

BSix News

BE INFORMED! BE INVOLVED!

Welcome to the **BSIX NEWS**, our termly update on events, achievements and developments at **BSIX**.

BSIX HAS MADE 'SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT' ACCORDING TO OFSTED

Ofsted visited BSix on 25/26 November for the annual monitoring visit. The function of these visits is to 'check out' how the college is doing in building on strengths and addressing areas for improvement. The college was assessed as having made significant progress in three areas. Extracts from the report below:

What progress has the College made in further embedding a self assessment process?

Significant Progress

Self assessment plays a pivotal role in maintaining the momentum to raise achievement and standards. Teachers and managers are very clear about the process.

What progress has the College made in improving the proportion of good or better teaching?

Significant Progress

So far in 2009/10, the proportion of good or better teaching has risen from 62% to 80%. A rigorous interview process involves students and only allows grade 2 (good) teachers through to interview. Teachers said the Virtual Learning Environment is helpful to them and to students and welcome the shortening of lessons. Ready to Learn has benefited teachers by making students more punctual and prepared and allowing teachers to focus on teaching. Commendation cards have motivated students.



What progress has the College made in improving attendance, retention and readiness to learn?

Significant Progress

The College's relentless drive to improve readiness to learn is having a positive impact. Students are well aware of the importance of attendance and punctuality and are reminded through posters, the Student Planner and the Ready to Learn Contract. Students are motivated by the use of the commendation cards. Students and teachers are positive.

The judgements are important to the College and to our students. In particular, we are happy to see that our very good teachers are acknowledged and are now being recognised as largely good or outstanding.

Philip Elliott
Deputy Principal - Curriculum & Quality

Key dates for the Spring Term

AS / A2 Examinations - January
Parents Evenings are on
Wednesdays this year
Entry, Level 1 & 2 Wednesday 10th
March Level 3 Wednesday 17th
March



Parents workshop update

The **first workshop** in October on Adolescent Behaviour was welcomed by parents. A leading child psychologist Emil Jackson described the behaviour of the different stages of childhood and explored what was considered “normal” adolescent behaviour with a number of interested BSix parents. The evening was seen as “informative”, “interesting” and “worthwhile” and parents were looking forward to the next of the series.

Workshop 2 Tuesday February 9th 7.00 Demystifying qualifications.

What is a BTEC, what are high grades in AS/A2, what makes them different, what do you need to do to get into university? This informal workshop aims to explain the key qualifications delivered at BSix, how these are graded and where they lead. .

Parents Evenings Update

We have had a great start to the year with the first of our series of Parents Evenings.

The Parents Welcome Evening in September offered the opportunity to meet with the Senior Management Team and the Heads of Department. There was standing room only in the theatre for a presentation on the year plan, the support available for students and an outline of the activities and events that students could experience at BSix. Parents also had their first opportunity to get involved as they worked together to produce a set of “tips” for supporting the achievement of students. These “tips” have now been published alongside the students’ own contribution in a booklet for the new Student Planner.

The feedback on the evening was very encouraging. Parents told us “the presentation was very informative”, “the activity was fun”, “it was good talking to other parents” and “BSix is a welcoming place.”

The November Parents Evenings were very busy with twice as many parents as last year. Parents’ evaluations were unanimously positive with the new reports being seen as “a good basis for discussion” and “clear and simple but informative”. Suggestions that the evening began earlier have been taken on board and, as a result, we are now moving the evenings to a Wednesday so we can start the interviews from 4.30 as teaching finishes earlier on this day.

World of Work

At BSix we give students experience of the world of work via a number of initiatives . The following are some of the activities experienced this term

The “ How Did We Get Here” programme of visiting speakers from different areas of industry aims to expand students’ knowledge of different careers and the routes that people have taken to achieve their current position. So far this year students have met with an Olympic swimmer and coach, an investment banker from Goldman Sachs, a pharmacist , a gas and oil installation engineer from AMEC, an international engineering company, and the Borough Commander of Police for Hackney.



BSix – AMEC Joint Project

AMEC is an Engineering and consulting firm for various divisions including; natural resources, power & process, earth and environmental.

The BSix- AMEC joint project will provide students with e – mentoring, work experience, shadowing and practical projects over the next three years .

Two science and one business student were the first to complete very successful placements at AMEC last summer. This will be followed next summer by three students intending to study Engineering at university. Students interested in work shadowing will be having at least one day every month to shadow project directors in AMEC.

A joint project will be starting early next year for our science students- Green power formula 24+.

BSix Music Technology students are ready to start their Business Enterprise project - a record company named "Soul Fly"

Young Enterprise is the UK's largest business and enterprise education charity.

Students involved get the chance to gain practical experience of running their own company. Over one academic year the students have to raise capital by selling shares and devising a product which they sell to the public. This is not simply a paper exercise. The new record company is real, set up as a subsidiary of Young Enterprise which also provides a Business Advisor to guide them. The scheme is voluntary, but the benefits are clear: the students are involved in work related learning, developing their skills on many levels and they get real business experience. Watch out for their first product launch!

Oh Yes They Did!

The National Diploma Acting students at BSix made their public performance debut at the local Southwold School in Clapton with a vibrant, energetic Christmas story which had the children crying out for more! The story of a little boy who falls asleep and awakes in 'The Land of Toys', surrounded by his favourite toys is taken on a mission to defend the land from the evil Puppetmaster and save Christmas.

Devised by the performers themselves over a six week period leading up to the performance, the play was a resounding success. School teacher Louise Heard commented that it was a "great performance which was enjoyed by all."

