



TO CARE  
TO LEARN  
TO ACHIEVE

**BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL**  
A Specialist Business and Enterprise College  
with Applied Learning

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Headteacher: Mr P McCaffery

I hope that you are all well. Thank you for your support during the first half term of 2022, we have enjoyed a hugely positive six weeks of learning. In this letter, I am pleased to share with you some of the highlights of this half term and provide a preview of what's coming up from next month.

### Careers Education

At Bedford we don't just see who the child is now, we aim to see the potential of what and who they can become, and we will strive to help our students to discover, develop and demonstrate their potential. That is why high-quality careers education is so important to us.

Every Tuesday we run a careers lunch, where a professional from the local community speaks to our students about their career and the pathways into that career. We have had over 150 students engage with these employers so far this term and we have many more planned for the next half term.

In March we will be hosting Careers week and have planned a whole host of events including our Careers fair which sees over 50 employers, colleges and universities come into school to speak to our students to help them plan their future goals. We will also launch work experience with our Year 10s and help our Year 9s complete their option choices for Key Stage 4.

### Awareness Weeks

We have had two awareness weeks this half term. Our Mental Health week helped raised awareness about mental health and share practical tips on keeping a healthy mind and body. We had over 300 students take part in wellbeing workshops throughout the week and our Year 11 Student Leaders raised money for 'Young Minds', a mental health charity for young people. RESPECT week saw over 120 students winning a Bedford breakfast and 25 students winning vouchers for successfully demonstrating the virtue of respect.

Our next parent information evening will focus on how we can work together to support your child's wellbeing and will be held on Thursday 4th March. Our Year 10 work experience information evening will be held on Wednesday 9th March. More information about these events will follow.

### Public Speaking

A huge congratulations to our KS3 Public Speaking team who won the local Heat in the recent annual Rotary Public Speaking competition. Their chosen topic on the 'stereotyping of teenagers' was insightful and so engaging. Well done to Faith Barlow, who was fantastic as Chair of the team. Well done to Meadow Armstrong for her skilful eloquence, and Abigail Fletcher for her flawless performance. The girls will now compete in the District Final when they hope to defend their title.

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Debating and Public speaking make a significant difference to a child's confidence and oracy skills. We have also noted that it leads to better academic outcomes, students are enriched with a knowledge and understanding that goes beyond our curriculum. We would fully encourage parents to enthuse their child to join our Debating Society which meets every Monday after school.

### **Extra-curricular and enrichment success**

As we are a National Theatre flagship school, our Year 9s watched the production of Jekyll and Hyde whilst it was on tour around the country. Year 10 GCSE Drama students are going to be performing at the Royal Exchange theatre at the end of March.

The Art department have had a fantastic term. Firstly, congratulations to Hannah Kendrick in Year 10 who became a finalist for the Holocaust Memorial Day Photography competition. Her photo of Luke Jerram's sculpture in Pennington Flash captured the judges' attention. Her work is now on display on the HMD virtual gallery website.

Well done to all students entered into the Half Term Art exhibition. This year we have displayed work across all year groups in an exhibition on the Art corridor in school and parents can access the virtual version online. Visit <https://bedfordhighschool.co.uk/art-department-half-term-exhibition-started-yesterday/>

We invited Lisa Michelle from Heart Communities CIC into school to help me with the difficult task of judging the art work. After much deliberation we were delighted to announce the winners:

#### Year 7

1st Bodhi Somerset

2nd Bailey Dodsworth

3rd Dawud Toqeer

#### Year 8

1st Paige Smith

2nd Rowan Riley

3rd Anaika Irfan

#### Year 9

1st Amy Mathews

2nd Lucia Wardle

3rd Lexie Morgan

#### Year 10 Art

1st Molly Connor

2nd Emily Farnworth

3rd Rebecca Shungu

Year 10 Photography

1st Hannah Kendrick

2nd Skylar Reece

3rd Declan Kitson

Year 11 Art

1st Faith Barlow

2nd Anthony Harvey

3rd Bradley Smith

Key stage 3 overall winner: Amy Mathews

Key stage 4 overall winner: Molly Connor

Year 7 Arts award students are aiming to achieve bronze this year and have taken part in a series of workshops with the Turnpike gallery and ex pupil Anna Smith.

Year 9 artists welcomed local artist, Pete Obsolete this week. Students learnt how to design ideas based on social and political themes and then were given the opportunity to draw them on the Art corridor windows.

Our Year 7s are all off to see the orchestra at the Bridgewater Hall next term, we have a dance company coming to perform to our Year 8s and our Year 10 Dancers are representing the school in a Wigan Schools showcase.

Our advanced singers are heading to the National Music For Youth Festival in March where they will perform amongst choirs from across the country. It is a very prestigious event, and we are thrilled to be able to take our talented singers along.

Year 11 Media students enjoyed their field trips to Leigh Spinners Mill to take photographs of the architecture on offer as part of their coursework, whilst Year 11 Computer Science groups enjoyed an exam masterclass with Paul Long on how, and how not to answer the questions in their upcoming exams.

### **Reading – It's a superpower!**

At Bedford High School, our goal is to develop students so that they can become world class learners and we recognise that effective teaching of literacy, both at school and at home, is the essential foundation of education. We are committed to ensuring that every student at Bedford is equipped with the skills needed to take control of their destinies, fulfil their potential and thrive in a rapidly changing and unpredictable world.

Research tells us that developing a love for reading is one of the most effective ways to raise attainment. It is the master skill that unlocks the academic curriculum. Confident readers achieve more highly in all subjects, and this improves GCSE results. But, more importantly, as a school, we recognise that reading helps to build our students' sense of identity and introduces them to new and alternative experiences. Research informs us that reading for pleasure is the single biggest factor in success in later life. Study after study has shown that those children who read for pleasure are the ones who are most likely to fulfil their ambitions.

To help support your child's reading, please encourage them to read at home as often as possible. Reading for just 20 minutes a day exposes them to 1.8 million words a year and will make a difference to their attitude towards reading for pleasure and their academic success.

### **Sports round-up**

We will continue with the arrangement where students can come into school wearing their PE kit on those days that they have PE, as this enables more time to be dedicated to exercise. Thank-you for your support in ensuring that your child continues to wear the correct kit.

The Year 7- 10 Netball teams have continued a fantastic run, with 16 wins, one draw and only 1 defeat out of 18 games. The 7 and 8 Girls Football teams came second in their first tournament and won their first futsal game 7 - 6. The boys enjoyed taking part in a number of intra - school Football competitions and achieved success against our local rivals.

During wellbeing week, our students also had the opportunity to take part in boxing taster sessions. We will look forward to welcoming Adrian from Leigh ABC back into school to work with us after the half term.

Finally, I hope that students and staff enjoy a well-deserved half term break, and that families manage to get some quality time together before we return. Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,



Paul McCaffery

Headteacher