

Dear parents, carers and students

This week we have thrown ourselves into the festive spirit!

We have had so much fun visiting and judging the tutor decorating competition. I was lucky enough to judge 9TG2 who had a real snow flurry, and an elf and Rudolf welcome as we entered! Once inside, there were wonderful decorations and Mr Harris dressed up as Father Christmas. It was honestly the most fun I have had in ages!



**THANK YOU TO ALL
PARENTS AND CARERS
WHO DONATED LOVELY
GIFTS FOR OUR STAFF THIS
YEAR!**



DRAMA AND

MUSIC SHOWCASE

The Drama and Music Showcase was another highlight this week. A big thank you to all the friends and families who supported the event.

I was so proud of the talent and bravery of our young people, performing in front of a full Drama Hall. A big shout out for Mrs Jerome, Mrs Kennard and Mrs Humphries too. It was a wonderful evening full of sparkle!

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

On Wednesday, the Innovate team cooked a fantastic Christmas dinner and homemade Christmas Pudding. Thank you to Ann and her great catering team.



We sold over 800 servings of the Christmas lunch and students enjoyed themselves wearing their Christmas jumpers! I would like to thank all the donations we received on Wednesday which will be used to support the challenging work of the Red Cross. This was a charity chosen by our student parliament who wanted us to do something positive for the innocent victims of recent conflicts.

PARENT SURVEY

In this newsletter, I have included the Parent Survey results that we did in November (see next page). More detailed feedback about our next steps will be shared next term in a live event.

THANK YOU!

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to parents and carers for your support over the last 12 months. What contributes to BFS' success is the positive partnerships it has with families and the wider community. We feel your warmth and support and that really helps us do our job.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to welcoming students back in 2024.

Remember, school returns on Wednesday 3 January - early this year!



MRS S KING

PARENT SURVEY NOVEMBER 2023

Thank you to all parents and carers who found the time to complete the November Parent Survey. We had 330 responses which is down from previous years and may reflect how busy everyone now is. I am sharing the graphs from the survey and will speak in more detail at the mid-year Headteacher Live update about the more nuanced feedback.

The main themes for us to focus on are around communication regarding your child's progress and widening participation in our enrichment offers.

3. How often is your child reading outside of school?

● Daily	124
● Weekly	134
● Monthly	38
● Yearly	12
● Never	22



5. How good is the quality of teaching your child is receiving?

● Excellent	43
● Very good	158
● Good	115
● Poor	10
● Very poor	4



7. How good is student behaviour in our school?

● Excellent	37
● Very good	119
● Good	136
● Poor	36
● Very poor	2



9. During the past year, how regularly has your child engaged in after school activities?

● More than once a week	41
● Once a week	98
● Infrequently	120
● Never	71

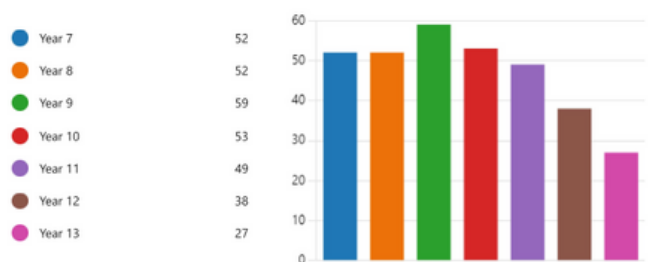


15. How eco-friendly is our school?

● Very eco-friendly	28
● Moderately eco-friendly	167
● Not very eco-friendly	37
● Not at all eco-friendly	4
● Is becoming more eco-friendly	27



1. What school year is your child in?



2. How would you rate your child's overall experience in school at the moment?

● Excellent	49
● Very good	134
● Good	130
● Poor	15
● Very poor	2



4. How safe do you feel your child is in school?

● Very safe	175
● Somewhat safe	121
● Neither safe nor unsafe	23
● Somewhat unsafe	8
● Very unsafe	3



