



BEECHEN CLIFF

About Beechen Cliff



Introduction

Located next to Alexandra Park on the south-side of Bath, Beechen Cliff occupies a glorious site looking over playing fields and then beyond Lyncombe Vale.

Beechen Cliff is a high achieving state day and boarding school – for boys only in Years 7-11 and with a large, vibrant, academic mixed Sixth Form. There are over 1250 students at Beechen Cliff, of which 400 are in the Sixth Form. We have a proud tradition of both strong academic success and the provision of a wide range of extra curricular activities.

Our vision at Beechen Cliff is to enable pupils and students to achieve their aspirations and become well-rounded, confident and compassionate individuals, who live fulfilled lives and go on to make a positive contribution to society.

We are committed to providing an exceptional, all-round education both in terms of high academic standards and an incredible range of extra-curricular opportunities. We have high expectations of our pupils in terms of their learning, conduct and appearance and encourage all to take advantage of the opportunities available to them at school. The pride that many feel for having been a part of the school is seen in vast numbers of our alumni.

Our pupils benefit from high quality teaching and pastoral care through working with a committed, experienced and caring team of staff, which leads to examination results above the national average and successful progression to the next stage of education.

We aim to develop character and an understanding of values with much of our work based around our Core Values of aspiration, compassion, independence and respect.

In September 2023, the school was inspected by OFSTED and judged to be 'Good' in all categories with the report highlighting many strengths of the school.

In December 2023, the boarding provision was also inspected by OFSTED. The judgement was also 'Good' in all categories with no recommendations.

The school has an incredibly supportive parent body and local community. We remain oversubscribed both into Year 7 and Year 12 (Lower Sixth) reflecting its popularity in attracting applicants from across Bath and the surrounding areas.

We are part of the Midsomer Norton School's Partnership (MNSP) and, within this, the Bath Hub. Within the partnership the schools work in collaboration for the benefit of pupils and staff across all schools.

Further information is available on our website: <https://www.beechencliff.org.uk/>

Academic Success

We are ambitious for all our students and the school is proud of its academic success both in terms of examination results and the destinations its students move on to. GCSE results are well above national averages (particularly for boys) and progress is also above the national average (+0.48 in 2023) with pupils in all ability levels making progress above the national average. A' level outcomes are also strong, particularly in Facilitating Subjects. Over 70% of our GCSE pupils go on to study A' levels in the Sixth Form with others securing places at college or apprenticeships. The majority of our A' level students go on to university (40% of which are Russell Group) and others secure elite apprenticeships or move into employment.

Developing Character

Our school Core Values (aspiration, compassion, independence and respect) underpin our approach to character development and possibilities are interwoven into every aspect of school life to ensure pupils have the opportunity to enhance and develop their character. This includes through the curriculum, the tutor programme and extra-curricular activities and is recognised through our Character Award. Our pupils are supported to become increasingly self-confident without arrogance and to recognise the role that their increasing leadership potential can have on others. From an early point, students are given the chance to lead and to learn the value of themselves. By the end of Year 10 they are applying formally for the sought-after Prefect positions and in the Sixth Form they become a part of the Senior Prefect Team in the school. This chance to lead and to act as role models for younger pupils has a very powerful effect across the school.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Beechen Cliff is a vibrant, dynamic school which places opportunity at its heart. Our pupils and students are encouraged to participate in as many activities as possible and our teachers give of their time very generously to make this happen. The activities available during a typical year include:

- Art Club
- Breakfast Club
- Bee Keeping Club
- F1 Car Racing
- Book Club
- Food Club
- Scrabble Club
- Library Club
- Bee Keeping
- Computer Programming
- Code Breaking & Cypher Challenge
- Climbing
- Cricket
- Homework Club
- Tennis
- Table Tennis
- Ten Tors
- Hockey
- Duke of Edinburgh (Bronze, Silver and Gold)
- Combined Cadet Force (CCF)
- Rugby
- Christian Union
- Choir
- Music ensembles: orchestras/jazz/folk groups
- Bands Nights
- Maths Club
- Film Club
- Chess Club
- Football
- Netball
- Warhammer Club
- Theatre/Drama Club (including school productions in partnership with Bath Theatre School)
- Public Speaking

The range of educational visits which enrich the curriculum and the lives of our students is also extensive. In a normal year over one hundred visits take place across the school, all aiming to develop the understanding and character of students. From the first few weeks in Year 7 the pupils are taken away to the school cottage in Wales, Tir-y-Cwm, where they bond together and are challenged to develop their confidence and sense of

belonging in our community. Trips take place throughout the year and there is also an extensive programme during our summer activities week.

