



BEECHEN CLIFF

PROSPECTIVE PARENTS EVENING - TUESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Questions	
Question	Answer
How are teaching groups organised?	<p><b>Year 7</b> Pupils are streamed in English/Maths in Year 7 based on KS2 data, SAT data and CAT data. All other classes are mixed ability.</p> <p><b>Year 8/9</b> Pupils are set in Maths/Computing/ICT and to some extent in English and Languages. All other classes are mixed ability.</p> <p><b>Year 10/11</b> Pupils are set in Maths, Science and to some extent in English. All other classes are mixed ability.</p>
What are class sizes like?	Class sizes are around 27 on average. Some groups, particularly top sets, may be larger and up to 32 students. Some support groups can have less than 10 students.
Is there a house system?	There are 5 Houses: Byron, Chaucer, Kipling, Milton and Shakespeare. Pupils stay in the same house throughout their school career. Siblings will be in the same house but not the same tutor group.
How are tutor groups organised?	Each house has 10 tutor groups: eight of which are for the lower school and two of which are for the Sixth Form. Our lower school tutor groups are vertical with each group having around 25 pupils with approximately 5 pupils from each year group (Years 7-11) in each tutor group.

<p>What food is available in school?</p>	<p>We have an excellent catering team led by our Head Chef, Mr Keal. A range of drinks and snacks are available to purchase at break times and a large variety of hot food, and sandwiches are served at lunchtimes. We run a cash free school where parents add money to pupils' accounts via Parent Pay.</p>
<p>What trips do you run?</p>	<p>We run a huge variety of trips. Some of these are linked to the curriculum, such as language exchanges, museum visits, field trips and trips to a power station. Others are sporting trips such as football and cricket tours and ski trips. There are opportunities to experience new cultures such as the China visit and the charity project in Romania. A large number of trips involve outdoor activities including Ten Tors, Duke of Edinburgh, Three Peaks, Centurion Challenge, Coast to Coast and visits to our cottage at Tir-y-Cwm in Wales.</p>
<p>What are the timings of the school day?</p>	<p>See the school website: <i>Menu, School Day, Timings of the School Day.</i></p>
<p>What clubs and activities take place?</p>	<p>Our extra-curricular programme is second to none and there are a large variety of activities for pupils to join in with. We encourage all our pupils to take part and believe these opportunities and experiences beyond the classroom are crucial to character development. For more information on our extra-curricular programmes see the school website: <i>Menu, Extra Curricular Activities.</i></p>
<p>How many lessons are there in each subject each week?</p>	<p>An overview of the curriculum subjects and the hours allocated for each subject is available on the school website: <i>Menu, Curriculum &amp; Assessment, Curriculum Overview</i> and then select <i>Academic Curriculum by Year</i> from the downloads.</p>
<p>What are the admissions criteria for the school?</p>	<p>Please see our admissions page on our website: <i>Menu, Admissions, Lower School Admissions.</i> For further information please contact our Admissions Officer, Mrs S Davies at school.</p>

<p>My son is a strong sportsman. How do we apply for the sporting aptitude places that are available? When will this assessment evening take place?</p>	<p>Information on admissions, including the sporting aptitude places is available in our admissions policy. The assessment evening normally takes place in October. <b>However, please note in the current circumstances this evening will not be able to take place in 2020 and therefore applications will be considered on the next set of criteria in the admissions policy and considered equally for all applicants.</b></p>
<p>How much homework is set?</p>	<p>In Year 7 pupils received two 30-minute pieces of homework each day. The amount increases as they progress through the school. More information on homework is available on the school website: <i>Menu, School Day, Homework and Prep.</i></p>
<p>Can pupils stay behind to study after school?</p>	<p>The library is available for pupils to read or study in after school. Prep (supported homework club) is available every day after school. For most pupils it is voluntary to attend, though some pupils be directed to attend.</p>
<p>Who should I speak to if I have questions about SEND support or the Pupil Premium?</p>	<p>Please contact Mrs J Blair via the main school email address: headmaster@beechencliff.org.uk</p>
<b>Curriculum/Subject Related Questions</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
<p>Are the sciences taught as separate individual subjects?</p>	<p><b>Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)</b> Pupils are taught individual sciences as separate subjects one after the other (but by the same teacher or teachers). For example, Year 7 pupils study Biology, then Chemistry and finally Physics. They have separate exercise books and assessments for each Science.</p> <p><b>Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)</b> Pupils either study Combined Science or the Separate Sciences. Combined Science involves being taught all three Sciences but slightly less content than the Separate Sciences. Regardless of the route taken, the sciences are taught separately by specialist subject teachers.</p>