6. Please indicate what you think about the amount of homework your child is set.

● Not enough	36
● About right	222
● Could be more	53
● Too much	19



8. How well do you understand the progress your child is making at school?

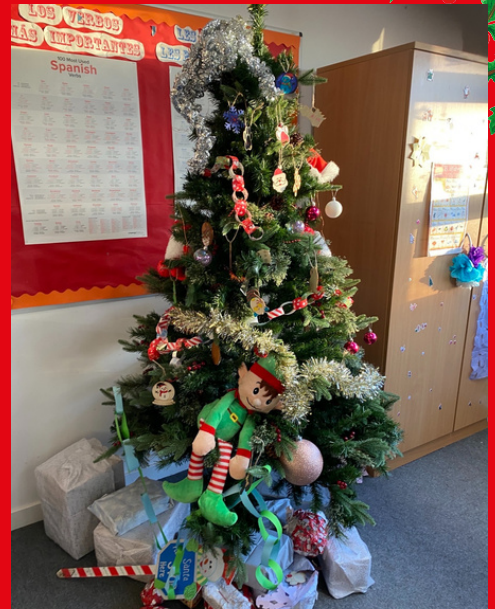
● Extremely well	65
● Somewhat well	148
● Neutral	50
● Somewhat not well	52
● Extremely not well	15

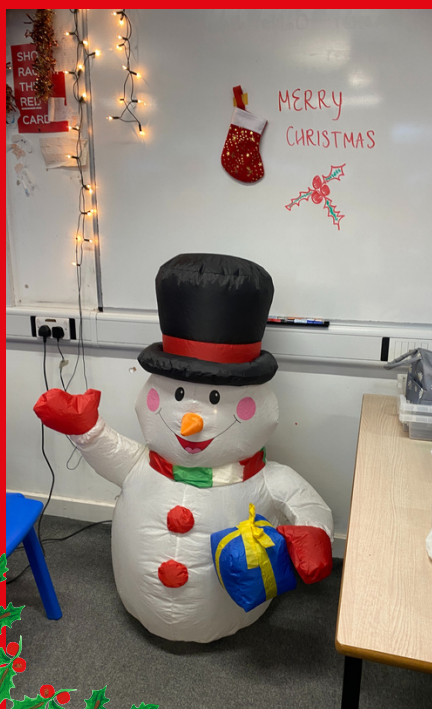
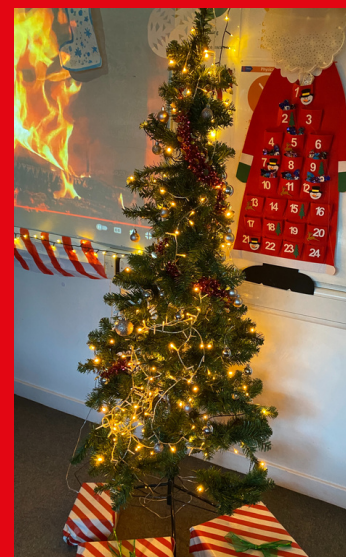


10. How good is communication from school?

● Excellent	57
● Very good	104
● Good	130
● Poor	29
● Very poor	10







YEAR LEADERS REVIEW OF TERM 2!



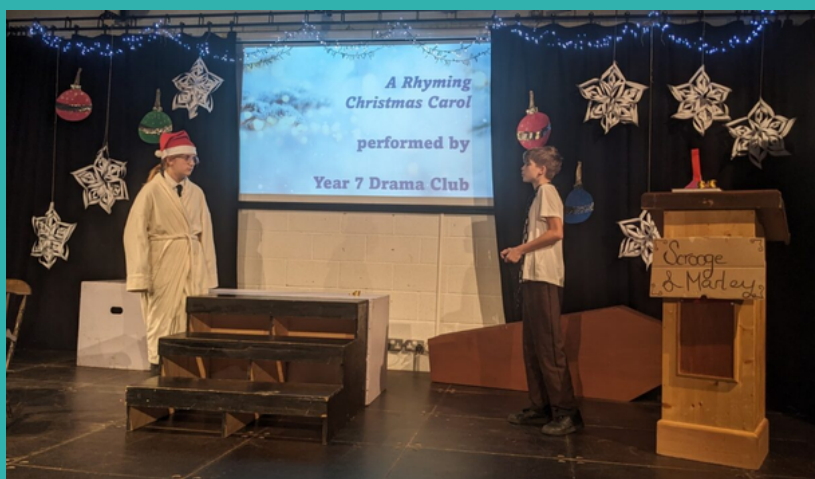
YEAR 7 - MRS MACBLAIN

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!