We also provide opportunities for overseas visits. During their time at Beechen Cliff, the pupils and students will be offered skiing visits to Europe and the United States, projects in Romania, Art trips to Europe together with language exchanges to Italy, France, Spain and Germany.

These opportunities are supplemented by an array of experiences which pupils and students will remember for many years to come, led by staff who are passionate about the positive effects of such activities.

Sport

Sport plays a big role in the life of Beechen Cliff with large numbers of pupils and students taking part and a reputation of sporting excellence spanning many decades. We aim for all our pupils to enjoy sport, develop their skills and reach their full potential. Participation is our first aim, though we also aim to support the development of top class athletes. Many of our young sports men and women have gone on to compete at elite levels.

We are immensely proud of the success of Beechen Cliff students whether it is representing their school locally or nationally, or gaining international honours. We have a strong partnership with Bath Rugby and Southampton Football Club, which has led to particular success in these sports in recent years. The Good Schools Guide refers in particular to our '*illustrious sports record.*'

Beechen Cliff Challenges

As part of our vision to develop character, throughout their time at Beechen Cliff, pupils and students are encouraged to take part in a range of challenges. These are designed to take them out of their comfort zones into realms that challenge body and mind – where there are no shortcuts and no easy ways out. It is during these occasions that they discover inner strengths and limits. Annual challenges include:

- The Centurion Challenge – a 100 mile walk to Hungerford and back in 48 hours
- Duke of Edinburgh – Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards; the latter including a mountaineering expedition
- Ten Tors Challenge – teams face hikes of up to 55 miles visiting 10 Dartmoor tors over two days
- Coast to Coast Cycle Ride – a 100 mile cycle ride in a day from the north Devon Coast, across Dartmoor, to Plymouth.
- Three Peaks Challenge – climbing the three highest peaks in England, Wales and Scotland within 24 hours.

Music and Theatre

In addition to clubs and peripatetic lessons throughout the year we aim to give pupils and students the opportunity to perform and showcase their talents.

Each year we run the following events:

- Piano Concert - at the local church, St Lukes.
- Beechen's Got Talent - organised by our Sixth Form Prefects
- Carol Service - at Bath Abbey
- Winter Bands Night - organised by our Tech Team
- School Concert - at the local church, St Lukes.
- School Musical Theatre Production - in partnership with Bath Theatre School

- Summer Bands Night - organised by our Tech Team

Opportunities are also provided to perform in collaborative events with our schools in the city e.g. the Bath Schools Voices project.

Support and Guidance

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral care is based around both a Year Group system and a House system. Pupils are placed in year based tutor groups within one of four Houses, which enables pupils to feel part of and contribute to their House community. We work incredibly hard to ensure our pupils are known, understood and feel both valued and supported in school. This includes a strong safeguarding culture, and a focus on mental health and well-being and personal development.

The pastoral system is year based with experienced Heads of Year 7 to 11 and a Pastoral Manager for each Key Stage. Each pupil is placed in a tutor group within their year. Their Tutor's role is to oversee and guide the development of each boy in his or her charge and to provide day-to-day academic and pastoral support. Tutors work alongside the Pastoral Managers and Heads of Year to ensure each pupil is well understood and supported in the best possible way.

In addition, each House is led by a Head of House who oversees House assemblies, councils, and activities. Academic and sporting competition between the Houses is fostered – as is charity fundraising activity. At the end of each term a House winner is announced and a reward week takes place where all members of that House receive certain privileges. At the end of the year the winning House name is engraved on the Rewards Board in the Refectory.

Parents

We recognise that parents are at the centre of our work in achieving success with students. To help parents support their child we provide clear information on academic performance and potential, guidance on the curriculum and how to support learning, revision and reading at home.

Parents have access to school reports and information on attendance, rewards and sanctions on our online portal, Talaxy. In addition, they are given access to information on the Homework set for pupils on Google Classroom.

In addition to annual Parents Evenings for each year group, we also provide year-specific Parent Information Evenings. These give the opportunity for parents to meet with tutors and to listen to talks on topics relevant to their child's year group including: How to Support at Home, Online Safety, GCSE Options, Work Experience, GCSE or A Level Revision and the UCAS Process.

Reporting to Parents

Throughout the Lower School parents are kept informed about their son's progress. This will happen in a number of different ways: each year there are two reports; one progress report and one full subject report. These reports are published on Beechen Cliff's online portal, Talaxy, which is available to all parents, pupils and students online. In addition there is an annual Parents' Evening for subject teachers and parents to discuss pupil progress.

