



BEDFORD ACADEMY

Welcome to our Tenth Newsletter

This has been a very successful half term for students and staff at Bedford Academy.

Year 11's outstanding Mathematics results, secured six months early through their November exams, saw fifty per cent of students celebrating a C grade or higher. On top of this, almost one third of students achieved a higher grade in English. These excellent results highlight that Year 11 students are on track to achieve another record breaking set of results this summer. Summer exam preparation is well underway following a motivational launch that saw students juggling to raise awareness of their personal learning style. Revision and grade improvement classes are now available in most subjects and students interested in attending should see their subject teacher as soon as possible.

This half term is one of decision making; Year 9 students have been preparing to make their options choices and sixth form interviews have also been taking place with more students than ever seeking a place at Bedford Academy Sixth Form. All students are excited about being the first to occupy the Academy's fantastic new building in the next academic year.

The Academy played host to visitors from our partner school, Bishop Okiring in Kenya, this term. Bishop Okiring's Principal and Deputy Principal visited lessons, met with Academy students and experienced life at Bedford Academy. In return they have helped our students to recognise the benefits that education can bring by sharing their own culture and wisdom.

Finally, the 18th and 19th January saw Ofsted arrive for our first New Academy Inspection and we are very pleased with their findings. The Academy is making expected and satisfactory progress; our 'self-evaluation is accurate' and 'the Academy's improvement plan well focused on the central aim of raising students' attainment.' A full report will be available online shortly but I am able to provide a summary of their findings:

- ✎ GCSE examination results in Summer 2011 showed an improvement but remain below national averages. More recent data, however, shows that students are now making better progress;
- ✎ In Sixth Form, students make progress in line with, or better than, other students nationally at AS Level;
- ✎ Students' behaviour is improving because staff have made their expectations for good behaviour clear. The great majority of students behave well and move around the Academy calmly and in a sensible manner;
- ✎ Attendance has improved and is now above the National average;
- ✎ Students say that they feel safe in the Academy, that bullying is rare and that it is dealt with effectively by staff when reported;
- ✎ The quality of teaching is improving well and is good in the large majority of lessons. Teaching is improving as a result
- ✎ The curriculum has been developed continuously since the Academy opened to ensure that it caters well for students' differing needs. The curriculum provides a sound choice for students.

The Academy will continue on its journey of improvement, focusing particularly on further raising student attainment and continually improving the standards of teaching and learning we offer. I hope that you enjoy our latest newsletter.

Mrs Claire Smith - Principal



Career in Artificial Intelligence anyone?

Friday 27th January saw Dr Jonathan Black from Queen Mary, University of London, deliver a university-style lecture on Artificial Intelligence to an audience of over one-hundred students. The lecture aimed to inspire students to follow an educational or career path in specialised science and technological fields.

Gifted and Talented students, Science Ambassadors and Year 8 students from Abbey and Harrowden Middle Schools all benefited from the lecture where they learnt about recent developments in technology and the true reasoning behind a machine being considered 'intelligent'.

Dr Black was kind enough to give each student a free Science magazine, focused on Computer Technology, and a range of Queen Mary merchandise. Further free science magazines, courtesy of Queen Mary, are available for students from the ILC.

This lecture is the first of many Science-specialist lectures that will be delivered to students throughout the academic year.



Grow your brain!

Recommended reading lists for Year 9, 10 and 11 are now available in the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) and on the Academy's website at <http://bedfordacademy.co.uk/communications>.

All of the titles are strongly recommended by the National Literacy Trust as reading material that will enlarge students' vocabulary and help to increase student attainment.

A copy of every title is available in the ILC.

Drug Awareness

Year 11 experienced an eye-opening talk by Paul Hannaford, a visiting speaker, on Monday 6th February.

The seventy-five minute talk fascinated students through its frank depiction of drug abuse and crime.

Paul has spoken to over fifty-thousand children and young people about his own experiences of drug abuse, bullying, crime and gang warfare.

For further information, please visit Paul's website on <http://www.paulhannaford.com>

STEM Workshop

As part of the Science CREST Award, students are being offered the opportunity to make their own jewellery at a workshop led by expert jewellery maker Jennifer-Lizzy on Thursday 23rd February.

