

That they be *good* men.



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Now more than ever we need forces for good in the world. At Bedford, our boys contribute to wider society as well as to each other; they know that arrogance is the least attractive of traits and that regret is the most wasted of emotions. We seek to raise good people first and foremost; and then to allow them to flourish as academics, as sportsmen, as artists and above all as themselves, in a supportive and ambitious atmosphere. Indeed, the one so often leads to the other: the confidence gained from achieving at cricket can transfer to the classroom; the good pianist becomes a better rugby player; the promising scientist starts to enjoy his acting more. It stems from a boy developing confidence in his own ability and learning to navigate for himself all the many activities on offer. With support and encouragement, he will find many things at Bedford School, but most of all he will find himself.

We are therefore dedicated to nurturing a wide variety of individual interests and to developing them as far as boys can take them; but we, like you, are devoted to ensuring our boys love their childhood, because they only get it once. We aim for balanced, outward-looking, forward-thinking, kind and sociable young men who are comfortable in their own skins. Being in an all-boys environment as they develop through such an important stage of their lives is hugely beneficial in achieving this: all these qualities can be nurtured without inhibition and lived without awkwardness. Our boys feel they belong here and therefore feel able and keen to participate to the fullest.

We find, happily, that our boys retain a genuine love of their old school once they leave and remain a part of this wonderful community for their whole lives – which then brings a richness of experience back to the next generation.

A great history and strong traditions bring stability and security. However, we are not at all complacent. We are constantly evolving the way we look at the boys' education to match the likely future of the world of work. It is inevitable that your son will enter a technological world and we have developed in a hugely exciting way on this front. Just as importantly, it has never been more crucial to accentuate the wonders and gifts of being human. Empathy, compassion, creativity, imagination, humour – these will be vital to our boys later, in a life where many current roles will be automated.

With encouragement, inspiration and support, over time our boys become confident in who they are. Your son will leave as a good man, secure in his values, happy and with the self-knowledge and self-worth to be able to hold his own in any company and take his place in the world.



*In their own words. The boys.*



*“It is simply easier to become good.”*

Ben is a young man who takes his lessons seriously. He wants to be an astrophysicist. He seems the sort of boy who is likely to achieve his aim. He says he is now in a place where it is possible to work hard and learn fast. The clubs he does, like Physics and Engineering, Physics Gym and Biology help this. But he’s not just keen on work-focused clubs – he enjoys rowing and Esperanto as well.

Ben says he takes a lot of responsibility for his own learning and that the resources here, the labs, library and support from the teachers mean that you can make as much progress as you want, as fast as you want. He likes the vertical tutor groups – “not only do you get to know older boys, but you see what they have to contend with, and once you know it, you are no longer worried by it”.

With this sort of focus, *the sky’s the limit*.  
So astrophysics sounds about right.

*Ben, day boy, Year 9, scientist, linguist*





Anhad, Vivaan and Kabir are three brothers from India, all in the same boarding house – Phillpotts. While they undoubtedly have very different gifts and talents, they can also talk as a coherent unit, finishing each other's sentences.

When it comes to the sheer scope of life at Bedford School, they make an interesting point – they say there exists a “symbiotic relationship between the mental and the physical”.

They go on to explain that when your brain is full of, say, physics, you can then play a game of rugby, which clears the mind. They say life here is *full* of changes of pace and atmosphere, which is helpful and healthy. Indeed, balance is a theme they all pursue, saying that the mix of freedom to do as they please with the compulsory aspects of life in school and in the boarding house makes for a happy equilibrium.

Talking of boarding, all three agree that via the boarding house you get the most complete version of the school ethos. As they say,  
*“You don't learn it. You live it.”*

Kabir, Vivaan and Anhad, *boarders, brothers, scientists, sportsmen*









Alex came to Bedford from Nigeria aged 10. What is immediately obvious is that he brought with him a work ethic that is astonishing.

He *could* be a day boy but is a boarder because it allows him to fit more into his day (he is frequently to be found in the Art School before breakfast). As well as the rugby he plays at school, he also plays at academy level, which does a lot for fitness. So unsurprisingly he is an accomplished runner, currently only 0.2 seconds off the school 400 metre record.

