

Mrs Susan King

Headteacher



Good evening, and a warm welcome to BFS's Y7 transition evening. My name is Susan King and I am very proud and honoured to be welcoming you to this fantastic school as your new Headteacher. I, like your, child start here in September.

September will, for your child, be the beginning of a very important journey – for most of them a seven-year journey – from child to young adult. Similarly, September is a very important beginning for me; when I begin working with the staff and Trust to ensure BFS goes from strength to strength next year and the years to follow.

Almost as soon as I arrived at BFS I knew that the school and I were made for one another! This is a school that places students' happiness and wellbeing, along with excellent teaching and learning at the heart of its daily life.

Similarly, my approach and experience of school leadership equip me to make the very most of BFS's considerable strengths and to ensure that the areas for improvement noted by our recent Ofsted continue to be rapidly addressed.

I guarantee that your children will be provided with an excellent education at BFS; one which builds on their current strengths and interests and opens up a world of opportunities for them.

I believe the best schools work in partnership with parents and carers. Communication needs to be clear, regular and built on trust so we can work together to achieve the very best for every child. School expectations need to be very clear and unwavering:

PUNCTUALITY and UNIFORM

- We expect our students to arrive to school on time looking smart and wearing their uniform with pride. Inspectors and visitors always comment on the excellent uniform here. I very much value your support with this aspect of school life.

ATTENDANCE

- Evidence shows there is a strong correlation between excellent attendance and high educational achievement. BFS, in common with many other good schools, expect students to attend every possible session unless they are genuinely unwell; we need to work together to achieve this. I recently learnt that in the last 2 years of GCSE results at BFS students with attendance above 96% achieved well above national expectations. In short, if you get your children here for over 95% of the time we will make sure they do exceedingly well.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS/MANNERS

- We expect all our students at BFS to be well mannered, respectful and tolerant of all staff and students – this is something that you notice when you visit the school; it is full of the most delightful young people. Relationships between students and staff are excellent and this is very important as it underpins a high-quality education built on mutual trust.

PROGRESS FOR ALL

- We expect all students to make excellent progress from their starting points when arriving in the school. Information from your child's primary school helps us to understand your child's abilities and needs. We celebrate all achievement and effort. I am as proud of a student who has worked hard and achieves a moderate set

of examination results as I am of one who goes on to achieve great academic success at GCSE and A level. We must cherish every individual and their unique set of skills and talents.

EXTRA CURRICULAR

- What sets BFS apart from many schools is the quality and range extra-curricular opportunities. Here at BFS we believe these wider enrichment experiences are a critical part of a young person's education and character development. The range of opportunities is extraordinary. Sports clubs thrive and include regular competitive fixture. This month alone we have become Y9 boys Bristol champions in football and U16 girls are football champions across the region – which is fantastic . I have been stunned by the quality of musical, performing and expressive arts and by the level of involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. We are constantly looking for opportunities for our students to practice, compete and perform. Just this week we have the Spanish exchange visiting and we have won the prestigious Bristol Chemistry Festival (beating off 15 other independent and maintained schools). Your child's tutor will be encouraging him or her to engage in at least 1 extra-curricular club. I understand many Y7 attend 2-3 a week, which is marvellous

For many children this next step in September will be exciting because they are more than ready for the new challenges of secondary school. (Often it can be the parents who can worry about this transition and the greater freedom and independence secondary school demands).

But even if your child is a little nervous, I just need to reassure you that; within weeks our Y7s adjust secondary school . They soon familiarise themselves with the larger school site, they make new friends and get to know their teachers, their lessons and new routines.

You may find communication about what is happening at school less forthcoming than when they were at primary school....I remember my own son when he started secondary school...'how was your day' I would ask....'good' he would reply....'what did you do today' I asked.....'stuff' he replied... I am sure some of you will have a similar experience.

Step one to success is developing and securing positive relationships with their teachers and other students, especially those in their tutor group. This is why we have the Year 6-7 Induction Day for students on **10th July** (which Miss Ryan will talk about) **and for students and parents together** on that same evening. You will be with your child to meet his or her tutor. Tutors will ensure you understand the expectations and the essential routines of school life. This way you can better support your child in the first weeks and beyond.