For £3.50, students will work with resin and polymer clay for two hours to create their own masterpieces. All students are welcome and only thirty places are available.

Lion King Trip

Miss Bye is running a Literacy Across the Curriculum trip to London on Thursday 19th July 2012 allowing thirty-nine students the opportunity to visit the British Museum and watch the award-winning performance of Disney's 'The Lion King'. Places cost £39 each, which includes return coach travel and one premium theatre ticket. Any students interested in attending must provide full payment to the Finance department by Friday 23rd March 2012.



Status Quo Drum Masterclass

Year 11 students were invited to take part in a Drum Masterclass led by Status Quo's Jeff Rich on Thursday 2nd February.

The workshop aimed to motivate students to achieve and improve their work ethic.

All involved praised the masterclass and left with a positive attitude about their future prospects (Jahangir Khan - Year 11)



Her Majesty...

Eight lucky students are set to meet Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at this year's special Diamond Jubilee Commonwealth Day Observance in Westminster Abbey on 12th March 2012!

A tremendous achievement, our students secured the opportunity by submitting an entry for the Jubilee Time Capsule that has since been judged by Her Majesty and has resulted in her request to hear the entries read in person by our students.

The Time Capsule entries aim to tell a truthful story of an event that has happened to a group or individual on any date over the last sixty years and can be submitted in a variety of forms, from a written essay to a photograph.

Students are still able to enter the Jubilee Time Capsule and should see their form tutor or Miss Bye for further details.

Masterful Wall Art

The ILC walls have become a place of enrichment during lunch and after school as many students take up the opportunity to leave their mark upon the Academy whilst having fun, relaxing and socialising.

Povilas Kiveris, William Dilling, Hannah Ovenden, James Lynch, Kia Dunell, Dale Wells, Luke Sims and Kieran Slep are just some of the regular Year 9 students that take part with me and Miss Bye each week.

Latest additions to the works of art include Animal Farm, The Lion King, Alice in Wonderland, Cherub, Deathnote, Flame, Mickey Mouse, Bart Simpson, Pacman and Harry Potter.

We all really enjoy painting the ILC and really wish that we could take our paintings, brick by brick, with us to the new building! **(Tia Forbes - Year 9)**



Run, Mr Lang, run!

William Dilling (Year 9) caught up with Mr Lang to find out what spring holds for him.

An avid runner covering five to seven miles a run three times a week, Mr Lang is set to compete in the Brighton marathon on 15th April 2012 to raise money for the WaterAid charity.

Mr Lang considers many of his teachers and coaches to have been role models and tries to emulate their positive attitude and desire to succeed.



BBC News School Report

Academy students will be making the news for real on Thursday 15th March 2012 as they take part in BBC News School Report.

We aim to publish the news by 16.00 GMT on the News Day, so please visit the Academy website to watch!

Easter Showcase

Audition dates for the greatly anticipated Easter Showcase will take place on Wednesday 22nd February at 3.35pm in Music Room 1. Eager participants should keep an eye on the Academy Facebook page for the latest news and information.



Kenyan Calling

British Council funding helped strengthen the Academy's international links this term by providing our Kenyan partner school with a second opportunity to visit.

Bishop Okiring's Principal, Mr Okadie, and Deputy Principal, Mr Men'guse, arrived on Saturday 21st January for a week's stay that included a visit, courtesy of the BBC, to the Emirates Stadium. By Monday, our guests were enjoying Academy life once more with a tour of the Academy's new building and a seat upon our Year 9 Eco Committee where we learnt of their recycling scheme and water conservation (water is collected two kilometres away by donkey!)

Our visitors also enjoyed a current affairs discussion with Academy students and Year 8 Harrowden Middle School students on topics that included ICC arrests of Kenyan politicians to capping of UK benefits. Next came a Year 10 geography lesson where students researched Mount Elgon, the extinct volcano on which Bishop Okiring school is situated, before presenting a PowerPoint on the biodiversity, climate and industry of the area for our visitors to judge. The day would not have been complete without a Swahili lesson led by our International Schools enrichment.

