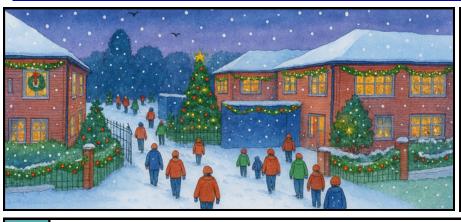


Newsletter

19 December 2025



What's In This Issue?

Notice Board Winter Showcase

House News Sports
Achievements Careers

Year Leader Messages

Dear Parents, Carers, and Students,

As we come to the end of a brilliant term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the many highlights that have made it so special. We rounded off the term with a fantastic Year 7 theatre trip to watch Treasure Island at the Bristol Old Vic, an outstanding Winter Showcase last Thursday evening, and impressive efforts from our Year 11 and Year 13 students as they completed a successful round of mock exams. Finally, it has been wonderful to see both students and staff celebrating together in their House assemblies, marking the end of term in true BFS spirit.



MRS KING

Looking ahead, the new term begins on Tuesday 6 January, and we will be resetting and reinforcing our BFS high standards of uniform and behaviour to ensure a strong start to the year.

I am also excited to announce a new addition to our newsletter: Student Corner – a space for student-generated content. If you are a budding journalist or have creative ideas to share, please step forward and get involved!

Thank you to everyone for your hard work, commitment, and enthusiasm throughout the term.

I wish you all a restful and enjoyable holiday, and I look forward to welcoming you back in the new year.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Warm regards,

Mrs S King Headteacher







NEXT WEEK AT BFS

Monday 5 January

INSET Day - School closed to all students

(©) BFS_Bristol

Tuesday 6 January

First day of Term 3

Wednesday 7 January

Y11 Subject Evening Y12 Assessments

Thursday 8 January

GCSE November Resit Results Y11 Subject Evening Y12 Assessments

Friday 9 January

House Competition - Basketball Free Throw Y12 Assessments

SUBJECT EVENING DATES

Year 11 - Wednesday 7 & Thursday 8 January

Year 9 - Wednesday 4 & Thursday 5 February

Year 7 - Wednesday 25 & Thursday 26 February

Year 10 - Wednesday 10 & Thursday 11 June

QUICK LINKS

Lunch Menu

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Term Dates

Student/Parent Handbook

Past Newsletters

We would love to have as many empty chocolate tubs as possible. They are really useful in the Food Department for students to take their food home in after they have cooked in lessons.

Thank you.

6 LESSONS

As Term 2 ends, please check your child's attendance on the MCAS app. Remember that good attendance is 96% and above.

90% attendance equates to 18 missed days and 108 missed lessons as well as clubs, trips, events and social time with friends. Remember: Miss School, Miss Out!

Recent DfE research has shown that persistently absent pupils in secondary school could earn £10,000 less at age 28 compared to pupils with near-perfect attendance, and that for each additional day of absence between Years 7 to 11, the typical pupil could miss out on an average of £750 in future lifetime earnings.

The research has also shown that Year 11 pupils with nearperfect attendance are almost twice as likely to achieve grade 5 in English and Maths GCSE, compared to similar pupils attending 90-95% of the time. In other words, missing just 10 extra days a year reduces the likelihood of achieving these grades by around 50%!

EVERY DAY COUNTS ATTENDANCE MATTERS

ш

ш ш

O DAYS O LESSONS

1 DAY

18 LESSONS 3 DAYS

5 DAYS 30 LESSONS

96% 7 DAYS 42 LESSONS MISSED

11 DAYS 66 LESSONS

12.5 DAYS

92% 14 DAYS 84 LESSONS 90% 18 DAYS 108 LESSONS

Maximise your potential. Attend school every day.