If you wish to make a wider contribution to the school, we have a fantastic and very active parent school association called "Friends of BFS" who will welcome any new parent/carers who would like to be involved. More information will be available in the school's newsletters and there are links on the school website. FOBS will also be hosting the Year7 BBQs in September.

Our Year7 Transition Leader, Miss Ryan is now going to explain what students can expect on Induction Day. After that, I will introduce you to two very brave Y7 students who would like to share, with you their experiences of their first year at BFS.



WELCOME

Induction Day

Tuesday 10 July 2018

Miss Kate Ryan
Transition Lead

Induction Evening Tuesday 10 July
from 6pm

What students are to expect on Induction Day



- Remove the unease of the unknown
- Students will arrive at **9:00am** and will finish at **4.30 pm**
- Opportunity to meet new teachers and new friends
- Fun and varied timetable for the day (six out of the following seven subjects will be showcased: **Art**, **Music**, **English**, **PE**, **Science**, **Drama** and **Modern Foreign Languages**, as well as a tour of the school)
- Students should wear your current school uniform with trainers
- Snack needed but lunch is provided
- Parent meeting at 6:00pm

Students will arrive at **9:00am** to begin with period 2 of the school day and will finish at **4.30 pm** after some extra-curricular activities

Opportunity to meet some of your new teachers and other students who will be in Year 7 with you

Students will be able to meet and chat to current year 7s which will allow them to feel more at ease with the idea of transition – less daunting heading into Summer

You will have six out of the following seven subjects: **Art**, **Music**, **English**, **PE**, **Science**, **Drama** and **Modern Foreign Languages**, as well as a tour of the school.

Students should wear your current school uniform, but wear trainers on your feet as you may take part in a PE lesson.

You may wish to bring a snack for morning break. **School lunch will be provided free of charge.**

What parents are to expect from Induction eve



- Parents to arrive at 5:45pm for 6pm start
- Opportunity to meet teachers and tutors
 - Behaviour and Awards system
 - Assessment Criteria and Calendar explained
 - Day-to-day school life explained
- Uniform
- Calendared events and trips information

Friends of Bristol Free School (FOBFS) to host 2 BBQ evenings in September for parents, new year 7s, tutors and for Year 6 teachers

- Offers an opportunity for a catch-up for parents and Year 6 teachers from Induction Day

Invite to parents to meet staff and most importantly their child's tutor who will welcome parents into tutor bases to offer parents an insight into the day-to-day running of the school

Supporting your child through this transition

Growing up is not always easy and whilst life is accompanied with its share of emotional challenges, Transition included, there are times when you might benefit from some support.

Students are encouraged from the beginning to share concerns with an adult you trust; your parents or a teacher. However in some cases it may be that they feel more comfortable speaking to one of our Well-being Ambassadors

What we do, and how we will further support your child in this transition

- **Mentoring**
- **Tutor**
- **Safeguarding Leads** - Mr Sillince, Mr Jeanneret, Mr Walker and Mrs Jenkins
- **Student Voice**
- **Wellbeing Ambassadors and Peer Mentors**
- **School nurse**



What we do

BFS is a content, trusting, safe and friendly school. We don't claim that BFS is perfect however and if you ever have a worry, concern or problem, whether it be about bullying or things bothering you outside of school, ask for help and we will do everything that we can to help resolve it.

Mentoring - Mr Jeanneret and Miss Gould are our Pastoral Learning Mentors (PLMs) and you can refer yourselves to them directly. Alternatively, your parents, tutor or another member of staff might refer you if they think you would benefit from some support.

Your tutor - The most important person at BFS in terms of your pastoral development. You will see them every day of your school career. They are there to help, but also to ensure you're making progress. If you have any concerns or worries then they should be your first port of call.