Tutors have been really impressed with the fantastic, mature discussions around Votes for Schools topics and contributions to the Young Green Britain Competition. Year 7 have finished Term 2 with a whopping 18530 positive points collectively, with the majority of students receiving their postcard home. Year 7 also have the highest attendance (96.2%) in the school to date, which is another great accomplishment for the cohort, demonstrating their enthusiasm and resilience.

House Leaders have officially been appointed and huge congratulations to the chosen House Leaders 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 extra-curricular 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. To finish it was an absolute pleasure to bring my own children to watch the Winter Showcase where the Year 7s performed magnificently.



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

YEAR 8 - MR LANGEVELDT



It has been a wonderful first term for Year 8 at BFS. The cohort have settled into the year extremely well and I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing each student grow and develop. I am proud of so many students who continue to meet all expectations, arrive at school each day, work hard in lesson and bring positive contributions to the school.

Sport leaders have officially been appointed and huge congratulations to the chosen Year 8s. Well done to the huge number of students applied to be sports leaders – Please continue striving and apply again in the future.

Highlights this term include extra-curricular clubs, including, Homework Club, Debate Club and Games Club. If you haven't managed to join a club yet, it's not too late to sign up in the new term. Staff have been working hard to create new clubs, so keep your eyes on the Clubs Booklet on the website!

Further highlights include poems written by Year 8s for Remembrance Day and Anti-Bullying Week – big thank you to Daisy TG5 and Emily TG1. A number of Year 8s have been amazing and helped out with assemblies throughout the term – Black History Month saw Tess, Muhammed, Jakub, Melissa and Fatimata share stories about their family.

'Role models' assembly saw Year 8 Tutor Groups pick a role model:

TG1 Barack Obama
TG2 Mary Earps
TG3 Andy Day
TG4 Marcus Rashford
TG5 Mary Earps
TG7 Stormzy

And currently, tutor groups have been decorating their rooms for the Christmas competition. All tutor groups have gone all out! The themes for each tutor group below.

TG1 – Winter wonderland – winners – everything used was from recycled products. Even had a visit from Father Christmas, however, no presents as it was too early. Very impressive and creative. Well done.

- TG2 – Christmas magic
- TG3 – Christmas miracle – third place
- TG4 – Santa's sleigh - second place
- TG5 – Grinch's cave
- TG6 – Christmas funk
- TG7 – Santa's post office



What a term it has been! I am so impressed to see so many of the Year 8s stepping up to meet expectations, face new challenges and embrace new opportunities. Make the most of your time off with loved ones and enjoy a well-deserved break.

See you in January!



YEAR 9 - MS LUDWELL

I could easily write an essay on how well Year 9 have started this academic year, but I won't as I have been given strict instructions to not write a 40-mark answer!

In the past 3 months, we have:

- Written Remembrance and Anti-Bullying poems in tutor.
- Helped Ms Ludwell with assembly by creating and presenting their tutor group role model and Anti-Bullying poetry.
- Been outstanding members of our community and mentored Year 7s with reading.
- Been ambitious and attended career talks.
- 153 students have signed up for DofE - the highest intake!
- Gotten involved in the Addams family musical.
- Oracy pioneers
- Fantastic enthusiasm, skills and teamwork in the Netball, Hockey, boys and girls Rugby Teams.
- Attended Deago Bailey's rugby training session.
- Led assembly as Language Ambassadors.
- Supported teachers and the school by volunteering to help with Open Evening.
- Allowed Year 9s voices to be heard through our members of House Parliament.



Three standout moments for me were watching the students demonstrate their empathy and creativity when groups within the tutor group wrote a stanza each to create one tutor poem to advocate for anti-bullying and Remembrance Day. Students were nominated to read out their poems in assembly and the way they confidently presented was impressive!

From a sports perspective, Year 9 have engaged enthusiastically in training and their matches. I have enjoyed watching your progression as individuals and within the team. Their resilience to play in during any elements is admirable and their spirits are never dampened!