4

TERM 3 & 4 KEY DATES

Term 3	Monday 5 January	INSET Day - School closed to all students	
	Tuesday 6 January	First day of Term 3	
	Wednesday 7 & Thursday 8 January	Year 11 - Subject Evening	
	Wednesday 7 - Wednesday 14 January	Year 12 Assessments	
	Thursday 15 January	Year 9 - GCSE Options Launch Online Event (5.30pm)	
	Thursday 22 January	Year 9 - GCSE Options Fayre (5-6.30pm)	
	Tuesday 27 & Wednesday 28 January	School Musical Matinee Performance (4.30pm)	
	Thursday 29 & Friday 30 January	School Musical Evening Performance (6.30pm)	
	Wednesday 4 & Thursday 5 February	Year 9 - Subject Evening	
	Wednesday 11 February	Year 9 - Options Deadline	
	Friday 13 February	Last Day of Term 3	
Monday 16 - Friday 20 February		Half Term - School closed to all students	
	Monday 23 February	First Day of Term 4	
Term 4	Wednesday 25 & Thursday 26 February	Year 7 - Subject Evening	
	Tuesday 3 March	Year 8 - HPV Vaccinations	
	Thursday 2 April	Last Day of Term 4	
Friday 3 - Friday 17 April		Easter Holidays - School closed to all students	
	Monday 20 April	First Day of Term 5	
		·	



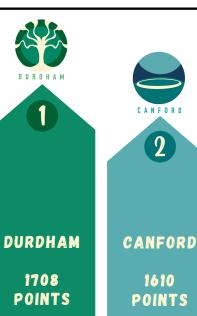


HOUSE NEWS





HOUSE POINTS







Well done to Durdham House for earning the most House points this week!



Top House Point Earners

Congratulations to our top House point earners this week!

	Ashton	Blaise	Canford	Durdham
Year 7	Margot S	Philip D	Emma W	Reuben P-T
Year 8	Willoughby S	Sophie R	Ella M	Mollie K
Year 9	Milo D	James C	Rebecca J	Adam G
Year 10	Miranda R	Tess P	Maia B, Florence P	Dhruvika R
Year 11	Harvey T, Henry B	Bailey A	Amelia S, Benjamin H, Niamh F	Andrés H S
Year 12	James C, Mia S	Harry G, Stanley H	William C	Benjamin R
Year 13	Reuben B	Daisy P	Emily W	Martha H

Last week I met with House Parliament to discuss ideas for the re-launch of House Competitions. Students from Ashton, Blaise, Canford, and Durdham came up with lots of exciting ideas for events and games that we can run throughout the year. We plan to host a House Competition every Friday lunchtime for students (and staff!) to compete for House Points. This kicks off in January with a basketball free-throw competition on the first Friday back (Friday 9 January).



MR JOHNSON

Christmas Quiz!

For some competitive fun and to get everyone in a festive mood for the Christmas holidays, students took part in a whole-school Christmas quiz. Tutor groups competed against each other and for their House. The winning House will be announced next term!

Have a great break and see you in the new year!





39.639

POINTS

HOUSE POINT LEADERBOARD

END OF TERM 2



CANFORD HOUSE 32,723 POINTS

8TG4



4 BLAISE HOUSE 29,316 POINTS Congratulations to our Term 2 Champions, Durdham, who earned an impressive 39,639 House points over the course of Term 2!