On Wednesday 25th January, Mr Okadie was invited to the BBC World Service radio station to take part in a worldwide discussion with Microsoft Founder Bill Gates! However, our visitors stated that they most enjoyed their visit to our local cluster schools Lakeview and Shortstown Lower, wearing the Mayor of Bedford's gown and chains in his office, participating in the Academy's Community Quiz and cooking Kenyan food with Academy students Khadija Ali, Eden Anderson, Terrisha Harrigan-O'Connor, Nike Ajadi and Mariama Jalloh,

The visit was rounded off with a farewell buffet and gift exchange in the ILC with Academy sponsors, governors and special guests. Mrs Smith took the opportunity to thank Mr Okadie and Mr Men'guse for inspiring Academy students to make the most of their education. Both gentlemen had a huge impact on our students with their stories of the challenges that they face daily; it really struck home with students and staff how lucky we are in every aspect of our lives and how we must make the most of our opportunities.



Futsal Success!

Friday 20th January saw the Academy host the first District Futsal tournament for Year 10 students with flying success.

Invented in Brazil, Futsal is similar to 5-a-side football but is played with a heavier football in an attempt to develop footballer's skills and technique - and to discourage players from playing the 'long ball'.

Our year 10 boys started the tournament well, dispatching off Sharnbrook Upper School convincingly with a 3-1 win. As the tournament progressed, the boys grew in confidence making easy work of Mark Rutherford School with a 3-0 win, before defeating Redbourne Upper 2-1 in their last group game.

The semi-final's elevated standard of play did not affect the boys and, despite a strong challenge from Sandy Upper, the Academy progressed to the Final with a 2-0 win. Fatigue began to set in during the Final, causing the boys to fall just short of victory against a strong Biddenham Upper School side.

A fantastic effort from Wayne Instrell, Darko Dorotic, Jonti Neal, Ben Nicholls, Jordan Neal, Jake Huckle and Raiqwan Joseph to earn a well-deserved runner-up spot after some great individual and team performances.



Making new tracks

Year 9 students participated in the Academy's first ever District Basketball tournament on Tuesday 31st January showing great team spirit and determination throughout, despite the superior experience of their opposition.

Whilst the boys finished an admirable fourth, the girls battled on to finish a remarkable second due to their commendable team work. Congratulations to Ninette Tavares, Kellyann Davies, Megan McHale, Tia Forbes, Lakiesha Kunari and Emily Sale!



Dazzling dance

Bedford Academy's newest GCSE option, Dance, has been a huge success! The small class numbers allows us to learn more intensely during the two-hour lessons, giving us a greater insight into healthy eating, safe practice and motif development.

Thanks to our teacher, Miss Powell, we have learnt to appreciate and interpret dance; previously, contemporary dance was just a dance style to us, now we understand that Martha Graham created the Graham technique to make it less structured than ballet.

On Wednesday 15th February, GCSE Dance students will set off to Milton Keynes to enjoy 'The Nutcracker', choreographed by Matthew Bourn, which features one of our set dances (**Tamara Thompson - Year 10**)

Badminton Tournament

The Academy's Year 10 girls' badminton team are celebrating this term having secured a respectable fourth place in the recent county school's tournament.

Four of the best Year 10 players, myself, Yasmine, Katherine and Tayla, were chosen specifically to play in the tournaments. An amazing achievement, due in part to our excellent sportsmanship and fantastic co-operation, the four of us really pulled together to do our Academy proud!

The boys team also worked hard and made a great first effort. Well done to us all! **Surma Shah (Year 10)**

Forthcoming Events

Monday 13th February to Friday 17th February - Half Term

Wednesday 15th February - GCSE Dance Trip

Monday 20th February - Staff Training Day

Wednesday 29th February - Parent Council Meeting 9.15am

Monday 12th March - Commonwealth Day Observance

Thursday 15th March - BBC News School Report

Tuesday 20th March - Access Coffee Morning 10.30am and Community Fish and Chips

Tuesday 27th March - Year 9 Trip to MK Dons vs Carlisle 5.45-10.30pm



Contact Us: Bedford Academy, Mile Road, Bedford MK42 9TR Tel:(01234) 301500 Fax:(01234) 301501

Web: www.bedfordacademy.co.uk;

www.youtube.com/user/bedfordacademy10

www.facebook.com/pages/BedfordAcademy;

Email: info@bedfordacademy.co.uk

Designed, created and produced by Miss Bye, Tia Forbes, Tamara Thompson, Surma Shah, Jahangir Khan & William Dilling