<p>What languages do pupils study?</p>	<p><b>Year 7</b> All pupils study French</p> <p><b>Year 8/9</b> Most pupils take up a second language - either German, Italian or Spanish</p> <p><b>GCSE/A Level</b> Many students opt to study languages at GCSE and A Level. French, German, Spanish and Italian are available.</p>
<p>Do all pupils study languages?</p>	<p>All pupils study languages in Years 7-9 as we believe this is an important part of a broad and balanced curriculum. A small number of pupils requiring additional support may take extra numeracy and literacy lessons in Year 8 and Year 9 instead of a second language. Such decisions will be made in consultation with the SENDCo.</p>
<p>What programming language do you teach in computing?</p>	<p>We tend to use Python in school as there are a vast amount of resources freely available. However, pupils are encouraged to teach themselves other languages and can choose their own language for the A-Level project. We teach general programming concepts that can be adapted to any programming language.</p>
<p>What do Year 7 pupils study in mathematics in Year 7?</p>	<p>The Year 7 curriculum covers aspects of number, algebra, shape space &amp; measures and handling data. More information on the curriculum is available</p>
<p>What do the pupils make in technology lessons?</p>	<p>At KS3 (Years 7-9) pupils will rotate around different 10-week experiences. In Year 7 they will be designing and making a pewter casted keyring, juggling balls, a Banksy style photo and stand, a range of dishes in Food &amp; Nutrition and a Formula 1 model car to race in the end of year competition.</p>
<p>Do you teach textiles?</p>	<p>Textiles is taught in Year 7 during the module of work where the students design and manufacture a set of juggling balls.</p>
<p>What types of dishes do you cook in school?</p>	<p>Pupils plan, prepare and manufacture a range of dishes that develop practical skills in areas such as knife skills, baking and healthy eating.</p>

<p>Do parents provide the ingredients for practical Food &amp; Nutrition lessons ?</p>	<p>Parents are expected to provide ingredients for the practical sessions. A sealed container is also required to transport ingredients and completed dishes. Pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium will have their ingredients provided if required.</p>
<p>Do pupils need an apron for Technology lessons?</p>	<p>Pupils will be provided an apron for their practical sessions.</p>
<p>How often do pupils study Humanities subjects?</p>	<p>At KS3 pupils will have History and Geography three times a fortnight and Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE) once a week. At GCSE this increases to 5 lessons a fortnight for all Humanities subjects.</p>
<p>Are there any field trips in Geography?</p>	<p>There is a field trip in each year group:  Year 7: Energy trip to Hinkley Point nuclear Power Station and nearby solar farm.  Year 8: Coasts trip to the Jurassic Coast  Year 9: Beechen Cliff Woods  Year 10: The River Holford in the Quantock Hills  Year 11: Bristol Harbourside  L6th: Four day residential to South Devon  L6th/U6th: Six day residential to Iceland (optional)</p>
<p>Do pupils need to have a reading book in school?</p>	<p>We expect all Year 7 and 8 pupils to have a reading book in school with them at all times. Reading is an important part of the curriculum with timetabled reading lessons and specified reading homework. We also run the accelerated reader programme is also run. Pupils are able to borrow books from the school library. We encourage pupils to read as much as possible and hope they develop a love of reading.</p>
<p>How is the curriculum chosen?</p>	<p>We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to help pupils develop the skills and knowledge to prepare them for life beyond school. Whilst there is a focus on the skills and content required for exams we also consider what will interest our pupils most. For example we select English texts that boys tend to enjoy and Year 7 pupils re-enact the Battle of Hastings on the school field. We review our curriculum regularly in light of current affairs and government guidance.</p>