Homework

At Beechen Cliff we are very clear about the importance of homework. We believe homework has huge benefits – it improves performance in lessons, enables positive reinforcement from teachers, improves attitudes towards lessons and develops pupils' capacity to work independently. Homework is set rigorously and the school has high expectations of pupils and the quality of the homework handed in to teachers. There is also an expectation that parents will provide the encouragement, the resources and the quiet space to allow homework to be completed well. Beechen Cliff also runs Homework Club, supervised time after school for pupils to receive additional support with homework. Some pupils are directed to Homework Club on a basis of need and some attend voluntarily.

Boarding

There is a small boarding section at Beechen Cliff, catering for up to thirty-two boys for Year 7 upwards. There are a number of reasons why pupils may wish to board, for example:

- parents may have work commitments which demand that they travel some or all of the time
- many Sixth Form students relish the opportunity for a half-way house between school and university
- elite athletes can access the excellent opportunities at local providers, including the university or through our partnerships with Bath Rugby and Southampton Football Club.
- family circumstances might mean that a period of boarding would provide stability and continuity in a child's life
- a one-off family commitment might mean that flexi-boarding will offer the ideal way to provide childcare while parents are away.

Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at Beechen Cliff is the largest A Level provider in the area. There are normally over 400 students in the sixth form with the school taking in students (boys and girls) from across the region. Sixth Form life at Beechen Cliff is vibrant, busy and full of opportunities.

Students' attainment and progress is above national average and particularly strong in facilitator subjects in which around a fifth achieve AAB in at least two such subjects. Russell Group, Oxbridge, Medicine and elite apprenticeship destinations are very well represented. As well as receiving excellent teaching, becoming an independent learner is at the heart of every student's success and our vision is that they leave fully prepared for the demands of higher education and the world of work.

Equally important are the high standards of dress, punctuality, conduct and application to their studies; these form the bedrock of all else they do and make the Sixth Form the flagship for the rest of the school. Life in the Sixth Form extends well beyond the classroom. Sport, of course, is of a very high standard and there are excellent opportunities both for young men and young women to take part in either our elite or recreational teams. Our extra-curricular activities are exceptionally popular. The Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award Scheme, Sixth Form led Bands Nights, charitable fundraising events including the Romania Project,

and societies ranging from drama to medicine, debating to STEM are prominent features of life in the Sixth Form.

In addition, there are numerous cultural opportunities – such as theatre visits, music and our annual representation at the International Model United Nations. Our super curricular programme stretches students beyond their A' levels including the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Meanwhile, our biannual TEDx event, run by students, provides a platform for our community to share “ideas worth spreading”. The great advantage of the Sixth Form being attached to a school is that Sixth Form students can begin to acquire skills of leadership which are so important in later life; we expect our Sixth Form students to exercise responsibility in a variety of ways for the mutual benefit of the school and themselves.

Within the Sixth Form students are placed into a tutor group within a House and students are part of the House community. Students have the opportunity to apply to be House Prefects and to lead activities, such as House councils or initiatives within their House in addition to opportunities to apply for Senior Prefect roles within the school, which come with a variety of responsibilities.

Some Sixth Form students give valuable in-class support to young pupils including as mentors, supporting in lessons or as a reading buddy. Others support with sports coaching or support staff on trips, for example the Year 7 visits to the school cottage in Wales.

The Sixth Form at Beechen Cliff is large and vibrant. It is a genuine community to which young people are proud to belong. It is open to students who are committed to their study, the broader life of the Sixth Form and to Beechen Cliff as a whole.

The Super Curriculum

The Super Curriculum is our range of opportunities aimed at enriching students' academic experiences, developing and challenging their thinking, and inspiring them beyond the formal curriculum. The most competitive universities expect students to have researched and read beyond the scope of their A' level specifications and the Super Curriculum also provides stimuli to do this.

Throughout the academic year there are a range of events, information and input from the school and external bodies. This includes a series of super curricular lectures and visiting speakers, held at either Beechen Cliff or our partner schools within the Trust, which have included such topics as “Galaxy” and “The importance of a open mind” and our Graduate Career Showcase.

In addition, there are a range of trips, visits and opportunities designed to enhance students' learning offered through curriculum areas and the Sixth Form. Examples of curriculum-based visits include a Classics Trip to Oxford, Geography visit to Iceland and Languages trips across Europe.

Examination Results

Examination results are available on our website:

<https://www.beechencliff.org.uk/about/examination-results/>