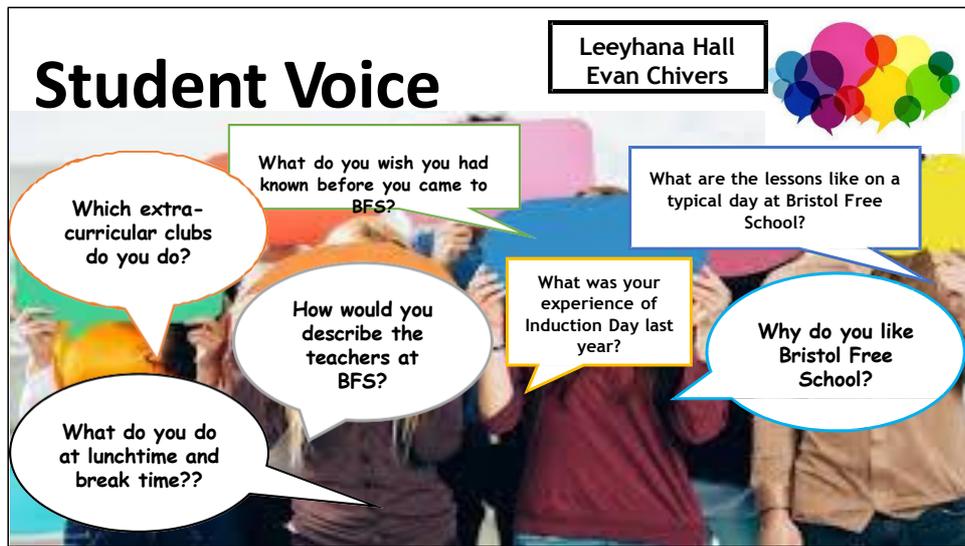
Mr Sillince, Mr Jeanneret, Mr Walker and Mrs Jenkins are your designated safeguarding leads. If you have a serious concern about your own or a friend's wellbeing make sure you speak to them.

All of the staff here at BFS are here to help. You can trust them to do the right thing by you to ensure you get the help you might need.

You'll be asked to complete our wellbeing survey twice each year. You are able to complete the survey anonymously but if you would like to, you can leave your name. If any of your responses gives reason for us to be concerned we would offer you the chance to speak to a member of BFS staff.

Our dedicated band of **Wellbeing Ambassadors** and **Peer Mentors** will continue to support you and your emotional health. They are always recruiting so if you'd like to help improve the school's wellbeing speak to the PLMs about applying.

We also have a **school nurse** who you can see with any wellbeing or health concerns. They hold drop-in sessions on Tuesday lunch time. These are held in the meeting rooms upstairs in C Block, next to Mr Aldridge's classroom.



1. What was your experience of Induction Day last year?

Evan – Scared of taller students and massive school, afraid of getting lost. But the wellbeing ambassadors made me feel relaxed and calm.

Leeyhana – I didn't know any people and the school was so big. But it was really fun to meet new friends and the tour guide showed me around and then I knew where I was!

2. What do you wish you had known before you came to BFS? Evan

– At the start teachers really don't mind if you are late!

- I think you should start revising from the beginning as there is more homework!
- Don't be scared! It's fun!

Leeyhana - Your tutors are always there

- Its important to say if you have a problem and not to be shy!
- Even though year 11s are tall (and smell) they are really friendly and want to help you

3. What are the lessons like in a typical day in BFS?

Evan – Fun and enjoyable! I love Drama because you can work with groups of people that you normally wouldn't work with.

- School feels a lot smaller now as teachers and making friends has made me really settle in

Leeyhana – Fun and enjoyable! In science we do cool practicals like making models of the solar system

4. How would you describe the teachers at BFS?

Evan – Fun and here to help. They're strict but fair. You learn so much stuff!!

Leeyhana – supportive and they always push and challenge you

5. Which extra-curricular activities do you do?

Leeyhana - netball, gymastics, athletics and music (chamber choir and junior choir)

Evan - every term the sport changes so I do what is on. My friends love science and maths club

6. What do you do at break and lunchtime?

Leeyhana - hang out with friends by the 'bench', go to the cantine, play and chat with other year 7s

Evan - hang out with friends or play football on the MUGA

7. Why do you like Bristol Free School?

Evan – Everyone is included and no one feels left out

Leeyhana – Teachers really support me and the facilities are great