Sports Questions	
Question	Answer
What sports can you do in Year 7?	<p>During curriculum time, Physical Education is taught during two 1-hour lessons per week, and is split into PE lessons (indoor or individual sports) and Games lessons (outdoor team sports).</p> <p>Under normal circumstances in Year 7, the boys will be taught:  <b>PE:</b> Health-Related Exercise, Fundamental Movement Skills, Gymnastics, Short Tennis and Athletics.  <b>Games:</b> Rugby, Hockey, Football, Cricket and Rounders.</p> <p>In addition, training sessions for many sports are run before and after school. A large number of fixtures take place against other schools too.</p>
Are the sports clubs available for everyone and how do you cater for the different abilities?	Clubs normally run after school and are available to everyone. We offer A and B teams in all sports, and where possible we also offer C team participation, so that everyone who wishes to take part can get involved.
When do sports fixtures take place?	Most of our fixtures take place during the school week, however, we also provide Saturday morning fixtures for rugby.
Is rugby full contact?	<p>In lessons we make the assumption, for safety purposes, that none of the boys have yet been introduced to contact rugby. Initially, rugby lessons focus on handling and running skills, but contact will be introduced after two to three weeks. All the necessary progressions towards developing safe tackling and contact techniques are taught, in size-appropriate groups.</p> <p>In extra-curricular rugby, the introduction of contact might be earlier, once previous experience and skill levels have been assessed.</p>

Does my son need a gumshield?	Yes. It is RFU guidance that all pupils should have a gumshield for contact rugby. These can be bought via your dentist or through a sports shop. At some point early in Term 1, OPRO will visit the school to give you the opportunity to purchase a professionally fitted gumshield.
<b>Music &amp; Drama Related Questions</b>	
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
How often do pupils have music lessons and what topics are in the curriculum?	<p><b>Year 7-9</b> Pupils receive one hour of music per week. The lessons focus on the 3 key skill areas of Listening, composing and performing. Some of the topics covered include, world music, film music, blues, Jazz and hip hop.</p> <p><b>GCSE/A Level</b> Pupils can opt to study Music or Music Technology at GCSE and A Level.</p>
Are instrumental lessons available?	We can offer individual tuition on all orchestral instruments, piano, guitar drums and voice. A team of visiting peripatetic teachers deliver the lessons during the school day. Timetables will be on a rota system to avoid missing out on the same curriculum lesson each week. Instrumental lessons are 30 minutes in length ( option of 20 minutes for beginners). There is a cost for Instrumental lessons, please see the website for further details.
What extra-curricular opportunities are there in music?	<p>There is a wide extra-curricular programme including concert band, swing band, folk group, string ensemble, choir, saxophone ensemble, percussion ensemble, guitar ensemble and rock bands. The main events throughout the year include Piano Concert (October), Carol Service at Bath Abbey (December), School Concert (March) and various bands nights throughout the year. There is also a Young Musician of the Year competition in the summer.</p> <p>We have strong links with Hayesfield and together we have held joint musical days and organised European Tours.</p>

<p>Is Drama on the curriculum?</p>	<p>Drama is not currently on the curriculum. However, we work in partnership with Bath Theatre School to run Drama workshops on Fridays after school. As part of this programme pupils and students have the opportunity to perform in professionally staged productions. Recently we have staged Guys &amp; Dolls and Grease.</p>
<p><b>Outdoor Activities Questions</b></p>	
<p><b>Question</b></p>	<p><b>Answer</b></p>
<p>Do you run the Duke of Edinburgh Award?</p>	<p>We run a large numbers of outdoor activities with very high participation levels. We run the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze, Silver and Gold Levels (over 90 pupils took part in Bronze last year). We also run Ten Tors, Three Peaks, the Coast to Coast Challenge, Centurion challenge and much more!</p>