform reminder

A letter was sent home to all parents this week reiterating the expectations for uniform at BFS.

Please read in full, and use the Christmas break to replace any worn out or ill-fitting items.

We expect all students to be in full uniform from January.

FoBFS Update

Many thanks for all support at our events this year.

The Music Extravaganza raised £336 and, thanks to our many bakers, the cake sale raised £74.

We wish you a merry Christmas, a happy 2019 and hope to see you at our events in 2019.



FoBFS

Inter-house competitions

The week commencing 3 December saw our inter-house competitions running after school in netball, rugby and cross-country.

We had a fantastic turn out of over 200 students during the course of the week. Despite some challenges from the weather, the competition levels were high and the support from tutors and non-participating tutees were second to none. All participating students have been given a merit for their commitment. A special mention must go to the following students for being nominated Most Valued Pupils; Phoebe Hilyer-Jones, Lucy Chatham and Georgia Short for netball, Lewis Whittaker and Ed Gallen for rugby and Lewis Challenger and Trevor Smart for cross-country. Well done to all who participated.

Term 4 will see the next episode of inter-house, where points gained from this term will be added to the next competition (sports tbc).



Events in the next fortnight

Inset Day	
07/01/2019	School closed to students except Sixth Formers taking exams
08/01/2019	
09/01/2019	Year 12 at Bristol University; Higher Education Fair
10/01/2019	Year 11 Subject Evening; 4:30pm - 7pm Berlin 2019 Trip Information Evening, 7:15pm (Common Room)
11/01/2019	
12/01/2019	
13/01/2019	
14/01/2019	Year 12 Exams SCS Governors' Committee Meeting
15/01/2019	Year 12 exams
16/01/2019	Year 12 exams
17/01/2019	Year 12 exams Year 12 & 13 Subject Evening; 4:30pm - 7pm
18/01/2019	Year 9 Pathways Day Year 12 exams
19/01/2019	
20/01/2019	

Christmas Jumper Day

Staff and students raised a fantastic £304.92 for the Bristol Homeless Shelter by donning their most spectacular jumpers.

Thank you everyone!



Admission Arrangements Consultation

Please see our website for details of a consultation regarding proposed change to our admission arrangements for 2020-21.

Consultation is open from Thursday 20 December 2018 to Thursday 31 January 2019

The full draft policy can be read at <https://www.bristolfreeschool.org.uk/>.

Paper copies are also available on request.

Feedback, comments, queries and requests for copies of the policy should be emailed to admin@bristolfreeschool.org.uk and marked for the attention of the Admissions Officer.

Screen time...

Students may be excited to receive new smart devices from Santa in the next few days.

Please see overleaf for some useful tips on screen addiction – perhaps they could form the basis of new year's resolutions!





It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech-related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?



47%
of parents
said they thought their
children spent too much
time in front of screens



What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION



SMARTPHONE ADDICTION IS A RECOGNISED HEALTH CONDITION

Children as young as 13 are attending 'smartphone rehab' following growing concerns over screen time. There are now help centers in the UK which deal with screen addiction for children and adults showing the seriousness of device addiction.

IT CAN CAUSE SLEEP DEPRIVATION

7 out of 10 children said they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need in order to focus the next day.

CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT & ACCEPTANCE

The Children's Commissioner report 'Life in Likes', explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about their problems and seek acceptance and support, removing face to face interactions.

LOSS OF INTEREST IN OTHER THINGS

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is missing school time and generally being less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behaviour change.

APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Apps have been designed with 'psychological tricks' to constantly keep grabbing your attention. One example of this is on the app Snapchat, where you can gain 'streaks' when interacting with your friends. If you don't respond, you lose the streak. This addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



Top Tips for Parents



LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning them from using their devices, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is a suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device, they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them. If you have asked your child to not use their device at the table, make sure you don't. Try setting house rules that the whole family abide by.

REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from bedrooms will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focussed the next day at school. 20% of teenagers said that they wake up to check their social network accounts on their devices. Even by having a device switched off in their bedroom, they may be tempted to check for notifications.

LESS TIME MEANS LESS EXPOSURE

There are many risks associated with devices, such as cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, viewing inappropriate content etc. Less time spent on a screen means that a child will be less exposed to these risks.

ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or playing outdoors will help them realise they can have fun without their device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their outdoor activities to show your support.

MOBILE-FREE MEAL TIMES

Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a tablet at the dinner table or restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but in reality, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

STATISTICS

53% of children aged **3-4**
go online for nearly **8hrs** a week

79% of children aged **5-7**
go online for nearly **9hrs** a week

94% of children aged **8-11**
go online for nearly **13.5hrs** a week

99% of children aged **12-15**
go online for nearly **21hrs** a week

<https://www.independent.co.uk>
Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2017: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk>
<http://uk.businessinsider.com/how-app-developers-keep-us-addicted-to-our-smartphones>
Journal of Youth Studies: <https://www.mirox.co.uk/tech/one-five-kids-losing-sleep-9653986>
University of Leeds: https://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/1296/lack_of_sleep_damaging_for_children



A whole school community approach to online safety
www.nationalonlinesafety.com

Email us at hello@nationalonlinesafety.com or call us on 0800 368 8061

