

# Weekly Update

## Words from the Headteacher

I am very pleased to be able to share our news about the 6<sup>th</sup> form. Last Friday, after the newsletter had been circulated, we received confirmation from the Department for Education (DfE) that we had been successful in securing capital funding to convert block 2 to house the School's 6<sup>th</sup> form. The bidding process began in the autumn term and closed in the early part of the spring term. We were due to hear the results in May but delays to the process, in part caused by the General Election, meant that the DfE's decision making timetable kept shifting. Even though this news is long overdue, it is most welcome. Bristol Free School always set out to be a school which included a 6<sup>th</sup> form and whilst last year we were granted permission to change our age range from 11 – 16 to 11 – 18, the final part of the jigsaw is the capital to build the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

The capital funding means that we can start our building project this side of the summer holidays and be certain that the 6<sup>th</sup> form will be ready to welcome our Year 12 students (current Year 10s) in September 2016.

Much work has been going on behind the scenes, not only to secure the capital funds but to ensure that we are able to provide our students with outstanding 6<sup>th</sup> form provision. For this I must thank RET for their tireless work and persistence in chasing the DfE's decision over the funding. Over the next few weeks and months you will see the fruits of these labours including a 6<sup>th</sup> form website, curriculum plans, policies and programmes of study together with architectural plans which will put the BFS 6<sup>th</sup> form firmly on the map.

Our students, in particular Year 10 (as they are for the next week before becoming Year 11) will play a vital role in designing the 6<sup>th</sup> form. They, together with governors and parents, have already given us a clear steer about how they would like the 6<sup>th</sup> form to be and you will see this influence in all aspects of the 6<sup>th</sup> form from pre-opening to the physical features of the building when students enter for the first time in September 2016. I will be calling on our students to help deliver the 6<sup>th</sup> form from next September. They will be needed to help influence the design of their 6<sup>th</sup> form environment at each crucial stage of the building process. Our students know that as 6<sup>th</sup> formers at BFS, they will receive the highest quality teaching and learning, nonetheless, with their role in the shaping of the learning environment over these next few months, they will also be able to say that they had a true hand in the final design of the building.

For our founding students this is both a unique opportunity and a significant responsibility to all of the 6<sup>th</sup> formers who will follow them through BFS. This is why the news from the DfE is so timely. Our Year 10 students have just completed their work experience, another milestone in their education and when they start in September will be our founding Year 11. The worry of where they will go after Year 11 has now been removed and each and every student can take the opportunity to have a say in the creation of our 6<sup>th</sup> form.

I am in no doubt that our 6<sup>th</sup> form will rival the very best in the city and wider region.



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**Richard Clutterbuck**



Some pictures from the Year 7 residential trip to the PGL activity centre in North Devon



**Discovery Prize**

Last week saw the grand finale of the now annual BFS Discovery Prize! Students from Years 7 & 8 were invited to create an engaging and informative project on any scientific idea they wanted. Winners of the heats were put through to the finals, where each project was presented to friends, family and staff, and the voting commenced! There were some highly original ideas, including 'Does cheese give you nightmares?', 'Which came first, the chicken or the egg?' and 'Are ghosts real?' Winners will be announced during the end of term assembly, but a huge well done to everyone who took part.

**Well done Daniella**

Congratulations to Daniella Lloyd (Y8) who was recently chosen for the England Synchronised Swimming Squad in the 13- 15 age group. The team returned from the Primorje Synchro Cup in Croatia at the end of June with a silver medal and is now looking forward to a competition in Rome, where they will face teams from Russia, China and the USA. The competition in Croatia was an excellent experience for the team and Daniella's selection to the national squad is just reward for her dedication and determination.

Good luck in Rome!

**World War 1 battlefields**

A group of 38 students and six staff set off from Bristol Free School at 5 am on Monday to embark on the History department's first residential visit. Following a coach journey and ferry crossing to Calais students and staff immersed themselves in the battlefields of World War I. Students reflected on the sacrifice made by many between 1914-18 as they visited Langemark, a German war cemetery and then the 'In Flanders Fields' museum in Ypres. After tea, Matthew Ghosh and Sophie Fulford took part in a ceremony of remembrance at the Menin Gate where they laid a wreath on behalf of the School. A haunting performance of 'In Flanders Fields' by an *a capello* quartet created a fitting atmosphere for the ceremony of remembrance.

The following day the group travelled to the Somme where some of the heaviest British casualties were suffered. Visits were made to Vimy Ridge, Newfoundland Park, Lochnager, Thiepval and finally to a small cemetery dedicated to the Devonshire Regiment where a relative of Mr Sillince was buried. Mrs Sillince laid a wreath on behalf of the Sillince family in a moment which bought home the personal loss suffered during the first world war.

The final day saw students exploring preserved German and British trenches. The visit proved to be a huge success. Thank

you to all students for their efforts to engage with a difficult topic on the trip and also to Mr Parry, Mr Collis, Mrs Sillince, Miss West and Miss Young who assisted the students throughout the trip. Here's to many more successful historical visits!

Mr Bishop

**Zombie fighting**

One of the aspiration week activities for Year 9 students has been zombie fighting, based in the Science department. Teams were asked to design and build a trebuchet which could launch a tennis ball across the field, hopefully far enough to ward off a zombie attack! Points were awarded for the best ideas, the distance that the ball eventually reached, and also for team style and flair. The activity culminated in a mass launch on the school field, as well as the launch of a giant trebuchet made by Mr Ashley.



**Found property**

Parents and carers are welcome to check through the School's found property box between 3.00 pm and 4.30 pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday next week and claim anything which belongs to their child. Students will have a final chance to check the found property on the last day of term. Anything unclaimed and not named will be put to use in the School or given to charity.

**Term 6 – Key Dates**

Please see the calendar at [www.bristolfreeschool.org.uk](http://www.bristolfreeschool.org.uk) for other important dates.

July	
Tuesday 14	Trip to Barcelona returns
Wednesday 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspiration week finishes</li> <li>Volunteers' meeting</li> </ul>
Thursday 16	Sports Day
Friday 17	End of term 6: school finishes at 1.45 pm