TOP EARNING TUTOR GROUPS

END OF TERM 2

ASHTON 8TG7 CANFORD

ASHTON

HOUSE

33,335

POINTS

BLAISE

7TG3

8TG2

TOP EARNING STUDENTS

END OF TERM 2

Willoughby S - 8TG7 Sophie L - 10TG3

Emily R - 8TG7

Seren G - 7TG6

Phoebe P - 8TG7

Rimon G - 8TG7

Thomas H - 8TG7

Hazel I - 8TG7

Lauren S - 9TG1

Harriet S - 9TG1

Year 11: Henry B - 11TG6 Year 13: Reuben B - 13TG1

DURDHAM

COMMUNITY



Sophie R - 8TG1

Ella M - 8TG4

Hattie J - 8TG4

Cara S - 9TG6

Abigail T - 8TG3

Oli E - 8TG4

Louis B - 8TG4

Holly F - 8TG4

Emily M - 8TG4

Rosie B - 9TG5

Florence T - 7TG1

Year 11: Chloe D - 11TG1 Year 13: Emily W - 13TG3

Ollie W - 8TG2 Madeleine P - 8TG2

Sophie R - 8TG1

Alvar J - 8TG2

Amelia F - 8TG1

Zach O - 8TG1

Cian D - 8TG1

Naomi H - 9TG3

Harry C - 8TG2

Jake B - 8TG2

Year 11: Fiona H - 11TG7

Year 13: Lorraine H - 13TG2

Amara P - 7TG3

Roisin L-W - 7TG4

Molly H - 7TG4

Darcey F - 8TG5

Mollie K - 8TG5

Oliver P - 7TG3

Belle M - 7TG3

Blake Z - 7TG3

Leonora M - 7TG3

Phoebe P - 8TG5

Year 11: Isabella E - 11TG4 Year 13: Sophie W - 13TG5





Roisin L-W - 7TG4

OPPORTUNITY



Daniel E - 8TG3

EAR 10



ACHIEVEMENTS



Our Site Manager, Mr Hill who is a scout leader at 191st Bristol Scouts, along with his wife who runs Beavers, were presented with a Chief Scout's Commendation Award for their brilliant contributions to Scouting. Their son, who is a Young Leader, was also awarded a special Commissioner's Commendation. They were presented with their awards by Mr Gavriel, the District Lead Volunteer.

Congratulations to the Hill family for your awards and thank you for your amazing contribution to the community.





Year 10 GUH Subsea STEM Challenge winners!

At long last our STEM Challenge winners received their engraved trophy to show off in the BFS trophy cabinet! Arriving just in time to feel like a Christmas present, Ms Board was so excited to hand them the trophy and reminisce about winning the first national final in BFS history! A huge well done again to Nameera, Sophie, Emily, Ava, Dan and Dylan. You are all STEMtastic!

Bebras Competition

Students from all around the world participated in the Bebras Competition this year. Over 280,000 students from the UK entered, including more than 600 students from BFS. We were delighted to have 65 students awarded Gold certificates, placing them in the top 10% of the UK and taking them through to the next round of the competition, known as The Oxford University Computing Challenge, in March 2025. Congratulations to all Gold winners.

Juniors (Year 7)

1st - Amara P

2nd - Islaa G, Robbie S, Henry S

3rd - Amelia D

Seniors (Year 10)

1st - Daniel D, Dylan I

2nd - Dexter S

3rd - Thomas O

Inter (Year 8-9)

1st - Bertie B

2nd - Lexi L, Ben S

3rd - Owen T

Elite (Year 12)

1st - Eric B

136 LITED

2nd - Joel H

3rd - Danny G

Congratulations to our overall school winners!

1st - Amara P (Year 7)

2nd - Bertie B (Year 8)

3rd - Islaa G (Y7), Robbie S (Y7), Henry S (Y7), Lexi L (Y8), Ben S (Y8)









Year 7 have excelled themselves again in completing a second successful term at BFS. They have continued to settle into Bristol Free School life, and it is a pleasure for staff to watch each student grow and develop into secondary school students. I am incredibly proud of so many students who continue to meet all expectations, arrive at school each day, work hard in lessons and bring such positive contributions to the school community.

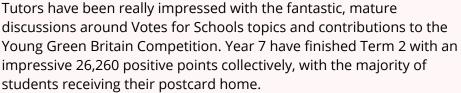












House Parliament students have officially been appointed and huge congratulations to those chosen for House Parliament this year. Well done to all those who applied, and if you were not successful this year, continue to strive and apply again in future years.



There have been some real highlights of the term including extracurricular clubs fully up and running, where students have come together after school for a variety of activities including PE, music, and drama. There has been such a positive atmosphere, sense of community and development of physical and social well-being which is being reflected in the students' commitment to working with our core values.

We have finished the term with a thoroughly enjoyable festive trip to watch Treasure Island at Bristol Old Vic, which was enjoyed by all.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas. I am already excited to see how Year 7 continue to impress us in Term 3.











We are so proud of Year 8 and the incredible focus they have shown throughout Terms 1 and 2 on our theme of Ambition. Every student has been working hard in lessons, each setting and striving towards their own individual ambition target.

A huge highlight was seeing over 60 students volunteer at our annual Open Evening - they were absolutely amazing and represented the year group brilliantly!

This term also featured our Winter Showcase, where students demonstrated creativity and talent, alongside numerous sporting fixtures and clubs, showing commitment and teamwork both on and off the field.

