

# Newsletter



## Greetings from the Principal

### **Week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

This week has been another busy one within the academy. The year 11s have started their mock exams and have been applying themselves fantastically. A large number of year 10s were in Paris, the year 9 netball squad were amazing at a regional competition attended by national scouts and a music trip to Bedford Girls School.

Below I have included some information for parents on vaping. There has been a number of news articles like this one: [Warning a child could die due to illegal drugs in vapes - BBC News](#) highlighting the issue.

### **Vaping Dangers: A Closer Look**

Did you know that a staggering 20.5% of 11-17 year olds in the UK have experimented with vaping. While initially designed for adult smokers, the alluring packaging and fruity flavours have attracted a younger audience.

What makes vaping dangerous for teens? For starters, the lack of regulation has made it easier for young people to purchase vapes with nicotine levels that exceed legal limits. In fact, some have been found to contain up to six times the allowable amount.

Nicotine, a highly addictive substance, can easily distract young users, causing them to lose interest in the positive interests and habits they once had. Moreover, nicotine is linked to depression and anxiety, which can significantly impact their education and overall well-being.

Perhaps the biggest issue is that the long-term effects of vaping and its chemical components are still unknown, leaving us to wonder about the potential health consequences for our children in the future.

### **Approaching the Topic of Vaping with Your Child**

Talking to your child about vaping can be tricky. One of the biggest issues is that many young people believe it is acceptable because it is perceived as less harmful than smoking. To address this issue, it is important to keep an open dialogue with your child. Avoid making big declarations such as "it's bad for you, don't do it," as this may shut down the conversation. Instead, try asking questions like "do many of your friends- vape?" to encourage an open discussion. This will help you gauge how much they know, and whether they have already tried vaping. Once the conversation is underway, you can begin to discuss the negative aspects of vaping.

If you suspect that your child is addicted to vaping, be patient and give them time to talk to you about it. You can also seek help from your GP or local pharmacist to support your child with their addiction.

**Attendance matters:**

This time of year, there are lots of bugs and illness that pupils and staff can suffer from. We encourage you where possible to send your child into school. We can always check on them and if necessary, send them home. An interesting article on the matter can be found here:

[Why is school attendance so important and what are the risks of missing a day? - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2019/09/11/why-is-school-attendance-so-important-and-what-are-the-risks-of-missing-a-day/)

**Proposed merger:**

You will have seen that the BCAT has recently released information on a proposed with Knowledge Schools Trust. Further details can be found here: [Proposed merger of Bedford College Academies Trust and Knowledge Schools Trust - Wixams Academy](#)

Best wishes,



Chris Stainsby

Interim Principal

**Head of Year Messages**

**Exam Support**

Hi There,

Our names are Laura and Christine and we are from the CAMHS Mental Health Support Team in Bedford. We are based weekly in Wixam's Academy offering mental health and emotional wellbeing support to pupils.

This new term we know that the year 11's will be preparing for exam season and this can be a stressful and anxious time for young people, parents/carers and staff. Therefore, we will be offering a lunch time exam stress drop in for year 11 pupils every Thursday. This will be a space for pupils to discuss any worries they have pertaining to exams. We will also provide useful resources and tips such as mindfulness exercises, self-care toolkits, study tips and more.

If your child or pupil is interested in attending these sessions, please feel free to encourage them to pop in for support or a chat.

Thank you,  
Laura and Christine

# Year 11 Exam Stress Drop In

Every Thursday  
Lunch Time  
In the Sancturary



Worried about exams? Feeling stressed? Overwhelmed?  
The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) will be offering a safe space to talk, listen and provide advice to support your wellbeing around exams.  
Drop in and have a chat

## **Food bank**

Dear Families,

As the Winter is getting closer and we are all feeling the effects of rising bills and cost of living, we wanted to remind families that if you are struggling and need support with sourcing food for your family, we are here to help.

The Heads of Year have access to the Food bank and can issue families with food bank vouchers for a number of locations across Bedford.

If you do need to access a food bank voucher please contact your Head of Year. Full confidentiality is observed.

Thanks

*Holly Davies*

***Mrs Davies & the Head of Year Team***

## **Music**

This week we took 8 year 10 students to Bedford Girls' School to take part in a workshop with players from the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The students listened to world class performances by the players, and then discussing their career as a professional musician and compositional techniques.

I was particularly impressed that our students were brave enough to ask the musicians questions in front of students from 6 other schools.

*Chloe Blessing*

**Head of Music**



**Dates for your diary:**

13 <sup>th</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 11 GCSE Mock Exams – 5.30pm – 7.00pm
20 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 12-13 Psychology Trip – Freud Museum
30 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 9 Reports go home
30 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 13 Criminology & Law Trip – Royal Courts of Justice
5 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 9 Parent Consultations – Early closure for all students
7 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Tree Festival – St Paul’s Square
11 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 12 Criminology NEA
13 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas showcase – 6.00-7.30pm
14 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 13 Criminology NEA
14 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 7 Disco – Time TBC
19 <sup>th</sup> December	End of Term – Pupils finish at 1pm