Finally, I have loved judging their tutor rooms for the Christmas competition! I have been metaphorically hit with the Christmas spirit: "elfie door", masses of baked goods that were all delicious, paper chains, TikToks, tinsel, fake snow and stunning singing of "Feliz Navidad" and "Last Christmas." Mrs Conway and Mrs King supported with the judging, and they have been very impressed with the community and festive feel Year 9 have created!

As you can see, Year 9 don't make it easy for me to summarise their experience so far but what does make me proud to be their Head of Year is how they are taking the opportunities given to them, showing ambition for their future and representing our community. Well done Year 9 and have a lovely, safe Christmas.



YEAR 10 - MISS URCH

It has been a busy term for Year 10, so buckle up! The year group have quickly settled into their array of GCSEs and staff have noted how calm and hard working the year group are.

Struggles have been juggling their studies with Sport, Music, Drama and many other talents and interests, both in and out of school. Over 50 students have signed up to the Silver Duke of Edinburgh award since completing their bronze and are volunteering at an array of different clubs and charities both in school and the community.

A number of students have been a part of many sports teams and clubs, notably the U16 Girls Football Team getting through to the 5th round of the National Football Cup. Well done to everyone involved in the Christmas Drama performance - you were all fantastic!

Students embraced the Christmas grotto theme, and a huge congratulations to 10TG7 who just pipped TG3 and TG7 to the winning spot! Students have baked, sewn, chiselled, sang and jumped their way to a much-deserved Christmas break. Have a lovely rest, be safe and look after one another. See you all in January 2024!



YEAR 11 - MISS BATE

I am so impressed with the way Year 11 have started this academic year, especially their outstanding attitude towards the mock exams. It was wonderful to see so many students putting in their best efforts and revising diligently in class and during social time. This week in assembly, I shared with students some of the many positive comments I received from staff over the last fortnight.

Just last week, Year 11 were Sixth Formers for a day. It was such a valuable experience for the students and was wonderful to see them happy and thriving in their subject choices. Many thanks to Mr Smith, Ms Norton and Ms Exon for their hard work in running the day!



So far this term, we have celebrated incredible sporting achievements, such as the undefeated Boys Rugby Team and Girls Netball Team. Well done to all students involved!

As we approach the new term, we will be maintaining our high standards of uniform. All students must be wearing blazers with no excessive piercings or pencil skirts. Thank you in advance for your support with this in January.

Students are to be made aware in assembly next term that the Passport to Prom is being launched. Students need to have net positive house points to attend the prom next year.

Wishing Year 11 and their families a restful (and well-deserved!) Christmas break. It's been a fantastic journey so far, and I look forward to seeing what the rest of the year holds for us, especially with exciting events like prom nearing. Keep up the great work Year 11!

SIXTH FORM - MR SMITH



It has been a very busy term in the Sixth Form. We have been joined by a new cohort of Year 12 students who have very quickly acclimatised to the specific requirements of A Level and BTEC study - particularly the new free periods and the increasing emphasis on independent study.

Year 12, alongside many of our Year 13s, have also begun volunteering in one of over 40 different activities - from reading with Year 6 students in local primaries, to coaching extra-curricular sports teams, to mentoring Year 11 students who need revision support. It is always such a joy to see students give back to the wider school community in this way. Year 12 students will next have their January Assessments which will be the first indication of the progress that they are making in their subjects and their first opportunity to sit extended papers and receive detailed feedback - good luck to you in your revision!

Similarly, Year 13 students have impressed us with their resilience, determination and consistency at the start of this very important year. Students have recently been concentrating on their mock exams and on submitting their university and apprenticeship applications. Students are applying for a diverse range of courses (from Medicine to Mechanical Engineering to Environmental Science) at a range of local and far-flung destinations (from Southampton to York to Boston (US)). A few students have also been offered interviews on the early-entry courses at Oxbridge universities and for Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

In terms of trips, Year 13 Geography students have recently completed their 5-day fieldwork to Slapton Sands, Year 12 and Year 13 English students have attended the Poems of the Decade Conference in London, Religion and Philosophy students have listened to speeches at Worcester Cathedral, Food and Nutrition students have attended a one-day conference and a group of Sixth Form Science students have completed a residential trip to Cern. We are looking forward to a wide range of trips planned for later in the year.