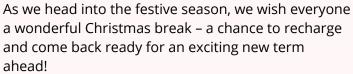












#Year8Pride #Ambition #TeamYear8 #StudentSuccess #MerryChristmas

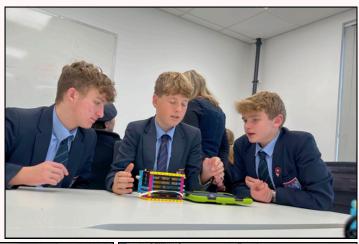






Year 9 have had a fantastic start to the year. One highlight has been their commitment to supporting Year 7s with reading during tutor time each week. It has been inspiring to see this sense of community in action. A special well done to 9TG3 for winning the tutor reading competition too!

We have also seen incredible ambition from the year group, with every available Duke of Edinburgh slot filled and plenty of chatter about volunteering – a brilliant example of students stepping out of their comfort zones. One of our assemblies this year focused on that very theme, and Year 9 engaged brilliantly.











Beyond the classroom, Year 9 participation in House Parliament has been fantastic, and our rugby and netball teams have represented the year group with pride.

Finally, a huge shout out to the wonderful Year 9 tutor team for their ongoing support and dedication. We are looking forward to starting the new year with the Year 9 options process, an exciting next step for our students.

Wishing all our Year 9 families a joyful Christmas and a successful New Year!





















We are thrilled to celebrate the fabulous start Year 10 has made to Key Stage 4. Terms 1 and 2 have been filled with numerous opportunities, and academically, Year 10 has been amazing. Teaching staff consistently praise their attitude to learning and engagement in lessons.

Recently, Year 10 participated in an RP mock exam. In the lead-up, Mrs Stuttard highlighted how fantastic they were during the after-school period 7 lessons, with nearly half the year group attending. On the day of the mock, Year 10 impressed everyone, with the exams team praising their conduct upon entering the exam hall.







Beyond academics, Year 10 has been engrossed in extra-curricular activities, including netball, basketball, and the winter showcase. A particular highlight for the tutor team was Open Evening, where Year 10 students volunteered to assist subject departments in showcasing their learning, and speaking to prospective Year 7 students and their parents.

Wishing everyone a wonderful Christmas and a restful break!





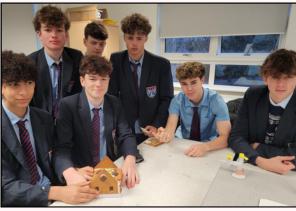




It feels surreal writing this - our final Christmas newsletter for this amazing year group. What a journey it has been so far! Over the past two terms, Year 11 have truly impressed us with their resilience, determination, and self-motivation. Faced with challenges like their mock exams, they didn't just rise to the occasion - they gave it their all. We have seen the effort, the revision resources, and the commitment, and we couldn't be prouder.

Alongside their academic achievements, Year 11 have excelled in extra-curricular activities, including netball and rugby. Their commitment and teamwork have been inspiring.







I also opened applications for the Prom Committee, and the response was incredible! The application forms were excellent, and I am looking forward to working alongside this fantastic team to create a prom that truly reflects our wonderful year group.

Congratulations to our Prom Committee superstars.

Henry B, Thomas, Sonny, Mollie-Mae, Josh P, Sophia, Lexi, Lulah, Martha, Issy W, Fiona, Orla, Nina, Katy S, Issy E.

Of course, no Christmas at BFS would be complete without our festive tradition - the Christmas competition! This year, it was all about gingerbread houses. For two joyful days, the room was filled with laughter, teamwork, and the sound of Christmas songs as students built their masterpieces. It was a truly wholesome moment that reminded us why this year group is so special. Congratulations to TG2 on winning this year's competition.

I say it every year - and I mean it: Year 11 have been an absolute delight. Their positivity, resilience, and sense of community make them a joy to work with.

Enjoy the holidays, recharge, and come back ready for an exciting term ahead. We will see you on Tuesday 6 January. Until then, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Ms Ludwell and the Year 11 tutors.















It has been a fantastic autumn term for our Sixth Form students, full of achievement, ambition, and plenty of moments that have made us proud.





Year 12 - A Brilliant Start to Sixth Form

Our new Year 12 cohort have made an excellent transition into Sixth Form life. They have embraced the step up with maturity, energy, and a willingness to get stuck in.

