



Weekly Update

Words from the Headteacher

We have reached the end of this academic year and it feels as though it has gone by rather quickly. Perhaps this feeling is more to do with my age, as each passing year becomes a smaller fraction of my overall time spent on this earth creating the illusion that time is travelling faster. Or time could be speeding up. Whatever the truth, an awful lot has been packed in to this year, too much to recount in this newsletter but I would like to share some of the facts and figures of these last few weeks as I think they represent the scope of what goes on at BFS.

Over 110 founding students completed their first stint of work experience last week. We have heard from employers, first hand, how impressed they were by the calibre of BFS students who worked for them. In fact many of our students have been offered Saturday jobs and further promises of employment as a consequence of the impression they left with businesses around Bristol.

Aspiration Week is over! The week has been a mammoth task from residential trips abroad to days out at the universities of Exeter, Cardiff, Bath Spa and Oxford. From the Great BFS Bake Off to Minecraft, Thorpe Park to Harry Potter World, students (and staff) have enjoyed a different curriculum and opportunities all designed to broaden horizons, raise aspirations and develop new skills. Coordinating such a week is an unenviable task, the equivalent of writing a school timetable in a week. Ms Huzzey, my Senior Teacher, rose to this challenge (as well as sorting out work experience, and Humanities) with aplomb. She's been calm under pressure and flexible to boot. All I can say is thank you. Nonetheless, Ms Huzzey would be the first to state that without the Admin and Finance Teams, ably led by Mrs Hyde and Mrs Lawrence, the business end of the week would not have taken place. Not only have they coped with the day-to-day running of the School but ensured that our students have been able to take up the opportunities offered in Aspiration Week. On too many occasions support staff are the unsung heroes of school life but I know that even in their darkest hours, 7.30 am buried in consent forms, registers, first aid packs and grumpy coach drivers, they kept smiling. Thank you.

Yesterday, I believe, typified all which is good and great about Bristol Free School; our fourth Sports Day. Since I began teaching I have attended 21 annual sports days. Yesterday's event at Coombe Dingle was the best yet. Why? From the end of registration at 9:00am every student, and I mean EVERY student, participated in the day's activities. We were able to blend participation with performance dispelling the notion that competition and inclusion in high performance sport are incommensurate. However, I did take several rounds to perfect my wellie throwing and it was noted by several students and staff that I had become a little obsessed. The Sports Day finished with the track finals, our competitors gleaned from the heats which took place earlier in the day. We enjoyed our biggest parent/relative audience to date and we were even paid a visit by a sprightly Jack Russell Terrier who ran a fantastic 75m before running back to his owner, a man who looked surprisingly like Mr Parry's father. Sports Day was a whole school effort and what took place yesterday was nothing less than a triumph. Mr Truan, my Head of PE, and Assistant Headteacher from September, said to me it was always what he had in mind for our Sports Day when he joined BFS, but today was the first time he had all of the pieces of the jigsaw in place to run it this way. Well it all came together beautifully so thank you on behalf of the students and staff and audience. As an aside, we have posted highlights from yesterday on our twitter account so if you want to catch up with yesterday's sporting excellence then follow @bristol_free.

So, I'll end the year and this newsletter with some farewells and a look forward. First the farewells - to Miss Carter (Pastoral Learning Mentor) who is off to Bristol Hospital Education Service; to Miss Moroz and Miss Sheppard, both of whom are embarking on PGCE courses to train as teachers (no doubt inspired by their time at BFS!); to Mr Carlisle who is taking up a teaching post in English at St Laurence, a school I hold dear as I was Deputy Headteacher there for six years before heading up BFS; to Ms Almey who has secured the Head of Religion and Philosophy at Cotham School; and finally to Mrs Kendall (nee Hogg), who joined us in January 2013, became Head of English in 2014 and as well as relocating to the east of England has secured a senior teaching post in an academy in the East. All will be missed and I wish them well and thank them for all they have done to make BFS great.

And now looking forward: I am looking forward to a holiday with the family (but not the packing). Next academic year I am looking forward to meeting our new Year 7s in their BFS uniform, our founding year group's GCSE results (which on current performance and projections are going to be spectacular), the Year 11 Summer Ball, Ofsted - they're due in and I want the two missing grade 1s which we deserved last time, and the 6th form. Our new 6th form is being penned as the 6th form of the North (Bristol). Whilst the 6th form won't be as cold as Jon Snow's outpost in the Game of Thrones, it will win the equivalent of the Emmys when it opens in September 2016.

So, to our students, staff, governors, RET and parents, have a well-earned rest and we'll see our students at 8.30 am in tutor rooms (school gates open at 8.00 am) on Thursday 3 September.

Richard Clutterbuck

Barcelona - a highly successful trip! The students embraced the Spanish language and were inspired by the wonderful Gaudi architecture. They enjoyed their well-earned afternoon on the beach!



Dynamics choir performed a range of songs at the United Reformed Church in Redland alongside the adult choir group "Riff Raff". The audience was very appreciative and the students did a fantastic job.

DJ skills

Students learnt to mix and scratch using real turntables and a range of DJ iPad apps.



Puppeteering

We used various plastic tubes for fully functioning and dextrous limbs and rubber tubing for 'bones' and joints which allowed great movement possibilities.. Each puppet had a functioning foam mouth operating either by a peg at the back of the neck or with a hand in the jaw of the puppet.



Oxford University ... The Gower ... Handbells ... Cycling to Ashton Court ... Golf ... Mojo Active ... Harry Potter World ... Thorpe Park ... Think Tank ... Stop Motion Animation ... Felt making ... Pond Life ... Arduino Computer Electronics ... Cyanotype Printing ... Fieldwork at Blaise ... Philosophy in Film ... Card Shop USA ... Psychology ... We Will Rock You! ... Zombie Survival Training ... Exeter University ... Flash Mob ... Screenwriting ... Jewellery making ... Robot Wars ... Craft & Create - Make a Gift! ... Heroes and Monsters in Myth ... Trading Game ... Knitting ... Cardiff University ... Italian ... and more!



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