We have also been supporting Year 11 students with their decision for next year through our Open Evening events, tours and through Sixth Former for a Day. Any students or parents/carers who have any further questions about this (or who would like to arrange a tour), can email sixthform@bristolfreeschool.org.uk

Well done to all Sixth Formers on a great start to the year and we look forward to seeing you again after the Christmas break.



BFS COOKS



CADBURY WORLD TRIP!

MS EVANS

Year 9 went on a chocolate-filled trip to Cadbury World! They were able to explore how chocolate is manufactured, marketed, and researched. They also found out about the story behind Cadbury and were able to experience the Cadabra ride and 4D cinema which took them through a 'wonderland' of chocolate.



BFS Student Voice

Benjamin Zephaniah

Benjamin Obadiah Iqbal Zephaniah was a British writer, poet, and actor. He was born on 15 April 1958 and peacefully passed on the 7 December 2023 at the age of 65.

Benjamin was dyslexic and he attended an approved school but left aged 13, unable to read or write. He persevered and discovered his love for the written word. Zephaniah was given an old, manual typewriter to begin his passion for writing.

Zephaniah's first piece of poetry to be published was 'Pen Rhythm.'

Zephaniah has said that his mission was to fight the dead image of poetry in academia, and to "take it everywhere" to people who do not read books.

He turned poetry readings into concert-like performances.



He began performing at demonstrations, youth gatherings and outside police stations. "I was a big protester, not just against racism but also apartheid. We are a multicultural society, but the institutions must catch up with us," he said in 2019.

His poetry often directly responded to historical and current events. His second poetry collection, 'The Dread Affair', was published in 1985 and featured several poems attacking the British legal system.



His influence on young people's minds is huge and will be remembered with his poetry works and novels at BFS.

He was known all over the world for his creative talents. He released several collections including 'Talking Turkeys', 'Inna Liverpool' and 'School's Out'.

Turning his attention to acting, Zephaniah also played the role of Jeremiah "Jimmy" Jesus in 'Peaky Blinders', appearing in 14 episodes. Upon hearing the news of his death, co-star Cillian Murphy said that he was "so saddened" by this news, adding: "Benjamin was a truly gifted and beautiful human being – a generational poet, writer, musician and activist. A proud Brummie and a Peaky Blinder."

written by Lamis, Year 11



LRC NEWS

MRS SPEAR BRISTOL TEEN BOOK AWARD

The Shortlist for the Bristol Teen Book Award has been announced and we are encouraging our students, particularly the Year 10's and 11's to help with our nomination. With a mixture of genres from the Romantic to the Horror, there will be something for everyone to enjoy.

How to get involved:

Read any title from the list, if you liked it and believe it to be award worthy come and register your vote with a member of the LRC team. Read two or more titles and vote for your favourite.

Who decides on the Winner?

All of the participating Bristol Schools have until the end of January to register their nomination with the BTBA committee – The book with the most BFS votes will be the choice we put forward.

The Awards Ceremony

Once the voting has closed the committee will announce the winner at a special celebration ceremony due to take place at Orchard school in February. It is hoped that several of the nominated Authors will attend.

Please note that the list of nominated Novels includes several that have been recommended as being appropriate for over 14s or 16s which is why we are asking our older students to participate. However, pupils from the younger years are welcome to take part if parents/careers are aware and approve of their reading choices.

With books making an excellent Christmas gift or stocking filler, now is the perfect time to replenish your child's reading collection!

WELCOME TO ST HELL: MY TRANS TEEN MISADVENTURE - LEWIS HANCOX



THIS SUMMER'S SECRETS - EMILY BARR

ACTIVIST - LOUISA REID



THE HAUNTING OF TYRESE WALKER - J P ROSE

CONTENT ADVISORY!

CROSSING THE LINE - TIA FISHER



CONTENT ADVISORY!



STEADY FOR THIS - NATHANAEL LESSORE

CONTENT ADVISORY!