One of the standout features of their first full term has been their commitment to our school community. From supporting younger students as reading mentors to helping teach musical instruments, they have already become positive role models around the school. It has been wonderful seeing them share their skills, encouragement, and talents with lower years.

With January assessments approaching, we wish Year 12 the very best of luck. Given their impressive start, we know they will rise to the challenge.









Year 13 - Determined, Focused, and Flying High

Year 13 have shown real drive this term. They have completed their first full set of mock exams and achieved exceptional early results - a clear sign of their hard work and determination. Alongside this, many have been busy fine-tuning UCAS applications, drafting personal statements, and preparing for competitive interviews. It has been a demanding few months, but they have handled it with focus and ambition.

As they head into a well-earned Christmas break, we hope they find time to relax, recharge, and enjoy some festive downtime. The new year brings a second round of mocks and the countdown to final summer exams - but if this term is anything to go by, they are more than ready for what is ahead.



2025







A huge congratulations to everyone involved in the Winter Showcase last week. It was such a wonderful evening, so full of warmth and talent. We are so proud of everyone who took part, performers and crew alike, and feel honoured to work with such a talented bunch! We also raised an impressive £715.78 for our House charities.

Well done everyone.













































BOOK REVIEWS

PERFORMING ARTS



On Tuesday, 190 Year 7 students visited Bristol Old Vic Theatre to watch the Christmas performance of Treasure Island. It was a fantastic show and enjoyed immensely by the students and staff.











ENGLISH



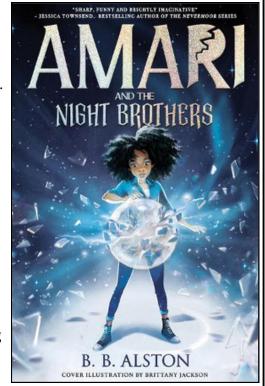
Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B Alston Review by Nabeeha, Year 8

The story starts with a young girl, Amari, who is determined to find her older brother, Quinton. Everyone else has forgotten and given up. But Amari still keeps trying. But the real story starts when she gets an unusual invitation offering her the chance to join the Secretive Bureau of Supernatural Affairs. This is an organisation beyond the ordinary world but then Amari discovers a dangerous ability causing horror and dismay.

But to find her brother she faces shocking and dangerous trials, facing powerful enemies as she uncovers shocking secrets.

The book is filled with suspense, courage and mysteries that I couldn't stop reading.

That's why I highly recommend this book to anyone who likes thrilling mysteries and adventure. This is a book that proves that adventure is just a page away.









Last Wednesday, a fantastic group of Year 7 and Year 8 girls proudly represented BFS at the first ever Bristol Trampolining Competition at Trinity Academy and it was an amazing event!

Each student performed a routine, showing off their hard work, confidence, and incredible skills. From perfect shapes to smooth landings, they truly impressed everyone watching. The energy in the room was electric, and our girls absolutely rose to the challenge!



We are eagerly waiting for the official results later this week, but one thing is certain – they were phenomenal! Their enthusiasm made us all proud. This was a brilliant opportunity to shine and experience competitive trampolining at its best.

A HUGE well done to everyone - you have set the bar high for future competitions. A special mention to Amara P in Year 7 who won her category with a score of 7.7.

PE hosted their second House competition of the year this week, with every year group taking part across every House once again. The atmosphere has been electric for a second term in a row!

The students have fully embodied the competition this term, with so much chatter and conversation around which team has how many points! It has been a real pleasure for the PE department to have hosted something that students are now really buying into and enjoying. Well done to every single student who took part - you were amazing!

The final scores are:

Ashton: 237 **Blaise: 148** Canford: 171 Durdham: 284

The final scores from all sporting events and sports day in July will be added to award the Sports Cup at the

end of the year.







UPCOMING FIXTURES

Wednesday 7 January	Y10 Girls Sports Hall Athletics Competition	Redland Green School				
Thursday 8 January	U16 Basketball vs Cotham School	BFS				



CAREERS



Connect With Us

Connect with us on LinkedIn! @Bristol Free School. Join in the conversation and help us if you can.