Drama teacher Darren Peers added: "It was a fantastic, festive occasion. The kids loved it and the actors were really buzzing and fed on the enthusiasm of the children to give a wonderfully energetic performance. I was very proud of them all."

The Hackney Empire offers a "volunteer scheme" to our Performing Arts students which involves them directly with the programming of performances. The benefit to our students is that they will have the opportunity to see shows for free, to go backstage and meet with the Directors and performers involved in various shows and through all of this get a clearer insight into the world of theatre. In return the students will meet weekly with Kate Angus to discuss the shows that they have seen and they will keep a written log. This benefits the Hackney Empire by using the students to spread the word about various shows to their friends and family. Their opinions will also be taken into consideration for future programming so as to re-establish a youth audience base at the theatre.

Performing Arts students also took part in an audition technique workshop delivered by professional staff from the Central School of Speech & Drama on Friday, 27th November 2009.

Art & Design students are working with The Courtauld Institute of Art, one of the world's leading higher education institutes for the study of Art History and of Conservation. The Courtauld Gallery is home to outstanding collections of Old Master, Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, sculptures, prints and drawings and works of decorative art.

The Courtauld will:

- Provide workshops and access to Frank Auerbach's London Building Sites 1952-1962 exhibition.
- Liaise with and provide access to 'the Shard' construction site for BSix staff and students for a primary research visit.
- Provide space at the Courtauld Institute for an exhibition of student practical work based on the Building Sites show and research.

BSix teacher awarded Artist Residency at Exhibit Gallery at Golden Lane Estate at the Barbican

Anthony McCorry, one of BSix's Art and Design teachers, has been awarded residency at the Barbican. The purpose of residency is to (along with nine other artists working across all media) celebrate the Grade 2 listed estate's 50th Anniversary. The estate was the first modernist housing project in Britain, an experiment from which the Barbican itself was built.

The first project BSix Art & Design students usually embark on links to the environment in some way, so Tony has combined his residency with the BTEC National Diploma students' first project (lasting a term and covering three units) and designed a brief called ESTATES. Exhibit's programme is closely linked to The Royal College of Arts work in social planning and a now 12 year in project entitled 'Designing Our Future Selves'.

So far students have visited the estate, the Barbican itself and the gallery in addition to Thamesmead in South London. The drawings students made on location are excellent and their plans and early stages of the production of final pieces for the project are also very good.

Level 3 Sports students supported the Hackney schools Paralympics Awareness week at Clissold Leisure Centre. Working with students with disabilities, our students experienced working as a team and communicating effectively while assisting and leading various sports sessions.

Trainee Beauty Therapists provided mini-manicures and nail art as part of their promotional unit which was set up in the canteen area. These services were very popular and the client response was overwhelming with queues at every session.

Head of Department, Miri Georgiou, is very proud of the success in the department and would like to thank everybody involved in these brilliant opportunities.

Students from the Gateway Department started work on updating the look of the College's garden. The seats are now a rainbow of colours and the once white walls now boast a stunning example of graffiti based artwork which lifts all our spirits with its vibrancy and fun.

Enrichment News

Inspired by London 2012: Host borough colleges awarded the Inspire Mark.

BSix, along with eight other host borough colleges, has been awarded the 2012 Inspire Mark by the London 2012 Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The coveted 'Inspired by London 2012' logo has been awarded to an innovative **Legacy Champions** project. It will begin with 10 students from each of the colleges taking part in an activity-packed **Legacy Day** in February 2010 (including a visit to the Olympic Park). After that, they'll have lots of opportunities to champion the legacy of the Games to their colleges and communities. The Legacy Champions programme will run to December 2012.

The Inspire Mark is used to highlight projects or events which celebrate and promote the opportunities and values of London 2012, and the Games' legacy.

Paralympics Involvement

BSix was one of only four schools in the borough taking part in the inclusive sports programme introducing students to new activities that allow both able and disabled bodied participants to take part together. We were lucky to have the Hackney Basketball coach for a ten week coaching programme for wheelchair basketball. Next term we will offer archery.

New sports for 2010 – **wrestling!**

Politics Club



The Politics Club welcomed their first guest speaker George Galloway MP. His "eloquent" and challenging speech on "Britain in the World" provoked some interesting questions and stimulating discussion. The students made us proud - George Galloway's team were impressed with the quality of the debate. We are looking forward to meeting with Diane Abbott, who has agreed to be our speaker this term.

The Chess Club's members were faced with their first big challenge when one of our Maths teachers Jonathan Ruback played six students at once. His resounding victories have meant that this is now a regular Monday event as keen students are determined not to let him continue his undefeated run!

Wi-Fi Launch



Taskin, Public Services student and the brains behind the Wi-Fi facility, being congratulated at its opening ceremony

The launch of the WIFI internet café after half term was met with enthusiasm by students. The canteen area now has PCs set up for more social use of the internet and students can now use their own laptops anywhere in the canteen. New furniture has created an area dedicated to quieter study allowing students to carry on with work in a less formal setting than the LRC.

Student Union Xmas Concert 2009



The Student Union organised and presented the BSix Xmas Concert 2009 on Thursday, 17th December in the BSix College Theatre. This event was a huge success that showcased cross college talent. It was so popular that it was completely sold out and the audience of parents, students and friends enjoyed every second! Highlights of the show included singers, pianists and Mcee groups as well as the BSix Youth Dance Company, "Confidence" and the first performance by the BSix Choir "Be Vocal."

BSix Alumni students also contributed to the show through choreography and compering. Congratulations to all performers and to the Student Union for organising this successful show!