LRC NEWS

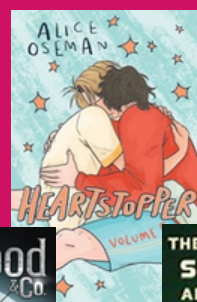


CHRISTMAS READING



MRS GRIFFITHS

The holiday is the perfect time to allow ourselves a chance to unwind, relax and have time for some essential reading. Mrs MacBlain is looking forward to reading *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*, the latest from Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games* series. Mr Treen is planning to finish reading the *Lockwood & Co* series written by Jonathan Stroud and Ms Griffiths is hoping to be gifted the new 'Waterstones Book of the Year', *Impossible Creatures* by Katherine Rundell. *Heartstopper* fans have been excited that the eagerly anticipated fifth book of the series has been recently released. All promise to be riveting reads and will make great Christmas gifts for anyone still needing a stocking filler.



KS3 BINGO CHALLENGE

Earlier this term, the LRC started a Reading Bingo Challenge which encourages and supports students to read a diverse range of appropriate, yet challenging books over the course of the year. When a Bingo Book has been read, students either take an Accelerated Reader quiz on the book or fill in a review slip and it's ticked off the card. Completion of a row or column results in a raffle ticket that will be put in a prize draw to be held later in the year, and a house point. Many students have taken up the challenge already and two have already nearly completed their cards. The raffle tickets are quickly piling up. The Bingo Challenge can be started at any time, so 2024 is a great chance to visit the LRC, pick up a card and get reading. Congratulations to those Bingo Challenge readers who have enjoyed working their way through their card already.



MRS MACBLAIN

BFS SPORT



The Year 7 Netball Team took to the courts one last time this term on Thursday 30 November for the North Bristol Schools Netball Festival. Entering two teams to compete against the other local schools on a very cold wintery day, both teams performed with confidence, resilience and team spirit. Each team played multiple games and there were some wins, draws and losses. As the afternoon progressed, they continued to improve and adapt to their opponents. By the end of the day BFS walked away with 1st and 4th place which is an incredible achievement for two teams who have only been playing for a short time. It has been a pleasure to watch the squad grow and develop and I can't wait for them to be back on the courts next year. Well done Year 7 Netball Team!



BFS COMPUTER SCIENCE

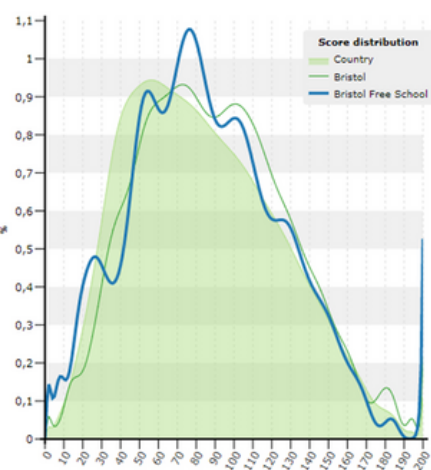
MRS RAMANANDI SUCCESS IN BEBRAS COMPETITION!

Bebras Competition is one of the most recognised competitions in the field of Computer Science, organised by Oxford University. 61 Students are qualified for next round of Oxford University Computing Challenge and will receive certificates - congratulations to all the qualified students and well done to all students for participation! All students will receive their certificates in class.

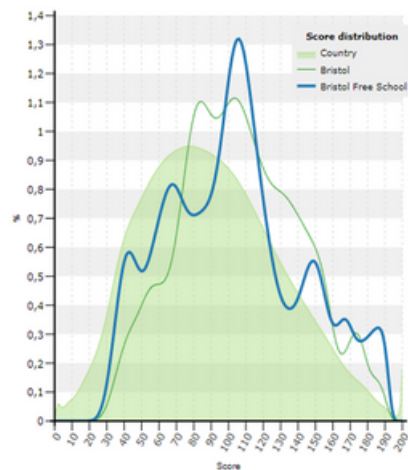
Students from all around the world participated in Bebras Competition this year. More than 87000 students participated in Junior category, 155000 in Inter category, 29000 and 10000 students participated in seniors and elite category respectively in the UK.