Work Experience Employer Talks Careers Day



On Friday 12 December, we welcomed Beth Philips, Practice Tutor Assessor and Registered Probation Officer, to our Employer Talk. Beth spoke to students about a career as a Probation Officer within HM Prison and Probation Service. She explained that the core probation values are Purpose, Openness, Humanity, and Togetherness.



Beth described the role of a probation officer and what her day-to-day work involves. A probation officer plays a crucial role in the criminal justice system by supervising individuals who have been released from prison on probation or sentenced to community-based orders instead of incarceration. Their primary responsibility is to ensure that offenders comply with court conditions, which may include attending rehabilitation programs, avoiding criminal activity, and maintaining regular contact.

Probation officers act as a bridge between the offender and society, supporting reintegration while safeguarding public safety. They conduct risk assessments to determine the likelihood of reoffending and create tailored supervision plans. This often involves monitoring behaviour, conducting home visits, and liaising with other agencies such as social services, mental health professionals, and law enforcement.

In addition to enforcement, probation officers provide guidance and support to help individuals address underlying issues such as substance misuse, unemployment, or housing instability.

Beth then explained the qualifications required to become a probation officer. She explained that there are different roles within the Probation Service, such as administration or Probation Service Officer. Both roles offer the opportunity to gain a Level 3 qualification (equivalent to A Levels), which can lead to applying for a Trainee Probation Officer position.

You can also apply after completing a relevant degree, such as criminology. If your degree is in an unrelated subject, you can still join and study alongside working to build the necessary knowledge base. During this time, you would be known as a PQiP (Professional Qualification in Probation). Once qualified, you would hold a Level 5 vocational qualification. An apprenticeship route will also be available soon.

Students also learned about salary scales within the Probation Service, where the highest level - Band 5 (Manager Grade) - currently offers earnings between £44,100 and £46,000.

Many thanks to Beth for her time and engaging talk.

CAN YOU HELP?

Are you able to offer Work Experience to one of our Year 10 or Year 12 students? If you work locally and are able to offer a placement, please get in touch: careers@bristolfreeschool.org.uk. Thank you!

Year 10: Wednesday 1 - Friday 3 July 2026 Year 12: Wednesday 8 - Friday 10 July 2026

COMING UP...

9 January: Ministry of Defence **16 January:** Public Relations **23 January:** Pharmacy **30 January:** Chiropractic **6 February:** Construction **13 February:** Medicine

COMMUNITY AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Free support sessions

Join us for free information and support sessions covering a variety of topics both in person and online, run by parents for parents.

No diagnosis is needed, this is a supportive space to connect, share experiences and gain practical advice. As our Let's Talk sessions are interactive, we'd appreciate you keeping your cameras on. For everything else you can switch it off and participate as much or as little as you like.

Click the image below or visit: www.bit.ly/Getbookednow





















Barnardo's Children Affected By Parental Offending Network **Bristol Reflective Session**



THIS IS A FREE SESSION FOR THE CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE IN BRISTOL.

Free for CAPO champions, supporters, and those interested in practice development.

Facilitated by Polly Wright.

The session will include:

- a young person from TIME MATTERS.

Polly Wright is a freelance consultant specialising in children, families and criminal justice. Previously a Children's Services Manager for Barnardo's, she developed and managed the National Information Centre on Children of Offenders and supported the strategic development of Barnardo's prison-based services across England.

A freelance consultant since 2018, she was the lead consultant on the Clinks 'Think Family' programme (2019), developed 'Keeping People Safe in Prison' (Pact, INQUEST and Prison Reform Trust 2019), authored **Nobody's** Listening: what families say about prison healthcare (Pact, 2023)

She is also an associate of KCA training and a member of Children of Prisoners Europe.



https://CAPOReflective Session.eventbrite.co.uk



Timings 10.30am - 1pm **Venue**: St Werburghs Community centre, 22 Horley Rd, Bristol BS2 9TJ

environment. Don't miss out!

Date: 17th March 2025

https://BarnardosCAPOtraining2.eventbrite.co.uk

· Become part of the network of CAPO champions

Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment

This event will enhance your skills and knowledge in a supportive and engaging

Reflect on the impact of having a parent in prison from arrest, going to court,

Consider how to provide trauma informed support to children, young people

Introductory training provided by Barnardo's and a parent with lived experience.