In all of this he finds time to design school house kit, which must be interesting enough to make it economically viable.

His take on Bedford? *Exposure*. To different cultures, different characters, different things.

*“Be open. Be available.”*

*Alex, boarder, Year 11, artist, athlete*

*“Because it’s about knowledge,  
not about privilege.”*

Alfie started the Italian Club. He is also in the Head Master’s Ancient Greek Club. He is going to have a shot at studying classics at Oxford. His love of classics however goes much further.

He introduces Year 4s to Latin at a local primary school.

Apparently, some of the teachers there attend as well because they have had no exposure to Latin. “The pupils and staff are in the same boat, in eadem nave, and it is fun and rewarding – for them I hope, and also for me.”

He is keen on the school’s traditions, so much so that on his last day he hopes to turn up wearing brown shoes (a special privilege for Monitors), Bedford School cufflinks, academic colours, rugby colours, hockey colours, Monitor’s tie and a Head Master’s scarf. A good way for Alfie to leave a place he has loved.











Flik is a shining example of the *breadth* and *contrast* to be found at Bedford School. He is an accomplished scientist (maths, further maths, physics) and yet also an extremely talented and much-awarded musician.

He came in Year 9 and right from the beginning has thrown himself into school life, particularly the music. He has won just about every school music prize, and even a composition competition organised by the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. His music was clearly good when he arrived, but he thanks his music teachers for helping him to a more fundamental understanding of how music works.

If there is any spare time, the school Planetarium is a great attraction, as well as grade 8 LAMDA. A very busy and *engaging* young man.

*Flik, boarder, Year 13, scientist, musician*











Ishaan joined in Year 12. He says, if you looked at the boys from his previous school compared to the boys at Bedford, they would seem at first to be pretty much the same. But probe a bit deeper, and you find much more passion and motivation here. How does that manifest itself? Ishaan makes an interesting observation.

He says that obviously,

*“Bedford looks for success,  
but it also prioritises enjoyment.”*

Not just doing something well, but deeply, sincerely, enjoying doing it. He says this is self-evident in all the sports opportunities available at Bedford, but for him it is drama. He came with drama as a hobby; he will leave with drama as a passion. The play he wrote and directed himself, *This is our Death Sentence*, is testament to his success.

Another point he makes is that at Bedford School you cannot make lazy generalisations – he loves drama but is doing biology, chemistry and mathematics at A-Level in order to read medicine at university.

A playwright and a scientist – a great *balance*.

Matthew hopes to go to New College, Oxford to read biology. He says immediately that his biology teacher is the inspiration for his academic success, nurturing in him a *genuine fascination* for the subject. In the essays he has been encouraged to write and enter into competitions, he feels he has already been treated more as an undergraduate, which has undeniably accelerated his academic achievement.

Matthew, though, has had a multi-faceted life at Bedford School. He plays rugby in the 1st XV, but it's technology that's really sparked his passion. He and his team scooped third prize in the Barclays' Blockchain Hackathon, causing quite a stir when they beat professional teams from banks and high-profile tech companies.

The school demands high standards in everything but nevertheless has a relaxed atmosphere. He thinks that too many rules and regulations just breed either obedience or disobedience, "*but a more relaxed approach fosters common sense*".

Agreed.

Matthew, *day boy*, Year 13, *biologist, sportsman*



Kayde is a sports scholar, identified through the Northampton Saints Academy, and also an accomplished academic. He admits that he was not at all sure about coming to a school like Bedford when the Saints suggested it. However, he says, absolutely straight, that the two years at Bedford have been the best years of his school life, despite the unfortunate fact that he is recovering from a nasty sports injury. Once recovered, he is expected to go on to be a significant figure in the national game.

Smiling broadly, he reckons that if someone had told him he would be singing for all he's worth in the House Singing competition, he would have laughed. But he does. *And he loves it.*

He feels one of the major advantages of Bedford School is that life is so busy that you learn to manage your time. He also can't believe the number of completely different people from completely different cultures he has met and who have become his firm friends.

A big, smiling man with a *big* future.

Kayde, *day boy*, Year 13, *sportsman*, *singer*









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