

BICESTER TECHNOLOGY STUDIO PARENT NEWSLETTER



September 2017

We are now three weeks into our second year at BTS and we have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming our new students and staff. All students have had the opportunity to take part in an induction project, which was highly successful, enabling students to demonstrate a wide range of skills they have developed and learn new skills in a slightly different learning context.

Our Year 11 and 13 students have returned with determination and focus as they prepare for the very important year ahead; I am sure if the students are able to maintain this high level of effort whilst combining it with a positive mind-set, they will perform very well.

All staff have been very impressed with the mature attitude demonstrated by our new Year 12 students, who have made a very positive start to their time with us.

We were also delighted to welcome our new Year 10 students, who have undertaken a rigorous baseline testing process so we are able to build an accurate picture of their learning experiences to date; this will enable us to plan and deliver learning experiences that are well matched to their abilities.

All of the staff at BTS are looking forward to developing positive relationships with students and their families as we work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for all!

Kind regards,

Dean Woodham
Vice Principal

New staff

We are very fortunate to be able to welcome several new staff members who have joined us this year. They bring with them a wide range of educational and industry experience, which will dovetail with the existing staff as we develop a high quality staff team:

- Mr Kyberd joins the SLT as Assistant Principal with a range of areas of responsibility, including Head of Year 10 and 12, raising attainment and monitoring attendance.
- Mrs Garvin Elliott will teach English and head up the Communications faculty.
- Dr Ndwana will be our lead teacher for Maths and will also teach Engineering and Product Design.
- Mrs Wall will be our lead teacher for Science.
- Mr Christie will teach Science, Engineering and Product Design.
- Mrs Buchanan will be the school technician, focussing on the Science and Engineering departments.

Introduction from Mr Kyberd, Assistant Principal (Director of Personal Social Development)

I would like to take a brief moment of your time to introduce myself to all of you as students, parents and associates of BTS. I have been a teacher now for the past 14 years and have worked in a variety of schools in different capacities, including both curriculum and pastoral roles in mainstream secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units. I live in Bicester with my family and as such have a strong connection to the town and its schools. I was particularly drawn to working at BTS as it offers something that no other school in the area can do in that it prepares students for work in everything that it does.

Outside of school I am a keen sportsman and music lover, I spend my spare time travelling to visit family and friends in the USA, enjoying gardening, reading and days out with my family visiting historical sites around the country.



I look forward to meeting all of you this year and working in partnership with you to ensure excellent outcomes for all of our students.

Email: james.kyberd@bicestertechstudio.org.uk

Key dates

Thursday 27 September, 5.30-7pm: BTS recruitment event

Open evening for students who are interested in joining BTS next September.

Wednesday 4 October: Parents information evening for Years 10 and 12

Parents will be presented with useful information and plans for the year including work placements and employability.

Thursday 5 October, 3.30-7pm: Parents Evening for Years 11 and 13

- Opportunity for parents to meet individual subject teachers to discuss progress.
- The school will close at 3pm on this day to allow for a smooth start from 3.30pm.
- Details of how to book an appointment will follow in due course.

Thursday 19 October: UCAS Information Evening

Opportunity for parents to find out more about UCAS and Unifrog.

Thursday 9 November, 3.30-7pm: Parents Evening for Years 10 and 12

- Opportunity for parents to meet individual subject teachers to discuss progress.
- The school will close at 3pm on this day to allow for a smooth start from 3.30pm.
- Details of how to book an appointment will follow in due course.

Tuesday 14 November, 5.30-7pm: BTS recruitment event

Open evening for students who are interested in joining BTS next September.

Term dates

Autumn term 1: Monday 4 September-Friday 20 October

Half term: Monday 23-Friday 27 October

Autumn term 2: Monday 30 October-Tuesday 19 December

Christmas holiday: Wednesday 20 December-Wednesday 3 January

Spring term 1: Monday 8 January-Friday 9 February

Half term: Monday 12-Friday 16 February

Spring term 2: Tuesday 20 February-Thursday 29 March

Easter holiday: Friday 30 March-Friday 13 April

Summer term 1: Tuesday 17 April-Friday 25 May

Half term: Monday 28 May-Friday 1 June

Summer term 2: Monday 4 June-Friday 20 July

Inset Days

Friday 1 September 2017

Thursday 4 and Friday 5 January 2018

Monday 19 February 2018

Monday 16 April 2018

Year 10s make an uplifting start

A full cohort of Year 10s joined us for their first day on Tuesday 5 September and got stuck straight into their first project, planning, designing, costing and marketing a new tent. The project offered them the first opportunity to see just how different BTS will be for them and how they have to step up and work with others to progress.

At the end of each day all groups presented their work and explained what they had achieved and how they were going to improve. Finally, at the culmination of the project, each group produced a three-minute presentation to market their product to the rest of the school. All staff, both new and existing, commented on how well students stepped up to this and we are really looking forward to seeing this cohort develop over the next two years.

Mr J Kyberd



English Department

Year 10 & 11

Year 10 and 11 GCSE English Literature students will be assessed in the following texts: Animal Farm, Macbeth, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and poetry. The school are selling CGP revision guides for the £3.00 and these text guides are an invaluable resource to consolidate the understanding of characters, plot and themes of the texts they will be examined in next year.

At the moment there is no poetry revision guide; however I will let you know if and when one is produced.

We are also selling English Language revision guides for £3.00. These workbooks can be used during Directed Learning to practise writing for a specific purpose and audience.

If you would like to purchase one of these guides, please let Mrs Garvin-Elliott know and we will then process the payment through your Parent Pay account.

BTS needs your help!

If you have any books or magazines at home that you have read, and you would like to find a new home for them, we have the answer... bag them up and send them into school.

We would like to start a 'borrow a book' corner, so all students have the chance to extend and improve their reading skills, spellings, punctuation and grammar.

Fiction and non-fiction books and magazines can be dropped off at reception.

Thank you for your support, it will make a difference.

The English Department

Year 13 information

Unifrog

We have signed all of our students up to be able to access an online support platform called Unifrog; this is a “one stop shop” for all destination vacancies and applications, incorporating all British universities and a live apprenticeship tracker. The students already have login details and have had two induction sessions in using the platform; parents will have the opportunity to be introduced to the platform during the Year 13 Parents Evening on 19 October.

Friday finish time

Further to the letter sent in July, our operating hours for Year 13 students have changed slightly, meaning students are required to remain in school until 3pm on a Friday; this change has been brought in to accommodate our expanding curriculum and to ensure that students have sufficient study time to prepare for exams and completion of coursework portfolios.

Laptops

For some time now we have been strongly advising students to bring in laptops and many students have now done so. This is especially important for students studying BTEC Business and Engineering courses as the coursework portfolio element is largely completed independently and online.