More than 650 students from BFS participated in Bebras Competition this year, with the 61 qualifying students being in the top 10% in the UK! To right are our statistics compared to Bristol Schools, and nationally!

Juniors (10-12)				
Description	Min	Avg	Max	Participants
Bristol Free School	2	84.8895	200	190
Bristol	2	89.4320	200	919
Country	2	83.5348	200	87066



Seniors (14-16)				
Description	Min	Avg	Max	Participants
Bristol Free School	35	102.9200	189	50
Bristol	35	106.3417	189	199
Country	2	89.4910	200	29946



WHOLE SCHOOL

1 George A 1 Henry D
1 Peter S
2 Pippa G 3 Rosie D

YEAR 7

1 Fin B
1 Theo BR
2 Harry H
3 Isaac J

YEAR 8

1 Dylan I
2 Ella R
3 Lucy H

YEAR 9

1 George A 1 Henry D
1 Peter S
2 Flo C 3 Chloe G

SENIOR CATEGORY

1 Pippa G
2 Ellie J
3 Ben R

ELITE CATEGORY

1 Harry M
2 Josh M
3 Maha E



BFS DRAMA



DRAMA AND MUSIC WINTER SHOWCASE!



Parents said they "really enjoyed" the performance and "could tell that there was a lot of hard work that went into it" - well done to all students and staff involved!

Face-to-face Routes into STEM 2023/24

Routes into STEM is an experience that provides an amazing opportunity to help students understand the different routes to further STEM education and career pathways.

Who is it for?

Students in Year 9 and 10 who are interested in finding out more about STEM careers. Students should also be within one-hour of travel distance of locations.

What is involved?

- A three-day local experience that includes a day in a college, a day in a university and a day at a STEM company local to them
- Students will explore STEM careers, participate in interactive workshops, site tours and hear from young professionals

What are the outcomes?

- Gain first-hand information and experience hands on activities at STEM educational providers and companies to make informed decisions about their future
- Go on campus tours and get thinking about future studies in a mature and informed manner
- Speak with apprentices/graduates about their experiences
- Develop valuable skills such as presentation skills, team-building, and social skills, and see how they can be applied to their CV, Application Form or Personal Statement
- Become a Bronze Industrial Cadet

Bristol dates & locations

- Tuesday 13th February 2024 - College Day - TBC
- Wednesday 14th February 2024 - University Day - TBC
- Thursday 15th February 2024 - STEM Company Day - TBC

Cost / Funding

£175 for all 3 days. Bursary places are available, to indicate your interest simply select the option on our application form.

To apply, please visit our website [here](https://www.etrust.org.uk).
or scan the QR code!

What our students say

"I loved everything about the course especially the hands on experiences"

"The course was fun, I met alot of like minded people!"

100% felt that they had improved their skills and knowledge by taking part in the Routes into STEM experience

100% of students would recommend the course to a friend or family member



FITNESS, NUTRITION, AND SOCIAL



CRUSH THOSE WINTER FITNESS GOALS WITH OUR AWESOME FULLY FUNDED DROP-IN SESSIONS AT HENBURY LEISURE CENTRE! ⭐

JOIN US FOR A FUN AND EMPOWERING EXPERIENCE WHERE YOU CAN USE FITNESS EQUIPMENT IN DESIGNATED GENDER AREAS, GIVING YOU THE SPACE TO BOOST YOUR CONFIDENCE ON YOUR FITNESS JOURNEY! 💪 DROP IN FOR A CHAT OR USE THE EQUIPMENT AS YOU PLEASE.

IT'S THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO WORK ON YOUR GOALS IN A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT.

AGES 14-16

18TH & 19TH DECEMBER 2PM - 6PM

20TH & 21ST DECEMBER 1.30-5.30

22ND DECEMBER 2PM - 6PM

DROP IN WHENEVER YOU WANT



SOCIAL

A warm social space for all to chat, do crafts and get fit



PERSONAL TRAINING

Optional use of on-site personal trainer to assist with program planning and exercises, making your fitness journey



FOOD

Food stations to make a protein packed lunch



EMAIL INFO@PRO-COACHING.CO.UK FOR A CODE TO JOIN